Challenges in the Tertiary Education Sub-Sector and the Emergence of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND)

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Abstract

Education plays a critical role in the development of any society, whether developing or developed, and should be given adequate attention. This paper examined some challenges bedeviling tertiary institutions in Nigeria as well as the impact of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) in addressing these challenges since its emergence in 2011. In attempting to achieve this objective, the paper sets for itself the following questions: what are the possible challenges affecting tertiary education in Nigeria? And to what extent has TETFund assisted in ameliorating these challenges and advancing educational development in Nigeria? The paper made use of secondary data from journals, textbooks, online newspaper reports on educational development in Nigeria all of which were analyzed via content analysis. The Stakeholder Theory by Edward Freeman was adopted as theoretical framework in a bid to identify the solutions to the numerous challenges bedeviling the Nigerian educational sector. The paper concluded that Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) has contributed immensely to the development of infrastructure facilities, human resources, and research programmes and intervened in the provision of funds for tertiary education management in Nigeria. Based on these findings, the paper suggested amongst others that there should be increase in the budgetary allocation for education in Nigeria, TETFund intervention in academic staff training and development should continue,

and stakeholders should be encouraged to synergise to provide adequate infrastructural facilities that will propel creativity and innovation in beneficiary institutions.

Keywords: *Tertiary institutions, research, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Nigeria*

Introduction

Education serves not only as a means of intellectual growth, but also as a platform for socialisation, moral development and preparation for societal development. To Epelle and Asiegbu (2022) education can be seen as a tool which helps not only in the dissemination of knowledge, but in the advancement of a nation or society and to a great extent has the capacity to transform the entire world. Thus, the basic function of education is to equip individuals with essential knowledge and skills for personal and professional life. However, contemporary education is increasingly recognized as a vehicle to promote critical thinking, creativity and emotional intelligence, ethical and moral upbringing essential for surviving in the modern world. Thus, the overall objectives of education extend beyond simple academic success to encompass character training, illustrating the broader social impact of education.

The structure of education in Nigeria is a hierarchical one that includes primary, secondary and tertiary levels, each designed to meet different stages of learning and development. This layer system aims to provide a comprehensive educational experience but faces significant challenges that prevent its effectiveness. Understanding the intricacies of Nigeria's educational structure, along with its challenges and prospects, is essential to assessing the quality of educational products in the country. At the elementary level, primary education in Nigeria is a constitutional right and a critical stage in the educational structure of the country. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme serves as a vehicle to provide primary education, emphasizing access and inclusion. Despite these efforts, access remains a significant issue, with millions of children still out of school due to socioeconomic factors, infrastructure deficits and cultural barriers (Okeke *et al*., 2024). On the other hand, secondary education in Nigeria faces its own set of challenges, strongly influenced by inconsistent policies and varied

implementation patterns in different states. Okeke *et al.* (2024) further states how some political reforms with regards to the functionality of secondary schools in Nigeria suffered from inadequate resources and poorly coordinated structures, leading to significant disparities in experiences between urban and rural areas and even between states.

Given the purpose of this paper, we shall be focusing on the standard of tertiary education as a sub-sector in the Nigeria educational structure while looking at the challenges militating against its effective operation in Nigeria as well as the place of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) in the development of tertiary education in Nigeria. Tertiary education is the apex of the sub systems of education in any nation. Thus, Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2004) defined it as "Education given after secondary education in Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, including institutions offering corresponding courses". Thus, tertiary education is essential for national development. However, higher education in Nigeria has over time faced diverse challenges affecting its productivity and standard. Nwakanma (2010) stated that the Nigerian tertiary institutions of learning are far too ill-equipped to train and develop new graduates suitable for the 21st century. Causative analysis of the situation point to the poor infrastructural as well as pedagogical deficiency in Nigerian Universities and other higher institutions of learning, this being the result of underfunding of public universities. Ibrahim (2009), while decrying the poor state of education in Nigeria and its resultant effect on the country, lamented that Nigeria was losing quite a huge sum of foreign exchange because of applicants seeking foreign university education. He gave a comparison of universities in Nigeria and Britain, noting that in an average British university, all facilities are available for research with libraries having the latest books on different subjects unlike in Nigeria where the reverse is the case.

In lieu of the above challenges and others, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) was established by the Federal government of Nigeria in 2011, to disburse, manage and monitor education tax to government owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Prior to the establishment of the Fund in 2011, government-owned tertiary institutions were poorly funded. Onyeike and Eseyin (2014) also observed that tertiary education in the country was confronted with problems

ranging from financial to human and material resource insufficiency. It is for these reasons that the government set up TETFund in 2011 to restore the dwindling fortune of the nation's educational system. It is against this backdrop that this paper examines the role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) in development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In attempting to achieve this objective, the paper sets for itself the following questions: what are the possible challenges affecting tertiary education in Nigeria? And to what extent has TETFund assisted in ameliorating these challenges and advancing educational development in Nigeria? Data for this study was collected through secondary sources and reviewed via content analysis.

Conceptual Framework

Education

Education generally entails teaching, training and learning for the development of knowledge and skills so as to prepare individuals not just to survive now but also for the future. To Ajonuma (2010) education is the process of developing human capacity, skills, abilities, behaviours, which encompasses the social process of achieving competence, growth and development in an institutional or organizational setting. The National Policy on Education (2004) described education as an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development. It affirmed that education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because it is the most important instrument of positive change. Education, according to Fafunwa (1974, p.3), can be seen as " the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviours which are of positive value to the society in which he lives". Fafunwa went further to explain that education is a process of transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth and for disseminating knowledge to ensure social control or guarantee rational direction of society or both (p.3). Hence, once we say a person is educated, we are implying that he is well cultured, enlightened, knowledgeable, well-exposed and is socially, morally, intellectually and physically useful to society. It is no gain saying therefore that education's social utility is a prerequisite for a person to fit into any society, hence the need for the acquisition of vocational skills and competence for self -relevance.

Tertiary Institution

According to Briggs (2013), a tertiary institution is a community of teachers and scholars who commit themselves to the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, learning, research and scientific enquiry. The honest and relentless pursuit of truth for a better understanding of the world is the supreme purpose of all tertiary institutions in the world. They achieve this by engaging in scholarly activities that expand the frontiers of knowledge leading to innovations, inventions and new discoveries. For Ogunode (2020), tertiary institutions can be defined as the post-secondary school education designed to produce manpower. Tertiary education is thus, education that deals with teaching programmes, research programmes and community service programmes.

Tertiary education, which is the central focus of this study, represents a vital investment in human capital. It is considered a higher or more specialized form of human capital, playing a significant role in driving economic growth within any society (Schultz, 2016). Beyond its economic value, tertiary education also empowers individuals to understand and assert their fundamental rights. This is particularly crucial because part of the reason corrupt elites maintain power is their ability to manipulate an uninformed populace (Kukah, 2007). A lack of proper education narrows the worldview of the masses, limiting their ability to demand accountability and claim their rights from the state. In addition, Ibukun (2017) emphasizes that the primary aim of university education in Nigeria is to produce the skilled workforce necessary for the nation's socioeconomic progress. University education is thus seen as a catalyst for social transformation and economic advancement. However, despite its critical importance, Nigeria's university education sector faces numerous challenges. The situation is so dire that anyone concerned about the nation's future would agree that the sector is in urgent need of profound reform. According to the National Policy on Education (2013), University education is expected to:

i. Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
ii. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
iii. Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.

iv. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
v. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
vi. Strengthen national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction.

However, how far the above objectives are being achieved remains a matter of conjecture.

The Development of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

The importance of tertiary institutions in contemporary society cannot be exaggerated, since they serve as fundamental players in the transmission of higher education and social development. Their roles are multifaceted, which cover the provision of advanced education, promotion of research and innovation, and the facilitation of social mobility. In addition, the structure and diversity of these institutions, which include universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics, add to their importance, since they meet a wide range of educational needs and demography of students. The structure of tertiary education institutions varies widely in different regions and educational systems, reflecting a complex interaction of historical, cultural and economic factors. Traditionally, universities have been seen as intensive research entities mainly focused on academic scholarship, while also promoting vocational teaching and learning.

Although Nigeria's university system has faced numerous challenges since its inception, it has nonetheless recorded significant achievements and growth. Before the establishment of the University of Ibadan in 1948, Nigeria had very limited capacity for training high-level human resources locally. Consequently, professionals were often recruited from Britain, other European countries, and the United States to meet the country's economic and administrative needs. As noted by Nte (2005), some of the earliest Nigerian graduates earned their degrees from institutions like Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone and Achimota College, Ghana. Today, Nigeria boasts over 140 universities that contribute to the development of highly skilled human capital across a wide range of disciplines, including Medicine, Engineering, Law, Education, Pharmacy, Psychology, Accountancy,

Banking and Finance, Mass Communication, Journalism, etc. These institutions produce professionals such as doctors, engineers, lawyers, educators, pharmacists, psychologists, accountants, bankers, and journalists (Wali & Ololube, 2015). In addition to academic training, Nigerian universities also play a vital role in providing skilled personnel for public service. Graduates often serve as commissioners, ministers, heads of parastatals, board members, or members of inquiry commissions. Universities also engage in community service through programmes such as extra-mural classes, agricultural extension initiatives, and rural health outreach. Moreover, these institutions promote national unity through curricula that foster integration, as well as through inter-state exchange programmes, excursions, cultural activities, and the encouragement of participation in the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). Similarly, they contribute to international relations through departments like Foreign Languages, which organize exchange programmes where students not only learn new languages but also gain insights into other cultures, arts, and traditions.

Nigerian universities also support national development by supplying research data to government bodies, industries, and agencies. The impact of university education is further evident when viewed in light of Nigeria's five national educational goals: fostering a democratic and free society, creating a just and egalitarian society, building a united, strong and self-reliant nation, developing a dynamic economy, and ensuring a land of opportunities for all citizens (National Teachers Institute, 2010).

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)

Tertiary Education Trust Fund, abbreviated as TETFund, is a scheme established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2011 to disburse, manage, and monitor education tax to government-owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

This Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) was established as an intervention agency under the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Establishment, ETC) Act, 2011. This Act repeals the Education Trust Fund (ETF) Act No. 7 of 1993 and Education Tax Fund Act No. 17, 2003 and charged the Tertiary Education Trust Fund with the responsibility for imposing, managing and disbursing the tax to public tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Oraka *et al.,* 2017). The vision of the TETfund is to be a

world-class interventionist agency in Nigeria's tertiary education. Its mission is to provide focused and transformative intervention in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria through funding and effective project management. The Act approves a secretariat for the Fund, headed by an Executive Secretary and assisted by other management and support staff, under the direct supervision of the Board of Trustees. It also provides for zonal offices all over Nigeria to liaise with beneficiaries in project identification, data collection and communication with educational institutions. According to Oraka *et al.,* (2017) the zonal offices also liaise with the Federal Inland Revenue Service in the respective zones to ensure that there is close monitoring of the assessment and collection of Education Tax.
TETFund major scope include intervention on building physical infrastructure, equipment and training of academic staff and development which entails disbursement of fund for sponsorship to study for Masters and Doctorate Degrees, conference attendance, and teaching practice intervention. These interventions are managed through beneficiary institutions which collate applications from their staff for onward transmission to TETFund.

Theoretical Framework

The Stakeholder Theory

The stakeholder theory can be traced to the work of Edward Freeman. Freeman in his seminal book "Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach", published in 1984, argued that in every organisation or institution, it is very important for managers and leaders to understand and address the needs of all stakeholders within such environment. The stakeholder theory proposes that corporations, especially corporate directors and state leaders, can be more responsive to the interest of society as a whole by incorporating participation of the stakeholders in the corporation's decisions or policy formulation. In essence, every stakeholder should be represented in the decision-making process of the organisation.

Johnes (1995) states that the stakeholder theory has evolved to incorporate ethical, managerial, and instrumental dimensions, thereby expanding its applicability across different sectors such as business, governance, non-profit organisations and public administration. Accordingly, the stakeholder theory is grounded on three fundamental assumptions namely: organisations operate in a network of interdependence, where the actions of one can greatly influence the other.

Secondly, every stakeholder possesses a legitimate claim or interest that must be addressed and acknowledged and thirdly, the success of an organisation is tied to its ability to integrate these diverse interests from different stakeholders to actualize a goal or objective.

Applying the stakeholder theory to this study reveals the need for all stakeholders in the Nigerian educational sector including government at all levels, ministry of education, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) as an agency of government, the Nigerian tertiary institutions, the lecturers, and even the students to all recognize each other's roles as well as the important place all parties hold in our educational development process. The continuous challenges and unending problems such as poor budgetary provisions for education, weak educational curriculum, poor learning environment and infrastructure amongst others all of which affects the Nigerian educational sector can be curbed if and only when the Federal Government involves critical stakeholders in the educational sector before the formulation of educational policies. Consequently, the government as a matter of importance must engage all stakeholders so as to garner all the requisite information towards solving educational problems. Stakeholders like academic administrators and students have a better understanding of these challenges as well as possible ways to solving them; hence this paper is of the view that when the government gets all stakeholders involved in the scheme of things, the problems in the educational sector will be highly reduced. This tallies with Freeman *et al.* (2020) opinion that the integration of the different perspectives from stakeholders in strategic planning contributes to better risk management and long-term performance in every sector. It therefore becomes imperative that the government consults all stakeholders within the Nigerian educational sector and not just formulating unsustainable policies without identifying the particular problems of individual public tertiary institutions.

Discussion and Data Analysis

Challenges which Affect Tertiary Education in Nigeria

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria face a multitude of formidable challenges which has over time hindered effective teaching and learning in them. Some of the challenges include: (1) decline in public expenditure; (2) deteriorated infrastructure/facilities/equipment for teaching, research and learning – these are

either lacking or very inadequate and in a bad shape to permit the universities the freedom to carry out the basic functions of academics; (3) the erosion of university autonomy and academic freedom; (4) the increasing rate of graduate unemployment; (5) brain-drain; student unrest and constant strikes by both students and academic staff (World Bank, 2004).We will discuss only a few of these.

(i) Poor Funding:

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with diverse challenges with inadequate funding being the most pronounced. The financial problems faced by these tertiary institutions significantly impair their operational capabilities, leading to an erosion of educational quality and student experiences. Oyeneye (2016) argues that inadequate financing stifles institution's ability to attract and retain qualified teachers, restricts access to modern educational resources and limits the implementation of robust academic programmes. This financial deficiency is not just a statistic, but a critical barrier that affects general institutional effectiveness, as they struggle to provide adequate learning environments and support services necessary for students' success. Friday (2021) reported how members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) lamented the effect of reduced funding of public educational institutions and how this has continued to impact negatively on the conditions of service of all categories of workers in the Nigerian education sector.

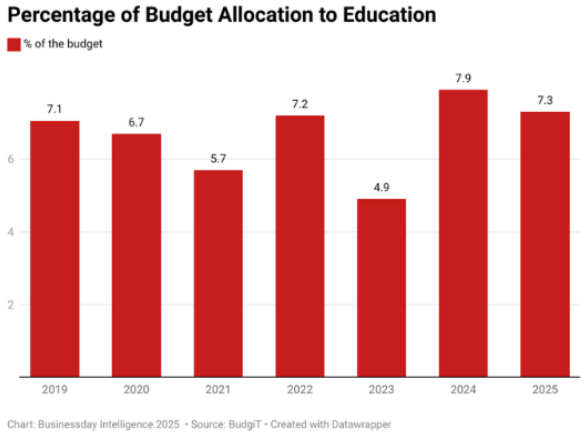


Figure 1: Percentage of Budget Allocation to Education.
Source: Punch News online (2025)

According to Agwulonu and Muhammed (2025), Nigeria unveiled its 2025 appropriation bill in December 2024 with an allocation of N3.52 trillion to education, representing a worrisome 7.3 percent of the total budget. This allocation, as can be seen from the data above falls significantly short of UNESCO's 1990 recommended benchmark of not less than 26 percent of the annual budget, thereby raising critical questions about our commitment to equipping future generations with the tools they need to thrive.

(ii) Poor Learning Infrastructure:

All the resources required for education production process are in short supply in our tertiary institutions of learning. According to World Bank (2004) and Ochuba (2011) lecture halls, laboratories, students' hostels, library space, books and journals, office spaces are all seriously inadequate. That means that equipment for teaching, research and learning is either lacking or very inadequate and in a bad shape. Badei *et al.* (2024) opine that the implications of inadequate infrastructure limits not only access to the necessary resources but also stifles the innovative teaching methods that take advantage of technology. They argue that a solid educational infrastructure is essential for the promotion of students' commitment and active learning approaches, which are essential to improve educational results. More specifically, they point out that without strategic investments in physical facilities and technological progress, institutions will find it difficult to create an environment that promotes creativity, critical thinking and collaboration between students. In line with the above, Iwok and Salau (2024) stated how in Nigeria, many federal universities are lacking the necessary infrastructure for more intakes as lecture halls are filled; hostel accommodation has become very problematic to the extent that "squatting" has become the order of the day.

Also, a critical examination of our education system will reveal that inadequate technological infrastructure is a omnipresent problem which is having an impact on the educational experiences of the students. Many tertiary institutions in Nigeria have trouble with obsolete equipment, insufficient bandwidth and a lack of staff trained to effectively exploit technological tools (Okechukwu & Owolabi, 2021). These problems severely restrict the ability of students to use contemporary educational facilities that could potentially improve their learning results. For example, in a comparative study of various Nigerian universities, Eze (2014) found

that institutions with limited access to digital learning environments have experienced low levels of informed students and a reduction in academic performance, highlighting the correlation between technological access and quality of education.

(iii) Political Interference, Instability and brain drain

Sometimes, government of the day, most especially in the public-owned varsities, interfere a lot in terms of selection and choice of the chief executive, Deans, Departmental heads and Directors of programmes. A situation whereby the members of the university are not totally free to choose their head without government intervention would not augur well for the system.

In addition, the harmful effects of political cum social instability extend beyond immediate disturbances; They permeate the broader educational environment, influencing factors such as the recruitment and retention of teachers, research production and institutional financing. Sub-financed and politically unstable academic institutions find it difficult to attract and maintain qualified teachers, because the uncertain academic environment decreases the attraction of careers within these institutions (Akanbi, 2023). Continuous political turbulence also dissuades potential investments in educational infrastructure and research, because local and international stakeholders find it increasingly difficult to justify financial commitments in an environment characterized by unpredictability and inconsistency.

(iv) Rise in Social Vices

Increase in social vices among students of Nigeria's tertiary institutions is a multifaceted problem that deserves an in-depth investigation. Various factors contribute to the phenomenon, ranging from socio-economic pressures to the influence of technology and the dynamics of peers, while the consequences extend to personal, academic and social environment. One of the main factors that contribute to the rise of social vices among students is the complex interaction of the socio-economic conditions. According to Hassan (2024), the removal of subsidies has significantly influenced academic staff, students and the university administration, leading to greater financial tension on students. This economic pressure can push students to engage in social vices such as computer crime, drug

abuse and other illegal activities as coping mechanisms in response to their terrible financial circumstances.

In addition, the escalation of information technology (IT) has transformed the ways of social interactions between students. IT crime according to Iloanya *et al.* (2024) is particularly prevalent among young people who often resort to hacking, fraud on the internet and other forms of online criminal activity. The charm of rapid monetary earnings affects students, deviating their attention from educational activities to illegal activities. In the same way, Okam (2024) discusses the psycho-social factors that contribute to social vices, stating that the lack of positive training of students leads to misbehaviors of students as a result of peer pressure. The pressure of peers, combined with the desire for social acceptance, further aggravates the tendency of social vices. The consequences of these social vices extend beyond individual students, influencing the larger academic environment and society in general. The degradation of academic standards is one of the most urgent results, since students are inclined to criminal activities, they often neglect their studies. This negligence not only hinders their personal growth but also decreases the quality of education within the institutions, ultimately influencing the credibility of Nigerian tertiary education.

Addressing these multifaceted challenges is crucial because they collectively shape the educational landscape of Nigeria. By prioritizing initiatives such as TETFund that expands access to technology and improve infrastructure, Nigeria's tertiary institutions can better navigate modern education complexities while promoting an environment for innovation and improvement.

The Emergence of TETFund and the Advancement of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

A critical examination of the impact of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) which was established by an Act of the National Assembly in June 2011, proves that the interventionist agency has helped in improving public tertiary institutions in Nigeria through the provision of teaching materials for public institutions, academic staff training and development, and the provision of infrastructural development among others.

The establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) in Nigeria has helped in the infrastructure facilities development in tertiary institutions across the country. Infrastructural facilities include libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. Taiwo (2018) reported how the University of Ibadan unveiled six projects valued at the sum of N5.6bn being part of a total of 42 projects approved for the institution by Tetfund from 2008-2010 as approved by the Federal Government. The projects included a 1,000 capacity lecture theatre for the Faculty of Science, a building for the Department of Food Technology, lecture rooms and offices for the Institute of African Studies, auditorium, lecture rooms and offices for the Faculty of Pharmacy, Information Communication Technology Centre and Laboratory for the Department of Virology, University Teaching Hospital, Ibadan. Also, according to Idoko (2023), the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) made plans to deploy a learning platform known as the Blackboard Learning System to provide access to online academic resources in universities and other tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Prior to 2022, TETFund ICT Support Intervention was N15 million for universities and N7.5 million for polytechnics and Colleges of Education, however in 2023 this was increased to N100 million for universities and N50 million for polytechnics and Colleges of Education with about 253 institutions benefiting from the intervention as part of measures put in place to bridge the digital skills gap in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria. Moreso, according to a report by Diko (2024), the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) announced the allocation of N1 billion for the construction of student hostels across 12 educational institutions in Nigeria as part of its 2024 intervention cycle. This disclosure was made by Executive Secretary of TETFund, Sonny Echono, during a one-day workshop entitled 'Emerging Areas of Students Needs in Beneficiary Institutions' which took place in Abuja. Accordingly, the beneficiary institutions—comprising six universities, three polytechnics, and three colleges of education are spread across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. Similarly, Idoko (2024) reports how in line with a public-private partnership arrangement promoted by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), the Akwa Ibom State University in partnership with the Africa Plus Partners launched the construction of a 1,600-capacity student hostel with support from TETFund.

According to Patrick (2025), the chairman of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund and a former Katsina State Governor, Aminu Masari disclosed that the Akwa Ibom State University has received over N14.4bn from TETFund in the past 15 years. Out of the amount, a substantial portion has already been accessed, with only about N2.67 billion outstanding for access as ongoing projects reach maturity and completion specifically for infrastructure-related projects under the Annual, Special, Zonal, and Special High-Impact intervention lines. These include the Faculty of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Physical Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Management Sciences, and the Faculty of Agriculture's Laboratory and Classroom/Administrative buildings, consisting of 189 new offices, 51 classrooms, 40 state-of-the-art laboratories and 237 restrooms, among others.



Faculty of Arts, Obio Akpa Campus constructed by TETfund 2011/2012 intervention and maintained by TETfund intervention 2015.



Directorate of ICT, Main Campus Constructed by TETFund 2013 intervention.

Also, as captured from the Federal College of Education, Omoku, Rivers State website, it is stated clearly that the College was able to construct three lecture halls and laboratories which were fully equipped through the intervention funds. In School of Business Education, TETFund constructed, completed and equipped ICT building, two (2) 500- capacity lecture halls, two storey buildings for Entrepreneurship Centre and one storey building for offices using 2014 special intervention funds. Some of these interventionist projects can be seen below:



ICT Building, Federal College of Education, Omoku, Rivers State, constructed by TETfund 2013/2014 Intervention.



Lecture Theatre and Laboratory at Federal College of Education, Omoku, Rivers State, constructed by TETfund 2013/2014 Intervention.

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) has impacted positively on human resources development in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Many academic and non-academic staff have benefited from TETFund training sponsorship. According to Press Release Nigeria (2021), in 2021, the former Executive Secretary of TETFund, Professor Suleiman Bogoro, disclosed that Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) sponsored a total of close to 30,000 lecturers for Masters and PhD programmes in both local and foreign institutions in the last fifteen years. He

further noted that in a bid to boost human capacity in the beneficiary institutions, over 68,000 academic and non-academic staff of public tertiary institutions has been sponsored by the Fund to attend local and foreign conferences. He stressed that the Fund equally supported over 71,263 lecturers under its Teachers' Supervision Programme among other achievements. Isiaka *et al.* (2020) carried out a study and concluded that capacity building of the academic staff of Lagos State University was the major focus of the Tetfund intervention. They further stated that due to Tetfund interventions, many lecturers have been sponsored to local and international seminars and conferences in addition to Tetfund sponsored oversea training and retraining of academic staff. As a corollary, TETfund has sponsored many scholars for programmes like innovation and entrepreneurship, science, engineering and technology, art, humanities and social science that are not offered in Nigerian universities.

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) has played a great role in the development of research programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Since 2011 when the Education Trust Fund (ETF) law was repealed and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund Act was enacted as a transformative intervention agency for the rehabilitation, restoration, and consolidation of tertiary education in Nigeria, TETFund has made visible impact in supporting tertiary education in terms of sponsoring academic staff in Nigerian universities for higher degrees and sponsoring conferences, workshops and valuable research endeavours. For example, in the area of research, Tetfund provided about ₦20m (US$63,391.60) for each university as an annual intervention for research. Also, Press Release Nigeria (2021) reported how the former Tetfund Secretary, Professor Bogoro maintained that in 2011, the Fund launched the National Research Fund (NRF) with a seed fund of N3billion as a take-off grant to support cutting-edge research in areas of critical national need. He added that in 2015, N1 billion was added; in 2019 the allocation became annual and N5 billion was approved for that year. He further added that in 2020, the government approved an additional 50 per cent increase in allocation to the NRF, making it N7.5 billion for that year and N8.5 billion in 2021.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the emergence and impact of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) on tertiary education development in Nigeria. It is the position of the paper that the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) since its emergence in 2011 has contributed immensely to the development of infrastructural facilities, human resources, and research programmes and intervened in the provision of funds for tertiary education management in Nigeria. However, more still needs to be done. The government as a matter of commitment must improve the budgetary allocation for education from the current 7.3 percent represented in the 2025 budget to meet the UNESCO's 1990 recommended benchmark of not less than 26 percent of the annual budget of nations. This is as a result of the increasing demand for specialized and technical education globally. When this is done, tertiary institutions in Nigeria will be able to compete with head-to-head their counterparts all the world.

Recommendations

i. There should be increase in the budgetary allocation for education in Nigeria. The government, through the Ministry of Education, should allocate the necessary funds required for the educational sector to prosper.
ii. TETFund intervention in academic staff training and development should continue and even be increased to enable more academics utilize the available opportunities.
iii. TETFund officials should be proactive in supervision of benefiting institutions to remove unnecessary hitches, corruption and misapplication of funds that can derail the attainment of its objectives.
iv. TETFund and its stakeholders are encouraged to synergise to provide adequate infrastructural facilities that will propel creativity and innovation in beneficiary institutions.

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