

**ASSESSMENT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND INTERVENTION
(TETFUND) IN KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC ILORIN, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the source of tetfund funding, impact and challenges of tetfund in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin. The study relied on both primary and secondary data. Management by Objectives (MBO) propounded by Peter F. Drucker was adopted. Finding from the paper that Tetfund receive her running cost only through taxes. The 3% out of company's profit across the country goes to Tetfund through the Federal Inland Revenue. Project intervention, staff training and development intervention and library intervention were the activities executed in Kwara State Polytechnic. Tetfund is confronted with the strategy of lowest bidder and withdrawal of State Government from her responsibilities in educational sector. The paper recommended that tetfund should intensify effort on monitoring and evaluation, there should be more focus on staff training and development and strategy of lowest bidder should be avoided. Key words: Education, Intervention, Institution, Tax

Introduction

The polytechnics in Nigeria have been confronted with various problems which range from financial, human to material resource insufficiencies. It is for this reason that various steps have been taking by the government to restore the dwindling fortune of the nation's educational system. The polytechnic level of education is very strategic in the educational arm of the country since it is vocational among the tertiary education system. Polytechnic education plays a vital role in human resource development by creating skilled manpower, enhancing industrial

productivity and improving the quality of life. Technical Education covers courses and programs in pure, applied and social sciences such as science laboratory, engineering, architecture, town planning technology, management, hotel management, applied arts and crafts, and catering technology.

The policy for higher education in Nigeria is embedded in the National Policy on education, as well as other issues approved from time to time by the National Council on Education (NCE) which is the highest decision-making body of education related matters and other policies legislated and passed into law in respect of higher education operations and management in the country. The policy for higher education in Nigeria is based on what the government approves as the practice to be promoted in Nigeria or what the government of the day legislated within the overall goal of higher education. According to the National Policy on Education, (NCE, 2000) higher education is expected to; contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training, develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society, develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments, acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. Equally, the higher education promotes and encourage scholarship and community service, forge and cement national unity, promote national and international understanding and interaction, Education beyond school such that we will furnish the students with more complicated and fresh knowledge and consequently develop better skills, conducting research which should be speculative and imaginative and accumulate knowledge and ideas for the benefit of society (Freeman, 2007).

The national policy on education document also specified how these goals shall be pursued by higher educational institutions in Nigeria. These include teaching, research and development, virile staff development, generation and dissemination of knowledge, a variety of modes of programmes including full-time and part-time access to training funds such as those provided by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES); maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate agencies; inter-institutional cooperation, dedicated service to the community through extra-moral and extension services.

(NCE, 2000). Against this background, the paper will assess tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) intervention on Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin.

Statement of the Problems

The educational sector worldwide plays a key role in providing the needed balance in the form of skilled manpower, inculcation of acceptable societal norm, developing techniques and methodologies that are required for the nation to thrive. The relevance of polytechnic education in Nigeria cannot be neglected. However, the basic resources needed to provide quality service delivery in the nation through the educational system are usually in short supply. Therefore, since the overall development of the nation is anchored on the survival of the educational system, all efforts need to be made to ensure that these institutions survive in all of their endeavors. It is based on this premise that various organizations have been set up to see to the overall management, control and monitoring of these institutions. This is to enable them contribute and enhance the economic position of the nation. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) as one of the intervention agencies of the government has been established with the responsibility of seeing to the survival of the polytechnic system. In the face of human, financial and material inadequacies in the nation's tertiary institutions, the standard of teaching, learning, research and community development has continually been threatened. As such, in order to redeem the image or lost glory of these institutions, monitoring agencies are employed to intervene and revamp the tertiary institutions position the nation on the path of development via the efficiency and effectiveness of these tertiary institutions. Many researchers have worked on TETFund intervention and tertiary institutions e.g. Ogar 2012, Adeleye 2013, Onyeike and Oseyi 2014 but none has written on the impact of TETFund in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin. Therefore, this study intends to fill the gap.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. examine the sources of TETFund funding;

2. examine the impact of tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) intervention on Kwara State

Polytechnic Ilorin; and

3. identify the challenges confronting tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) in the cause of discharging its responsibilities.

Research Questions

1. What are the sources of Tetfund funding?

2. What are the impact of tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) intervention on Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin?

3. What are the challenges confronting tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) in the cause of discharging its responsibilities in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin?

Literature Review

TETFund

TETFund is a substantial source of financial assistance to the various institutions in Nigeria, especially in the commencement, completion or rehabilitation of capital projects embarked upon by institutions at the Federal, State and Local Government levels. Most of the recent capital developments in our tertiary institutions have been sponsored or financed by the Fund. It is pertinent to note that the fund from the ETF was used initially to support activities at all the levels of education based on a sharing ratio of 2:3:5 for the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary institutions respectively. Through a major policy shift, informed by the commitment of the Federal government to revamping the higher education sector, TETFund is now to fund only public tertiary institutions. Consequently, the Fund is now referred to as the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). Fortunately, the inflow of fund to TETFUND has increased significantly due to the efficiency of FIRS in collecting the education tax from registered companies in Nigeria. While announcing the special interventions in April 2009, the Honourable Minister of Education made the pertinent statements that: “There is no doubt that the education

sector is facing enormous challenges. The effective resolution of these challenges is a pre-condition for our nation's development. The Administration of President Yaradu'a was committed to the realization of the 7-Point Agenda and our national vision of becoming one of the top 20 economies in the world by 2020. In order to succeed, the nation needs world-class manpower, possible only through world-class institutions. This called for strategic investment towards improving the teaching and learning environment as well as the quality of lecturers in our institutions”.

The Honourable Minister of Education also noted further that the objective of the special intervention was the provision and upgrading of facilities for the promotion of the core activities of teaching, learning and research in critical areas: This includes; establishment of standard central teaching and research laboratory, programme upgrade in Science, Technology and Humanities/Social Sciences such as Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture and the Arts/Social Sciences. Here, the intervention is targeted towards nurturing the programmes into centers of excellence, general improvement of the teaching and learning environment ranging from lecture theatres, classrooms, laboratories, workshops etc. This is to involve the rehabilitation of physical infrastructure and the provision of instructional facilities and learning resources (Bamiro,2012). Of relevance was also the following statement of the Minister on the same occasion that: “In addition, the Federal Government is aware that the realization of the 7-Point Agenda and Vision 2020 lies not only in the provision of facilities but equally importantly in encouraging research and scholarly publications. Accordingly, the sum of N3 billion has been approved to support our scholars, as individuals and groups, to conduct research capable of contributing to national development in their areas of specialization. Similarly, the sum of N2 billion has been approved to support the revival of scholarly journals, the publication of well researched tertiary level textbooks and to make these materials available to the libraries of our tertiary institutions”.

TETFUND has since put in place the machinery for the implementation of the TETFUND Research Fund through calls for research proposals from researchers in the system in three thematic areas: Humanities and Social Sciences; Science and Technology; and Crosscutting Issues (www.etf.gov.ng). The Textbook Project for which N2.0 billion has been allocated has

also taken off. Generally, TETFUND's normal interventions in the tertiary institutions are in the areas of construction and Rehabilitation of buildings and laboratories, procurement of teaching and research equipment, academic staff training, research and book development, capacity building and teacher training programme, provision of ICT infrastructure, development of facilities that sustain institutions such as boreholes, electric power generators, etc. (Bamiro, 2012)

Tertiary Education

Tertiary Education refer to formal educational institutions that 'build on secondary education' (UNESCO 2011). This category of institution includes universities, medical and business schools, polytechnics and technical colleges, teacher-training colleges and two-year further education institutions (Moses et al, 2014)

Roles of TETFund in Nigerian Polytechnic

Based on the key responsibilities of the TETFund, there are basically three key areas in which the agency functions. They are: Funding, Staff training and development, projects facilitation

Funding- The process of making this allocated money available for the facilitation of plans and programmes is referred to as funding. As one of the focus of the TETFund, funds are usually set aside to assist public tertiary institutions to execute most of their programmes whether it is in the short-run or long-run. This is to ensure that the presence of TETFund is felt in almost all the public tertiary institutions in the country. However, a critical analysis of this role of the TETFUND has revealed that most of these institutions are continually in direct need of money to be able to meet up with their plans and programmes. Therefore, since most of these institutions relatively do not feel the impact of these funding roles in their institutions, it is needful that some conditions be considered before this gesture is extended to most of these institutions in the country. Oweh (2013), states that chief among the constraints bedeviling the educational sector in Nigeria is the issue of poor funding. The TETFund need to note that proper funding is centered on the ability of such funds to meet the needs for which it was planned.

Project Facilitation- TETFund assists in the facilitation of projects. Project facilitation just like the funding function of the TETFund should be carried out with a zero exclusion ratio. That is, in monitoring and ensuring project execution, the TETFund should endeavor to monitor projects to the extent that such projects can make effective contribution to the administration of the polytechnic system where such projects are situated. Based on agreed criteria, the TETFund should ensure that the ratio of projects to teachers and/or students should be reasonable enough for efficient and effective teaching, learning, research and community development. Due to the importance of facilities in the administration of tertiary education in the country, the quantity and quality of projects should be such that can contribute to the management of the education system. Students and teachers should be able to feel the impact of facilities made available in the benefiting institutions. It should not be mere lip service that facilities have been provided, but rather, the agency should ensure that such facilities are qualitative enough. The TETFund should be involved in assisting institutions facilitate projects that will be of benefit. (Onyeike and Eseyi, 2014).

Staff Training and Development- The importance of staff training and development in any organized institution cannot be ignored most especially in the university system. According to Ebong and Ezekiel-Hart (2006), training is crucial as one of the staff development procedure. An employee may have the qualification needed for a job, but may not have the necessary experience and skills to perform the task required effectively”. Based on this premise, one can identify that the productivity of an employee in any organization especially in the educational sector is majorly dependent on the level of training acquired on the job. Therefore, in order for the staff of the university to function effectively, they need to be trained continuously. In fact, all staffs of the Polytechnic system whether academic or no-academic should be exposed on the best practices of their responsibilities at work. Most of academicians have also requested that the activities of the TETFund in terms of human capital should be extended to the non-academic staff just like their academic counterpart (Ogar, 2012).

Challenges Confronting the TETFund in Nigerian Polytechnic

These are many challenges confronting TETFUND in the execution of its functions. Some of them are as follow:

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. This has in some way being a hindrance to the function of the agency. (Onyeike and Eseyi, 2014).

Funding: This 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. Suffice it to say that the absence of adequate funds will either slow or totally ground the ability of the TETFUND to carry out the most important plans laid down ahead of it. (Onyeike and Eseyi, 2014).

Overloading of Responsibilities: The TETFund over time has been experiencing challenges in the area of clear definition of responsibilities. Although the TETFund has been linked to be an intervention agency in the monitoring of the affairs of tertiary institutions. 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. This has been a serious challenge for the agency over time. (Onyeike and Eseyi, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopts Management by Objectives (MBO) propounded by Peter F. Drucker in 1954. This is because polytechnic education in the country was established to contribute to individual and national development in the country. This theory is renowned for its ability to guide any organization towards setting and achieving defined goals or objectives. MBO is established on the premise that managers should avoid “the activity trap” that is, getting so involved in their day to day activities that they forget to adhere to principles regarding the sustenance of the reason why the organization was established.

It is important to state that polytechnics ought to constantly focus on their objectives and ensure that all is done to achieve the needed goals. The polytechnic system is usually divided into various sub-units and headed by various heads. Each of these units has specific Institute or Departmental objective(s) that is being pursued at any point in time. However, effort must be made to ensure that each of the Institute or Departmental objectives harmonizes for the overall management of the polytechnic system. Each Institute or Department in the Polytechnic focuses on attaining their goals. Despite all the various objective(s) pursued by each of these units, they all combine in assisting the polytechnic to produce high level manpower for the economy. In this regards, the various departments though in pursuance of their various departmental objectives must similarly bear in mind the need for achieving the big objective which is the Polytechnic’s objective(s). (Onyeike and Eseyi, 2014).

Research Methodology

This study is a narrative research designed to investigate on assessment of tertiary education trust fund intervention in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin. Both primary and secondary data were used. The primary data include interview and observation methods while the secondary data consists of journals, magazines, textbooks, newspapers and online materials.

Source of TETFund Funding

TETFund receive her running cost only through taxes. The 3% out of company's profit across the country goes to TETFund through the Federal Inland Revenue.

Impact of TETFund Intervention on Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin

TETFund has done a wonderful job in the execution of projects which could be categorized into three (3) i.e project intervention, staff training and development intervention and library intervention.

Project Intervention

In 2000, tETFund constructed lecture theatre and agricultural technology department. TETFund constructed lecture halls in 2002, 2004/2005. In 2005/2006 academic session, tETFund built lecture halls in Institute of Technology (IOT). Equally, tETFund embarked on construction of lecture halls and computer studios in three institutes in 2007/2008 i.e Institute of Applied Sciences, Institute of Environmental Sciences and Institute of Finance and Management Studies(IFMS). Polytechnic Academic Conference Centre and Entrepreneur Development Centre were built by TETFund in 2010. The Kwara State Modern Library named Prof. Sheu Ahmad Jimoh was constructed in 2011. Also, two lecture halls were built in the same year i.e new lecture hall besides the modern library and Public Administration lecture hall along Yankari.

In 2012/2013, many projects were put in place, these include; Chief Lecturer's Office, Tourism Department, Mass Communication Department, Lecture Complex at IFMS, Auditorium Complex with 500 sitting capacity, Stadium Complex and Principal Lecturer's Office were also built by TETFund. In addition, tETFund in 2014/2015/2016 constructed and equipped Institute of Information and Communication Technology (IICT), Supplied computer systems and its components, donated 2 hummer buses, 2 hilux, 2 250KVA generators and 100 KVA at Polytechnic water work (Dam) and well as provision of melting and fabrication machine at Institute of Technology (IOT).

Staff Training and Development Intervention

Here, Tetfund has sponsored both academic and non-academic staff of the institute. Many staff have been sponsored for different programmes both within and outside the country. For academic staff, some of us have been sponsored for Post Graduate Programme such as Master (Academic) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) which cut across every institute of the institution. While non-academic staff benefited from periodic workshops, seminars amongst others.

Library Intervention

Apart from the construction of modern library in Kwara State polytechnic, Tetfund also equipped the library with various materials which include; text books, journals, book shelves, tables (reading and office), chairs (reading and office), computer with internet facilities, library round table amongst others from 2011 to 2016. In fact, apart from human resources, every other material is Tetfund intervention.

Challenges of Tetfund in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin

One of the challenges confronting tetfund in the area of project execution is the delay in finance since the money accrues for a project does not release once. The strategy of lowest bidder in the allocation of project to contractor also affects tetfund intervention solely because; the standard may be compromised instead of quality project. Kwara State Government withdraw her responsibilities in educational sector since the inception of tetfund thereby causing overloading of responsibilities for Tetfund

Conclusion

The study traced the history of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, it examined the impact and challenges of Tetfund in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin. The paper revealed that without tetfund, many institutions would have collapsed. Therefore, the polytechnic system to perform well, the effort of all educational stakeholders and other agencies must be on deck to complement tetfund efforts.

Recommendations

Tetfund should intensify effort on monitoring and evaluation. TETFund should also be provided with appropriate legislations that will make it easier for them to carry out their various activities. There should be more focus on staff training and development. The strategy of lowest bidder should be avoided. Kwara State Government should take charge of her responsibilities in educational sector.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations to the study include disturbance from the children as a result term break, financial constraints, non-availability of some documents that are relevant to this research work.

Suggestion for Future Research

The duration of the interview should be longer so as to give interviewee more convenience time to respond. The questionnaire should be administered instead of interview.

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