DEVELOPING TERTIARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA:
AN EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF THE TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND (TETFund)

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Abstract

The study was set out to examine the role of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) vis-a-vis the development of tertiary education in Nigeria. Specifically, it seeks to determine factors that precipitated the establishment of the Fund by the government and to examine the core areas of intervention as well as evaluate the impact of the Fund on tertiary education development in the country. The descriptive method was adopted for the analysis of the findings. The data for the study was obtained from secondary sources.

Keywords: Development, Education, TETFund, Developing Countries, Tertiary Education, National Development.

1. Introduction

Education is often seen as the bedrock of national development of the modern state. Its transformative role helps in facilitating socio-economic and political development in society. This important role placed the development of the sector as a priority for both government, development partners, and international agencies. Ajayi & Ekundayo (2014) noted that
education is widely accepted as a major instrument for promoting socio-economic, political and cultural development in Nigeria. Nigeria’s National Policy on Education stated it succinctly as reflected in the country’s philosophy of education (FGN, 2004). The policy states that;

i. education is an instrument for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education.
ii. education fosters the worthy development of the individual, for each individual’s sake, and general development of the society.
iii. the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around.
iv. the acquisition of appropriate skills and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

Thus, developing the educational sector remains a critical concern for all governments. In this regard, most governments commit sizeable financial and human resources for the improvement of the sector. Though, developing the sector is a continuous process even as the developed countries continue to engage in further development through planning and research, however, this is more paramount among the developing countries, as greater effort and commitment are required on the part of the various governments, if they must breach the gap between them and the industrialized nations. This means that more human and material resources need to be invested particularly, in the areas of research and skill development through the formal educational system. This brings us to the primary need for the development of the tertiary educational system among Third World Countries. The argument put forward here is that, while the lower levels of education (e.g., primary and secondary schools) provides the foundation and rudiments for learning, the tertiary level provides the individual the opportunity to acquire specialized knowledge and appropriate skills for his personal development and society at large.

The role of tertiary education in the development of the individual and society is clearly captioned in the National Policy on Education (2014). According to this policy, the goals of tertiary education include;

i. Contribute to national development through higher level manpower training;
ii. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
iii. Develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate the local and external environment;
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. Forge and cement national unity; and

vii. Promote national and international understanding and interaction (FRN, 2014)

Apparently, tertiary education contributes to national development through manpower training, inculcates in the individual proper values, helps the individual in the area of intellectual capacity building, promote and encourage scholarship, helps the individual to acquire physical and intellectual skills for self-reliant, and promote national and international interactions. All these can be accomplished through the development of tertiary education. Therefore, tertiary or higher education through invention, innovation, research and application form the bedrock for the development of the individual and society. Agi (2017) asserts that “higher education has the responsibility to interrogate the frontiers of knowledge, moral sovereignty and the development challenges that face society where they are located”. Also, Ajayi & Ekundayo (2014) noted that “universities educate future leaders and develop the higher-level technical capacities that underpin economic growth and development”. Therefore, higher or tertiary education has very important role to play in the overall development of a given society, and Nigeria is not an exception. Consequently, developing this sector remains a priority and a concern to the Nigerian government and the rest of the developing world.

However, among these nations, the educational sector is faced with several challenges ranging from infrastructural decay to insufficient manpower, inadequate funding and inconsistency in educational policies. For example, in Nigeria, there is a short supply of both academic and non-academic staff, poorly equipped lecture halls and lecture theatres, poorly equipped science laboratories, poor staff offices and student hostels, poorly equipped libraries, inadequate funding for research and development etc. in the universities, polytechnics and the colleges of education. In fact, all the resources required to position the educational sector for optimal performance are lacking and where it exists, they are in very limited supply. No doubt this is worrisome as educational resources at the higher levels are still in deplorable condition.

Developing higher education among third world countries in general, and Nigeria in particular, had been the sole responsibility of the various levels of government. It is usually a herculean task for the government to sufficiently provide the requisite financial resources to meet the needs of the ever demanding sector. Tertiary education development requires huge funding
which the government often lacks, placing it side by side with other sectors of the economy competing for the same limited resources. Thus, funding constitutes a major challenge to higher education development in Nigeria and other developing nations. In order to adequately respond to the developmental challenges of the tertiary sector, especially funding, the Nigerian government established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) as an intervention agency primarily to cater for this purpose. The main target of the agency is to ameliorate the developmental difficulties facing tertiary institutions through intervention in physical infrastructure, staff training and others. It is against this background that this study examined the role of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) in the development of the tertiary sector in Nigeria.

It should be noted that society is a cobweb of structures, each complementing one another in performing their specialized functions to keep society balance and stable. The educational system is one of such structures in society responsible for the education of the citizens on the values, norms and beliefs of that society. The tertiary sector of the educational system is a substructure within the system saddled with the task of providing the avenue for people to acquire professional knowledge and specialized skills. The specialized knowledge and skills acquired by the individual is used for the advancement of society in general, as other facets of the society need the knowledge and specialized skills acquired from the educational system for their growth and development. For example, the skills and knowledge acquired from the educational system is put to use for the advancement of politics, economics, technology, sociocultural and religious systems in society. Thus, the development of the educational system (e.g., the primary, secondary and tertiary) has a cross-boundary effects on the development of every sector of the economy. It means therefore that, the development of society in general depends to a large extent on the level of advancement of the educational system. It should, however, be noted that the requisite knowledge and professional skills needed for national development is acquired at the higher educational level. It is against this backdrop that the paper is set out to evaluate the role of the TETFund in the development of the tertiary sector. The study is purely a theoretical one as such it employs the descriptive research method in analysing the issues raised. The study also relies on secondary sources as its main source of information.

2. Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the structural-functional analysis as its explanatory framework. Structural-functionalism as a framework for the study of society was developed by the anthropologist,
Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) but systematically formulated by the American anthropologist, Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) in his work, “The Structure of Social Action” (McLean and McMillan, 2003:520). However, the structural-functional analysis was made popular in Political Science by Gabriel Almond (1965) in his work on comparative politics (Almond, 1965).

Primarily, the structural-functional analytical framework directs attention to the understanding of the role of social structures and institutions (e.g., economic, political, social, cultural, and educational structures etc), their interrelatedness and their interdependence in the performance of functions or roles in maintaining the social system (Nna, 2000). Thus, structural-functionalism is the theoretical framework of analysis that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote harmony and stability in society. According to Olaniyi (1997:74) the theory “examines a system in terms of the structures of which the system is composed, and the functions performed by those structures”, in maintaining system stability through development.

Education is one of the social structures in society saddled with the responsibility for the transfer or the transmission of the social values, norms and beliefs as well as some specific skills and knowledge to the people. This structure is broadly divided into formal and informal sectors. However, for the purpose of this study, we are more concerned with the former (e.g., the formal educational sector). The formal sector is often divided into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Each level is expected to perform some defined roles in the process of the transfer of the social values, norms and beliefs of the society. Nevertheless, none can successfully perform its role without interfacing with the other levels of education and other social structures in society. Thus, these various levels of education are interwoven and are interdependent on one another, and also expect that other structures perform their expected roles adequately. What this implies is that the success of the educational system in a given society is dependent on the success of other interrelated structures and institutions who also perform their roles as expected. Conversely, the economic, political, religious and family institutions in society will experience stability and development only when the educational system is developed to carry out its roles as expected. This is due to the fact that the other social structures are affected either directly or indirectly by the role of the educational system. Therefore, any negative or lack of development of this sector will produce negative effects on all the other social structures and institutions in society.
Thus, the framework is employed to analyse the cross-boundary effect of the educational sector on the Nigeria’s larger social system. It, therefore, sees the educational system as a critical sector with specific functions if adequately carried out will result in the transformation of the other sectors of the economy needed in the developmental processes of the larger society.

3. Literature Review

Societies in general are made up of values, norms and beliefs. These values and beliefs bound the people together as one, they define and determine the patterns of social interactions among the members of a society. Society is what it is today due to the fact that the existing norms, values and beliefs are somehow maintained and sustained by the people through a system of indoctrination. However, the maintenance and sustainability of the values is achieved as society usually fashion out mechanisms for the transmission of its values from generation to generation. The process of transmission may be undertaking by informal institutions or structures such as the family, peer groups, the mass media or some other form (s) acceptable to the people. The process may also be undertaking by formal structures or institutions established for this reason. Here, the various formal educational institutions at various levels come to play. Giving this background, members of a given society learn about their social values, norms and beliefs through a process of education. They also acquire knowledge concerning their past, traditional skills and cultural practices through the same educational processes. Thus, education is a medium through which individuals in society can learn and inculcate social values and beliefs, personal virtues and skills aimed at improving the individual-self and society at large.

Lawal (2003) noted that education is meant to help individuals grow and develop, provide the desired skills and professional abilities, assist them in acquiring the necessary understanding of concepts, values and attitudes to manage future tasks, and show them how to be productive members of the society. Fafunwa (1974) also defined education as what each generation gives to its younger ones which makes them develop attitudes, abilities, skills and other behaviours which add positive values to the society in which they live. Education is the means for transmitting culture from one generation to another and a process through which individual’s behaviour can be changed. Ajayi & Ekundayo (2014) described education as one of the oldest institutions or industries in society. They argued that “education is the main instrument used by society to preserve, maintain and upgrade its social equilibrium” (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2014).
From the foregoing, it shows that education as a social phenomenon in society is very important as younger generations depend on it to learn and understand the heritage of their past, learn how to participate in productive activities in society and how they can also contribute to the development of the larger society. An important thing to learn from the social context of education as expounded above is that, it is the foundation upon which all other aspects in society including the economy, politics, religion and so on are erected, and whatsoever advancement and success recorded in these sectors depend largely on the quality of education that society or nation provides for its citizens. This is true because education is the process of training and developing the individual’s mental potentials, his physical knowledge, skills and characters either through informal or formal means (Uche, 1984). Therefore, the role of education cuts across all facet of society, whether politics, economics, religion or culture. What this implies is that the level of development of these other sectors relies on the right skills, appropriate knowledge, character, virtues and attitudes acquired through the formal and informal educational system prevalent in that society. This informed structural-functionalists to view education as essential to society’s development and believe that in order for society to remain balance and sustainable, education and other social components must function together to implant similar beliefs and values in each member of society (Hale, 1990).

This is the reason why education is important for national development and most countries recognize this fact and make education as the cornerstone for the development of their society. Hum (1995), for example, asserts that “society functions much better economically when there is quality education for the individuals for society at large”. Equally, Orji (2013) noted that “education is a crucial sector in any nation, being a major investment in human capital development, it plays a critical role in long-term productivity and growth at both micro and macro levels”. While Ajayi & Afolabi (2009: 44) put forward the assertion that “a developed or educated polity is the one that has enough manpower and each person occupies his or her rightful position to enhance the growth of the society”. D’Aeth (1975) also observed that the central objective of education is to raise the level of skills, especially technical and management skills, needed to support economic growth and to provide an adequate supply of the whole range of professional expertise needed to run and develop a modern economy. With regards to the above observations, there is no doubt about the critical role of education in national development through the development of the individuals’ social, mental, physical, emotional, moral and psychological aspects. And as Ajayi & Ekundayo (2014) puts it “education is a
powerful instrument of social progress, without which neither an individual nor a nation can attain the growth that is necessary for development”.

However, the nexus between education and national development is achieved in three major areas. The first is its social interactive role in society. In this regard, Obasanjo (2012:13) posits that “education train individuals to relate to and interact meaningfully with others in the society and appreciate the importance of effective organization for human progress”. Swanson (2018) described this role of education as “non-monetary effect”. According to him, education on non-monetary effects have many forms which include “a high level of social tolerance, active participation in the democratization process, solidarity on the national and international levels”. As a social cohesion instrument, education helps to develop in the individual those values which make for good citizenship, such values as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard work and personal integrity necessary for good and effective leadership in society (Ololube, 2013). These values no doubt are critical factors for the attainment of national development. Though, they are not physical development and at the same time cannot be quantified in monetary terms, but remains critical values for a nation’s advancement. When a nation’s educational system past unto succeeding generations the right mentality, the appropriate values and virtues, society will become strong, stable and progress in all ramification can easily be achieved. This made Swanson (2018) to argue that “the cultural benefits of education not only contribute to improving the social situation, but also have a direct economic effect”.

Nevertheless, the tool or instrument used for the transmission of the socio-cultural values is very important. Here, schools in this case stand out for effective learning of these values. The reason being that they bring together people of different religious, historical, and cultural backgrounds in a classroom setting that fosters the exchange of ideas, opinions and views based on their perceptions on varying issues. According to Ololube (2013:109) these cross-cultural interactions “promotes mutual co-existence among the different students”.

The second role of education in national development is that of been the supplier of manpower through human capital development. In this regard, Orji (2013) noted that “without education, a nation cannot get the needed manpower for material advancement and enlightenment of its citizenry”. He stated further that the trained engineers, teachers, medical doctors, lawyers, architects, nurses etc., are all the products of education. Human capital remains the most critical factor to a nation’s economic development. This is because a country though may be blessed
with material resources, it needs technology acquired by individuals through the educational system to develop and transform the raw materials into consumables. This implies that economic growth and development become difficult to accomplish in the absence of the right mix of manpower (e.g., both skilled and unskilled labour) in a given society. For example, a World Bank Expert Assessment Report cited in Swanson (2018) shows that the pace of economic growth is mainly determined by (a) the scale of the development of priority areas of science and technology, (b) the training and qualification of employees at all levels, and (c) the progressiveness of the means of scientific and industrial works.

In other words, the economic growth of a nation is generated by the expansion of the volume of labour and capital resources, however, improving the quality of both depend to a large extent on the progress attained in both technology and education in that nation (Swanson, 2018). Therefore, investment in education is considered as an investment in the quality of human capital which is needed for the overall development of society. It is, therefore, clear that education train members of the society to be useful to the society and also to meet up the manpower need for national development (Orji, 2013; Mohammed, 2012).

The third important role of education is research and development. This is one major area that influences economic growth and national development. For example, research and development accounts for the emergence of industrialization in Western Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries, and till date, the economies of these nations have undergone significant structural changes because of the increasing role of industries based on human intellect (Orji, 2013). It is the educational system that prepares and provides the intellectual framework for the discovery and use of new knowledge, technology and innovations. According to Swanson (2018), technology contributes over 20-40 percent of the annual national increase in productivity in the United States of America and other developed countries. He also stated clearly that “the emergence of many industries in the second half of the 21st century was as a result of major scientific discoveries made at Universities”. It is here that higher education provided by tertiary institutions have major role to play in national development.

Tertiary institutions including the Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Monotechnics etc., are the providers of higher education. The Nigerian National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014) described higher education as education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, mono-technics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses. They are the ones often engaged in research and
development of new ideas, knowledge, and technology that enables society to overcome its developmental challenges. For example, Agi (2017) noted that it is at this level education most directly connects to society through invention, renovation, researches and applications much more than other levels. Similarly, Adavbiele, Justina & Ajegbelen (2016:22) argued that “tertiary institutions are the cornerstone of excellence, a place for building brains, training of disciplined and highly skilled individuals”. In the same vein, Ibukun (1997) opined that “the main purpose and relevance of university education in Nigeria is the provision of much needed manpower to accelerate the socio-economic development of a nation”. The implication of all these is that tertiary education has the onus task to integrate the frontiers of knowledge, moral sovereignty, and the development challenges that face society wherever they are located (Agi, 2017). Thus, the level of scientific and technological advancement in a society is dependent on the quality of education provided at the tertiary level. The Nigeria State in recognition of the above clearly define the goals of tertiary education as follows;

i. Contributes to national development through high level manpower training;
ii. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
iii. Develop the intellectual capacity 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. Forge and cement national unity; and
vii. Promote national and international understanding and interaction (FGN, 2014).

Consequently, the mandate of higher education is to stretch the frontiers of knowledge, connect knowledge and develop challenges to provide compass for the general direction of society through research and development (Agi, 2017).

4. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)

The TETFund was originally established as Education Trust Fund (ETF) by the Education Tax Decree No.7 of 1993. Decree No.7 was repealed and replaced by Decree No.40 of 1998, now repealed and replaced with the Tertiary Education Trust Fund Act of 2011 (FGN, 2011). And according to the Act, the objectives for the establishment of the fund is mainly for the restoration, rehabilitation and consolidation of Tertiary education in Nigeria from a 2% annual
education tax on the assessable profits of all registered companies in Nigeria. Thus, the funds meant to run the establishment is derived from tax on the profits from registered companies in the country and occasional grants to the agency from the Federal Government. The enabling law also provides that the fund be managed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the President of the country and an Executive-Secretary also appointed by the President who take the responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Secretariat of the Fund (Adavbiele, Justina & Ajegbelen 2016:22). According to the present Executive Secretary of the Fund, Professor Suleiman Elias Bogoro, the reason for the establishment of the Fund was;

As a result of the deteriorating infrastructure and structure of the country’s education sector, evidenced by the poor training, staffing and resources, rapid personnel turnover, unrest in the form of student riots and universities staff strikes actions combined with falling standards of education, the increase in illiteracy of low-level numeracy which paved the way for negotiations on educational crisis in Nigeria in the 1980s (Bogoro, 2019).

The establishment of the Fund, therefore, was to address the identified issues such as infrastructural decay in the tertiary education sector, including improving staff training aimed at raising the educational standard in the country.

4.1. Mandate of the Fund

The major mandate of the Fund is to ensure the judicious use of the 2% funds raised from taxes on the assessable profits of all registered companies in Nigeria. The money realised is to be used for the provision and maintenance of:

i. Essential physical infrastructure and equipment;

ii. Instructional material and equipment;

iii. Research and publications;

iv. Academic staff training and development; and

v. Any other need in the opinion of the Board of Trustees that is critical and essential for the improvement and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions (FGN, 2011).

The Act establishing the Fund is also specific on the beneficiaries of the fund. Accordingly, the beneficiaries are public tertiary institutions owned by either the Federal Government of Nigeria or a State Government. These are the Federal and State Universities, Federal and State Polytechnics, and Federal and State Colleges of Education. At present, there about 43 Federal
Universities, 48 State Owned Universities, 28 Federal Polytechnics, 48 State Polytechnics, 22 Federal Colleges of Education and 49 State Colleges of Education, giving a total of 238 public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. All 238 tertiary institutions, by the provision of the Act establishing the agency, are the beneficiaries of the funds. However, for an institution to be a beneficiary of the fund it has to meet the standard guidelines established by the Board of Trustees of the Fund (Bogoro, 2019).

4.2. Intervention Areas of the Fund

The management of the Fund with the clear intention of accomplishing the mandate for which it was established has created areas of intervention (intervention lines) based on needs of beneficiary institutions. These include among others:

1. Physical infrastructure/programme update
2. Project maintenance
3. Scholarships
4. Teaching practice-for Colleges of Education (COEs)
5. Equipment fabrication-for Polytechnics
6. Entrepreneurship-for Universities
7. Journal publication
8. Manuscript development
9. Conference attendance
10. ICT support
11. Advocacy
12. Institutional Based Research
13. National Research Fund
14. Library development (Bogoro, 2019).

4.3. Achievements of the Fund 2011-2019

**Academic Staff Training and Development (AST&D):** This programme of the Fund is also called TETFund Scholarship Programme is a normal intervention line under the Academic Based Intervention Areas aimed at upgrading the quality of teaching staff of public tertiary institutions, through the award of scholarships for masters and doctorate degrees both within Nigeria and universities outside the country. Apart from award of scholarships, this programme also includes Bench-Work sponsorships for those pursuing science based Doctorate Degree
Programme in Nigerian Universities to carry out research work in foreign institutions with advanced facilities (Bogoro, 2019). The table below shows the summary report of AST&D as at March 2019.

**Table 1: The Summary Report of AST&D as at March 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsorship items</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Polytechnics</th>
<th>COEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign PhD</td>
<td>2,642</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign masters</td>
<td>1,102</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Bench-work</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local PhD</td>
<td>2,777</td>
<td>1,992</td>
<td>3,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Masters</td>
<td>1,241</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>4,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,254</td>
<td>6,989</td>
<td>9,142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the report, a total of 3,902 academic staff of the various public Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education received sponsorship from the Fund to study for Doctorate Degree in foreign universities, while 2,940 went for Masters programme also in foreign universities for the same period. In the same period a total of 595 bench-work were sponsored, while a total number of 8, 447 and 8,501 academic staff of the different public institutions received sponsorship for local Doctorate Degree and local Masters programmes from the Fund. In all, between 2011-2019, a total number of 24, 385 academic staff benefited from the Fund’s scholarship programme (Bogoro, 2019).

The Fund claimed that prior to the introduction of this intervention scheme only 40 percent of academic staff in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions had Doctorate degree, but with this intervention the percentage has risen to 70 percent (Bogoro, 2019).
Conference Attendance (CA): In the Conference Attendance (CA) intervention programme, the data from the Fund indicate that a total of 18,721 academic and non-academic staff of tertiary institutions have benefited in its foreign sponsored conferences, while a total of 38,843 have also benefited from local conferences attendance. In total 57,564 academic and non-academic staff from the different higher institutions have accessed its foreign and local conference attendance programme as at March 2019 (Bogoro, 2019)

Table 2: The Summary Report of CA as at March 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>9,958</td>
<td>12,415</td>
<td>22,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnics</td>
<td>4,282</td>
<td>9,964</td>
<td>14,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COEs</td>
<td>4,480</td>
<td>16,464</td>
<td>20,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18,721</td>
<td>38,843</td>
<td>57,564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bogoro, 2019.

The CA programme started in 2010 according to the Fund. The main objective of the intervention is to create opportunities for both academic and non-academic staff of public tertiary institutions to interface with their peers at the international and local levels aimed at acquiring new ideas and improve their knowledge in their areas of specialization.

Library Development: In library development the Fund’s statistical data show that as at January 2019, a total sum of N16.1billion has been disbursed to Federal and State Governments’ owned Universities, while the sum of N10.7 billion and N10.2 billion were disbursed to Federal and State owned Polytechnics and Colleges of Educations in the country (Bogoro, 2019). This intervention is aimed at providing up-to-date textbooks, periodicals, journals, equipment and other reading resources in public tertiary institutions in line with global trends.

National Research Fund (NRF): This scheme was introduced by the Fund in 2011 mainly to encourage academics to undertake cutting edge research for national development, especially in the areas of Power and Energy, Employment and Wealth Creation etc., and according to the Fund a total of 44 research works from various scholars have been funded with a cost over N2.2 billion as at January 2019. Similarly, Institution Based Research (IBR) intervention has
received intervention of over N4.6 billion for Universities, N2.4 billion for Polytechnics, and N2.2 billion for Colleges of Education between 2011 to March 2019. In the same vein, disbursements for the Academic Research Journal (ARJ) intervention shows that a total of N713.4 million was disbursed to the different universities, N647.3 million for Polytechnics and N633.6 million for COEs. The Fund has embarked on the construction of six academic publishing centres one each in the six geo-political zones of the Federation. And according to the Fund’s summary report of 2019, four of the centres have been completed and commissioned (Bogoro, 2019).

The report of the Fund also shows the summary of the annual direct disbursements to the three category of public institutions who are the beneficiaries of the funds.

Table 3: TETFund Annual Direct Disbursements from 2011-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Polytechnics</th>
<th>COEs</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>N395m</td>
<td>N224.9m</td>
<td>N190.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>N598m</td>
<td>N339.5m</td>
<td>N321.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>N646m</td>
<td>N443.0m</td>
<td>N390.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>N912m</td>
<td>N661.0m</td>
<td>N581.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>N337m</td>
<td>N250.0m</td>
<td>227.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>N1.009b</td>
<td>N691.632m</td>
<td>N679.1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>N659.15m</td>
<td>N450.8m</td>
<td>N440.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>N785.832m</td>
<td>N536.703m</td>
<td>N510.1m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Bogoro 2019*

In 2019 the sum of N208 billion was approved for disbursement to universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. According to the Executive Secretary of the Fund, Professor Suleiman each of the universities received N826.6m, while each of the listed polytechnics and colleges of education received N566.7m and N542.2m as direct disbursements (Okeke & Stephen, 2019).
5. Evaluation of the Role of TETFund in the development of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

This section of the paper examined critically the role of TETFund in the development of tertiary education in the country. Hence, analysis is centred on the core mandate the Fund is expected to accomplish as an intervention institution in the education sector, particularly in the higher educational system. As identified in the preceding section of this paper, the core mandate of the Fund includes the provision and maintenance of essential physical infrastructure and equipment; instructional material and equipment, research and publications, and academic staff training and development. And from the report of the Fund for the period 2011 to part of 2019, it shows that the body has made tremendous impact on upgrading Nigerian higher institutions in those core areas of the Fund’s mandate. This view is supported by a number of empirical studies carried out by researchers. For example, Ogundu & Nwokoye (2013) noted that TETFund has alleviated the universities problems in the area of infrastructures, instructional materials and equipment, but needs to do more in the area of human capital development.

Ugwanyi (2014) carried out an investigation on the Education Trust Fund spanning eleven years of the existence of the Fund. The main target of the research study was to reveal how the Fund has helped in enhancing the educational development of the country’s tertiary system (Nagbi & Micah, 2019). The study revealed that the Fund has made significant positive impact in terms of improving the educational sector in Nigeria, through the construction of various intervention projects and has also improved the teaching and learning conditions of students and lecturers in the different institutions of higher learning.

For example, Eneastor, Azubuike & Orji (2019) in their submission noted that manpower development programmes of TETFund, especially in the COEs in Nigeria remain commendable and berates academic staff members of these institutions for not being able to take full advantage of the training opportunities provided by the Fund.

Similarly, Oraka, Ogbodo & Ezejiofor (2017) carried out a study on the impact of TETFund in developing tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study revealed that the Fund has been able to make significant impact towards improving the educational development in Nigerian tertiary institutions. They stated further that “the provision of needed infrastructure for learning at tertiary level represents one major milestone in the achievement recorded by TETFund”.

Udu
& Nkwede (2014), also in their finding asserts that “TETFund has done handsomely well in areas such as library development, manpower training, conference attendance etc.

On the contrary, there are others who believe that the role of the Fund in the development of tertiary education in Nigeria has not achieved the desired expectations in terms of improving the quality of education that is most needed for national development. Here, the concept of quality education needs brief explanation to put the position of some scholars who feel that TETFund intervention programmes have yielded the expected goals in the Nigerian educational system. Article 11 of the World Declaration on Education (2003) defined quality as a multi-dimensional concept encompassing all the functions and activities in school (cited in Asiyai, 2017). While the World Conference on Higher Education, (1998) listed the functions and activities of schools to include teaching, research and scholarship, community service, staffing, students, infrastructures and educational equipment, and academic environment (Asiyai, 2017). Quality is therefore a measure of the state or standard of an activity or a product as it relates to the attainment of an expected goal or satisfaction. In terms of education, quality relates to measuring the inputs into the educational system in terms of lectures, instructional materials and the evaluation procedures which translates to the quality of the products (e.g., graduates) produced from the system. It entails the improvement and the consistent progress achieved in the standard of educational infrastructure and all other aspects related to producing high standard products from the system. Therefore, quality higher education should be the one that produced disciplined and hardworking graduates as well as persons with far improved cultural heritage and virtues of mutual respect for religious and cultural diversities in a multi-cultural global system. Quality higher level education according to Asiyai (2017) also “entails that the products of institutions of higher education should be able to perform according to expected standard and compete favourably with their peers in other countries of the world”, particularly in their chosen field of discipline.

Quality education is crucial considering the fact that it is directly related to national development. The quality of the educational facilities including physical infrastructures, the right quantity and quality of academic staff, research facilities etc., in a given nation are directly linked to the quality of the products (e.g., Engineers, medical doctors, architects, computer engineers, educationists, economists, builders, scientists, social scientists, etc) produced from the system. Thus, a nation with high quality educational standard is most likely to experience faster growth and national development as against nations with low standard of education.
The major underlying aim for the establishment of the TETFund is to provide the needed quality, as indicated above in the educational system through the various intervention programmes to facilitate national development. Unfortunately, there exists a large gap between what has been achieved and the expected goal. The expected goal here, is how the products of higher education can contribute to the development and advancement of science and technology that will in turn foster national economic growth and development in the agricultural sector, engineering, medicine, law, politics, economics, etc., in Nigeria. This has not yet happened in Nigeria. Instead, the same challenges of shortage of qualified staff, lack of infrastructural facilities for teaching and learning, poor conditions of classrooms, students’ hostels, lecture theatres, etc., remain some of the daunting challenges facing the different tertiary institutions in the country. Coupled with no substantive and critical breakthroughs achieved in crucial sectors such as the sciences, medicine, technology, engineering and the rest. These were the same issues faced by these institutions before the emergence of the TETFund in 2011.

Due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, research equipment and shortage of trained staff in our tertiary institutions, the products of these institutions are usually substandard and inferior when placed side by side with their peers from other climes. These factors equally explain some of the reasons for the low ranking of our universities in the international system. For example, in 2016 no Nigerian tertiary institution was ranked among the first one thousand universities in the world in the areas of clinical medicine and pharmacy (ARWU-MED, 2016). In 2019, the four Nigerian universities (Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Covenant University, Otta, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and University of Lagos) were ranked 2,244, 2,291, 2,341, and 2,583 in the world. Table 4 below shows ranking of Nigerian universities in a recent ranking carried out by Ranking Web of Universities in January, 2020.

**Table 4: Ranking of the Ten Best Nigerian Universities in January, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s/n</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Position in Nigeria</th>
<th>Position in the World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University of Ibadan</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>1,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Covenant University</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>1,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>University of Nigeria</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>1,805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 above clearly shows the standings of the best ten universities in Nigeria in January, 2020. The best among them is ranked 1,322 in the world. On the other hand, the best Polytechnics in Nigeria as at January, 2020 is Auchi Polytechnic but ranked 10,469 in the world (Ranking Web of Universities, 2020).

Sequel to the above, some other researchers (Adevbiele, et:al., 2016; Nagbi and Micah, 2019) believe that there is still a lot to be done in our tertiary educational system, if it must play the leading role of fostering national development in the country. For example, Adavbiele, et:al (2016) findings on the impact of TETfund on tertiary institutions in Nigeria, using colleges of education as the main focus of the study discovered that the funding system of tertiary institutions in Nigeria was in shackles until the inception of TETfund. Thus, the study asserts that funding was a major challenge to the development of higher institutions in Nigeria before the emergence of the TETFund. However, further results of the study revealed that over 70% of respondents disagreed that the Fund has impacted positively on tertiary institutions in the country. It concluded by stating that the body has not really done much in providing laboratories, equipment, current books, enough accommodation for students and staff, as well as not providing quality staff training and not creating the most desired atmosphere to stimulate teaching and learning activities in these institutions. Based on these findings, they advanced the argument that after coming on stage of the TETFund, that the learning condition in schools has not been better off, and that TETFund has only succeeded in the case study area (College of Education, Ekiadolor, Edo State) in the provision of erecting two TETFund buildings in the school and also provision of desks (Adavbiele, et:al 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>University Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>University of Lagos</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>1,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>OAU, Ile-Ife</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>2,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ABU, Zaria</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>2,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>University of Ilorin</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>2,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fed. University of Tech, Akure</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>2,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>University of PH</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>2,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adekunle Ajase University,</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>3,126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, Nagbi and Micah (2019) studied TETFund and the development of higher institutions in Nigeria. The study adopted Pearson product moment correlation analysis and simple linear regression analysis to determine the relationship between the creative accounting and shareholders’ wealth with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. According to the findings of the study, the role of the Fund has been positive in terms of library development, staff training as well as journal publications. Thus, the study averred that TETFund is positively related to research and journal publications, library development, and staff training among Federal Universities. However, they argued that its interventions have no significant relationship with the development of Federal Universities in Nigeria during the period under study.

In the same vein, Agha and Udu (2019) in their study on the quality and relevance of TETFund intervention researches in tertiary institutions in South-East Nigeria, from 2010-2015 revealed that the extent of the impact of TETFund intervention at 5.28 percent had no significant impact on quality and relevance of educational research in Universities in South-East, Nigeria. The authors’ argument was hinged on the fact that during the period under study, only 5.28 percent of TETFund intervention funds were accessed and utilized by academic staff of all the Universities in the region, while 94.72 percent of the funds were not accessed. In their conclusion, they assert that despite the fact that TETFund has immensely improved our tertiary institutions in terms of trained qualified staff since its inception, there is still need for improvement in the area of research development.

This is a clear evidence that TETFund has a herculean task to perform in the tertiary education sector. Here comes the question on whether TETFund has the capacity to actually perform its role in developing the tertiary institutions for national development in Nigeria? Sincerely, it thus has the capacity, but may be constrained by several factors. The Executive Secretary of the Fund, Professor Suleiman Bogoro share this view when in his report he identified some challenges facing the agency to include:

1. The constraints of the Fund’s enabling law which limits her from exploring other possibilities of expanding its sources of revenue to education tax collections and investments in safe securities;
2. Inconsistencies in education tax payments by companies resulting in low EDT collections;
3. Interference by some State Governments in the deployment of funds for projects;
4. Low capacity utilization of disbursements by some of the beneficiary institutions;
5. The country’s dependence on oil and gas as its main source of revenue is a great challenge to the Fund as any drop in price affects the collection of EDT negatively;
6. The frequency of establishing tertiary public institutions by Governments at all levels puts enormous pressure on the Fund in the face of dwindling and competitive resources;
7. There is a preponderance for the political establishment of many universities by State Governments only to abandon them to their fate or make them rely mostly exclusively on TETFund;
8. The lack of harmonization of modalities for granting tax holiday to companies by relevant arms of government has been a major cause for concern;
9. Misinterpretation of TETFund guidelines on its interventions by beneficiaries, overtly and covertly;
10. The perception of the general public that intervention funds are to be misapplied; and
11. The interference of State Governments in the Procurement Processes of TETFund allocations to State tertiary institutions is worrisome and have slowed down project projection (Bogoro, 2019).

Considering these enormous challenges, TETFund will definitely find it difficult to make the desired impact in the tertiary education system in Nigeria. Particularly, one of the daunting challenges of the Fund and by implication the tertiary education system in Nigeria is inadequate funding. Funding is critical to the development of the sector as many other factors such as staff training, library, research and infrastructural development, conference attendance etc. depend on the availability of funds. Therefore, inadequate funding will hinder the accomplishment of the expected goals of the agency or any other body related to the development of the educational sector.

Poor funding of the educational system in Nigeria is clearly reflected in budgetary allocations to the sector by the Federal and State Governments. Nigeria remain one of those countries in the world that has low budgetary allocation often below the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 15-20% recommended for the education sector (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2006). The table below shows nine years’ national budgetary allocations to the education sector in Nigeria.
Table 5: Nine Years’ National Budget Allocation for Education 2012-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (Nbn)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>UNESCO (15-20 %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>N400.15</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15-20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>N426.53</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>N493.0</td>
<td>10.63</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>492.34</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>N367.73</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>N550.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>N605.8</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>N620.5</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>N601.99</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Dipo, 2017; Ameh & Aluko, 2019.

Consequently, poor funding of the sector has resulted in the production of low quality output, especially graduates of our tertiary institutions. According to Agi (2017:342) “funding of Higher Education Institutions in Nigeria has remained a major issue in that sector, especially of the public ones”. In the same vein, Asiyai (2017:4) opined that “inadequate funding is the most critical challenge that has threatened the attainment of good quality higher education in Nigeria”. Ozurumba & Amasuoma (2015) also observed that the foundation of education is frail when education is not well funded and the products of such foundation are weak intellectually. Undoubtedly, the problem of inadequate funding of the educational sector has been a serious challenge to educational development in Nigeria and most developing countries of the world. And this has very serious adverse effects on the quality and performance of the products produced from the system (Osinulu & Daramola, 2017; Agha, 2014).

For example, Agi (2017) observed that the effect of funding can be seen on the quantity of staff, facilities/infrastructure, research, programme expansion, access, staff training and development etc., it leads to taking some belt-tightening measures that may be detrimental to quality and performance of higher institutions graduates. Oraka et al (2017) noted that “the effects of inadequate funding are evident in the fact that the physical facilities in respective
universities are in a state of despair, several capital and research projects have been abandoned, laboratories and libraries are ill equipped, academic staff do not attend conferences regularly and there is a drastic reduction in the award of research grants and fellowship”. In general terms, poor funding of the tertiary education system in Nigeria has affected teaching and research activities, improvement of knowledge of academic staff through conference attendance, development and improvement of instructional materials and recruitment staff and many other academic activities that are significant in promoting teaching and learning process.

With the herculean task of developing the tertiary education sector placed on TETfund, the body will require sufficient funding in order to achieve the expected goals. The indication that its source of revenue is limited to the 2% accessible profit of registered companies in the country, while the Government grants tax holidays for certain category of companies as well as some registered companies not remitting on regular basis and in extreme situations not all their statutory payments to the Fund is a clear indication that the agency is underfunded. Under such condition, attaining its set goals become invariably difficult. Therefore, irrespective of the Fund’s efforts towards developing the sector it has not yielded the desired result, hence, the impact has been minimal.

On the other hand, it is also important to note that there are certain internal administrative mechanisms put in place by the Fund that has become obstacle to accessing some of its programmes by beneficiary institutions. These internal mechanisms that has to do with guidelines for beneficiary institutions to access funds are usually stringent and tertiary institutions often find it difficult to meet some of the requirements. Some of these conditions include cumbersome procedures for accessing the fund, low level of staff awareness about the fund, and other stringent conditions attached to accessing grants and development projects. In their study Akomolafe & Bello (2019) argued that there are many challenges inherent in accessing TETFund for training by academic staff.

The major reason for the agency to adopt such tough measures according to their finding may not be unconnected to paucity of funds within the disposal of the body. Based on their findings, they opined that the challenges inherent in accessing TETFund plays a major role in hindering academic staff training in Southwest Nigerian Universities, as such difficulties lead to delay in the approval of funds for applicants and that these stringent regulations tend to discourage programme attendance by expected beneficiaries of the different institutions. Similarly,
Adavbiele et al. (2016) findings on the impact of TETFund on tertiary education development identified some challenges facing the agency to include:

i. Fraud as one major problem preventing the Fund from disbursing funds to tertiary institutions on regular bases;

ii. The internal control system of the Fund been an obstacle to effective role performance; and

iii. Insufficient funds preventing the body from sustaining its activities effectively.

In a press statement in 2017, the former Executive Secretary of the agency Dr. Abdullahi Bichi Baffa, revealed that universities, polytechnics and colleges of education failed to access the sum of N175bn in six years (in Idoko, 2017). According to him this huge unassessed fund spanned from 2011-2017. He also mentioned the problems hindering speedy access of allocations to include the lack of adequate capacity of some public institutions frequent changes of TETFund desk officers by management of institutions and activities of unscrupulous contractors who are fond of abandoning projects awarded to them. The former Executive Secretary stated that the Fund will embark on restructuring the operations of the agency for optimal performance through training of its staff for effective service delivery. These are clear indications that stringent internal mechanisms adopted by the Fund contributes to hamper easy access to funds by universities, polytechnics and colleges of education and by implication impede the realization of the collective goals of the education sector in Nigeria.

Therefore, poor funding and internal control mechanisms adopted by the Fund constitute some of the challenges confronting TETFund. Unfortunately, these challenges have contributed immensely to the minimal impact the agency has achieved in the development of the tertiary institutions in the country. Hence, the three key functions of education in society has not been achieved in Nigeria.

6. Conclusion

The educational sector remains a critical sector to the overall development of any society. The sector’s linkage to all other sectors in society makes it even more critical as the development of education leads to the advancement of society in general. However, as the findings of the study indicate, the tertiary education subsector needs to be developed to make the necessary developmental impact in Nigeria. This is the reason why the development of this sector is imperative to the overall advancement of developing nations. The government’s recognition of
this in Nigeria necessitated the establishment of TETFund and the subsequent allocation of 2% accessible profit tax to the agency for the realization of the nation’s development objectives. Unfortunately, this has been a herculean task both for the government and the Fund. Findings of the study show that the agency has implemented several of its mandate programmes in many higher institutions of learning. However, as a result of lack of adequate funding and internal measures put in place by the agency that is now an impediment to higher institutions’ access to funds has resulted in non-attainment of the desired goals of the educational sector in Nigeria.

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FGN. (2014). National policy on education. Lagos; NERDC.


