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Towards Students' Personnel Administration in Universities in South East, Nigeria: The Place of Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention.

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Abstract

This study investigated on the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria. One research question guided the study while one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the 231 staff made up of 16 TETFund officers and 215 Heads of Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The entire population was used as the study sample purposively. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire. The instrument was validated and the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency which yielded a reliability index of 0.78. In analyzing the data, mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. The t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed among others that, TETFund intervention had significant impact on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, TETFund should improve its intervention in providing grants for academic staff development for conference participation (International and National), and publications in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

Keywords: Tertiary Trust Fund, Students' Personnel Management.

Introduction

The growth and development of any nation or society largely depends on her citizens whose competences and skills can effectively be developed through education. Education is however one major instrument responsible for training the human capital and capacity for effective functioning in the society. Education is also a veritable tool for national transformation and advancement of any society. In Nigeria, we have three levels of education namely; Basic, Secondary and Tertiary. This study will be focused on university education which part of tertiary level of education. University education is one of the most important needs of every individual for survival and well-being of any society. Ukala and Nwabueze (2014) defined university education primarily as an institution where knowledge, skills and ideas are built for economic expansion in the global economy through training and research. It could be referred to as an institution where knowledge is transferred and skills acquired through teaching, learning and research aimed at bringing about the needed changes in people and the society at large. In the context of this work, university education is the training acquired from universities, which provides knowledge and skills needed for individual growth and societal development.

University education is a vehicle for economic, political, social and technological development of any nation. Onokerhoraye and Nwoye in Ogbonnaya (2005) stated that, through university education, new knowledge and skills are acquired for the transfer, adaptation and dissemination of knowledge generated elsewhere in the world. Ukala and Nwabueze (2014) viewed university education as a central system for economic and political development, which is vital to global competitiveness in an increasing knowledge production and development. In universities, teaching, learning, administration, research processes and community service take place through proper utilization and management of educational resources for individual growth as well as national

development (Nwabueze & Nwokedi, 2016). University is a tertiary institution on which the future of every country depends, because it produces elites for the growth and technological advancement of every country at a given period of time (kpokpo, 2018). Hence, universities have the major responsibility of equipping individuals with advanced knowledge and skills required for positions in government, business, engineering, marketing, medicine, research and sciences. University education equips individuals with new knowledge and skills to participate in nation building. Proper management of university education increases staff and students' productivity through resource mobilizations for institutional growth and national development (Jaja, 2013). Hence, university education management is a systematic process of making use of human resources (academic and administrative staff) as well as the non-human resources (school buildings, instructional resources, finance and time) to achieve the goals and objectives of the institution. It involves proper planning of school activities, controlling, organizing, staffing, leading, coordinating and directing the human and non-human activities needed for students' productivity and global competitiveness. Proper management of educational resources in universities increases staff and students' productivity for institutional growth and national development. Hence, students' productivity and institutional growth can be achieved through proper management of educational resources. From the foregoing, its obvious that the achievement of the goals of university education may not be achieved if the university Management fails to coordinate the activities of both the human (staff and students) and material resources. Therefore, there is the for effective management and administration of students personnel in the university system.

Management in education refers to a process of making use of the available resources towards the achievement of educational goals and objectives. Oragwu and Nwabueze (2019) stated that resources are stock or supplies of money, materials, staff and other assets that can be drawn by a

person or an organization to function efficiently and effectively for university benefits. Management of university resources could be the systematic coordination of available resources (human, material, time, energy and funds) in the university through proper organization for quality teaching and learning geared towards the actualization of institutional set goals and objectives (Nwabueze, 2017). It is a distinct process consisting of activities such as planning, organizing, actuating and controlling of educational resources aimed at actualizing individual growth and institutional development. University management plays a vital role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. It is the initiative by university managers and administrators to properly and effectively attend to the concerns, queries, proposals, grievances and feedbacks of students, academic and non-academic staff promptly for improved productivity (Kpokpo, 2018). Hence, management of university resources is a process demanding the performance of specific functions required for quality outputs from university institutions. Unfortunately, there is no adequate resources in place to ensure the management of personnel in our university system owing to the fact that the allocation to education is always very low far below UNESCO's recommendations. It is against this inadequate funding that the Federal government of Nigeria introduced Tertiary Education Trust Fund that will aid the government in providing necessary funding need for effective administration of students' personnel among other things.

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) is established to create positive impact on the management of university education in Nigeria through adequate funding. The establishment of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention was mainly to assist tertiary institutions in Nigeria to manage educational resources properly for quality education delivery. Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), which started as Education Tax Fund (ETF) in 1993 in pursuance of the

Education decree of 1993, as an Intervention Fund to administer and disburse 2% education tax imposed on profits of all registered companies operating in Nigeria (TETFund, 2012). The ETF started off well, intervening at all aspects of public education, but became overburdened, overstretched and less effective mainly due to inadequate funding and expanded scope (Udu & Nkwede, 2014). Subsequently, in 2011, a Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) replaced the ETF with special focus on improving and sustaining education in States and Federal Tertiary Institutions using the same 2% education tax. Specifically, the TETFund has the mandate to intervene and mitigate the apparent lingering problems noticed in the education sector since the early 1990s, which are often attributed to the inadequacy of infrastructural, academic learning facilities and funding (Udu & Nkwede, 2014). Generally, TETFund is responsible for the repositioning of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria by translating vision into a strategic plan for promoting higher education.

TETFund was introduced in Nigeria to support the students and academic staff in knowledge building through fund generation and disbursement for knowledge management, skill acquisition through research and development programmes (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011). The major areas in universities where TETFund assistance are needed in the management of universities include: academic staff management, infrastructural management, students' management, and financial management (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014).

One of the contributions and impact of TETFUND to universities in the areas of students' personnel administration include among others: the provision of buses to convey students for lectures, building hostels for students, building classroom blocks for teaching/learning, provision of funds for school development, and provision of learning materials/equipment to schools (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). The school buses provided through TETfund interventions are used to convey

students within and outside the school for academic activities; hostels provided for students are used for accommodation; classroom blocks are used for teaching/learning/examinations; and funds provided by TETFUND are used for school development, procurement of learning materials/equipment for creativity and capacity building (Aprebo & Onyeike, 2018).

Regrettably, despite the existence of TETFund through its intervention programmes, there are still challenges to effective administration of students' personnel. There seems to be diversion of facilities provided by TETFUND for the students into private use, poor maintenance of the available educational resources (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). There is the need therefore for TETFund interventions in universities in Nigeria generally, and in south east particularly to promote students' personnel administration in the universities. Despite the successes recorded with regards to TETFund intervention, Nigeria are still facing problems and challenges in assessing the funds generated through TETfund interventions. Many public universities in the south east Nigeria have been complaining of poor infrastructural resources which affect the building of knowledge and skills negatively, as there are insufficient classroom blocks, lack of hostels and library facilities among other challenges that inhibit effective students' personnel administration. In support of the above, Nwaogwugwu and Nwaogwugwu, (2020) maintained that poor management of educational resources seems not to have changed much as there are still cases of inadequate classrooms, lecture halls and teaching aids, and the issues of poor capacity building, high turnover of workers and poor library services. In the light of the forgoing, one begins to wonder the place and impact of TETFund intervention on effective students' personnel administration. It was against this background therefore that this study investigated the place and impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund on students' personnel Administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite some successes made by TETFund to enhance the delivery of quality education in Nigeria, universities in South East, Nigeria are facing problems and challenges that require TETfund interventions. Universities in South East, Nigeria are still faced with challenges in accessing the funds generated through TETfund interventions for institutional development and global competitiveness. These universities have been complaining of dearth of research grants which had affect the building of knowledge and skills negatively; the lecturers seem not receive research grants expected of them for capacity building and development among other challenges. This poor management of TETFund interventions especially as it concerned with research development has resulted in high turnover rates among lecturers most especially in south east Nigeria. Could it be that, funds are not evenly distributed to universities in South East by TETfund? or could it be that the funds distributed for students' personnel administration are not properly managed? This could negatively affect quality of teaching and learning in the universities which are institution established to produce high level manpower needed for societal growth and development. It was against this backdrop that the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria was necessitated.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to find out the place of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention on student personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study:

1. What is the impact of TETFund intervention on student personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

Research Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in the South-East Nigeria. There are five states in the zone, and they include: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The population of the study comprised all the 231 staff from the five (5) federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The entire population comprising 231 TETFund staff and Heads of Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria were used as the study sample purposively in this research. This consisted of 16 staff in TETFund offices and 215 Heads of Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher from views of experts and literature reviewed. The questionnaire was subjected to face validation using three experts who are lecturers; two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency (reliability) of the instruments which yielded coefficient of 0.78. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of eight

research assistants. Mean scores and standard deviation were used as the statistical tools to answer the research question while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

What is the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean scores and Standard Deviation of TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments on the Impact of TETFund Intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in south east Nigeria

S/N	Impact of TETFund Intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities include:	TETFund Staff (16)		HODs (215)		Decision
		Mean	St.D	Mean	St.D	
1.	Supports students' basic academic research activities for quality results	3.50	1.63	3.43	0.45	Agreed
2.	Sponsorship of students for Ph.D. based discipline to increase knowledge practices	3.50	1.63	3.45	0.45	Agreed
3.	Sponsorship of students for Masters' degree based disciplines for knowledge updates	3.38	1.66	3.42	0.45	Agreed
4.	Supports knowledge dissemination through teaching and research for students' development	3.50	1.63	3.43	0.45	Agreed
5.	Provision of instructional materials for teaching, learning, research and administrative services to schools	3.25	1.69	3.45	0.45	Agreed
6.	Accepting undergraduates in industrial training for the development of middle level manpower	3.44	1.64	3.52	0.44	Agreed
7.	Organization of seminars for training/graduate housemanship	3.44	1.64	3.44	0.45	Agreed
8.	Organizing Workshops for students for the development middle level manpower skills	3.63	1.59	3.45	0.45	Agreed
9.	Programming conferences for manpower development skills in tertiary institutions	3.56	1.61	3.49	0.44	Agreed
10.	Supporting technical courses in school curriculum to equip undergraduates with new knowledge of becoming entrepreneurs after graduation	3.56	1.61	3.45	0.45	Agreed
	Aggregate Mean scores	**3.48**	**1.63**	**3.45**	**0.45**	**Agreed**

Data on Table 1 present the mean scores and standard deviation of TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments on the Impact of TETFund Intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria. The respondents agreed on all the items presented in the table with high mean scores above the mean criterion of 2.50. From the analysis, it was indicated that the higher the mean score, the lower the standard deviation and vice versa.

The aggregate mean scores of 3.48 and 3.45 for TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments indicated that, they agreed on the items in the Table. Therefore, the Impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria include: supporting students' basic academic research activities for quality results, sponsorship of students for Ph.D. based discipline to increase knowledge practices, sponsorship of students for Masters' degree based disciplines for knowledge updates, supporting knowledge dissemination through teaching and research for students' development, provision of instructional materials for teaching, learning, research and administrative services to schools, and accepting undergraduates in industrial training for the development of middle level manpower. Others include: organizing seminars for training/graduate housemanship, Organizing workshops for students for the development of middle level manpower skills, programming conferences for manpower development skills in tertiary institutions, and supporting technical courses in school curriculum to equip undergraduates with new knowledge of becoming entrepreneurs after graduation

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in south east Nigeria

Staff	N	Mean	St.D	df	t-calculated value	t-critical value	Decision
TETFund	16	3.48	1.63	229	0.073	±2.00	Accept Ho1
HODs	215	3.45	0.45				

Data presented on Table 2 showed the summary of t-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was accepted because the t-calculated value of 0.073 is less than the t-critical value of ±2.00 at 229 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This implies that, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration:

The findings of this study revealed that, the Impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria include: supporting students' basic academic research activities for quality results, sponsorship of students for Ph.D. based discipline to increase knowledge practices, sponsorship of students for Masters' degree based disciplines for knowledge updates, supporting knowledge dissemination through teaching and research for students' development, provision of instructional materials for teaching, learning, research and

administrative services to schools, and accepting undergraduates in industrial training for the development of middle level manpower. Others include: organizing seminars for training/graduate housemanship, organizing workshops for students for the development of middle level manpower skills, programming conferences for manpower development skills in tertiary institutions, and supporting technical courses in school curriculum to equip undergraduates with new knowledge of becoming entrepreneurs after graduation. The test of hypothesis had shown that, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration in public universities in South East, Nigeria. Both TETFund staff and heads of departments agreed that TETFund intervention on students' personnel administration improves their knowledge expectations and academic performance for the management in public universities.

There is need for TETFund interventions in universities to promote students' personnel administration in university management for improved productivity. Students are involved in learning practices and research geared towards individual growth, academic improvement and global competitiveness. In line with the findings, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2011) stated that, TETFund interventions in universities help to improve students' ability in the areas of knowledge building and skill acquisition for problem solving, creativity and innovation, while developing personal and interpersonal skills in research and development. In the same vein, Uzoigwe (2020) revealed that TETFund intervention allocations and TETFund research grants for students' development significantly predicted quality assurance in terms of project development and academic productivity.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that TETFund intervention is a very big instrument in the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. However, the Intervention on the management of public universities in South East, Nigeria by TETFund have brought about positive changes in the institutions. These positive changes are seen in the area of personnel administration which invariably leads to improvement in the teaching and learning processes because of involvement of university staff members in further education and professional growth and development programmes facilitated by TETFund

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. TETFund should increase its intervention in providing grants for academic staff development for conference participation (International and National), and publications in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.
2. TETFund should intervene in providing grants for students' personnel administration, which include; research building, and industrial training to improve their performance academically and the management in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

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