

Tetfund Intervention Programmes and Academic Staff Development of Selected Polytechnics in Southwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Before the establishment of the TETFund in Nigeria, the tertiary education system has been on the path of severe developmental and infrastructural decline. This study examined the effect of TETFund intervention programmes on academic staff development in selected federal and state polytechnics in Southwest, Nigeria. Primary data extracted from carefully structured questionnaires administered to academic staff in six southwest polytechnics were analyzed using descriptive analysis and the analysis of variance (ANOVA). The findings revealed that TETFund intervention programs had a significant positive effect on academic staff development in the selected polytechnics. The study recommends continuous sustenance of TETFund intervention activities to polytechnic education in Nigeria, as well as the exploration of possible alternative sources of funding by the management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria as supplements.

Keywords: TETFund, Polytechnic, Southwest, Academic Staff.

INTRODUCTION

Education in any economy is an important driver of economic growth and development. This is because education is regarded as the most important component of human capital development in the economic literature (Ogunode, 2023; Uduagu and Saidu, 2021; Oyediran, *et al.* 2020; Kopnina 2020). Education is a wise financial investment for both individuals and families since it improves the quality of life, expands work opportunities, and reduces unemployment. It also drives a nation's economy through the acquisition of relevant skills that will help develop a knowledge-driven learning society and facilitate increased social and political participation (Zhou, *et al.* 2020; Nduagu & Saidu, 2021).

Nations that invest in education create an avenue to increase per capita gross national product, reduce poverty, and support the expansion of knowledge (Ogunode, *et al.* 2020; Nwajiuba *et al.* 2020; Ogunode & Musa, 2020). For instance, tertiary education is regarded as the highest phase of educational pursuit that ultimately equip trainees (students) with adequate knowledge necessary to make them relevant in the labour force and enhance their contribution to the growth and development of the nation at large (Ogunode & Musa, 2020). Nigeria arguably has one of the largest economies in Africa, with abundant resources to drive her economy, especially the education sector, but the sector over the years has received far below the 26% allocation of the local budgetary allocation as stipulated by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Nigeria (Ayosa & Chukwumeka, 2023; Nduagu & Saidu, 2021; Kopnina, 2020).

As a result of the above, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) was established in Nigeria by the Tertiary Education Trust Act of 2011, to take over the tertiary education functions of the Education Trust Fund (ETF), established by the Education Tax Act No. 7 of 1993 as amended by Act No. 40 of 1998

(Yakubu, *et al.* 2021). The main objective of the ETF fund is to provide necessary assistance to all public education activities nationwide. However, the ETF has not had the desired effect on the Nigerian education system as a result of various challenges. The challenges include excessive responsibilities that ETF is saddled with, similarities in its functions with other bodies such as Universal Basic Education (UBE), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the excessive heterogeneity of its spending functions that has rendered their efforts ineffective in Nigeria (Osaigbovo & Ikediashi, 2022).

The introduction of TETFund in Nigeria is to (among other things) fund the training of academic staff within and outside the country, provide adequate infrastructures to enhance teaching efficiency, provide research grants and other essential academic needs of tertiary institutions, as well as facilitate academic staff development and promotion in Nigeria (Ayosa & Chukwemeka, 2023). While a lot has been said about the impact of TETFund-sponsored programmes on the quality of the university educational system in Nigeria (Yemi-Peters, *et al.* 2023; Olufunmilola and Christiana, 2023; Yakubu, *et al.* 2021; Isiaka, *et al.* 2020; Ogechukwu & Ngozichi 2020, Ogunode & Musa, 2020), very little evidence is available for polytechnic education (Amin, *et al.* 2020; Ademiluyi, 2022) and hence, one of the reasons for this study.

Not only that, but the available studies also focused on TETFund intervention support programmes in the areas of infrastructural development rather than its quality to staff promotions (Yemi-Peters, *et al.* 2023; Yakubu, *et al.* 2021). For instance, Yakubu *et al.* (2021) concluded that the TETFund has made a greater contribution to the university's infrastructure expansion than to the professional growth of its academic staff at Gombe State University. Therefore, this study examines the human capital development and beneficial effects of TETFund training programs in Nigeria.

Objectives Of the Study

1. To appraise the overall performance of TETFund activities in Nigeria since its inception.
2. To empirically examine the effect of TETFund intervention programs on academic staff training and development of federal and state polytechnics in Southwest Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some scholars have identified pertinent concepts necessary to the conduct of TETFund in Nigeria. Isiaka, *et al.* (2020) probed into the effect of TETFund's intervention on the capacity building of academic staff in Lagos State University, Nigeria. Data were collected from the academic staff of the institution using 196 questionnaires and a descriptive technique of analysis was employed. The result showed that the TETFund activities have provided adequate infrastructures for effective teaching, learning, and staff development in the institution. Also, the findings revealed that the institution has experienced a major increase in the academic qualification of teaching staff over the years. Similarly, Nduagu & Saidu (2021) investigated the influence of TETFund interventions on staff and infrastructural development in tertiary institutions in Abia State, Nigeria. The cross-sectional Survey design was used for the study and the Analysis of Variance technique (ANOVA) was employed in analyzing the statistical significance of the findings. The result showed a significant positive effect of TETFund's intervention programs on infrastructural and staff development in Abia State tertiary institutions.

The purpose of the study by Wenibowei & Warrant (2021) was to look into how the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) relates to the growth of tertiary education in Nigeria. It specifically identified the driving forces for the government's creation of the Fund, investigated the main intervention areas, and assessed the Fund's influence on the growth of tertiary education in the nation. A descriptive approach was used to analyze the results of the secondary sourced data for the study. As a corollary, Uduagu & Saidu (2021) evaluated the impact of TETFund initiatives on personnel and infrastructure development for raising the quality of tertiary education in Abia State, Nigeria, using a cross-sectional survey approach. The results

demonstrated that TETFund's involvement has had a good, considerable impact on staff and infrastructural developments, which has improved the quality of tertiary education in Abia State.

Using a structured questionnaire, Ademiluyi (2022) investigated administrators' perceptions of TETFund's efficacy in improving the caliber of polytechnic programs in Nigeria. According to the findings, while TETFund has been largely successful in raising the caliber of academic curricula, faculty, and physical facilities at public polytechnics, it has not had a comparable impact on private polytechnics. The results also demonstrated that funding, despite having greatly increased from its low point in the late 20th century, is still woefully insufficient, especially in public polytechnics. The report advised polytechnic administrators to prioritize the search for alternative financing sources to lessen their existing reliance on TETFund for capital and staff development projects. A similar recommendation was proffered by Yakubu, *et al.* (2021) in their evaluation of TETFund intervention programs at Gombe State University from 2009 to 2019 with a focus on conference attendance, academic staff development, and infrastructure improvement. The Public Goods Theory served as the organizing principle. The results demonstrate that TETFund has made a greater contribution to university infrastructure development than academic staff development. Instead of relying solely on TETFund interventions, it is advised that the Gombe state government contribute to supporting infrastructure and academic staff development programs.

Ogunode (2023) employed secondary data in examining the effect of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) on the development of tertiary education in Nigeria with the conclusion that the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) had made a significant contribution to the growth of infrastructure, human resources, and research programs and had intervened in the funding of tertiary education management in Nigeria. To evaluate the Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention in academic staff capacity building at Lagos State University in Nigeria, Isiaka, *et al.* (2020) used a descriptive survey research design. The study's conclusions showed that the main financial intervention for the qualitative change of the academic staff at Lagos State University is the development of infrastructure for efficient teaching and learning. It was also demonstrated that Lagos State University's finance intervention for academic staff capacity building was a top priority. Consequently, it was advised that the Fund remove the degree of bureaucratic impediments frequently connected with receiving approved money based on the study's findings.

Utilizing a descriptive survey research approach, Olufunmilola & Christiana (2023) investigated the accessibility to Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) initiatives and their impact on academic staff job performance in Southwest universities in Nigeria. The findings showed an association between research, conferences, funding for additional study, and academic staff members' work performance. It also showed that universities and academic personnel find it difficult to secure TETFund grants for research, conference participation, and additional education.

Asoya & Chukwuemeka (2023) examined the relationship between research development, academic staff training and development, and staff attendance at conferences and workshops in their study and found a strong and favorable correlation between TETFund and staff attendance at conferences and workshops, academic staff training and development, and the advancement of research. In the same sense, Musa, *et al.* (2023) looked at how staff employees at Gombe State University in Gombe, Nigeria, reacted to attending conferences funded by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). Most of the participants in this study were recipients of TETFund conference support. The results indicate that there is a significant correlation between academic conference attendance and academic staff motivation and that TETFund-sponsored conferences exclusively inspire academic employees at Gombe State University and do not inspire non-academic personnel.

Human resources must have the necessary skills and abilities in order to operate successfully and efficiently, they could be acquired through capacity building. As a result, Ogechukwu & Ngozichi (2020) looked at interventions made by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and the development of librarian capacity in Southeast Nigerian public university libraries. A descriptive survey research design was used for

the investigation. The research results demonstrated that the TETFund intervention played a key influence in librarian capacity building and that capacity building has greatly helped librarians in Southeast Nigerian public universities discharge their jobs. It was suggested, among other things, that the agency enhance funds in order to expand the number of librarians who benefit from TETFund's capacity-building interventions.

In summary, the impact of TETFund-sponsored programmes on academic staff promotions in Nigerian Polytechnics remains a missing gap that has not been researched.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the cross-sectional survey research design to achieve the stated objectives. This is because the study requires the use of primary data through the administration of questionnaires from samples chosen across six (6) different polytechnics in Southwest Nigeria, out of which inferences are drawn accordingly. The samples chosen cover the academic staff of three (3) federal and three (3) state polytechnics across Southwest Nigeria. The research instrument employed is a well-structured self-designed Google form questionnaire, which covers questions relating to the objectives of the study.

Specifically, a total of 180 questionnaire links were sent out to the staff of the chosen polytechnics across Southwest Nigeria. These Polytechnics are Osun State Polytechnic Iree, Federal Polytechnic Ede, Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic Owo and the Polytechnic, Ibadan. The questionnaires were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential techniques of analysis such as graphs, percentages, mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis, as well as the analysis of variance.

Analysis and Presentation of Result

This section presents the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire administered. Out of a total of 180 questionnaires sent out to various respondents (academic staff) across the six selected polytechnics in Southwest Nigeria, a total of 159 responses were retrieved and used for the analysis. This implies that 88% of the questionnaires administered were returned for analysis, which is indeed a fair representative fraction of the overall expected responses. The analysis of this study is structured towards answering the stated research questions which centers on the effect of TETFund intervention on academic staff development and promotion in Southwest Polytechnics.

The socio-demographic details of the participants were also collected in data form to validate and appreciate the suitability and qualities of the respondents who were included in this study. They included amongst other things, the respondent's age, name of institution, faculty and department, level/rank, highest certificate held, and years of working in the institution. To achieve the different goals, the responses were automated, using the statistical program (SPSS 29.0 edition), which allowed different statistical techniques to be applied to different groups of data. The findings of this study are presented in two sections for clarity and easy comprehension.

Section A presents the socio-demographic analysis of the respondents in terms of age, name of institution, faculty and department, level/rank, highest certificate held, and years of working in the institution. This is done through the descriptive statistics of the variables using frequencies and percentages. Section B of the analysis presents the result of the effect of TETFund intervention programs on the development of academic staff, in terms of teaching skills, facilities, and equipment, increased academic degrees, research grants, increased number of publications, etc.

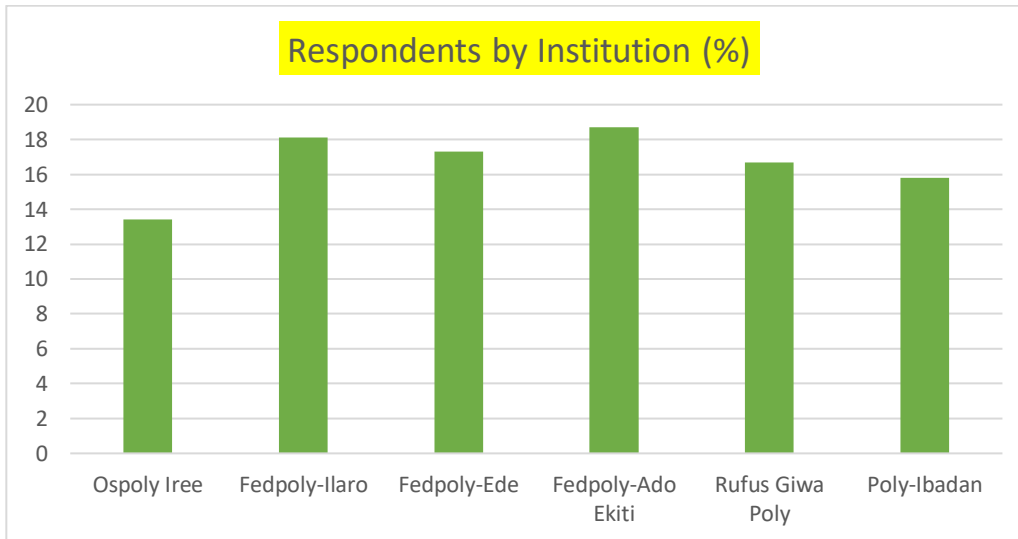
Socio-Demographic Analysis of the Respondents

The socio-demographic analysis of the respondents is presented in this section. The analysis is carried out by aggregating the information generated from all the respondents from the chosen samples for ease of

comprehension.

Figure 1 presents information on the responses and feedback from the institutions covered in this study. It is observed that 18.7% of the respondents were from The Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, 18.1% from The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, 17.3% from The Federal Polytechnic Ede, 16.7% from Rufus Giwa Polytechnic Owo, 15.8% from The Polytechnic Ibadan and the remaining 13.4% of the respondents were from Osun State Polytechnic Iree.

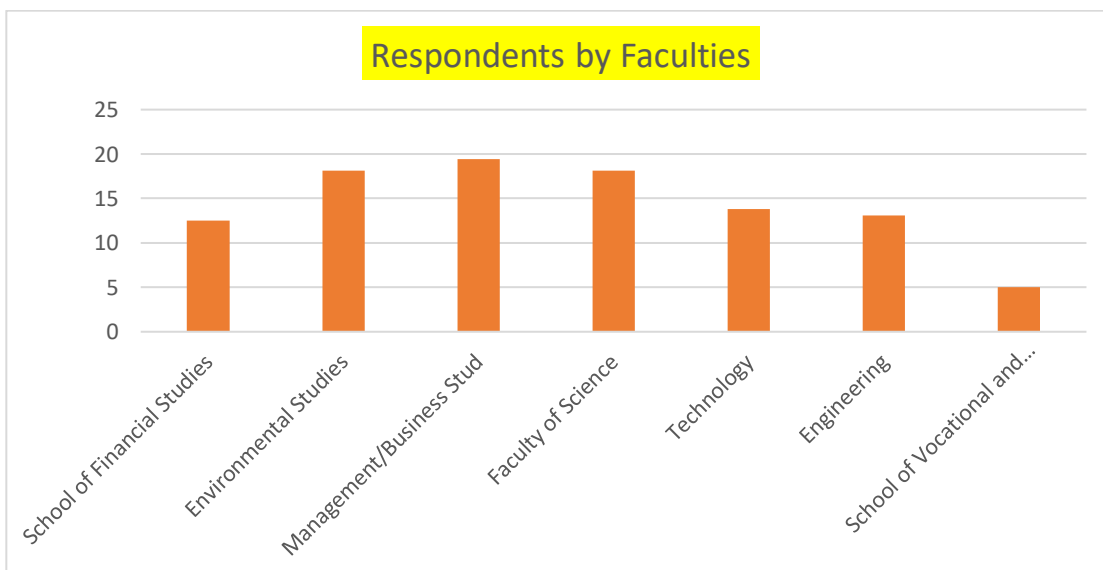
Figure 1: Respondents Distribution According to Institutions



Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023).

Figure 2 displays information on the proportion of respondents from the various faculties in the chosen institutions. It is observed that 19.4% of the respondents were from the faculty/school of management/business administration, 18.1% from environmental studies, 18.1% from the faculty/school of science, 13.1% from the faculty/school of engineering, 12.5% from the faculty/school of financial studies, 13.8% from Technology and the remaining 5% of the respondents were from school of vocational and technical studies.

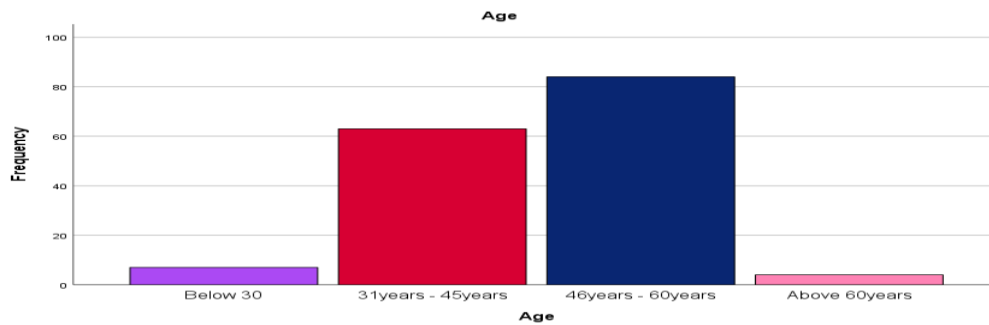
Figure 2: Respondents Distribution According to Faculties



Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023)

Figure 3 displays the age distribution of the respondents. The result revealed that 53.2% of the respondents fall between the ages of 46 and 60 years, 39.9% were between 31-45 years of age, 4.4% of the respondents were below 30 years of age, and 2.5% of the respondents are 60 years and above. Thus, it can be deduced from this analysis that the majority of the respondents belong to the active labour force age bracket of 46 – 60 years.

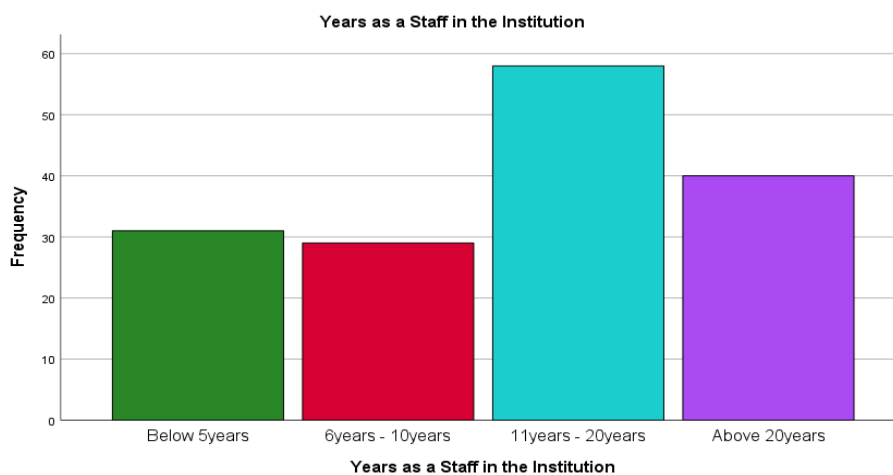
Figure 3: Respondents Distribution According to Age



Source: Field Survey (2023)

Figure 4 presents information on respondents based on their working experience in the Nigerian polytechnic system. It is observed that 36.7% had working experience of 11-20 years, 25.3% of the respondents had over 20 years of working experience, 19.6% had less than 5 years of working experience, while the remaining 18.4% of the respondents had 6-10 years of working experience. This indicates that most respondents had between 11 and 20 years of experience working in Nigerian Polytechnics.

Figure 4: Respondents' Distribution According to Working Experience



Source: Authors' Field Survey (2023)

Effect of TETFund Scholarship on Academic Staff Training and Development

The information presented in Table 1 contains the findings of the effect of TETFund intervention programs on academic staff training and development in Southwest Polytechnics of Nigeria. In this case, the mean and standard deviation of the responses are computed, and the analysis of variance is used to determine the significance or otherwise of the result. The decision rule here is that a mean value greater than 2.5 indicates

a positive relationship and a mean value below 2.5 depicts a negative relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The findings revealed that TETFund intervention programs have a positive and significant effect on academic staff development in Nigerian Southwestern Polytechnics. This is evident in that all the 13 items from Table 1 have a strong positive mean value that is greater than 2.5 and the analysis of variance (which serves as the test of statistical significance) presents a probability value (P-value) of 0.005, indicating the significance of the result at 5%. The implication of this is that TETFund programs such as study scholarships, staff training and retraining, seminars, workshops, etc. have significantly improved the overall performance and development of staff in Southwest Polytechnics. This confirms earlier studies by Asoya and Chukwuemeka (2023) and Uduayu and Saidu (2021), where a positive relationship between TETFund-sponsored programmes and staff development was documented.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Respondents for Academic Staff Development

Items	Questions	Mean	Std Dev.	SD	D	I	A	SA
Item 1	Nigerian polytechnics have improved greatly since the inception of TETFund	4.03	0.913	6 (3.8)	4 (2.5)	15 (9.5)	87 (55.1)	46 (29.1)
Item 2	TETFund intervention and scholarship is meant for both academic and non-academic staff in your institution	3.92	0.874	3 (1.9)	10 (6.3)	19 (12.0)	91 (57.6)	35 (22.2)
Item 3	Academic staffs have benefitted more from TETFund scholarships	3.92	0.878	3 (1.9)	10 (6.3)	19 (12.0)	90 (57.0)	36 (22.8)
Item 4	TETFund scholarships are easily accessible to academic staff in your institution	3.41	1.077	10 (6.3)	22 (13.9)	39 (24.7)	67 (42.4)	20 (12.7)
Item 5	TETFund scholarships are available on a yearly basis in your institution	3.41	0.997	7 (4.4)	25 (15.8)	36 (22,8)	77 (48.7)	13 (8.2)
Item 6	TETFund has greatly improved the teaching skills of academic staff in your institution	3.90	0.897	6 (3.8)	5 (3.2)	21 (13.3)	93 (58.9)	33 (20.9)
Item 7	TETFund has provided teaching infrastructures (lecture rooms, laboratories etc.) and training materials in your institution	4.09	0.894	6 (3.8)	3 (1.9)	11 (7.0)	88 (55.7)	50 (31.6)
Item 8	TETFund scholarships has helped staff to acquire more academic degrees in your institution	4.01	1.000	6 (3.8)	6 (3.3)	24 (15.2)	67 (42.4)	55 (34.8)
Item 9	TETFund intervention has increased the number of Ph.D holders in your institution	3.85	1.036	7 (4.4)	13 (8.2)	17 (10.8)	81 (51.3)	40 (25.3)

Item 10	TETFund intervention has increased the number of Master’s degree holders in your institution	3.94	1.042	6 (3.8)	11 (7.0)	21 (13.3)	68 (43.0)	52 (32.9)
Item 11	TETFund has organized several trainings, workshops and seminars for staff development in your institution	3.82	0.813	3 (1.9)	9 (5.7)	24 (15.2)	100 (63.3)	22 (13.9)
Item 12	TETFund has provided academic staff with research grants in your institution	3.92	0.826	5 (3.2)	1 (0.6)	27 (17.1)	93 (58.9)	32 (20.3)
Item 13	TETFund intervention has helped to increase the number of published academic papers in your institution	3.67	0.848	4 (2.5)	10 (6.3)	37 (23.4)	90 (57.0)	17 (10.8)

Source: Authors’ Field Survey (2023)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P_value
Between Groups	897.738	3	299.246	4.476	0.005
Within Groups	10295.281	154	66.852		
Total	11193.019	157			

Source: Authors’ Field Survey (2023)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper examined the effect of TETFund intervention programs on academic staff development in Southwest Polytechnics of Nigeria. It was established that TETFund intervention programs have a positive and significant effect on academic staff teaching performance and development in the region. This is an indication that academic staffers of polytechnics in the Southwest part of Nigeria have been making adequate use of the opportunities offered by TETFund’s various intervention programs. It is therefore recommended that the various TETFund programs be sustained for polytechnic education nationwide, especially given the high cost of attaining technical education in Nigeria. In addition, polytechnics in Nigeria especially the state-owned affiliates should devise means of boosting their internally generated revenues.

Further studies should investigate the benefits of TETFund training programs on staff promotions.

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