

**CHALLENGES IN THE TERTIARY SUB-SECTOR AND THE EMERGENCE OF
TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND (TETFund) IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This paper examines the challenges of tertiary education and emergence of TETFund with the objectives of identifying them and to show how they have affected the delivery of quality education in Nigeria over the years. The paper relies on secondary sources of data and employed content analysis and documentary evidences for its analysis. The Human Development Capital Theory (HCDT) was adopted as a theoretical framework of analysis. The finding of the paper reveals that education in Nigeria belongs to the concurrent list which allows for funding from all the three tiers of government. However, the challenges arising from the inadequate funding necessitates the creation of Tertiary Education Trust Fund Initially Education Trust Fund to serve as intervention agency in the tertiary education sector. The major problems identified in Nigeria's tertiary education were inadequate funding, poor welfare and bad condition of service, brain drain, deteriorating infrastructures, industrial disharmony, corruption and embezzlement, cultism and violence, lack of commercialization of knowledge, and poor registration of intellectual property rights among others. The paper concludes that Nigeria needs to invest in its human capital for national transformation and sustainable development. It recommends adequate funding in line with UNESCO benchmark, amending TETFund Act to increase its funding from 3% to 5%, linking the education sector to industry, and registration of intellectual property rights for national image, global education ranking, and opportunities.

Keywords: *TETFund, Tertiary education challenges, Human capital development theory*

Introduction

Historically, formal education in Nigeria can be traced to the advent and activities of European Missionaries and Colonialists. Although the colonial administration basically introduced formal education with a view to creating the manpower, capacity, and competencies to run the new economic, social, political, and administrative setup that was introduced to Nigerians. This necessitated the expansion of primary and secondary education and subsequently, the introduction of tertiary education in Nigeria. Education can generally be viewed as the process of acquiring knowledge, new values, and skills for self-fulfillment, economic mobility, social transformation, and effective functioning of society (Echono, 2023; Mohammed, 2018).

According to Fafunwa (2018), education is what each generation gives to its younger ones, which makes them develop attitudes, abilities, skills, and other behaviours that generate positive values in the society in which they live. The importance of education to humanity and sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. Aristotle (382-342 BC), one of the three great philosophers and teachers who ever lived, advocated for all-around education. Education is the creation of the mind in a sound body. He believes that the aim of education is happiness and goodness. Goodness is divided into two: goodness of intellect and goodness of character.

Hence, learning and character are needed to develop physical and mental skills for individual self-fulfillment that would propel national development.

Therefore, the starting point of any education philosophically is the training of good citizens through human capital development that will ultimately lead to national transformation and sustainable development. Generally, the philosophy of education in Nigeria is centered on using education as a tool for national development and transformation, fostering national unity and consciousness, mental and physical skills, and promoting equal access to functional and practical education for all citizens (FGN, 1981; 2013).

In the 1990s and 2000s, efforts were made to revitalize the role of higher education in the development of the African continent. It was in 2009 that the Association of African Universities organized a conference in Abuja, Nigeria, with a theme, 'Sustainable Development in Africa: The Role of Higher Education'. The 1980s and 1990s saw an uncoordinated expansion of higher education in Nigeria with absent or decayed infrastructure, deteriorating work conditions, and declining academic standards, which consequently weakened both the capacity for research and knowledge production (Echono, 2023).

It is against this backdrop that the challenges of tertiary education have become complicated in Nigeria. It is in this context that this paper will identify major challenges in the tertiary subsector in the last decade and establish the nexus with the emergence of TETFund as one of the education policy attempts at finding solutions to higher education in Nigeria. However, the paper aims to stimulate discussions that would identify enduring solutions for quality and sustainable management of tertiary education in Nigeria.

The paper is divided into seven sections. Section one covers the general introduction and what tertiary education entails, while section two is on the significance and goals of tertiary education in Nigeria. In section three, the paper highlighted the various Federal Government policies on tertiary education over the years. Section four identified the major challenges affecting tertiary education, while section five provides an overview of the emergence of TETFund's vision and mission. Section six offers solutions as the way forward to addressing challenges in tertiary education. The concluding part wraps up the paper.

Tertiary Education in Nigeria

According to Echono (2025), Tertiary Education is referred to as higher education because it reflects the advancement of both the content and educational experience, as well as the expected contributions of the scholars to society upon graduation. It heralds the transition from basic education to a more progressive, specialized, and intellectually demanding aspect of learning and personal development, thus referred to as the peak of formal education.

Tertiary education is regarded as the post-secondary section of the National education system, which is delivered by Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, and other relevant institutions of higher learning. The establishment of Yaba Higher College in 1932 as the first institution of higher learning in the country marked the starting point of the tertiary education system in Nigeria. The Elliot Commission, set up in 1943 by the colonial administration, recommended the establishment of universities in Nigeria, which laid the foundation for the establishment of the University College Ibadan in 1948. In 1960, upon independence, University College of Ibadan became a full-fledged university. University of Nigeria, Nsukka,

was established in 1960, while Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Lagos, and University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) took off in 1962. The University of Benin was established in 1970, and in 1975, seven new universities in Jos, Calabar, Maiduguri, Kano, Ilorin, Port Harcourt, and Sokoto were established, and they commenced academic activities by 1977/78 (Taiwo, 1980). Since then, many tertiary institutions, notably universities, polytechnics, monotechs, and colleges of education, have been established in Nigeria.

The status of Tertiary Institutions is broadly categorized as Public Tertiary Institutions owned by the Federal and State Governments, and Private Tertiary Institutions owned by private individuals and organizations. The National Universities Commission (NUC) has reported 52 Federal Universities, 63 State Universities, and 147 Private Universities, which brings the total number of recognized Universities in Nigeria to 262 as of January 2024. Similarly, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) has identified 183 Federal, State, and Privately-owned Polytechnics in the country, while Monotechs are 227, Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs) are 181, and Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) are 84. In the same vein, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) has accredited 236 NCE Awarding Institutions in Nigeria owned by the Federal, States, and Private entities. The initial aim for the establishment of tertiary educational institutions

Tertiary education refers to all *formal* post-secondary education, including public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools. Tertiary education is instrumental in fostering growth, reducing poverty, and boosting shared prosperity. A highly skilled workforce, with lifelong access to a solid post-secondary education, is a prerequisite for innovation and growth: well-educated people are more employable and productive, earn higher wages, and cope with economic shocks better.

The Significance of Tertiary Education

Education has a direct relationship with economic growth and sustainable development. The World Bank has maintained that the development of nations in the 21st Century largely depends on the quality and quantity of education in different countries. It has also been established that there is an inverse relationship between the number of tertiary education level graduates in an economy and the extent of reliance on the state. Higher education is believed to generate a higher level of social cohesion and complement the process of crime reduction (Echono, 2019).

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Goals of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

The main goals of tertiary education in Nigeria include contributing to national development through high-level manpower training, fostering self-reliance and useful societal contributions by equipping individuals with skills, promoting research and innovation, instilling national unity and values, and enhancing intellectual and creative capabilities. It also aims to provide opportunities for personal development, promote community service, and ensure national and international understanding (Echono, 2023).

The Federal Ministry of Education (2004) highlights the focal objectives of Tertiary Education in Nigeria. These objectives include:

1. Contribution to National Development through high-level manpower training.
2. Development and inculcation of proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
3. Development of the intellectual capabilities of the individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.

The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013a), section 5, subsection 80 - 85 specifies that the goals of tertiary education shall be to:

- a. Contribute to national development through high-level manpower training;
- b. Provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of Nigerians;
- c. Provide high-quality career counselling and lifelong learning opportunities that prepare students with knowledge and skills for self-reliance;
- d. Reduce skills shortages through the production of relevant skilled workers;
- e. Promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship, and community service
- f. Forge and cement national unity; and
- g. Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

All these goals are set to be achieved through teaching, research, and development; knowledge generation and dissemination, international cooperation; dedicated Services to the communities through extra-mural and consultancy services.

Tertiary educational institutions pursue these goals through:

- a. Quality student intake; quality teaching and learning;
- b. Research and development;
- c. . Quality facilities, services, and resources;
- d. The generation and dissemination of knowledge, skills, and competencies that contribute to national goals and enable students to succeed in a knowledge-based economy;
- e. Access to training funds such as those provided by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund);
- f. The maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate regulatory agencies, and an all-inclusive, credible admission policy for national unity (FGN, 2013a).

Theoretical framework: A Human Capital Development Theory

The first writings on human capital comes from the 18th century Scottish economist, Adam Smith. Theodore Schultz came up with the theory of human capital theory in the 1960's, where he emphasized that investing in education, training to increase skills and knowledge is crucial for economic growth (Smith, 1776). However, the American economist, Gary Becker, was arguably the biggest pioneer for the human capital theory. Through his works in economic sciences, he coined the idea of investing in people (Becker, 1996, 1975).

However, how human capital can enhance productivity and national development is clear and predictable. Educated citizens with skills are engines of development and social change. We shouldn't view the theory as selling humans as a commodity. But rather as investing in their

talents and performance, benefiting themselves and the business. Schultz and Becker are both credited for formalizing the theory and establishing it as a significant concept in economics.

Assumptions of the Human Capital Development Theory

Human capital is a loose term that encompasses the educational attainment, knowledge, experience, and skills of the population or citizens. Human capital is the study of human resources. It talks about the development of economic, social, and political value of the humans from how we function as a society. The assumptions are predicated on three grounds:

- i. Investment in human resources is the foundation for social change and development
- ii. Educations and intellectual abilities of people increase creativity and innovation
- iii. Training and skills development increases economic growth and development

Not all economists agree that human capital directly raises productivity. In 1976, Harvard economist Richard Freeman suggested that human capital merely signals talent and ability, with real productivity arising from training, motivation, and equipment. He concluded that human capital should not be considered a factor of production.

In the 1980s and 1990s, behavioral economists criticized the human capital theory for assuming that people are rational actors. Therefore, the human capital theory will experience the same defects and limitations when it attempts to explain phenomena because its basic assumptions on human motives, goals, and decisions are, it turns out, not well-grounded.

Methodology

This study is qualitative descriptive in nature which relies on secondary sources of data include books, personal sources, journals, newspapers, websites, government records, etc. Secondary data is known to be readily available compared to primary data. Qualitative content analysis answers “why”, “how”, or “what”. Through an iterative process of coding, counting, and interpretation, it explores the subtleties of data in a way that is illuminating. The qualitative content analysis often relies on quantifying the frequency of words, phrases, and concepts to provide such answers. It further provides a systematic way to identify patterns, concepts, and larger themes within the data to gain insight into the meaning and context of the content. With the advent of electronic media and the internet, secondary data sources have become more easily accessible. Some of these sources are highlighted below (Manion, 2004; Patton, 2000).

How Tertiary Education Promotes National and Sustainable Development

High-Level Manpower Training: Developing the skilled workforce and intellectuals needed for economic, social, and industrial progress.

Research and Innovation: Generating knowledge and finding solutions to societal problems, contributing to the nation's technological and industrial advancement.

Individual and Societal Development

Skill Acquisition: Equipping individuals with both physical and intellectual skills to become self-reliant and valuable members of society.

Intellectual Capability: Developing individuals' ability to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.

Value Inculcation: Fostering proper values essential for the survival and well-being of both individuals and the wider society.

Social Cohesion and Understanding

National Unity: Acting as a unifying factor by providing equal educational opportunities and bringing people from diverse backgrounds together.

National and International Interaction: Promoting understanding and interaction between Nigeria and other nations.

Personal Growth

Higher Educational Opportunities: Providing access to advanced learning for personal fulfillment and career advancement.

Talent Enhancement: Promoting and enhancing talents and skills in all fields of human endeavor.

Community Service

Community Service Promotion: Encouraging scholarship and community service among students and staff.

Policies on Quality Tertiary Education in Nigeria

As of now, Nigeria has a number of policies that guide the tertiary education sector. These policies provide a holistic framework that directs how tertiary education is run in the country.

These policies are:

1. Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan - 2017-2030
2. National Policy on Education – (2013)
3. Ministerial Strategic Plan – 2016 – 2019
4. National Policy on Special Needs Education in Nigeria
5. Blueprint on the Rapid Revitalization of University Education in Nigeria (2018)
6. National Education Policy (2020).

Challenges of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

Nigeria's educational system has been bedeviled by many challenges over the years. However, funding has been the most disturbing, if not devastating, to the educational aspiration and development of Nigeria. According to Ohaegbun and Chijioke (2023) the results of their empirical studies on the level of Nigeria's compliance with UNESCO benchmark showed that for the period, (1960-2023), the average allocation made to the education sector of Nigeria was about 5.94%, which was about 9.06%, 14.06% and 20.06% significantly less than the three UNESCO's recommended benchmarks of 15%, 20% and 26%, respectively.

Also, the average percentage budgetary allocation to the education sector of Nigeria during the Recent Democratic Regime (1999-2023) was significantly higher than in the Pre-Recent Democratic Regime (1960-1998). Results further showed that, for the period, (1999-2021), the average annual percentage budgetary allocations for Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Kenya and Morocco were 7.81%, 24.37%, 19.49%, 21.32%, 21.70% and 17.61%, respectively; and these figures, no doubt, implied that the level of adherence to the UNESCO's 15%, 20% and 26% recommended minimum benchmarks was highest in Ghana, followed closely by Kenya, and then Senegal, South Africa, Morocco and lastly, Nigeria. As a matter of fact, Nigeria was unable to adhere to any of the UNESCO's 15%, 20% and 26% recommended benchmarks for the period (1999-2021).

An in-depth study of the Human Development Index (HDI) produced by the United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organization in 2018 showed that Nigeria was ranked in the

24th position out of 54 countries in Africa and also ranked 157 in the world when it comes to educational development (UNESCO, 2018).

1. **Inadequate Funding:** A significant constraint on the effectiveness of tertiary institutions.
2. **Deteriorating Infrastructure:** A persistent problem in many institutions, in offices, lecture theatres, libraries, laboratories, hostels, and sports complexes.
3. **Brain Drain:** The emigration of skilled professionals and academics seeking better opportunities abroad. The japa syndrome for greener pasture;
4. **Access and Equity:** Ensuring that all qualified individuals have equal opportunities for enrollment.
5. **Few Intellectual Property Registration and Acquisition:** Most researches in science and technologies in Nigerian tertiary institutions are not registered;
6. **Disconnect between tertiary education and industry:** In terms of specialization to galvanize national development. The type of education and knowledge that does not promote national development.
7. **Lack of commercialization of knowledge:** Nigeria is largely a resource-based economy.
8. **Poor policy Implementation:** Good policies and bad implementation.
9. **Poor quality of academic staff:** Favoritism, nepotism, and racketeering in recruitments.
10. **Poor Welfare Package:** Tertiary education workers are among the most poorly paid.
11. **Industrial disharmony:** The culture of incessant and long strikes in tertiary education;
12. **Inadequate Research and Development Fund:** The quantum of R&D fund is very small and grossly inadequate for any serious national research endeavor and impact.
13. **Corruption, embezzlement, and mismanagement of resources;** There were cases of corruption in the tertiary education sub-sector by lecturers, managements, and councils.
14. **Lack of Political Will:** In policy formulation and the punishment of law violators.
15. **Using old curricula and Poor-Quality Assurance:** No regular review of the curriculum and introduction of new ones. The accreditation of courses, teaching, internships, and certification in tertiary education suffers from a lack of proper supervision and monitoring.

However, funding is the major problem with the tertiary education subsector and education at large in Nigeria over the years.

Table 1: The percentage budgetary allocations to the education sector by FGN (1960-2023)

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Year	% Allocation	Year	% Allocation	Year	% Allocation	Year	% Allocation
1960	6.02	1976	8.71	1992	3.86	2008	13.00
1961	6.15	1977	3.12	1993	5.62	2009	6.54
1962	5.19	1978	11.44	1994	7.13	2010	6.40
1963	3.45	1979	3.70	1995	7.20	2011	1.69
1964	3.65	1980	4.95	1996	12.32	2012	10.00
1965	3.57	1981	6.45	1997	17.59	2013	8.70
1966	4.23	1982	8.09	1998	10.27	2014	10.60
1967	4.88	1983	4.04	1999	11.12	2015	9.50
1968	2.84	1984	4.49	2000	8.36	2016	6.10
1969	2.20	1985	3.79	2001	7.00	2017	7.38
1970	0.69	1986	2.69	2002	5.90	2018	7.03
1971	0.53	1987	1.93	2003	1.83	2019	7.29
1972	0.62	1988	2.40	2004	10.50	2020	6.70
1973	0.88	1989	3.55	2005	9.30	2021	5.60
1974	2.96	1990	2.83	2006	11.00	2022	5.40
1975	4.57	1991	1.09	2007	8.09	2023	6.30

Source: Ohaegbulem and Chijioko, 2023

The data in table 1 above has indicated that Nigeria’s budgetary allocation to education both pre and post the UNESCO benchmark was grossly inadequate for the education that would transform the national economy and development since independence.

The Emergence of TETFUND: Overview of Mandate and Vision

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) (ASUU) initiated the idea for what became the Education Tax Fund (ETF), later the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), through a 1992 agreement with the Federal Government that stemmed from a period of prolonged ASUU industrial action. This agreement resulted in the creation of the ETF Act in 1993, a fund derived from a 2% tax on company profits to support the rehabilitation and funding of Nigeria's public education system (TETFund, 2022).

The evolution of TETFund gives us the direction to the understanding of the status and challenges of the tertiary education sub-sector in the last three decades. From the 1980s and beyond, the decay of all tiers of education was monumental. Facilities had almost collapsed, and teachers and lecturers' morale was at its lowest. An enabling environment for conducive teaching and learning was absent. The administration of President Ibrahim Babangida, mindful of the reality of the situation, took measures to arrest the rot (TETFund, 2024).

TETFund's Vision and Mission

The vision and mission of TETFund are stated below:

The Vision: "To be a world-class intervention agency in Nigeria's Tertiary Education".

The Mission: "To provide focused and transformative intervention in Public Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria through funding and effective project management," aiming to improve the quality of education in Nigeria using funds generated from the education tax (TETFund, 2022).

In December 1990, the Federal Government constituted the Commission on the Review of Higher Education in Nigeria (the Gray Longe Commission) to review the post-independence Nigerian Higher Education after Lord Ashby’s Commission of 1959. The Longe Commission recommended, among others, the funding of higher education through an earmarked tax to be borne by companies operating in Nigeria. An implementation committee under the chairmanship of Professor Olu O. Akinkugbe was constituted to implement the recommendations of the Grey Longe report. An agreement was also signed between the Federal Government and ASUU on the 3rd of September, 1992, on the funding of universities (TETFund, 2025; NUC, 2023).

As a result of a policy shift, TETFund was created in Nigeria as an intervention agency under the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Establishment, etc) Act No. 16 of 2011, replacing the earlier Education Trust Fund (ETF). Established to address the severe decay in public tertiary institutions, its primary funding source is a 2% Education Tax paid by companies in Nigeria, collected by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS). The funds are disbursed to public universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education to improve infrastructure, research, instructional materials, and staff development.

The establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund by the Federal Government to provide intervention support towards the rehabilitation, restoration, and consolidation of tertiary education in Nigeria is part of conscious and deliberate efforts of the government to ensure the transformation of our public tertiary institutions. The law setting up the Fund stipulates that a 2 percent (now 3 percent) education tax be imposed on the profits of all registered companies in Nigeria. In the disbursement of the funds, 50 percent goes to the Universities, 25 percent to the Polytechnics, while 25 percent goes to Colleges of Education (TETFund Act 2011).

Table 2: 2011 – 2023 (AS PER CBN TRANSFER)

YEAR	COLLECTION
2011	N128.52 billion
2012	N128.52 billion
2013	N279.17 billion
2014	N189.61 billion
2015	N207.43 billion
2016	N130.12 billion
2017	N154.96 billion
2018	N203.28 billion
2019	N154.96 billion
2020	N257.01 billion
2021	N189.54 billion
2022	N328.80 billion
2023	N725.74 billion
TOTAL	N3.203 trillion

Source: Adapted from Echono 2024

The funds disbursed to public tertiary institutions are to be used for the provision or maintenance of:

- i. Essential physical infrastructure for teaching and learning;
- ii. Instructional materials and equipment;
- iii. Research and publication;
- iv. Academic staff training and development; and
- v. Any other need which, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, is critical and essential for the improvement of quality and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions. To date, TETFund has funded 5,525 physical infrastructural projects, 188 equipment fabrication projects, and the provision of 576 faculty/departmental libraries in tertiary institutions across the country.

Table 3: List of Past and Present Leadership of TETFund 2011-2025

S/N	Name	Position	Year
1	Mal. Mustapha Abba Jaji:	Executive Secretary	2011-2012
2	Prof. Mamood Yakubu	Acting Executive Secretary	2007-2014
3	Mal. Tijani Ahmed Abdulkadir:	Executive Secretary	2014-2016
4	Mal. Aliyu Na'iya	Acting Executive Secretary	Feb.2014 & Jul 2014
4	Prof Suleiman Bogoro	Executive Secretary	2016-2019
5	Dr. Abdullahi B. Baffa	Executive Secretary	2019-2022
6	Prof. Suleiman Elias Bogoro	Acting Executive Secretary	2019-2022
7	Arch. Sonny. S.T. Echono	Executive Secretary	2022 to present

Source: Author's compilation

The leadership records and transition indicate that the background of its headship over the years were experts and technocrats who devoted their expertise in ensuring that they achieved the vision and mission of the TETFund.

TETFund's Evolution in Nigeria

1. 1993: Education Tax Act No. 7
2. The process began with the creation of the Education Tax Fund (ETF) to fund tertiary education.
3. 1998 Amendment
4. The Act was amended by Act No. 40 to change the name to the Education Trust Fund.
5. 2011: TETFund Act No. 16

The ETF Act was repealed and replaced by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) Act, refocusing the intervention exclusively on public tertiary institutions.

The funds are disbursed for the general improvement of education in federal and state tertiary education institutions, specifically for the provision or maintenance of:

- a. Essential physical infrastructure for teaching and learning
- b. Instructional material and equipment
- c. Research and publications
- d. Academic Staff Training and Development
- e. Any other need which, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, is critical and essential for the improvement and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions.

The TETFund Board Members and their Functions

The Fund is managed by a thirteen (13) member Board of Trustees with members drawn from the six geopolitical zones of the country, as well as representatives of the Federal Ministry of Education and Federal Ministry of Finance.

The Board of Trustees has the following responsibilities as stated in the Act:

1. Monitor and ensure the collection of Education Tax by the Federal Inland Revenue Service and ensure the transfer of the same to the Fund;
2. Manage and disburse the Tax imposed by the Act;
3. Liaise with the appropriate ministries or bodies responsible for the collection or safekeeping of the Tax;
4. Receive requests and approve admissible projects after due consideration;
5. Ensure the disbursement of funds to various public tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria;

6. Monitor and evaluate the execution of the projects;
7. Invest funds in appropriate and safe securities;
8. Update the Federal Government on its activities and progress through annual and audited reports;
9. Review progress and suggest improvement within the provisions of the Act;
10. Do such other things that are necessary or incidental to the objectives of the Fund under the Act or as may be assigned by the Federal Government;
11. Make and issue guidelines, from time to time, to all beneficiaries on disbursement from the Fund on the use of monies received from the Fund; and
12. Generally, to regulate the administration, application, and disbursement of monies from the Fund under the Act.

The Board of Trustees shall administer, manage, and disburse the tax imposed by the Act based on:

1. Funding of all public tertiary educational institutions;
2. Equality among the six geopolitical zones of the Federation in the case of special intervention, and
3. Equality among the States of the Federation in the case of regular intervention.

The distribution of funds shall be in the ratio of 2:1:1 between Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education.

The Way Forward

To address the challenges of tertiary education in Nigeria, there is a need to present and implement eight key solutions as follows:

1. Adequate/improved funding of the tertiary education sub-sector;
2. Amendment of the TETFund scheme Act to increase the education tax from 3% to 5% or more as soon as possible, with immediate effect;
3. Linkage of tertiary education with industry to galvanize national development;
4. Registration of intellectual property and commercialization of knowledge;
5. Strengthen quality assurance, update curricula, retrain teaching and non-teaching staff, and ensure standards in accreditations.
6. Fight and punish corrupt practices in tertiary education
7. Political will to implement all solutions and to initiate new visionary policies.
8. The Triple Helix should include plus endowment to attract more funding to tertiary education (Triple Helix+).

Conclusion

Tertiary Education plays an indispensable role in the development of any society. No nation in the world has achieved national transformation and development without investment in education. Hence, the quality of education determines the scientific, technological, transformation, and advancement of any nation. In Nigeria, the situation has been very worrisome in terms of inadequate funding for nearly three decades. The implications are that if education has been grossly underfunded, quality delivery, research and development, and brain drain will set in. The nation cannot catch up with its peers. Therefore, Nigeria's tertiary education has to be linked with the Triple Helix for sustainable national development. Since the

nation returned to democracy in 1999, previous administrations have consistently failed to allocate more than 10 percent to the sector since UNESCO's benchmark recommendation in 1990. Needless to say, the World Bank even recommended 20-30 percent of the government's annual budget be allocated to the sector.

As we stand at a pivotal moment in shaping the future of education and the tertiary sub-sector in Nigeria, it is imperative that all stakeholders' government, private sector, and civil society come together in a unified call to action to amend the TETFund Act to increase the education tax to improve funding to 5 percent. The collective strength of our voices can advocate for increased funding and transformative change in our education system in Nigeria.

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