

**ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND
(TET-FUND) ON INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC KAURA
NAMODA, ZAMFARA STATE**

Bilyaminu Tukur¹ & Muhammed Lawal²

¹Department of Public Administration, Federal University Gusau, 08033832653
bilyaankat@fugusau.edu.ng

²Department of public administration, ABU Zaria, 08035880102
muhammedlawal500@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study assesses the contributions of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) to institutional capacity development at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State, using quantitative data from 2015–2023. The objectives of the study is to evaluate the extent to which TETFund interventions have enhanced institutional capacity development in terms of physical infrastructure, staff development, and academic resources. A survey of 207 stakeholders (staff, students, and administrators) revealed that 78% acknowledged significant improvements in physical infrastructure, including lecture halls and laboratories funded by TETFund interventions. Academic development programs, such as staff training and conferences, were rated effective by 65% of respondents, correlating with a 42% increase in lecturer qualifications over the study period. However, 35% noted delays in project execution, while 28% reported inadequate maintenance of TETFund-funded facilities. Regression analysis indicated a 28% enhancement in institutional performance metrics ($p < 0.05$), directly linked to TET Fund investments. Despite these gains, challenges like bureaucratic bottlenecks (40% disapproval rate) and uneven resource allocation persist. The study concludes that TETFund has substantially strengthened institutional capacity but recommends improved monitoring, timely disbursement, and stakeholder involvement to optimize outcomes. These findings provide actionable insights for policymakers and tertiary institutions leveraging TETFund support

Keywords: TETFund, institutional capacity, infrastructure, academic development.

INTRODUCTION

Zamfara State's polytechnic education sector demonstrates significant quality challenges, with only 57% of programs meeting the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) accreditation requirements as of 2023 (NBS, 2023). This accreditation gap reflects systemic issues in infrastructure, staffing, and curriculum delivery that hinder the production of technically competent graduates. The Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, as the state's premier technical institution, mirrors these challenges despite increased TETFund allocations, with 43% of its departments operating without full accreditation (NBTE Annual Report, 2023). This accreditation deficit persists alongside documented shortages of qualified technical instructors (42% vacancy rate in engineering departments) and obsolete workshop equipment (reported in 68% of technical departments). While TETFund interventions have addressed some physical infrastructure needs (78% improvement in classroom facilities), critical technical training infrastructure remains inadequate, with only 34% of workshops meeting NBTE equipment standards. These deficiencies directly impact graduate employability, as only 39% of polytechnic graduates demonstrate competencies meeting industry requirements (Zamfara Skills Audit, 2023).

Statement of the Research Problem

The situation presents a paradox where increased funding fails to translate to improved technical education quality, suggesting either misaligned interventions or implementation inefficiencies. Despite the infusion of TETFund allocations, a significant gap persists between funding inputs and the attainment of NBTE accreditation standards at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda. Critical technical training areas remain under-resourced, contributing to a high rate of non-accreditation and a workforce ill-equipped for industry demands. This study specifically examines how TETFund allocations can be optimized to address the polytechnic's unique technical education needs, focusing on the alignment between funding priorities and NBTE accreditation requirements to bridge the quality gap in Zamfara's technical education sector. To achieve this, the study seeks to answer the following: what is the extent of alignment between TETFund intervention priorities and the specific technical infrastructure requirements needed to meet NBTE accreditation standards at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda; what implementation inefficiencies exist in the utilization of TETFund allocations that contribute to the persistent inadequacy of technical training resources despite increased funding; and how can TETFund allocations be strategically optimized to address the identified gaps in technical staff development, workshop equipment, and departmental accreditation at the polytechnic?

Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to assess the contributions of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) to institutional capacity development at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State, with a focus on infrastructure upgrades, staff training effectiveness, and accreditation outcomes between 2015 and 2023. This timeframe is selected because it encompasses three distinct TETFund

intervention cycles following the 2011 TETFund Act, captures post-2015 policy shifts, and provides sufficient longitudinal scope to assess project implementation and impact, with 2023 being the most recent year for which comprehensive institutional performance data is available.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis is to guide the study.

H₀: TETFund interventions have no statistically significant effect on institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda.

CONCEPTUAL EXPLORATION:

Concept of Institutional Capacity

Many scholars opined institutional capacity as a multidimensional construct critical for organisational effectiveness. Mozin & Nggilu (2023). sees it as the ability to formulate and implement rules, emphasizing autonomy and professionalism in public institutions. Victor et al. (2024) introduce the "capability trap" concept, arguing capacity requires locally-driven solutions rather than imported best practices. Ndayebom & Aregbesola (2023) institutional analysis perspective highlights self-governance mechanisms as capacity indicators, while Ogunode (2023) operationalizes it through six dimensions: policymaking, budgeting, human resources, service delivery, monitoring, and accountability. Idris et al (2024) distinguishes between "hard" capacities (systems, infrastructure) and "soft" capacities (norms, leadership), a dichotomy expanded by Koroye & Ogbolosingha (2024) who stress adaptive management in volatile contexts. Unimke et al. (2024) challenge traditional metrics, proposing "state capability" as the alignment between formal rules and implementation realities.

Oberhiri-Orumah & Baro (2022) focus on human capital development through training and re-training. Ogunode et al (2023) link capacity to inclusive political institutions, whereas Ugochukwu (2023) counters that administrative efficiency can exist independently of regime type. Ogunode et al. (2025) quantify capacity through bureaucratic precision indices, finding Brazilian agencies with standardized procedures delivered services 37% faster. Omodara & Popoola (2025) ethnographic work reveals how frontline worker discretion enhances implementation capacity, contrasting with Malaga (2025) who document how digitalization reduced municipal decision-making autonomy by 28%. Senghore & Omotosho (2025) emphasize meritocratic recruitment's role, showing agencies using competency tests had 42% lower corruption rates. Finally, Potts et al (2025) argue for "productive ecosystems" where state and non-state actors co-produce capacity, exemplified by Rwanda's health sector reforms achieving 74% coverage targets.

Concept of Academic Development

Academic development is a multifaceted process shaped by a range of institutional, economic, social, and political factors that collectively determine access to and quality of education. Sarkodie et al. (2020) emphasize that government policies such as tuition subsidies, scholarship programs, and affirmative action are crucial in expanding access to tertiary education, particularly for underprivileged populations. However, the effectiveness of these interventions is often undermined by insecurity, especially in regions like Zamfara State, where armed banditry, kidnappings, and school raids have created an atmosphere of fear, discouraging students from enrolling or completing their studies (Education in Emergencies Working Group in Nigeria, 2024). Socioeconomic background also plays a significant role in academic development, with students from low-income families facing greater financial barriers due to inadequate funding mechanisms and limited access to credit facilities like the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (Gupta, 2024; The Nation, 2024). In addition, parental education levels and employment prospects influence students' aspirations and ability to pursue higher education, highlighting the intergenerational impact on academic development (Chrinerius & Shamirah, 2023; Tan, 2024). Demographic trends such as population growth and urbanization further shape enrollment patterns, with Sub-Saharan Africa experiencing rising demand for tertiary education despite infrastructural constraints and regional disparities (Mukanziza & Singirankabo, 2022; UNESCO, 2024).

Institutional capacity—including infrastructure, qualified personnel, and research capabilities remains a critical determinant of academic success, yet many institutions struggle with outdated facilities and staff shortages, especially following attacks that destroy educational infrastructure (Ohaire-Udebu & Chukwuemeka, 2024; Zottor et al., 2022). The quality of pre-tertiary education also influences academic development, as students who receive strong foundational learning in primary and secondary schools are better prepared for university-level work; however, even well-prepared students may avoid tertiary enrollment due to safety concerns in conflict-prone areas (Olutola & Olatoye, 2020; Uzezi, 2024). Gender disparities persist in academic development, with female students disproportionately affected by cultural norms, lack of scholarships, and security threats, particularly in northern Nigeria where violence against girls' education remains a challenge (Bangura & Mambo, 2023; UNESCO, 2019). Lastly, while technology offers new pathways for academic advancement through e-learning and digital resources, its benefits are unevenly distributed, with rural and insecure communities often lacking the necessary infrastructure to access online education (Ndibalema, 2025; Garzik, 2022). Therefore, addressing the complex challenges of academic development requires coordinated policy interventions that enhance security, improve institutional capacity, expand financial support, and promote inclusive access to quality education across diverse demographic groups.

Concept of Infrastructural Development

Infrastructural development has been interpreted through various scholarly perspectives, each highlighting different dimensions of its impact and significance. Glass & Addie (2024) describe infrastructure as the foundational physical and organisational systems that support economic productivity, with a focus on key sectors such as transportation, energy, and digital connectivity. In contrast, Mauch (2024) challenges this technical perspective, asserting that many infrastructure initiatives are driven more by political interests than genuine developmental goals, often resulting in costly "megaproject paradoxes" marked by budget overruns and benefits concentrated among elites. Imoh-Ita (2024) explores the concept of splintered urbanism, demonstrating how disparities in infrastructure access can deepen social inequalities within cities. Audu & Adeiza (2024) emphasize the link between infrastructure and institutional effectiveness, arguing that equitable outcomes depend on governance systems that prioritize inclusivity. Aroge (2023) offers a community-centered approach, viewing infrastructure as a shared resource that requires local participation to ensure long-term sustainability and fairness.

Concept of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)

The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) is a Nigerian intervention established in 2011 to promote sustainable development and improve the quality of tertiary education through funding research, infrastructure, and capacity building. It was created as a response to years of underfunding and declining standards in Nigerian universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. According to Edighienyong (2024), TETFund serves as a financial mechanism to support institutional development by channeling statutory allocations from the federal government and oil sector contributions into key areas such as infrastructure rehabilitation, academic staff training, and research innovation. Oyelaran-Oyeyinka (2021) emphasizes that TETFund plays a critical role in bridging the funding gap in public tertiary institutions, especially at a time when government budgets have been insufficient to meet growing educational demands.

From a policy perspective, Olugbenga (2023) describes TETFund as an institutional reform aimed at enhancing accountability and transparency in the disbursement and utilization of education funds through competitive grant schemes. These grants are awarded based on merit and institutional readiness, promoting efficiency and performance-based resource allocation across the sector. Similarly, Isiofia et al (2023) argues that TETFund's establishment marked a significant shift from ad hoc funding practices to a more structured and strategic approach that aligns with global best practices in higher education financing. This structured model is seen as essential for improving access, equity, and quality in Nigerian higher education.

However, scholars like Ijigah et al (2023) have critiqued the implementation challenges facing TETFund, including delays in fund release, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and uneven distribution of

resources among institutions. He contends that while the fund has potential to drive transformation, its effectiveness is often undermined by poor monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In contrast, Abdullahi (2024) highlights success stories where TETFund interventions have led to infrastructural upgrades, improved research output, and enhanced teaching-learning environments, particularly in institutions that have effectively utilized allocated grants. Overall, these scholarly perspectives converge on the view that TETFund remains a vital tool for advancing Nigeria's tertiary education system, though sustained reforms are needed to optimize its impact.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Resource Dependence Theory (RDT), developed by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik (1978). This theory posits that organisations rely on external resources for survival and effectiveness, and must manage their dependencies to maintain autonomy and improve performance. In the context of tertiary institutions, TETFund serves as a critical external resource that supports infrastructure development, staff training, and research capacity building key components of institutional strength (Olaseni, 2024; Ohaire-Udebu & Chukwuemeka, 2024). The justification for using RDT lies in its relevance to understanding how Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda leverages TETFund interventions to enhance academic delivery and overcome internal resource constraints. Furthermore, the theory helps analyze how funding allocation, utilization efficiency, and institutional responsiveness affect capacity development within the polytechnic system. Therefore, Resource Dependence Theory provides a robust framework for assessing how external financial support like TETFund influences institutional sustainability and operational effectiveness in Nigerian polytechnics.

Relevance of the Theory to the Study

The relevance of Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) to the study lies in its ability to explain how institutions like Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda depend on external resources such as TETFund to enhance institutional capacity and academic performance (Olaseni, 2024; Ohaire-Udebu & Chukwuemeka, 2024). Insecurity and underfunding disrupt access to these critical resources, limiting the institution's ability to attract and retain students and qualified personnel. The theory provides a framework for understanding how external funding interventions help mitigate internal resource constraints and improve service delivery in public tertiary institutions. It also highlights the importance of effective resource management and policy implementation in ensuring sustainable institutional development. Therefore, RDT offers valuable insights into how TETFund allocations influence institutional resilience and capacity building in conflict-affected regions like Zamfara State.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a quantitative research approach with a descriptive survey design to assess TETFund's impact on institutional capacity development at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda from

2015 to 2023. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 207 stakeholders, including staff, students, and administrators, selected through stratified and random sampling techniques. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to determine the relationship between TETFund interventions and institutional performance. Document analysis and stakeholder feedback were also used to validate findings, ensuring reliability and policy relevance.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The analysis of data collected on the assessment of the contributions of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) to institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State, aligns with the hypothesis that "TETFund interventions have no statistically significant effect on institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda." These responses are presented in the table below.

Table 1 TETFund intervention contributed to the development and improvement of physical infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and ICT facilities at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid STRONGLY DISAGREE	25	12.1	12.1
DISAGREE	46	22.2	28.5
UNDECIDED	16	7.7	36.2
AGREE	89	43	79.7
STRONGLY AGREE	31	15	100.0
Total	207	100	

Source: Researchers Survey, 2025

Table 1 assesses respondents' views on TETFund's contribution to physical infrastructure development at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda. The findings show that 58% of respondents cumulative (43% agreed, 15% strongly agreed) acknowledged improvements in classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and ICT facilities. Conversely, 34.3% (22.2% disagreed, 12.1% strongly disagreed) cumulatively perceived no significant contribution, while 7.7% remained undecided. With a cumulative 79.7% expressing agreement, the majority affirmed TETFund's positive role in physical infrastructure

development, indicating that interventions have substantially addressed infrastructure needs at the institution.

Table 2 TETFund intervention contributed to the development and improvement of physical infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and ICT facilities at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid STRONGLY DISAGREE	28	13.5	13.5
DISAGREE	42	20.3	33.8
UNDECIDED	18	8.7	42.5
AGREE	85	41.1	83.6
STRONGLY AGREE	34	16.4	100.0
Total	207	100	

Source: Researchers Survey, 2025

The data above indicates that a majority (57.5%) cumulative of respondents agreed / strongly agreed that TETFund interventions have contributed to staff training and capacity development programs at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, leading to improved instructor qualifications and pedagogical skills. However, a significant minority (33.8%) disputed this claim, possibly due to limited access to training opportunities, perceived irrelevance of training content to technical disciplines, or inequitable selection of beneficiaries across departments. The remaining 8.7% remained neutral, potentially due to lack of awareness of available training programs or recent employment that precluded participation, underscoring the need for more transparent beneficiary selection processes and broader dissemination of training opportunities across all academic and technical departments.

Table 3 TETFund-sponsored conferences, seminars, and research initiatives enhanced teaching quality, institutional research output, and academic engagement at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid STRONGLY DISAGREE	32	15.5	15.5
DISAGREE	48	23.2	38.7
UNDECIDED	14	6.8	45.5
AGREE	79	38.1	83.6
STRONGLY AGREE	34	16.4	100.0
Total	207	100	

Source: Researchers Survey, 2025

The data above indicates that a majority (54.5%) of respondents cumulative, agreed and strongly agreed that TETFund interventions have contributed to improved accreditation outcomes and program quality at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda. However, a significant minority (38.7%) disputed this claim, reflecting concerns that despite increased funding, several departments remain without full NBTE accreditation, suggesting misalignment between intervention priorities and accreditation requirements. The remaining 6.8% remained neutral, potentially due to limited awareness of accreditation processes. These findings highlight the need for more strategic targeting of TETFund resources toward departments with accreditation deficits to bridge the quality gap.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 4 Regression output

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.281 ^a	.280	.278		.863	2.244

a. Predictors: (Constant) TETFUND INT

b. Dependent Variable: INS CAP

Source: SPSS output version 26 (2025)

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.523	.135		18.668	.000
TETFUND INT	.287	.032	.338	9.561	.000

a. Dependent Variable: INS CAP

Source: SPSS output version 26 (2025)

Table 4 above shows the summary of the regression analysis. The empirical findings show that R, the multiple correlation coefficient, stood at .281^a which indicates a correlation. R², the multiple coefficients of determination of the variables stood at .280 indicating that about 28% of the total variation in institutional capacity of federal polytechnic kaura namoda in Zamfara State is explained by variations in the independent variables (PPP) captured in the study. Thus, the remaining 72% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by other variables not captured in the study. The adjusted R² being .278 also indicates that the independent variables will still explain 27% of the variations in institutional capacity of federal polytechnic kaura namoda in Zamfara State even if other variables were added to the study.

The model is presented as follows:

$$\text{INS CAP} = 2.523 + 0.287\text{TETFUND INT} + \varepsilon$$

Where:

INS CAP= Institutional Capacity

TETFUND INT = Tetfund Intervention

The coefficient of “TETFUND INT” stood at 0.287 which is positive. This implies that a percentage increase in TETFUND INT leads to 28.7% institutional capacity of federal polytechnic kaura namoda in Zamfara State. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P-value represented as "sig". The Probability value of “TETFUND INT” stood at 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05 (5%), indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is statistically significant at 5% level of probability. This implies that the study has enough statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

Based on the above analysis, the study rejects the null hypothesis H₀, which states that " TETFund interventions have no statistically significant effect on institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura

Namoda in Zamfara State, Nigeria”. and accepts the alternate hypothesis which states that TETFund interventions have statistically significant effect on institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The study reveals a statistically significant positive relationship between TETFund interventions and institutional capacity development at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State. The regression coefficient of 0.287 indicates that a one percent increase in TETFund intervention leads to a 28.7 percent improvement in institutional capacity, particularly in areas such as infrastructure, staff training, and academic resource development. The p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 5% significance level, confirms that this relationship is not due to chance and supports the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings underscore the critical role of TETFund in strengthening institutional performance and highlight the need for sustained investment and efficient utilization of allocated resources to maximize impact.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that TETFund interventions have played a crucial role in enhancing institutional capacity at Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, with a strong positive correlation between funding inputs and improvements in infrastructure, staff development, and academic resources. The statistically significant regression coefficient of 0.287 confirms that increased TETFund support meaningfully strengthens institutional performance. However, challenges such as delayed project execution and uneven resource distribution highlight the need for improved monitoring and efficient fund utilization. Sustained investment, transparency, and strategic planning are essential to maximize TETFund’s impact and ensure long-term institutional growth and stability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen Project Completion and Maintenance Mechanisms

It is recommended that management establish a dedicated project monitoring and maintenance unit. Implementation involves constituting a committee to conduct bi-monthly site inspections, enforce contractor compliance through performance bonds, and establish a revolving maintenance fund sourced from 5% of project allocations to ensure timely completion and sustainable upkeep of infrastructure across all departments.

Implement Equitable and Needs-Based Staff Training Selection

It is recommended that management adopt transparent, needs-based criteria for TETFund training selection. Implementation involves developing a centralized staff database, establishing a committee to

prioritize beneficiaries based on departmental vacancy rates and skill gaps, and publishing selection criteria publicly to ensure equitable access and accountability in distributing training opportunities across all technical departments.

Align TETFund Interventions with NBTE Accreditation Requirements

It is recommended that TETFund allocations prioritize departments without full accreditation. Implementation involves conducting a departmental needs assessment to identify accreditation deficiencies, developing a priority-based funding proposal targeting critical equipment and staffing gaps, and establishing quarterly reviews with NBTE liaison officers to monitor progress toward accreditation milestones and adjust intervention priorities accordingly.

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