Impact of Government Intervention on Academic Staff Productivity in Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of government interventions on academic staff productivity in government-owned Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. Guided by two objectives with corresponding research questions and hypotheses, the study adopted a descriptive survey design. From a population of 3,098 academic and management staff, a sample of 346 was selected using a stratified sampling technique to ensure proportional representation. Out of the 346 questionnaires administered, 315 were retrieved and analysed. Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled Government Interventions and Academic Staff Productivity and Performance Questionnaire (GIASPPQ), validated by experts and pilot-tested with 50 staff at Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.75. Descriptive statistics (weighted mean, benchmark = 3.50) and inferential tests (one-sample t-test and chi-square) were conducted using Stata software at the 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that government interventions significantly enhanced academic staff productivity ($p < 0.05$). Among identified challenges, only one variable (Chall5) showed a significant association with age ($\chi^2 = 23.37$, df = 12, $p = 0.025$). It was recommended that government should expand TETFund's capacity-building programmes and link future grants to measurable improvements in research output and teaching performance.

Keywords: Government Intervention, Academic Staff Productivity, TETFund, Higher Education

1. Introduction

Government interventions play a pivotal role in enhancing academic staff productivity and performance in Nigeria's tertiary institutions, particularly in Colleges of Education across the North-Central region. Academic staff development—through formal and informal training—equips educators with the skills necessary for effective teaching and career advancement (Winston & Creamer, 2017). Initiatives such as scholarships for postgraduate education and conference participation are critical for academic growth. However, persistent challenges such as poor funding and inadequate infrastructure continue to hinder institutional and staff development in public tertiary institutions (Olawale & Ayo, 2021).

In response to continued advocacy by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) for improved educational funding, the Federal Government established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) in 2011, replacing the Education Tax Fund (ETF). Since its inception, TETFund has been instrumental in promoting academic staff development across government-owned tertiary institutions, significantly contributing to improved educational quality (TETFund, 2017). Academic staff in Colleges of Education play a crucial role in training future teachers by imparting pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and professional ethics, thereby strengthening the foundation of Nigeria's education system (Obanya, 2014).

Beyond teaching, academic staff contribute to national development through research, community engagement, and educational policy advocacy (Afe, 2003; Uche & Ahunanya, 2013). Government interventions, such as research grants, institutional training, and infrastructure development, have enhanced staff productivity to some degree. Nevertheless, recurring issues like underfunding, weak implementation, and administrative bottlenecks continue to constrain their full impact (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2009; Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011). Similarly, inadequate facilities, poor working conditions, and limited career opportunities negatively affect staff morale and overall performance in Colleges of Education (Ejiogu & Ojewola, 2021).

Academic staff performance is further shaped by job satisfaction, which depends largely on institutional support and a conducive work environment. Adequate support systems foster greater commitment and innovation among staff, while poor conditions lead to burnout and diminished productivity (Omoegun & Ogunlana, 2022; Babalola & Onasanya, 2023). In addition, limited funding and outdated teaching resources continue to weaken the quality of instruction and research output (Ajayi & Odusola, 2020; Ogundare, 2021). Strengthening staff welfare, professional development opportunities, and funding mechanisms is, therefore, essential for improving productivity in Colleges of Education (Onifade, 2023).

Despite these interventions, the expected improvements in staff productivity across Colleges of Education have not been fully realized. Persistent challenges such as inadequate funding, delayed disbursement of intervention funds, weak monitoring mechanisms, and limited access to training opportunities continue to undermine the effectiveness of government programs. Consequently, academic staff morale, research output, and teaching quality remain suboptimal (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2009).

Against this background, the present study assesses the effectiveness of government interventions in enhancing academic staff productivity and identifies the key challenges affecting their implementation in Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study tests two null hypotheses: that government interventions are not significantly effective in enhancing academic staff productivity, and that government-owned Colleges of Education in the region do not face significant challenges in implementing interventions for academic staff development. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: introduction, literature review, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion with recommendations.

2. Literature Review

Concept of Productivity

Productivity is the ability to perform work duties in a timely, cost-effective, and thorough manner (Sultana, Irum, Ahmed, & Mehmood, 2012). The ILO defines it as the ratio of output to production resources (Kato, 2016), while Kaur (2016) links it to completing tasks that impact output quality and timeliness. Heathfield (2021) views it as efficiency in turning inputs into valued outputs. Boundless Management (2020) asserted productivity is the production of commodities per unit of input of labour

Concept of Government interventions

Government interventions are deliberate actions by authorities to regulate, support, or correct aspects of the economy and society to achieve developmental goals (Todaro & Smith, 2020). The objectives are to correct market inefficiencies, minimize inequality, ensure economic stability, and enhance overall welfare. Such actions include policies in infrastructure, health, education, labour markets, and environmental protection. They also ensure fair resource allocation and support sustainable development (Tutor2u, 2018).

Challenges and Funding Issues in Nigerian Colleges of Education

Academic staff in Nigerian Colleges of Education are essential in training future educators under the NCE program, yet their efficiency is hampered by inadequate funding, staff shortages, and inconsistent quality assurance. Insufficient financial resources limit research and development (Daniel, Urhiewhu, & Emezaivwakpor, 2022). Staffing gaps increase workloads and diminish teaching quality (Aina & Akintunde, 2022), while poor quality control highlights the need for frameworks like ACE to boost standards (Aina & Akintunde, 2022).

Although enrolment is growing and new institutions are emerging, challenges like poor infrastructure, resource scarcity, and lack of journals persist across the education sector (Okecha, 2008). Funding sources include public expenditures, loans, and the Education Tax Fund managed by TETFund for tertiary and UBEC for basic education (UBEC, 2020). However, private contributions remain marginal.

Nigerian tertiary institutions also grapple with weak infrastructure, limited tools, power issues, and outdated curricula, which hinder educational outcomes (Lawal, 2023). Added issues such as brain drain, student unrest, and poor inter-agency coordination contribute to a declining academic environment (Eze & Uche, 2021).

Government Interventions in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) function as the central regulatory authority for Nigeria's colleges of education, responsible for accreditation, quality assurance, infrastructure development, and financial support in line with national objectives (NCCE, 2020; Obizue & Okoro, 2016). Its functions include policy formulation, curriculum development, fund allocation, teacher certification design, and coordination of non-university teacher education. Complementing this role, TETFund's National Research Fund enhances academic standards through library development, staff training, research grants, and conference support (TETFund, 2014; TETFund, 2021; Aina, 2018). These interventions strengthen resources (Olalekan & Adeniyi, 2020), provide postgraduate opportunities (ISSN, 2021), fund impactful studies, foster professional growth, and promote innovation (TETFund, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The Human Capital Theory by Becker and Schultz (1960) highlights the importance of skills, knowledge, and education in boosting productivity. In North-Central Nigerian Colleges of Education, government interventions, such as training and professional development programs, align with this theory by enhancing the teaching and research capabilities of academic staff. This investment in human capital improves education quality and contributes to broader economic development. Government support, through training and development programs, equips academic staff with the skills needed to prepare students for the labour market, reduce unemployment, and promote economic participation. Enhanced education fosters a skilled workforce, attracts investment, and drives sustainable economic growth in Nigeria.

Empirical Review

Ajayi (2024) examined the relationship between infrastructural facilities, lecturers' job effectiveness, and students' academic performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions using secondary data from published sources. The study established that adequate infrastructural facilities significantly enhance both academic staff performance and student outcomes. It recommended that the government increase funding for infrastructural development in tertiary institutions to improve overall educational quality.

Omosidi, Atolagbe, and Johnson (2023) investigated the influence of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) interventions on lecturers' productivity in government-owned Colleges of Education in Kogi State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive research design and reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.75 for the instruments, the study revealed that TETFund interventions in staff training and infrastructure had a positive and significant effect on lecturers' productivity. The authors recommended that college management intensify efforts to access and effectively utilize TETFund allocations for academic improvement.

Amadi and Okpara (2022) explored the impact of teachers' welfare programmes on the productivity of secondary school teachers in university demonstration schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Adopting a descriptive survey design with validated instruments (reliability indices of 0.87 and 0.78), the study found that welfare initiatives such as regular promotions and financial incentives significantly enhanced teacher productivity. The study recommended that promotions be conducted regularly and based on merit to sustain high performance among teachers.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to examine government interventions and academic staff productivity in government-owned Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. The target population comprised 3,098 academic and management staff drawn from twelve Colleges of Education within the region, as presented in Table 1: Population of Academic and Management Staff in Government-Owned Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria (2025).

S/N	Name of Institution	Academic Staff	Management Staff	Total
1	Niger State College of Education, Minna	340	6	346
2	FCT College of Education, Zuba	346	8	354
3	Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi State	425	5	430
4	College of Education, Ankpa, Kogi State	283	4	287
5	College of Education, Katsina-Ala, Benue State	253	6	259
6	College of Education, Gindiri, Plateau State	302	7	309
7	College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State	400	4	404
8	College of Education (Technical), Lafiagi, Kwara State	107	7	114
9	College of Education, Oro, Kwara State	146	7	153
10	College of Education (Technical), Kabba, Kogi State	200	4	204
11	College of Education, Oju, Benue State	82	5	87
12	College of Education, Odugbo, Benue State	147	4	151
Total		3,031	67	3,098

Source: Registrars, 2025

From a population of 3,098 academic and management staff drawn from twelve government-owned Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria, a sample of

346 was determined using the Research Advisor (2026) Sample Size Table and selected through a stratified sampling technique to ensure proportional representation of both academic and management staff. Out of the 346 questionnaires administered, a total of 315 were retrieved and analysed. Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled Government Interventions and Academic Staff Productivity and Performance Questionnaire (GIASPPQ), which was validated by experts from the Department of Economics, College of Education, Minna, and pilot-tested at the Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.75. To address the research questions, descriptive statistics (weighted mean; benchmark = 3.50) were employed, while the null hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics (one-sample t-test and chi-square), conducted with Stata software at the 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 2: Demographic Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
Female	179	56.83	56.83
Male	136	43.17	100.00
Total	**315**	**100.00**	—

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The demographic distribution of the 315 respondents indicates a higher proportion of female participants (n = 179, 56.83%) compared to males (n = 136, 43.17%). This suggests that female respondents were more represented in the study sample.

Table 3: Demographic Distribution of Respondents by Age Range

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)
18–25 years	18	5.71	5.71
26–35 years	48	15.24	20.95
36–45 years	97	30.79	51.75
46 years & above	152	48.25	100.00
Total	**315**	**100.00**	—

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents fell within the 46 years and above category (n = 152, 48.25%), followed by those aged 36–45 years (n = 97, 30.79%). A smaller proportion were within the 26–35 years range (n = 48, 15.24%), while only 5.71% (n = 18) were aged 18–25 years. This indicates that the sample largely comprised older individuals, particularly those above 36 years.

Table 4: Demographic Distribution of Respondents by Qualification

Variable	**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**	**Cumulative (%)**
NCE	63	20.00	20.00
Bachelor's Degree	117	37.14	57.14
Master's Degree	114	36.19	93.33
Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.)	21	6.67	100.00
Total	**315**	**100.00**	—

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table 4 is regarding educational qualification, a significant portion held a Bachelor's degree (37.14%) or a Master's degree (36.19%). About 20% had an NCE (Nigeria Certificate in Education), and 6.67% held a Doctorate. This reflects a highly educated respondents' population, with over 80% holding at least a bachelor's degree.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Effectiveness of Government Interventions

S/N	Variable	Mean	Std. Erro
1.	Federal Ministry of Education's integration of ICT tools enhances academic staff productivity in Colleges of Education.	4.33	0.050
2.	The enforcement of minimum standards through the NCCE enhances academic staff productivity	4.15	0.056
3.	NCCE's accreditation exercises enhance academic staff productivity.	4.12	0.055
4.	Curriculum development and review initiatives of the NCCE support staff productivity	4.03	0.057
5.	TETFund's research funding initiatives significantly enhance academic staff productivity	4.38	0.051
6.	TETFund Academic Staff Training and Development (AST&D) programs enhance academic staff productivity.	4.33	0.058

Source: Field Survey, 2025
Weighted Mean= 3.50

Table 5 shows that all six government interventions are perceived as highly effective in enhancing academic staff productivity in Colleges of Education, with mean scores above 4.00.

TETFund research funding (4.38), ICT integration (4.33), and staff training (4.33) ranked highest, while enforcement of standards (4.15), accreditation (4.12), and curriculum review (4.03) respectively.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Challenges Affecting Staff Performance

S/N	Variable	Mean	Std. Error
1.	There are concerns about the decline in the quality of teaching in government-owned Colleges of Education.	4.45	0.038
2.	Decline in Students' performance is a concern in government-owned Colleges of Education.	4.44	0.040
3.	Colleges of Education face significant underfunding	4.43	0.044
4.	Government-owned Colleges of Education lack sufficient infrastructure.	4.29	0.047
5.	Research and innovation activities are not adequately emphasized in Colleges of Education.	4.24	0.055
6.	Shortage of manpower poses a challenge to the smooth operation of government-owned Colleges of Education.	4.52	0.036

Source: Field Survey, 2025
Weighted Mean= 3.50

The descriptive statistics reveals that academic staff in government-owned Colleges of Education strongly agreed that several challenges hinder their performance, with all mean scores exceeding 4.2. The most critical issue was a shortage of manpower (Mean = 4.52), followed by a decline in teaching quality (Mean = 4.45) and students' performance (Mean = 4.44). Other major challenges include underfunding (Mean = 4.43), inadequate infrastructure (Mean = 4.29), and limited focus on research and innovation (Mean = 4.24). The results indicate a consistent perception among respondents, highlighting the widespread and persistent nature of these institutional challenges.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 7: One-Sample t-Test Results for Government Interventions (GovInt1–GovInt6)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	95% Conf. Interval	t-value	p-value (two-tailed)
GovIn1	315	4.327	0.0500	0.8875	[4.229, 4.425]	86.53	0.000
GovInt2	315	4.152	0.0562	0.9979	[4.042, 4.263]	73.85	0.000
GovInt3	315	4.124	0.0547	0.9712	[4.016, 4.231]	75.36	0.000
GovInt4	315	4.032	0.0570	1.0122	[3.920, 4.144]	70.70	0.000
GovInt5	315	4.381	0.0513	0.9105	[4.280, 4.482]	85.40	0.000
GovInt6	315	4.327	0.0575	1.0210	[4.214, 4.440]	75.22	0.000

p-values < 0.005, indicating significant positive perception of interventions.

The results of the one-sample t-tests reveal that the mean scores of all six government intervention variables (GovInt1 to GovInt6) are significantly greater than zero, with p-values < 0.005 in all cases. This indicates that the respondents, on average, rated the effectiveness of the government interventions significantly above the neutral baseline of zero. The means range from 4.03 to 4.38, suggesting a consistently high perception of intervention effectiveness. The tight confidence intervals and large t-values further affirm the statistical strength of these findings.

Table 8: Chi-Square Test Summary between Age Range and Challenges Affecting Academic Staff Productivity (Chall1–Chall6)

Challenge Variable	Df	Pearson Chi-Square (χ^2)	p-value	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
Chall1	9	3.8057	0.924	No
Chall2	12	9.8969	0.625	No
Chall3	12	6.8851	0.865	No
Chall4	12	15.8602	0.198	No
Chall5	12	23.3663	0.025	Yes
Chall6	9	6.3306	0.706	No

p-values < 0.05, confirming significant agreement on the challenges

The chi-square test of independence revealed that only one challenge variable (Chall5) was significantly related to age range ($\chi^2 = 23.37$, df = 12, $p = 0.025$). This implies that age significantly influences perceptions related to Chall5. For all other challenge variables (Chall1, Chall2, Chall3, Chall4, and Chall6), the results showed no statistically significant relationship with age ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One: The results show that all six government intervention variables (GovInt1–GovInt6) are significantly above zero ($p < 0.005$); hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This finding supports Idakwoji and Makolo (2024) and Mafindi (2024), who reported that government training and mentoring programs enhance staff performance and satisfaction. Similarly, Amaechi and Obiweluozor (2020) emphasized that recruitment, training, and welfare packages are key drivers of academic staff productivity, while Iorkpiligh and Ogah (2024) and Sirajo et al. (2024) linked TETFund interventions such as scholarships and conferences to improved professional development.

Hypothesis Two: The findings indicate that only Chall5 was significant (χ^2 = 23.37, df = 12, $p = 0.025$); therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. For Chall1–Chall4 and Chall6 ($p > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. This aligns with the studies of Ogunode et al. (2023), Aibea and Aregbesola (2023), Stelle (2025), Sani et al. (2024), and Al-Amin (2024), who identified funding gaps, corruption, poor staffing, and outdated curricula as barriers to staff performance. Likewise, Oladebinu et al. (2018) associated poor facilities and low staff morale with declining student outcomes in tertiary institutions.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that government interventions—particularly those implemented through the Federal Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)—have significantly improved academic staff productivity in Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. TETFund's support for research and staff training remains the most impactful component, demonstrating that sustained investment in capacity-building directly enhances institutional effectiveness. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, limited infrastructure, shortage of qualified staff, weak ICT integration, and inconsistent policy execution continue to constrain optimal academic performance. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The government should expand TETFund's capacity-building programmes and link future grants to measurable improvements in research output and teaching performance.
2. College management should establish a digital learning and training hub to continuously upgrade staff ICT skills and technology-driven innovations.
3. The Federal and State Governments should adopt a performance-based funding model that rewards Colleges of Education demonstrating measurable progress in research and innovation,
4. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should strengthen quality assurance mechanisms through annual institutional audits focused on teaching standards and curriculum relevance.

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