

## Tertiary Education Trust Fund Sponsored Conferences and Staff Motivation in Gombe State University of Nigeria

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### Abstract

Inadequate staff motivation is one of the major areas that lacks significant concern from numerous stakeholders of Nigerian higher education sector leading to frequent brain-drain amongst academic staff of Nigerian Universities. This study examined the effects of conference attendance sponsored by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) on staff motivation among staff members of Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria. Primarily, this study used beneficiaries of TETFund conference sponsorship. Specifically, the study used 150 academic and non-academic staff of Gombe State University to obtain relevant data for the study. AMOS Structural Equation Modelling was used to analyze the collected data. The findings show that there is a significant relationship between academic conference and academic staff motivation at ( $p=0.003$ ). While the direct relationship between conference attendance and staff motivation among non-academic staff was insignificant at ( $p=0.586$ ) Thus, the findings indicated that TETFund sponsored conferences only motivate academic staff and does not motivate non-academic staff of Gombe State University. It is, therefore, recommended that the management of the university should ensure increased support to academic staff in securing TETFund conference sponsorship. At the same time, university management should encourage the non-academic staff to recognize and exploit advantages associated with relevant conference, workshops and seminars in their respective professions.

**Keywords:** Conference, Motivation, Academic, Staff and TETFund.

### Introduction

State owned universities are institutions recognized by the state government to offer higher education for its people. State universities are established to provide teaching, researching and community service within a state and within a country (Ogunode, Iyabode & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022). Nigerian constitution allows the state governments to establish and own their universities because education is on concurrent list. Based on this provision, all the states in Nigeria have established one, two or even three universities funded by the state government. Their infrastructural facilities, academic staff and non-academic staff and other resources are provided by the state government. Public

universities in Nigeria are grouped into federal and state-owned universities. The federal universities are owned by the federal government of Nigeria while the state universities are owned by the state government. The total number of federal and state public universities is 50 and 59 across the country (NUC Bulletin, 2022). Recently, the performance of performance universities especially the state universities are not encouraging. Public universities were established with the aims of providing services that significantly contribute within the context of a sound macro-economic and political environment to the growth of the society. Numerous earlier studies have identified that staff motivation contributes to the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency. In the higher education context, academic staff plays a significant role in a university to achieve the university's objectives and performance (Omar, Aziz & Salleh, 2020). Moreover, academic staff also determines the students' success. Therefore, understanding staff motivation among academics is crucial and necessary for the university because it leads to increase their performances (Torlak & Kuzey, 2019). One of the factors determining staff satisfaction and hard work among academic staff is staff motivation. Because staff motivation is crucial for the academic staff to determine their satisfaction, performance, students' achievement, and consequently, to improve the university's quality of services rendered.

Motivation is a popular concept defined in different ways by different scholars. Luthans (1998) defines motivation as the process that arouses, energizes, directs and sustains an individual's behavior and performance in a particular organization. On the other hand, staff motivation has been defined as the set of internal and external forces that initiate work-related behavior of staff and determine its form, direction, intensity and duration (Pinder, 1998). Therefore, staff motivation can be seen as any way, technique, or method of arousing and sustaining interest of an individual staff on a particular behavior toward achieving an end state of affairs. The staff of university, especially academic, are a key resource in achieving university set of goals. It is appropriate to argue that the success of every university significantly depends on the quality of its academic and non-academic staff. The motivation of university staff, who perform the role of a teacher, researcher, and administrators is paramount as it largely determines the quality of the students' learning experience and impact the universities make on the society as a whole.

Motivation has severally been found to have significant positive impact on the performance of university staff (Delgado, Yap & Luces, 2018; Mawoli & Babandako, 2011). Specifically, it was demonstrated that staff motivation in terms of appreciation on genuine effort, recognition of achievement, regular payment of salary and incentives, prospect for professional growth, availability of instructional facilities have strong influence on lecturers' performance (Mawoli & Babandako, 2011; Victor, & Babatunde, 2014), as well as non-academic staff (Delgado et al., 2018). According to Zameer, Ali, Nasir and Amir (2014) without motivating staff organizations can't run and can't attain their goals. They further claimed that for the success of any organization motivation plays an important role. Motivation is the only most important element of individual behavior that lead to positive mental health and challenge people to grow, contribute to the work environment and invest

themselves in the organization (Buchanan, 1997, Dauda & Mohammed, 2012). Therefore, continuous study of potential factors that could motivate university staff, academic or non-academic is necessary and efforts should be intensified in that direction.

In this light, university academic staff may gain higher motivation if they are encouraged through conference, seminar and workshops attendance or participation. However, most of the academic staff were not motivated in doing so which made them unable to impact adequately on their students. Because academic and non-academic staff are not only educating student but also carrying out various management tasks that may increase their performances and increases the university reputation (Omar, Rafie & Selo, 2020). Besides, academic staff also needs to multitask, juggling academic and non-academic tasks to ensure the organisation runs smoothly (Omar, Salleh & Aziz, 2020). According to Ridzuan, Baharudin, Ismail, Arham, Nazri and Rahman (2018), academic staff who constantly feels demotivated with the work will influence their work's execution and nature.

Despite the little improvement on motivation in the higher institutions of learning, motivation of staff in the Nigerian higher institutions of learning, it has still remained an area of serious concern. It has not been treated well and has been faced up with an alarming neglect and consequent brain drain of university lecturers, and several other professionals to other parts of the world. This neglect has caused untold negative effect on local students and the Nigerian nation as a whole who need their expertise and experiences (Buberwa, 2015). This indicates that concerns of motivation of staff at the higher institutions of learning need to be constantly be monitored and addressed squarely.

Theoretically, a few attempts were made in investigating the possible factors responsible for motivation of workers at the level of higher institutions of learning across the globe. Previous studies were able to make useful findings of motivation factors in the university setting including promotion and financial rewards such as salary pay (Buberwa, 2015; Onu, Akinlabi, & Fakunmoju, 2014; Onoyase, 2017; Rowley, 1996)

Other factors relative to motivation include personal autonomy, organizational structure, diversity of staff experience and assigned roles (Rowley, 1996). Similarly, organizational support, and welfare concerns including extending financial assistance when bereaved, health and safety workplace, study leave grant, support to get bank loans, and timely payment of salaries, and annual bonus were found to be the major factors responsible for igniting motivation among university community (Marufu & Uzhenyu, 2017).

In the same vein, many stakeholders benefit directly or indirectly with such academic and non-academic conferences and seminars. For instance, lecturers first get promoted whenever the attended and or participated in academic conferences on presentation of earned certificate, students also would benefit from the earned knowledge obtained by their lecturers from the attended conference, the university itself would be ranked higher than its counterparts thereby increasing its reputation. Therefore, conference attendance is worthwhile.

In view of the limited empirical studies on motivational factors in the university settings and the immeasurable importance motivation of employees has on students learning, social

progress, integration and general societal growth and development, this study was conducted to extend the previous studies made so far.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Academic and Non-academic staff are those professional handling various teaching and non-teaching services in the higher institutions respectively. Student welfare workers, secretaries, caretakers and cleaners form part of the non-academic professionals while lecturers form part of the academic staff of the university. Non-academic staff members are employees who work within the higher institutions and are contributing significantly to the success of higher education. They possess a wealth of institutional knowledge, charisma and drive to ensure that the universities' missions, visions and objectives are attained. Both academic and non-academics' contributions highly impact on the students' experience in the university environment. The cardinal programme of the universities include to produce manpower, conduct research and undertake community service. They assist with research, teaching and community development. The university system function because of the professionals who provide complementary roles other than teaching and research (Ogunode, Jegede, Abubakar, Martina 2020). Such staff are highly neglected in Nigerian universities in the areas that includes but not limited to lack of motivation, less consideration, lack of financial support to attend conferences to mention but a few. Unless this is done the problem would continue to deteriorate which would further lead to brain drain among both cadre of staff in Nigerian universities. This study therefore intends to assess the effects of TETFund sponsored conferences on both academic and nonacademic staff of Nigerian universities taking Gombe state university as a case study.

## **Research Questions**

- i. What are the effects of TETFund sponsored conferences on academic staff motivation in Gombe state university?
- ii. What are the effects of TETFund sponsored conferences on non-academic staff motivation in Gombe state university?

## **Research Objectives**

- i. To examine the effects of TETFund sponsored conferences on academic staff motivation of Gombe state university.
- ii. To assess the effects of TETFund sponsored conferences on academic staff motivation of Gombe state university.

## **Research Hypothesis**

- i. TETFund sponsored conferences would not motivate academic staff of Gombe state university.
- ii. TETFund sponsored conferences would not motivate staff non-academic of Gombe state university.

## Review of Literature

### An Overview

There is virtually nothing in the literature regarding to the relationship between conference attendance and motivation. This apparently made it difficult, in this paper, to adequately present and review relevant empirical literature. However, attempts were made to present and review the limited literature on the respective variables examined in this paper (i.e. conference attendance and motivation). Specifically, the paper examined the antecedents of motivation among the academic and non-academic staff of the higher institutions of learning. Importantly, also literature on the effects of conference attendance on individual and organization outcomes were examined and discussed.

### Outcomes of Conference Attendance

Wikipedia defines an academic conference or scientific conference as an event for researchers (not necessarily academics) to present and discuss their work. An academic conference is a one-day or multiday event during which researchers are expected to present their work, have comments and interact among themselves. Conferences are important ways researchers stay connected to others in their field and learn about cutting-edge scholarship. Conferences tends to be short and concise with a time period of roughly 10-30 minutes. Accordingly, the work may be bundled in written form as academic papers and published as conference proceedings. Tony (2012) argued that academic conferences typically fall into three categories including:

1. The themed conference which are small conferences organized around a particular topic.
2. The general conference, a conference with a wider focus with sessions on a wide variety of topics. These are often organized by regional, national or international learned societies, and held annually or on some other regular basis.
3. The professional conference is a large conference in which relevant and related issues that are not limited to academics are discussed.

In the same vein, it is widely accepted that building of human capability is one of the most important foundations of knowledge generation and it occupies an important position in promoting a nation's prosperity and its citizens' well-being in the knowledge-based era. Four key benefits of attending conferences were identified to include learning new techniques, technologies; grow a continuous improvement, educational and networking opportunities; face-to-face time; membership and commitment possibilities (Gibson, 2014, Adesope, Ifeanyi-Obi, Matthews-Njoku, Agumagu & Asiabaka, 2014). One important benefit of attending a conference is having opportunity of see "real" professionals in own area of specialization. Thus, there are three main arguments on the wisdom of investment in human capital (Babalola, 2003, Eze & Udom, 2015):

1. The new generation must be given the appropriate parts of the knowledge, which has already been gathered by previous generations.

2. The new generations should be learning how current knowledge are used to improve new products, to introduce new process, new invention techniques and public services.
3. Individuals must be stimulated to grow entirely new ideas, products, processes and methods through creative thinking approaches.

It is worth noting that, conferences are not about large gathering, but the quality of the people and the readiness to share findings, new ideas, and intellectually discuss issues bedeviling organizations or society at large. Any conference lacking those qualities are at best a jumble of enthusiasm and confusion (Sydney, 2017). Importantly, conference encourages development of collaboration among participants and the organizations they represent. Conference further refers to assembly of wealthy, accomplished gentlemen gather to deliberate thoughts and theories (Otero-Iglesias, 2018). Modern scientific gatherings are much more inclusive but they are still a worrying experience for numerous early researchers (Sydney, 2017)

Again, Professional development (PD) is one of the important issues for lecturers in higher education. Higher education quality is heavily influenced by lecturer quality and the professional development process has a significant positive impact on teacher quality (Buba, Dahiru & Nuhu, 2023). Recent researches suggest that lecturers need longer and sustainable professional programs to develop new knowledge and make good, observable progress (Wati, 2011). Udoh-uwah & Etim (2018) noted that to produce quality graduates with employability skills, abilities, and competencies to harness the available resources and solve practical problems in Nigeria, the university system must be efficient. The efficiency of the University system is greatly anchored on the competence of the academic staff which is dependent on their professional development because training and development play a vital role in the efficiency of the organizational system and the effectiveness of every personnel (Falola et al. 2014). In the University system, lecturers' professional development is encouraged through re-training programmes, mentorship, seminars, research publications, conferences, symposiums, inaugural lectures, Communication and Technology Gadget utilization, and so on (Igere, M. A., 2022). As good as these programmes were and are, it has been observed that they tend to not be 21st century oriented as they may not be inquiry-based kind of training, which should make teachers and educators discover knowledge for better facilitation of meaningful learning in the classrooms (Kambona, 2019).

Uzaru (2016) reported in her study on influence of Tertiary Education Trust Fund on educational research in Nigerian Universities that TETFund intervention to a high extent has no important influence on educational research in Universities in South East, Nigeria. A total of 386 lecturers have participated in the study. However, Adeniyi and Temitope (2015) designed to take a thorough look at university education in Nigeria from 1960 to 2015. They found that not only is the quality of education declining, but human thinking on tasks, involvement or pro-activeness and finances are also decreasing, a major reason why

Nigerians rudely give way to corrupt practices, which slip in like wolves and continue to devolve the system.

Research is a major tool for human advancement because most of the new products and services that people are enjoying at present were the research outcome of leading universities (Godwin, 2017). Conference attendance benefits academic staff learn from experts and learned people and develop their own knowledge and skills (Otero-Iglesias, 2018). According to Tipton (2018) being active in one's industry brings in it many benefits as there is power in being connected with other people who are active in training. Participating in learning events (i.e. conferences) impacts on results and overall experience of the participating staff (Tipton, 2018). Without exposure to a variety of points of view, academics miss new ideas and trends that can impact future academic results.

Conference attendance counts in the promotion of lecturers in the tertiary institutions (Kiruja & Elegwa, 2013). In a different perspective, Amaechi (2016) argues that TETFund has made contribution towards quality transformation of tertiary institutions in the area of staff training and development. It is worthy to note that attending conferences helps in learning latest trends in the fields of academic or professional endeavors. Against this background, Sangeeta (2018) posits that learning new things with the discussion is always better than learning with self-study.

Conference attendance has opportunities for participants to develop new relationships and strengthen existing ones (Kiruja & Mukuru, 2013). Specifically, conference attendance makes non-academic staff relate and socialize with their counterparts from other universities (Tipton, 2018). This is because human beings are social animals, who enjoy and get stimulated by interacting face to face with others (Otero-Iglesias -Iglesias, 2018). Hence, non-academics will be able to enter into conversation and talk about their work experiences (Tony, (2012).

### **Antecedents of Staff Motivation in the Higher Institutions of Learning**

For a long time, Nigerian university universities, and indeed Gombe state university and other sectors of education, have faced series of constraints in their service delivery efforts. These problems are largely due to poor economy, inadequate funding and misappropriation of funds meant for educational services and development (Anaelobi & Agim, 2019).). The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was worried by these developments which have always led to insufficient services and sometimes, non-provision of training programmes such as workshops and conferences in addition to essential information materials. Thus, the federal government had to come up with intervention measures to provide such workshops, seminars and conferences to help academics in areas that boasts research and teaching (TETFund Act, 2011). One of such measure according to (Ezeali, 2019) was the Federal Government agreement with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in 1992, to increase the total University budgetary allocation

A few numbers of studies were found in the literature on the antecedents of motivation in the higher institutions of learning. One of them was Buberwa (2015) who targeted a sample

of 75 academic staff of Tanzania public higher learning institutions. The results of his study revealed that salary pay was the major factor that influence academic staff for high performance at the University. Using a sample of academic staff of some higher institutions of learning in the UK, Rowley (1996) qualitatively established that financial rewards, the culture of teaching, higher education, personal autonomy, organizational structure, diversity of staff experience and roles were the major factors responsible for igniting motivation. In addition, using Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), Anaelobi and Agim (2019) tried to ascertain the level of motivation and the likely problems arising from lack of it among a sample of academic staff. After the study was conducted, the findings showed that extending financial assistance when bereaved, health and safety workplace, study leave grant, support to get bank loans, timely payment of salary and annual bonus were found to cause motivation among the academic staff. On the other hand, the results showed that long working hours, working during weekends, lack of good office accommodation, absence of research grant, and excessive administrative duties were found to lower motivation of the lecturers

In Nigerian context, Onu, Akinlabi, and Fakunmoju (2014) using 50 non-academics staff of a private university - Babcock University in Ogun State, examined the effect of some motivational factors comprising remuneration, recognition and incentives on their performance. After regression and correlation analyses to test the hypotheses, results showed that there exists strong positive relationship among the variables. Similarly, Onoyase (2017) used a sample of 246 lecturers of Nigeria public tertiary institutions to investigate to what extent motivation and job performance were related. The findings showed that promotion and salary/incentives have significant positive relationship with job performance. The finding did not show any significant relationship between lecturers' work environment and their job performance.

Moreover, the current study is more important because it has broadened the research to include both academic and non-academic staff of the university. Some of the previous studies used only academic staff as the sample to assess how motivation was triggered (Buberwa, 2015; Marufu & Uzhenyu, 2017; Onoyase, 2017; Rowley, 1996). The few remaining studies targeted the non-academic staff of the higher institutions of learning (Delgado, Yap, & Luces, 2018; Onu, Akinlabi, & Fakunmoju, 2014). Therefore, this study created opportunity to understand differences and compare perceptions motivational factors between the two different groups of the university workforce.

Therefore, this study examined the effect of conference attendance on the motivation of academic and non-academic staff of Gombe State University, Nigeria. Moreover, the study is unique in that it has only used the academic and non-academic staff who benefitted from the TETFund financial interventions rendered to all higher institutions of learning in Nigeria.

### **TETFund Interventions in Gombe State University (2012-2018)**

The Tetfund interventions remain what every public tertiary institution will continue to support and sustain (Umar, 2017). The Agency helps in numerous capacities such as

conference attendance, academic staff training and development, research undertakings and book development.

TETfund in its monthly digest (A monthly publication on tetfund activities) of August, 2017 it is published that in July, 2017 alone tetfund disbursed the sum of N1,69,149,000.00 for 14 universities (Gombe State university inclusive) for the academic staff training and development in Nigeria. Out of the total amount so disbursed Gombe State university received a total sum of N83,700,000.00 to sponsor 24 of its academic staff (19 local PhDs and 5 local masters).

This is an intervention line geared towards upgrading the quality of teaching in Nigeria's public tertiary education through sponsorship of Masters and Doctorate studies within and outside the country (TETfund, 2017). In summary, 73 scholars were sponsored for foreign PhD, 186 for PhD within the country, 29 for foreign Masters' Degree, 117 for masters within the country, while 30 scholars got sponsorship for bench work. These are for 17 universities, 13 polytechnics and 17 colleges of education at the sum of N2,363,315,700.00 (two million, three hundred and sixty-three million, three hundred and fifteen thousand, seven hundred naira). Thus, out of this total N1,069,149,000.00, N847,442,860.00 and N446,723,840.00 that were disbursed to 14 universities, 19 polytechnics and 14 colleges of education in Nigeria in July, 2017 alone.

However, on the part of academic staff training and development and conference attendance, as reported in Tetfund's monthly Digest, 2017, the intervention programme which started in 2010 gives the academic and non-academic staff of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria (including the staff of Gombe State University) the opportunity to have first-hand international and local experience and exposure in their various areas of endeavour as well as interaction with peers across the globe. The summary for Conference Attendance shows that for July, 2017, a total of 967 staff were sponsored for Local Conference Attendance and 179 staff for foreign Conference Attendance from a total of 17 Universities, 13 Polytechnics and 17 Colleges of Education at the sum total of #493,197,378.90 (four hundred and ninety-three million, one hundred and ninety-seven thousand, three hundred and seventy-eight naira, ninety kobo). Out of this total N186,086,924.34, N108,026,646.56 and N199,083,808.00 were disbursed to the beneficiary Universities, Polytechnics and colleges of Educations respectively. Thus 31% of total enlisted universities in Nigeria (77 of them as at August, 2017). 41% of total enlisted Nigerian Polytechnics in Nigeria (58 of them as at August, 2017) and 21% of the total enlisted Colleges of Education (66 of them as at August, 2017) respectively from the said interventions.

Particularly in Gombe State University, from 2012 to 2020, a total of 360 staff were sponsored by Tetfund and attended conferences while a total of 74 staff applications were not approved by the university due to one reason or the other. Below is the breakdown of beneficiaries of TETfund conference attendance in Gombe State University in a tabular form year by year to date.

Therefore, training, retraining and promoting academic values of the staff in tertiary institutions in the country are the key parts Tetfund is giving precedence to improve the tertiary education in the country (Ezeali, 2019). However, Amechi (2016), in her study on the evaluation of the extent of Tetfund contribution towards quality transformation of tertiary institution in Imo State, revealed that Tetfund contribution towards quality transformation of tertiary institution in the area of staff training (conference and higher degrees) and development is to a low extent. In realizing quality transformation of academic staff in Nigerian universities, the role of Tetfund is crucial. Academic staff play a vital role in determining the success of vision and mission of a university, thus job satisfaction among academic staff play an important role in contributing to positive outcome in the quality of the institution and the students' learning (Machado-Taylor, 2010). No doubt, therefore, that Tetfund has a lot more to achieve in boasting the level of higher education in Nigeria. As well the agency has a number of challenges to confront within itself, and between itself and management organizations of higher institutions they serve, and of course challenges are abounded between the agency and other government agencies it has to work together with to succeed. For example, in the words of Dr. Bappa, the then Tetfund boss stated while commissioning a Tetfund project in Gombe State University *"the difficulties with some administrations is that of having the immoral people manning them"*. He continued that *"For me, this is the product of leadership, the quality of leadership, the sincerity of leadership and vision of leadership in the university. Once you have a purposeful leadership with vision, clear focus, you will see result. We have been preaching on the need for institutions to construct Iconic Edifices, beautiful super structures in our tertiary education institutions and coming to Gombe State University today, we have just seen what we have been preaching in practical terms"*. Therefore, management of Gombe State University has been able to manage and deliver Tetfund quality and gigantic projects as a result of good leadership and performance driven management.

### Approved and Not Approved TETfund Sponsored Conferences

**Table 1: TETfund Sponsored Conferences**

| Year         | Approved Conferences | Not Approved Conferences | Total Applications |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2012         | 8                    | 0                        | 8                  |
| 2013         | 23                   | 0                        | 23                 |
| 2014         | 77                   | 17                       | 94                 |
| 2015         | 114                  | 21                       | 135                |
| 2016         | 0                    | 0                        | 0                  |
| 2017         | 5                    | 13                       | 18                 |
| 2018         | 33                   | 23                       | 56                 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>260</b>           | <b>74</b>                | <b>334</b>         |

**Source:** Management of Gombe State University, 2022

### Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on Hierarchy of Needs Theory of developed by Abraham Maslow. The theory postulates that people are motivated only when their needs are satisfied. The theory further argues that human needs are divided into lower-order and higher-order needs and that they are satisfied in sequential order. The theory, therefore, has important implications for this research. It means that for the management of Gombe State university to enhance its staff motivation through experiential learning, it has to identify what they want most for their professional and career development (e.g. conferences, workshops or seminar).

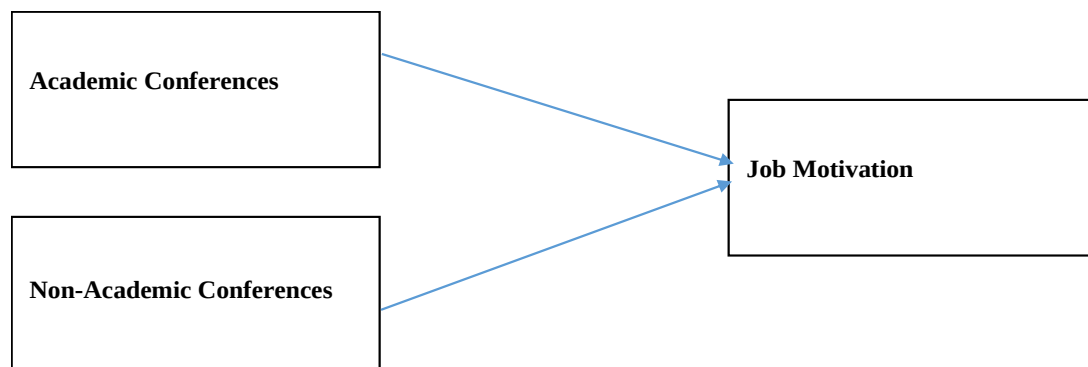


**Figure: Theoretical Framework**

### Methodology

#### Sample and Technique of Data Collection

This research was conducted using survey to obtain data directly from the respondents using the questionnaire technique. The research participants comprised academic and non-academic staff members of Gombe State University, Nigeria. A sample of size of 150 of staff members was randomly selected from a population frame of 501 staff of the university.

#### Measures

The variables used in this study comprises of academic conference and non-academic conference (Independent variables) as well as staff motivation (the dependent variable) respectively. The measurement of the independent variable of conference attendance was adopted from the work of Uzar (2016). While, the dependent variable of staff motivation was measured using the work of Sydney (2017). Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used as a technique of analysis of this research. AMOS Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used as a technique of analysis.

### Results

Demographic data alongside inferential data were analyzed to the already hypothesized relationships depicted in the model.

### Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis was essential in this research to test for construct validity and highlight variability between observed variables then to correspondingly check for any correlated variables so as to reduce redundancy in data (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Again, according to Mwiti (2013) all variables with factor loadings not smaller than **0.5** are the factor loadings with the maximum significance and influence. Factor analysis was carried out using all the variables so as to understand individual variables specific impact or effect to motivation of staff in Gombe State university.

### Reliability Statistics

The reliability of the scale used in data gathering is prepared construct by construct to ascertain the consistency of the scale used as follows:

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics**

| Name of Variable              | Cronbachs' Alpha | No. of Items |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Academic staff conference     | 0.726            | 6            |
| Non-academic staff conference | 0.728            | 7            |
| Staff motivation              | 0.762            | 7            |

Source: AMOS Software, 2022

### Measurement Model

The measurement model used in this study has achieved the required validity as indicated in table below:

**Table 3: Loadings of Measurement Model**

| Constructs | Items  | Factor Loadings |
|------------|--------|-----------------|
| Acad       | ASC05  | .52             |
| Acad       | ASC04  | .59             |
| Acad       | ASC02  | .65             |
| Acad       | ASC01  | .62             |
| NAcad      | NASC04 | .55             |
| NAcad      | NASC02 | .58             |
| NAcad      | NASC07 | .56             |
| NAcad      | NASC01 | .63             |
| Motiv      | SM09   | .76             |
| Motiv      | SM08   | .91             |
| Motiv      | SM06   | .56             |

Source: AMOS Software Outcome, 2022

Again, Awang (2012) recommended that items specified to measure a proposed underlying factor should have 0.50 or greater standardized loading on that factor. After confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on all the measurement items to determine the loading of each item on related factors, a total of 9 items were deleted for failing to meet the recommended threshold.

On table 7, which has six items originally for academic staff conferences before the CFA it later has three of the items deleted because they are less than the minimum criteria 0.5. On the non-academic staff conference, three items were deleted from the total of seven as they are less than the accepted threshold of 0.5. Same explanation offered in respect of the items in staff motivation.

**Table 4: Items Deleted**

| Name of Variables             | No. of items | Items deleted |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Academic Staff Conference     | 6            | 3             |
| Non-Academic Staff Conference | 7            | 3             |
| Staff Motivation              | 7            | 3             |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>20</b>    | <b>9</b>      |

Source: AMOS Software, 2022

The relationships between the study constructs should be made to guarantee a solid indication for discriminant validity. The correlations are supposed to be  $< 0.85$  (Awang, 2012). But in the case of this study the highest correlation is between academic and non-academic staff with 0.54 loading and it is  $< 0.85$  and therefore within the range and acceptable. C that the fitness index should also be good and it is found to be good in this study. The RAMSEA is 0.54, CFI=0.951, TLI 0.934, NFI=0.859 while the Chi square/df = 1.437, the P-value stands at 0.034, df = 41 but Chi square = 58.928 which are all within the acceptable range. This is depicted clearly in the tables below:

**Table 5: Correlations Results**

| Correlations of Variables                           | Loadings |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Academic and non-academic conferences               | 0.54     |
| Academic staff conferences and staff motivation     | 0.45     |
| Non-academic staff conferences and staff motivation | 0.07     |

Source: AMOS Software, 2022

### Results, Test of Hypotheses and Discussion of Findings

The results as depicted in Table 6, indicates support for the hypothesis I, which states that Tetfund sponsored academic conferences have significant influence on academic staff motivation in Gombe State University. The results show that the effect of Tetfund

sponsored academic conferences on academic staff motivation is significant ( $p=0.003<0.05$ ). Therefore, this finding has somehow contradicted some previous studies conducted on Tetfund sponsored conferences such as Uzaru (2016) who argued that Tetfund sponsored programmes have not positively affected educational research in Nigerian universities.

**Table 6: Hypotheses Testing.**

| Hypotheses       | Estimate | S.E.  | C.R.  | P-value | Decision      |
|------------------|----------|-------|-------|---------|---------------|
| Motiv <--- Acad  | 0.509    | 0.17  | 3.004 | 0.003   | Supported     |
| Motiv <--- Nacad | 0.078    | 0.143 | 0.545 | 0.586   | Not Supported |

Source: Path Algorithm, 2022

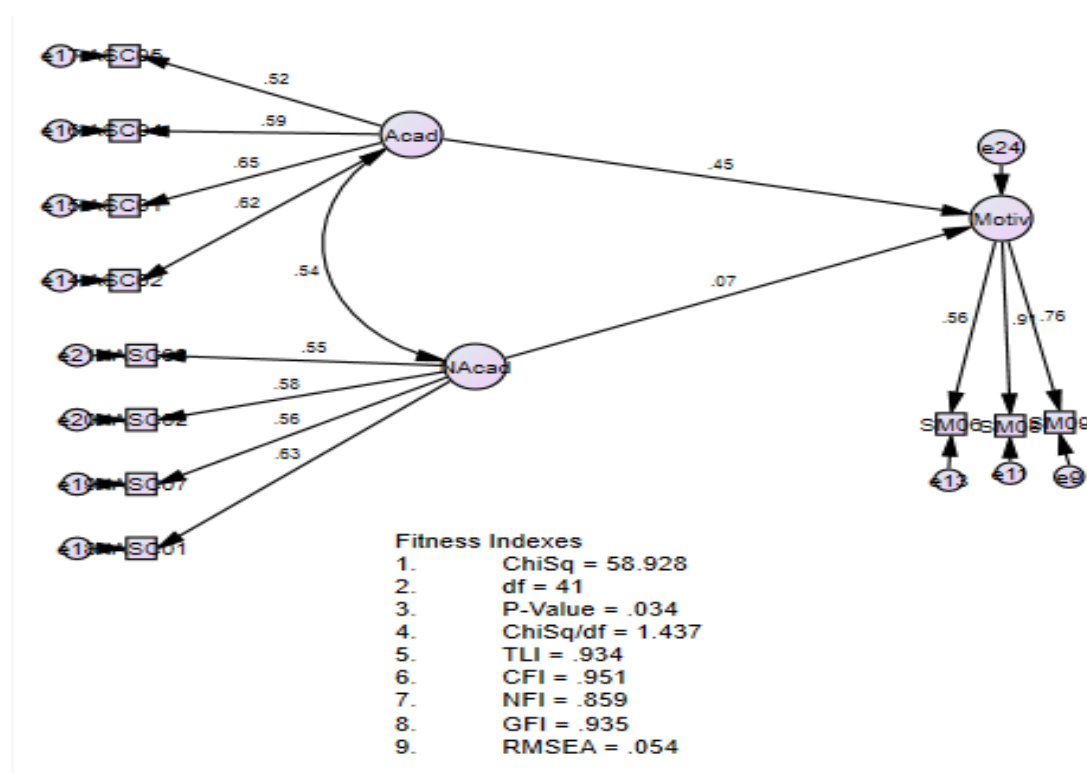


**Fig. 2: Structural Model**

Similarly, Sydney (2007) who claims that conferences, especially for non-academic staff, have not been achieved the desired objectives. Moreover, study of Amechi (2016) on the evaluation of the extent of Tetfund contribution towards quality transformation of tertiary institution in Imo State. The study revealed that Tetfund sponsored conferences and higher degrees contributed only a little towards quality transformation of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

On the second hypothesis which states that Tetfund sponsored non-academic conferences have significant effect on non-academic staff motivation in Gombe State University. The

results as shown in Table 6 indicates that the relationship between non-academic conference and non-staff motivation is not significant ( $p = 0.586 > 0.05$ ). The result somehow corroborates with most of the previous studies conducted on the activities of TETFund and educational transformation in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Amechi, 2016; Sydney, 2007; Uzar, 2016).

### Conclusion

Using the academic and non-academic staff who benefitted from TETFund sponsorship, for the first time, this study has explored the effect of academic conference and non-academic conference on staff motivation in Gombe State University. The results of the study indicated that there is significant relationship between academic staff conferences and staff motivation. Contrarily, the relationship between non-academic staff conferences and staff motivation was found to be not significant. This therefore indicated that conference attendance motivates academic staff than nonacademic staff in the university as at the period under study.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that:

- i. The management of the university as well as the TETFund should ensure that the funding of conferences is increased to further motivate its staff to benefit from all academic conferences which would have multiplier effect on Nigerian higher education system.
- ii. staff should be made to see and exploit advantages associated with attending relevant conferences
- iii. The management of the university should ensure increased support to academic staff in securing TETFund conference sponsorship.
- iv. At the same time, university management and Tetfund should embark on enlightenment campaign about the importance of attending relevant conference, seminar and workshops by non-academic staff. The non-academic staff

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