

**INFLUENCE OF FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL ON LECTURERS' ACADEMIC
ENGAGEMENT IN IMO STATE UNIVERSITY, OWERRI**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of fuel subsidy removal on lecturers' academic engagement in Imo State University, Owerri. A survey research design was adopted. The population comprising of 59 academic staff from the Faculty of Education in Imo State University, Owerri. Statistical data for about nine different seasons where fuel hike occurred in Nigeria was revealed and the instrument used to collect the data was interview and questionnaire. Data collected was dully analyzed with the help of chi-square. So, it was deduced from this study that increase in fuel pump price which resulted from fuel subsidy removal has an adverse effect on lecturers' academic engagement, since fuel is essential for easy and prompt availability of the lecturers' in their classroom engagement and also the transportation of agricultural produce and other market product in Nigeria. From the results of the interview conducted, the study concluded that lecturers' attitudes towards academic engagements worsened after the removal of fuel subsidy irrespective of the financial status of the lecturers. Thus, the study recommends that the government and institution executives should provide viable means to motivate lecturers through service motivated incentives.

Keywords: *Fuel, Fuel Subsidy, Subsidy Removal, Lecturers, Academic Engagement, Lecturers Academic Engagement.*

Introduction

Research on the effects of fuel subsidy removal on Nigerian's standard of living has been of interest to the economy and Nigerians. Fuel is the keystone of the Nigerian economy. It plays a very crucial role in shaping and modifying the economic, political and social status of the country. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities at Olobiri

in the Niger Delta and later at Afam and Boma in the 1960s established Nigeria as oil producing nation. The oil sector, as the catalyst of the economy became apparent in the 1970s due to the dramatic increase in oil process and the rise in the nation's proven oil reserves and production. The fuel subsidy in Nigeria is a highly contentious issue, encompassing technical, economic, and political dimensions. The pricing system, influenced by political decisions, significantly shapes the cost and profit-sharing dynamics between major stakeholders—the producer Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation-NNPC and consumers. While, oil exploration since the mid-60s propelled Nigeria into a top oil producer by the early 70s, with over 80% of foreign exchange earnings coming from oil by 1973 (Adebiyi, 2011; Olujobi, 2021). It is viewed as a "mixed blessing, by the generality of Nigerians". The presence of petroleum, despite catalyzing economic development, poses challenges due to Nigeria's absorptive capacity. Although, oil has enhanced economic growth and impactful projects, it has also led to ill-considered policy decisions and false hopes, with finances not being a constraint (George, 2013). Subsidy has been defined as aids directly granted by government to an individual or private commercial enterprise deemed beneficial to the public. (Ogundipe 2013).

According to Ogundipe 2013, Fuel Subsidy can be said to be the financial aid granted to autonomous and foremost oil marketers by the government for them to supply their products at a cheaper rate for the good of the masses. This move is with the intent of boosting the economy of a country, providing social amenities for the people, stabilizing the market, creation of employment opportunities and the notion of it being capable of fighting corruption as postulated by the Nigerian government. The issue of subsidy is not alien to the nation's down-stream because it existed during the military regime when the four refineries of the nation could only produce little which could not even satisfy the domestic needs of the people. Then, a need arose for the importation of finished petroleum products such as diesel, petrol and kerosene to meet the domestic need of Nigerians. For this reason, the Nigerian's elites and those in the corridor of power considered the sudden wealth that will result from this opportunity and started acquiring the various wells in the country and finally, they overtook the petroleum industries. This undoubtedly was the birth of fuel problems Nigerians are nurturing today especially as it affects petroleum. Nigeria like many other oil-producing countries, has faced significant economic challenges and fiscal pressures due to the costs associated with fuel subsidies. In response to these challenges, the Nigerian government has at various times contemplated and implemented fuel subsidy removal policies as part of broader economic reform initiatives. A subsidy is any government program that lowers the price of a good or service that is consumed by citizens compared to what the price would have been without the existence of the policy (OECD, 2018; Abdulkadir, Funmilola & Abdulkabir, 2020). These subsidy removals have sparked significant public debate and have been met with mixed reactions from different segments of the society (Emmanuel, 2023). The purchasing power of individuals, including lecturers, is directly impacted by changes in fuel prices. Lecturers, as professionals in the educational sector, are a crucial component of Nigeria's intellectual and academic community. Their purchasing power not only affects their personal well-being but also has wider implications for the quality of education they provide and the stability of their households (Adebayo, 2023).

The increment in fuel price has led to increment in transportation fare which directly and indirectly have increased the inability to come to schools, while in tertiary institutions many lecturers have decided to compress their lectures to one or twice in a week. And other lecturers have changed to virtual model of teaching. The post-subsidy removal in Nigeria have affected implementation of teaching programme in Nigeria

educational institutions. Subsidy removal have impacted negatively on the entire educational system leading to reduction in the teaching hours in schools because teachers cannot cope with the increment of transportation fare. Okonkwo (2023) observed that teachers' job performance is also affected by the removal of the fuel subsidy. This is because they have to pay more for transportation to and from work. Many lecturers rely on public transport, such as buses, taxis and motorcycles, which have also increased their fares due to the high cost of fuel. Some teachers may have to spend more than half of their salaries on transportation alone, leaving little for other expenses such as food, rent and health care. Academic engagement is the result of an individual's productivity compared to their co-workers on a variety of work ethics and results. Performance is determined by the quality and quantity of work completed as part of an employee's assigned responsibilities (Anitha, 2014).

On the first day of January, 2012 Nigerians woke up to face one of the greatest shock of their lives when the removal of fuel subsidy was announced by the federal government at a time perceived wrong, in a way many saw as erroneous, in a situation several believed was unstable and with arguments many opined came with a sinister motive. This raised the price of a litre of petrol from N65 to N141.

A drive through the memory lane revealed that subsidy was once removed on kerosene and diesel by the then Federal government of Nigeria on reasons similar to one gave by the President Jonathan led administration and with promises that such policy will have a long lasting positive effects on all areas in the nation. However, nothing tangible could be said to be the celebrated outcome of the said policy. It was argued by the then federal government that the removal of subsidy on diesel and kerosene would make the products available and affordable but it turned out to be a fallacious fabrications, the products have become more scarce and expensive, instead of the promise of its availability. Saddening enough, none of the crippled refineries was brought back to its feet from the money realized from the removal of subsidy on diesel and kerosene. One begins to wonder if the time honoured saying 'once bitten twice shy' was not the rhythm in the minds of long-suffering Nigerians when the Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency (PPRA) announced the infamous policy on the 1st of January, 2012. After weeklong protests by Nigerians, which was led by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Trade Union Congress (TUC), and some civil society groups, government bowed to public pressure not to remove the fuel subsidy entirely in view of some negative effects it would unleash on the populace, especially where there was absence of palliative and coupled with the fact that the government took the people by surprise. The government after much hesitation, made a U-turn in her policy, partially removed the subsidy and reduced petrol price from N141 to N97 per litre. Although, it was not a return to status quo, Nigerians had wanted but they heaped much of their hope on government planned palliative to cushion the negative effects the partial removal of the fuel subsidy would have on the masses. Unfortunately, most of the promised palliative such as massive job creation, easy transportation and other goodies did not get out of government's drawing board. Early 2014, the same government was again touting with the idea of removing what remained of the subsidy, which the people thought is the only benefits they derive from the nation's naturally endowed petrol – dollar largesse. The government argued that a tiny percentage of Nigerians called the cabal are the ones hugely profiting from the subsidy largesse and that the current low price of oil will always encourage smuggling of the product along our numerous porous borders. Government also said that the total fuel subsidy removal will attract more investment in the downstream oil sector which will boost employment and the economy. Although, the

government arguments may sound convincing, Nigerians have a pathetic tale and manifold frustrations to express over many years of government's fuel price hike based on terrible regimes and the failure by the government to deliver on its promises. Fast forward to 25th May 2023, the incumbent government have once again removed the fuel subsidy with the claim that it is a strategy to curb the irregularities in the oil sector. The price of fuel have skyrocketed from N250 to N1300 per litre, thereby causing untold hardship on the citizens. An average Nigerian cannot afford three square meals a day while the bourgeoisies and cabals are spending millions of naira on cars, travels and other irrelevant things that do not have an impact on the economic growth of the nation. The GDP of the economy is going down on a daily basis. Labour is threatening another strike as the one called off earlier could not yield any tangible result. The removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria has caused a rise in the cost of goods and services adversely affecting all sectors in the country. Opeyemi (2012) reveals that in an extensive research aimed at ascertaining the long run effects of subsidy removal on the performance quality of Nigerian textile workers in the wake of palliative removal. The result indicated a significant relationship between subsidy and workers' performance as the sudden surge in fuel prices, resulting from the removal of subsidies intensified the economic difficulties faced by the already struggling Nigerian population, grappling with high unemployment rates and widespread economic challenges. Educational institutions, including school administrators, teachers, and students, have not been spared from these repercussions. Since the subsidy removal, school administration and the processes of teaching and learning have undergone significant changes. It is crucial to investigate the consequences of subsidy removal on education, specifically focusing on school administration, teaching, learning, and school supervision. It is against this premise that this study investigates the influence of subsidy removal on lecturers' academic engagement in Imo State University, Owerri.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Major Concepts of the study

Subsidy

Subsidy as defined by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-OECD (2018) are as follow. A subsidy is any government program that lowers the price of a good or service that is consumed by citizens compared to what the price would have been without the existence of the policy. Subsidy is a decrease in the market price of products and services by the government so that people with limited purchasing power can obtain such goods and services. It occurs when the government assists customers in paying a price that is lower than the market price for consumer products. A subsidy is any measure that keeps prices consumers pay for a good or product below market levels for consumers or for producers above market. Subsidies take different forms. Some subsidies have a direct impact on price. These include grants, tax reductions and exemptions or price controls (Adebiyi, 2011). Subsidy is the money that is paid by government of an organization to reduce the cost of services or of producing goods so that their prices can be kept low.

Academic Engagement

Academic engagement refers to the extent and intensity with which students participate in and apply themselves to learning and other school activities, as well as the supportive relationships and structures that exist to support students and lecturers engagement. Fredricks (2004) described academic engagement as a malleable, developing, and

multidimensional construct that consists of three broad dimensions: behavioural, cognitive, and emotional. The dimensions, according to the authors, are not isolated but interrelate with each other. Engaging lecturers draw a range of strategies to captivate their students. They infuse lectures with activities, sequence materials to pique students' interest, and allow students contributions to shape discussions, building rapport and fostering meaningful analysis of course content in the process. A lecturer can plan for an engaging class session using the following strategies: sequencing materials to build student energy and excitement, planning ahead to facilitate the inclusion of student contributions, getting students mentally ready for class, regulating flow of energy in the classroom, providing multiple ways for students to engage in class discussions, exploring handouts as a study guide to highlight important concepts etc. In view of Prince (2004), activities that engage students in the learning process are associated with higher levels of student engagement. Compared to lecturers alone, activities promoting active learning are associated with lower failure rates and increased exam performance (Freeman 2014). A sense of autonomy and some control over course content are important components in lecturers' motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Factors That Improve Academic Engagement

One of the strategies highlighted by Okereke & Daniel (2010) in welfare schemes are the strategies employed in motivating lecturers for better job performance. These are in form of salary increment, gratuity, and regular promotion, ensuring job security and establishing cordial relationship among teachers are the initiators and facilitators of teaching and learning activities. They act as agents of changes in any school system because of the roles they perform; they can be regarded as the heart of quality improvement strategies (Hopkins, 2014). Furthermore, Okereke and Daniel (2010), opined that most institutions achieve remarkable success in their operations not only because they operate in good environments or because they are capable of competing favourably with the realities of their requirement but mostly because the management (or those at the helm of affairs) provides them with incentives that make their work worth enjoying. They appreciate the fact that no organization performs efficiently and effectively if the human elements are not adequately motivated. The provision of welfare package that ginger workers to work in an organization has helped organizations to create the enabling environment for better performance among the workforce.

According to Manzini and Gwandure (2011), employee welfare measures were meant to reduce absenteeism and increase efficiency and productivity. However, today employee welfare programs have taken a broader scope and they include almost all aspects of workers' welfare and development in the organizational establishment. The mandate of welfare measures is to generate an efficient, healthy, satisfied and productive workforce. Berry (2010) asserts that the objective of providing facilities is to make working environment more enjoyable of the 9th Malaysian National Economic Conference, Kuala Terengganu, and Terengganu.

Subsidy Removal and Academic Engagement of lecturers

Subsidies usually take the form of price controls and can involve large price gaps. While subsidies aimed at how producers generally keep costs of production lower or increase revenues, their effect is to keep marginal producers in the business (Sanders and Schneider, 2000). These subsidies can also be motivated by the desire to reduce import dependency (European Environment Agency, 2005). Production subsidies are more common in developed countries while consumer subsidies are prevalent in developing

and oil producing countries. A considerable number of studies have analyzed the issues of petroleum pricing and how it significantly impacts the performance especially in relation to the welfare of the general populace. Iwayemi and Adenikinju (2014), in a study argued that, the elimination of subsidies, particularly fossil fuel, if not met with an effective incentive program that will reduce the impact of the difficulties caused by the subsidy removal can potentially impact on the welfare of the populace, this recognizes that the effects of energy subsidies are complex and can exert adverse effects on the general output of the performance. According to Adagunodo (2013), it unambiguously agreed that eliminating subsidy play a central role in national efforts to achieve a long-term transition to a truly sustainable energy system that is secured and clean for the environment. However, there could be large, long-run social costs associated with its removal because subsidies in fuel for traditional mono economy like Nigeria is a critical determinant of welfare as its pricing has the capacity to distort the balance of energy sources and output within the productive social environment. The relationship between subsidies and the work performance has strong policy implications for government in terms of ensuring productive sustainability globally. Fossil fuel subsidy represents a unique problem that unites economists and educationist (Holton, 2012). In the last few years, policy direction has shifted towards the reform or elimination of subsidies, particularly fossil fuel subsidies. Pieters (2002) opined that the removal or reform of subsidies to improve the economy had been high on the international political agenda since the early nineties while bearing in mind the potential fallout of the removal on performance quality.

Theoretical Framework

Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R Model)

The JD-R model was propounded by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti in year 2001. Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2001) defined *job demands* as “those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs”. Examples of job demands are work overload, heavy lifting, interpersonal conflict, and job insecurity. Following Hockey’s (1997) model of compensatory control, the JD-R model assumes that when job demands are high, additional effort must be exerted to achieve the work goals and to prevent decreasing performance. This obviously comes with physical and psychological costs, such as fatigue and irritability. Workers may recuperate from mobilizing this extra energy and the associated costs by taking a break, switching tasks, or performing less demanding activities, for instance. However, when recovery is inadequate or insufficient, the result is a state of sustained activation that gradually exhausts the employee physically and/ or mentally (Knardahl & Ursin, 1985). *Job resources* were defined as “those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may do any of the following:

- (a) Be functional in achieving work goals; (b) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; (c) stimulate personal growth and development” (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501). Examples of job resources are feedback, job control, and social support. The early JD-R model proposed two processes for the development of burnout. First, long-term excessive job demands from which employees do not adequately recover may lead to sustained activation and overtaxing, eventually resulting in exhaustion – the energetic component of burnout. Second, a lack of resources precludes that job demands are met and that work goals are reached, which leads to withdrawal behavior.

Indeed, withdrawal – or reduced motivation/disengagement, i.e., the motivational component of burnout – acts as a self-protective strategy to prevent further energy depletion. Consistent with this reasoning, research revealed main effects of demands and resources on burnout; whereas job demands were associated with exhaustion, lacking resources were linked to disengagement (see, among others, Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005 ; Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004; Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli & Schreurs, 2003 ; Demerouti et al., 2001 ; Hansen, Sverke & Näswall, 2009 ; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Next to these main effects, the JD-R model predicts that job resources mitigate the negative effect of job demands on exhaustion. This follows from the definition of job resources, which are assumed to reduce job demands as well as the associated exhaustion. Bakker, Demerouti, Taris (2003) observed that the effect of job demands on exhaustion was especially strong if employees possessed few job resources and, in a similar vein, that the effect of job resources on cynicism was particularly strong if employees encountered many job demands.

Relating this theory to the study, the removal of fuel subsidy has gone a long way to influence lecturers' academic engagement in tertiary institutions. Because of the removal of fuel subsidy, there is a general hike in the standard of living which is leading to fatigue, irritability and psychological burnout because of the additional effort asserted by the lecturers in order to dispatch their duties diligently.

Statement of the Problem

However, Fuel subsidy removal have the following negative effects on Nigerians:

1. Lack of adequate palliative such as massive job creation, easy transportation and regular supply of electricity to cushion the negative effects.
2. Fuel subsidy removal increase the cost of production which is as a result of increase in fuel price.
3. Fall in the standard of living.
4. Increase in the cost of education as a result of fuel subsidy removal.

Purpose of the Study

The study is set to:

1. Find out whether fuel subsidy removal has any effect on the cost of education.
2. Ascertain the effect of fuel subsidy removal on transportation cost.
3. Determine the impact of fuel subsidy removal on the academic engagement of the lecturers.

Research Questions

1. What influence does fuel subsidy removal have on the cost of education?
2. What influence has fuel subsidy removal on the cost of transportation?
3. What influence has fuel subsidy removal on prices of goods and services?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide the study at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of students on the extent of disruption of fuel subsidy removal on the cost of education.

H02: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of lecturers in regards of fuel subsidy removal on the cost of transportation.

H03: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on how the removal of fuel subsidy increase the prices of goods and services.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. One objective guided this study. The study targeted only the entire academic staff of Faculty of Education Imo State University, Owerri totaling 59, 20 male and 39 female members based on the statistics from the college registry, 2023. The choice for the population is guided by time constraint and sparsely of funds. The entire population of fifty-nine (59) was used as a sample using the census sampling research technique. The researchers administered the instruments utilizing an on-the-spot method of instrument administration. The data was collected using a self-developed instrument titled "Effect of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Lecturers Academic Engagement" Questionnaire (EFSRAEQ) which consisted of two sections: Section A sought demographic data from the respondents, while Section B comprised item statements eliciting the opinions of respondents regarding the research questions arranged on a four likert scale of; Strongly agree (4) Agree (3) Disagree (2) Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by experts in the department of social science education. The instrument was pilot tested on education economics department staff in Imo state University, Owerri and the result Data was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, and a reliability index of 0.82 was obtained which signifies that the instrument is consistency. Fifty-nine (59) questionnaires were administered to the respondents with the help of a research assistant. All questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed using the mean and standard deviation for the research questions, and the t-test statistic was used to analyze the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance as used by (Atoyebi, 2012).

Results

This section presents and analyses the data collected to test the hypotheses in order to draw conclusions.

Table 1: Classification of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	20	33.90
Female	39	66.10
Total	59	100

Source: Field Survey (2023).

The Table 1 reveals that the 20 respondents are male representing 33.90% while 39 respondents are females representing 66.10% of the respondents. This means that majority of the respondents are females.

Table 2. Mean Rating of Respondents on how the financial difficulty caused by fuel subsidy removal impact on the academic engagement of academic staff at Imo State University, Owerri.

S/N	Items	N	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.Dev.
1.	High transport fare make it hard for me to get to School	59	45	10	2	2	27.8	4.17
2.	My inability to meet my Financial responsibilities affect my job	59	34	15	4	6	3.09	0.66
3.	Job satisfaction has decreased since the removal of subsidy	59	40		10	5	4	3.15
4.	Subsidy removal has led to High transportation cost	59	48	5	3	3	3.13	0.91
5.	Subsidy removal has resulted in an increase in the cost of living	59	48	6	3	2	3.11	0.76
6.	Subsidy removal has made it challenging for me to afford basic necessities.	59	35	10	9	5	3.43	0.67

Source: Field Survey (2023). Weighted Mean = 2.5

Table 2 illustrates the mean ratings of respondents regarding how the financial difficulty caused by fuel subsidy removal impacts the academic engagement of lecturers' of Imo State University, Owerri. Respondents are generally unanimous in the responses as all the items turn out to be agreed of course with difference in levels of standard deviation; on item 1 High transport fare makes it hard for me to get to school: Mean: 2.91, item 2 My inability to meet my financial responsibilities affects my job: Mean: 2.51, Item 3 Job satisfaction has decreased since the removal of subsidy: Mean: 2.94, item 4 Subsidy removal has led to high transportation cost: Mean: 2.61, item 5 Subsidy removal has resulted in an increase in the cost of living: Mean: 2.56, Item 6 Subsidy removal has made it challenging for me to afford basic necessities: Mean: 2.5. The overall weighted mean is calculated as 2.5, suggesting that, on average, respondents agree that the financial difficulties caused by fuel subsidy removal have a noticeable impact on the academic engagement of lecturers in Imo State University, Owerri. The specific concerns include high transportation costs, challenges in meeting financial responsibilities, decreased job satisfaction, and increased difficulty in affording basic necessities. With the above, standard deviation is to 0.66.

Table 3: Independent t-test Statistics on the Mean Rating of whether Gender has no significant difference between difficulty caused by fuel subsidy removal and job Performance

Item category	N	mean	SD	T.Cal	Df	Alpha	T.cri
1. Male	20	37.4828	7.65922	0.714	45	0.05	0.334
2. Female	39	29.111	8.48862				

Source: Field Survey 2022.

Table 3 reveals that the t-cal of -0.714 is less than the t-cri of 0.334 at 0.05 levels of significance and 45 degrees of freedom. As a result, the null hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the effect of the difficulty caused by removal of fuel subsidy on the academic engagement of lecturers of Imo State University, Owerri.

Discussion of Results

The research finding in Table 1 revealed that subsidy removal has indeed is directly related to the high cost of transportation as well increased cost of living. The result coincides with Elisha (2023) this recognizes that the effects of energy subsidies are complex and it distortion of transport cost and means can exert adverse effects on the general output of the performance. Fuel subsidy withdrawal is capable of heightening the uncertainties faced with regards to the means and cost of transportation and well-being of lecturers which directly affects the cost of transportation, eating deeply into the incomes of workers. Similarly, lecturers are faced with financial difficulties, and this scenario influences their job effectiveness as it hampers on lecturers' ability to attend to their financial obligations. The result indicated that some of the lecturers find it tough to fuel their vehicles to work, to pay their transportation fair to work every day, and to meet their family's financial responsibilities because of financial constraints occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidies.

The outcome agrees with Obaseki's (2023) opinion that employee performance is seriously affected when the price of gasoline is adjusted as transportation fare is immediately affected negatively resulting in delay or suspension of lesson contacts especially when such economic decisions by the government is carried out without adequate policy put in place to improve lecturers' welfare. Holton (2012) shows that there is relationship between energy subsidies and the work performance has strong policy implications for government in terms of ensuring productive sustainability globally due to financial constraints that the withdrawal of the fuel subsidy could cause on the welfare of workers. In this case, the upsurge of the fuel price to all time high above 100% has resulted in increased difficulty in affording basic necessities such as food, payment for shelter, energy etc.

Recommendations

- The government should conduct thorough assessment on the impact before implementing fuel subsidy removal.
- The government should invest in providing and improving public transportation infrastructure to reduce the reliance on personal vehicles.
- Staff welfare programs should not be neglected. The teaching and workloads should be reviewed in order to reduce stress and improve work-life balance.
- Lecturers should advocate for salary adjustments to compensate for increased living costs.

Conclusion

It is evident that lecturers in tertiary institutions are experiencing financial challenges following the removal of fuel subsidies. The removal has led to a higher cost of living, with increased transportation and hike in food prices. This study investigated whether there is an effect of fuel subsidy removal on the academic engagement of lecturers' of Imo State University, Owerri. The result reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female gender concerning difficulty caused by fuel subsidy removal and academic engagement of Academic Staff at Imo State University, Owerri. This is because the degree of freedom is 45 and the level of significance is 0.05. The study concludes that lecturers' condition worsened after the removal of subsidy irrespective of gender. The study opines that the institution executives and government should provide viable means to motivate lecturers through service motivated incentives.

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