

## MANAGING BORNO STATE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS, CRISES AND THE WAY FORWARD

**Dr. I. B. BUKAR**

---

Department of Education  
University of Maiduguri

### ABSTRACT

*The paper examines the ways tertiary institutions in Borno State are managed. It looks at the sources of fund, crises emanating from managing education tax fund, managing crises resulting from the neglect of college Edicts, and that of interference. The paper also discusses some practical ways for improving management of tertiary institutions in Borno State.*

### Introduction

Tertiary Education is the training given after Secondary Education in colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Colleges of Agriculture, and Universities. The goals of Tertiary institutions as contained in the National Policy on Education (2004) shall be to contribute to National development through high level relevant manpower training as well as to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self reliant and useful members of the society. The function of these institutions therefore, is to train middle manpower needed to move the state forward. The categories of such manpower are mainly skillful teachers in science, Arts and technology who are to teach at the two levels of Education in the state. Borno state has seven tertiary institutions spread across the state. The institutions are Sir Kashim Ibrahim College of Education Maiduguri, Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education, Science and Technology Bama, College of Education Waka-Biu, Ramat Polytecnic Maiduguri, College of Agriculture Damboa, Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic studies, Maiduguri and College of Business and Management studies Konduga.

Leadership of these institutions are mostly imposed by the state government through the Ministry of Education. Procedure for the appointment and removal of the heads of the institutions according to Bulama (2004) are not based on the law establishing them. The state government has refused to constitute governing councils for the institutions. Since

2003 the institutions in Borno State have been operating without the governing bodies, thus making the management of tertiary institutions very difficult. A crisis in a social institution according to English (1975) is any human condition which unattended, will block the organization from achieving its objectives. English further explained that, crises are caused by ignoring or violating certain norms in dealing with people. Such action results in a breakdown of interpersonal relationships, followed by conflict which is usually (or forced) to submerge, perhaps to be touched off later by an event or extraneous problem. Crises may also be caused by allowing certain conditions to develop which lead to a deterioration of mutual trust and communication. Social crises are problems between people and between groups of people. That means crises in tertiary institutions in Borno state are between the State Government/ Ministry of Education and Heads of Tertiary institutions, between Provosts and staff of the institutions as well as between heads and students of the institutions. Crises in Borno state tertiary institutions are predictable. What happens when they occur is not always predictable.

Too often, heads of tertiary institutions lay the blame for interpersonal deterioration on forces outside of the institution, failing to recognize that the institutions long ago became a victim of conditions which dehumanized it and made insensitive to students and teachers. Borno state tertiary institutions therefore are characterized by various problems that generate crises between various groups. These problems resulting from policies and management include poor or inadequate funding, frequent interference in the governance of the institutions, non-compliance to edict establishing the institutions, lack of governing bodies, unlawful removal of the heads and other principal officers of the institutions, inadequate water supply for both staff and students and poor maintenance of the existing structures and legitimate demands by staff of tertiary institutions. These and others generate a lot of crises in the institutions. In the light of the above, therefore, the paper examines some of the problems raised.

#### **Sources of funding in Borno State Tertiary Institutions.**

Under funding has been identified as one of the major causes of crises in Borno State tertiary institutions. This could be attributed to over-dependence on grants from one source, that is, the state government that owns the institutions. However, there are few sources of funds for managing tertiary institutions in the state. Some of them have very limited capacity to make an impact on the financial requirements of the institutions. The following are some of the sources.

1. Government budgetary allocation.
  - (a) Monthly staff salary.
  - (b) Monthly overhead cost
2. Internal institutional revenue generated from consultancy services, mainly from:
  - = Vocational and technical education
  - = Computer services
3. Registration and Tuition fees.
4. Sales of application forms.
5. Part- Time programmes fees
6. A Higher Education Tax, which is also called Education Tax Fund.

Although we agree that many of the sources yield very little as revenue base, we also know that Borno State tertiary institutions today derive millions of Naira from its revenue and regarded as insignificant. For instance, levies, sale of application forms, part-time programmes have become spinners of huge sums of money. Very unfortunately, some tertiary institutions leaders in Borno have difficulty in accounting for the way these internally generated revenues are expended. This results in the inability of the leaders to provide basic services needed by staff and students. This therefore, brings crisis between the Provosts and staff as well as between Provosts and students.

Borno state tertiary institutions as earlier stated are not adequately funded. It is an established that the main source of funds to Borno State tertiary institutions is from government budgetary allocation, which are often not released. Occasionally, the funds are released too late, and these result in serious management problems. There may be many reasons for the delay in release or not released completely. These may include political crisis within the state. It may also be due to poor planning and government indecisions on certain things.

The inability of government to provide enough fund results in poor management of the institutions. The institutions can not provide the basic facilities to both staff and students. The colleges can not maintain the existing boreholes that supply water to students and staff. Also difficult is the maintenance of hostels, staff quarters, classrooms and laboratories. The institutions also can not provide diesel to generators in the schools. When all these are not maintained and provided, the staff begin to challenge the authorities for their failure to provide these basic facilities. Also because of the inadequacy in structures, inadequate water supply, poor hostel maintenance, lack of



enough classroom/lecture halls, continued blackout, inadequate mattresses and poor policies and decisions result in rampage by students.

The under funding is not only peculiar to Borno state tertiary institutions, other tertiary institutions in the country may have similar financial situation. For instance, Mbanefoh, (2000), observed that tertiary educational system in developing countries especially in Africa is often in financial crisis. This poor funding according to Mbanefoh has led to various problems emanating from both students and staff. He further observed that at one time or the other, the staff will be on strike demanding for their legitimate monthly salary, while students because of inadequacy in structures go on rampage.

As indicated earlier, the major sources of funds to Borno state tertiary institutions is that of government budgetary allocation. Other sources of fund for managing Borno state tertiary institutions are those from internally generated revenue. Some of them have limited capacity to make an impact on the financial requirements of the institutions. Yet, staff and students' eyes are all on the revenue, because some tertiary institutions' leaders in Borno have difficulty in accounting for the way these internally generated revenues are expended. This results in the inability of the leaders to provide basic services needed by staff and students. For instance, staff of Kashim Ibrahim College of Education Maiduguri (2008), demanded for the removal of their Provost for his inability to account for the money obtained from the internally generated revenue for the year 2007. The state government however, denied the allegation and accused the academic staff for their baseless accusation and some of them were deployed to the ministry of education. The deployment generated serious crisis in the college because of the increasing tension in the college, the state government redeployed the staff back to the institution.

#### **Crises emanating from managing Education Tax Fund (ETF).**

Accusation as a result of alleged financial mismanagement of Education Tax Fund and internally generated revenue are rampant in Borno state tertiary institutions. Education Tax Fund which is also known as A Higher Education Tax is made up of the 2 percent tax collected by government from the profits declared by companies operating in Nigeria. The Tax Fund are disbursed to all levels of education in Nigeria. Borno state tertiary institutions do benefit from the fund. Ideally, leaders of the tertiary institutions through their various Governing Councils are supposed to manage the fund for maximum goal attainment. Unfortunately, the institutions have been deprived of the Governing Councils for 5 years. Consequently, the power to manage ETF has been removed and shifted to the State Government through the ministry of education. The Provosts of the institutions can

not utilize the ETF money released to them without permission of the state government particularly when there are no Governing Councils.

In order to enforce this order, the Ministry of Education, on the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2000 directed through a circular reference number CDN/1.216/Vol. 111/682, that no tertiary institution should embark on capital projects, award contracts and the rest without the approval of the Honourable Commissioner for Education. Any attempt to violate the circular by any of the Provosts attracted severe penalty. One would wonder why the state government should impose such on the Provosts of these institutions. One of the reasons for doing this may not be far away from the fact that top ministry officers wanted to benefit from the fund. One of the Provosts (*Waka-Biu*) in 2004 went out of his way and awarded contract to his friends without obtaining permission from the Honorable Commissioner for Education. The Provost was alleged to have awarded the contract to his closest friends suspected to be members of the opposing party in the state. He was instantly removed and replaced by the then registrar of the institution who is also the present Provost.

Apart from the order, directives and pressure from the ministry of education, the Provosts of the institutions suffer a lot internally from both staff and students. The Provosts are accused of mismanagement. Whenever a Provost is seen with a new car, it is attributed to Education Tax Fund. Whenever a Provost builds a house, it is attributed to Education Tax Fund and whenever a Provost performs pilgrimage to the Holy Land, it is attributed to Education Tax Fund.

#### **Management crisis emanating from the neglect of college Edicts**

One of the sources of crisis in Borno State tertiary institutions is that emanating from neglect of the edicts establishing them. By edicts establishing these institutions, they are supposed to be autonomous, free from external interference. For instance, the edict establishing the college of Education, science and technology Bama (1987), has clearly spelt out the role of Governing Council. The edict reveals that the council shall be the supreme Governing body of the college, be responsible for the general policy of the college and administration of the institution and on behalf of the college performs all functions and exercises all powers conferred on the college by this edict or any other enactment. Unfortunately, the autonomous ness has been over looked and institutions are run by the Ministry of Education. The problem of managing these institutions is compounded by the fact that, since 2003, government has refused to constitute Governing Councils to these institutions. As a result of this lack of councils, the institutions can not

perform their statutory functions. Many teachers have left the services of these institutions and can not be easily replaced. For example, Bulama, (2004) conducted a study on academic staff turn-over in Borno state tertiary institutions, discovered that 35% of total academic staff left the institutions between 1991 and 2000.

Due to lack of Councils, the Ministry of Education which is regarded as the mother ministry does everything for the institutions. The ministry on behalf of the state government formulates policies for the governance of the institutions. Some of the policies may not be in the interest of these institutions and thus becomes sources of crisis in the colleges. Also, leaders are imposed on these tertiary institutions. These leaders may not be in the interest of the institutions and this also becomes a source of crisis in the institutions. For instance in 2005, the state government imposed Provost on Kashim Ibrahim college of education which became the genesis of the current leadership crisis in the college. Also in 2007, there was a serious leadership crisis in Mohammed Goni college of Legal and Islamic studies Maiduguri where letters of appointments as Provost of the college were given to two people. One was given by the secretary to the state Government and the other was given by the then commissioner for education. This generated a lot of crisis which led to the deployment of the former Registrar of the institution to the office of the Head of Service, Borno State.

#### **Crises emanating as a result of interference by the State Government/Ministry of Education**

The interference of the ministry of education in the management of tertiary institutions is so pronounced that in 1988, three Deans of schools in college of education Bama were deployed to the ministry of education. Also during the year 2000, three staff of the bursary department of the same college were deployed to other sister tertiary institutions in the state. This revelation is in line with the study conducted by Bulama (2004) that, even the revenue generated from students' tuitions fees and sale of admission forms are not easily spent. Unlawful removal of the principal officers of the institution without due regard to the process of the law establishing them is also rampant. For instance, college of education Waka-Biu (2001) had a serious confrontation with the ministry of education over the unnecessary interference in the management of the affairs of the college. The two union leaders of the institution took the law into their hands and removed the Provost and the Registrar from their offices. The union leaders also ceased the keys to the Provost's official car. Also the leaders appointed new Provost and Registrar to the institution. The ministry of education on the other hand felt this singular act by the union leaders was a slap on her face and took a decisive action. In response to the unruly



behavior exhibited by the union leaders, the Ministry of education through the Honorable commissioner for education disbanded the two unions. The disbandment and suspension order sent to the institution via a letter with reference number ministry of education CDN/86/S.2T 2001, titled "immediate disbandment of the two unions and suspension of the Deputy Provost appointed by the two unions."

To conclude the Waka episode, the two unions filed a case against the ministry of education on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 at the High court of Justice of Borno state of Nigeria in the Biu judicial division (2001). The high court of justice therefore, restrained the Ministry of education from further actions against the college union leaders and the two principal officers suspended from the office until the case is finally decided. The court further restrained the Ministry of education from taking any further disciplinary measures and directed that the salaries, wages and entitlements be paid to the two suspended principal officers of the college. Such crises makes very difficult to manage the institutions effectively. Below are examples of the removals made unlawfully.

Provosts of the following institutions were removed due to various alleged offences ranging from maladministration to financial mismanagement.

1. College of education Waka-Biu (2004). The Provost was removed over the alleged award of contract to his close friends suspected to be members of the opposing party in the State. The money was from the Education Tax Fund (ETF). He was replaced by the Registrar of the institution.
2. Removal of the Rector of Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri. He was removed for his inability to control his staff and students which resulted into violent demonstration along the Maiduguri Airport Road by students of the polytechnic. He was replaced by the present Rector who was also one time the Rector of the institution.
3. Removal of the Provost of Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic studies Maiduguri (2007). He was removed as a result of leadership tussle between himself and a deputy Provost. Until his appointment as a Provost of the institution, he was the substantive Registrar of the institution. When the tenure of the former Provost Mustapha Umara ended successfully, the leadership was shifted to the Registrar. The Deputy Provost felt aggrieved and challenged the leadership of the then Registrar. Coincidentally, the two were served with letters as Provost of the institution by two most powerful leaders in the state. For peace to reign in the institution the Provost was deployed to the office of the Head of

Service, Borno State and the Deputy Provost was made to be the Provost of the institution.

4. The agitation for the removal of the Provost of Kashim Ibrahim College of Education Maiduguri (2008). When the tenure of the former Provost ended in 2004, a vacuum was created. The college authority conducted an interview. Twelve of the staff of the college applied for the post of the Provost. There were serious internal crisis mainly petitions against each other. The government felt appointing one of them may seriously increase the existing tension in the college; the government therefore, brought some body from outside to the institution. The aggrieved contestants under the cover of academic staff union demanded for the removal of the Provost and one of them appointed. Some of the aggrieved were deployed to the ministry of education and redeployed to the college. The alleged accusation was that of financial mismanagement, mainly money generated internally. The government denied the accusation vehemently.

### **Recommendations**

1. One way of resolving all the crises raised by the paper is by putting the governing councils back in place in all the tertiary institutions. When the councils are reconstituted, any problem that may arise could be amicably solved by both councils and the management of various institutions. This will go along way in curtailing future crises in the institutions. The crises as a result of mismanagement of institutional funds will now be handled jointly by councils and the management of various institutions. The Ministry of Education's frequent unwanted interference will not be there again. Also, the Edict establishing these institutions should be the only document to determine the affairs of these institutions. When this particular recommendation is implemented, there will be no room for mismanagement of institutional funds and unwanted removal of the principal officers.
2. The second way of solving the crises raised by the paper is by applying the three methods of handling crises indicated below:
  - a. **The crises prevention method:** This means changing conditions which produce crises or intervening before such conditions become crises in tertiary institutions. Crises could be prevented when the quality of the working climates, staff morale are routinely checked by the management and the state government.



Consultations could also be conducted to determine or sense the levels of anger and frustration which often pervade the lower levels of pyramidal organizations. Thus problems and alternatives are seldom anticipated before damage occurs to institutional facilities and materials, not to mention irrevocable harm to staff morale and loyalty.

**b. The second method of handling crises is through intervention:** This means confronting the interrelationships causing the crises. The confrontation consists of six steps. These are:-

- Problem awareness
- Cause/effect determination
- Problem focus
- Solution derivation
- Implementation and symptom review.

These are done jointly by the State Government/Ministry of education and the management of the institutions.

**c. The third way of handling crises is through crises resolution:** This way occurs when the conditions which produced the crises are so changed that they produce no further symptoms or no new occurrences.

The three methods of handling crises presented above is in line with English's (1975) observation. He observed that the three aspects of dealing with crises are interchangeable and may even occur simultaneously. For example, certain crises may be prevented by intervening in an institution to alleviate poor working conditions. Many problems are prevented by intervention and intervention at one level may be prevented at another.

Finally, Education Tax Fund, the major source of fund to Tertiary institutions in Borno state now should be managed by the various managements of the institutions even in the absence of the Governing Councils. Due respect should be given to edict establishing the institutions, funding by state government be greatly improved, lawful method of disengaging heads of the institutions should be employed and frequent interference should be discontinued. Prevention, intervention and resolution methods of handling crises should be adopted by both state government and management of tertiary institutions.

**Reference**

Borno State, (1987): College of Education, Science and Technology, Edict, Bama.

Bulama, B. I. (2004): Academic staff turn-over and Achievement of Institutional standards in Borno state Tertiary Institutions. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Maiduguri.

Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2004): National Policy on Education. Lagos: Federal ministry of information printing press.

High court of Justice, Biu Judicial division, (2001): Joint Union of Tertiary Institutions, College of Education Waka-Biu chapter and three (3) others and Honorable Attorney General of Borno state.

Mbanefoh, G. F. (2000): Proceedings of workshop for Provosts of colleges of Education in Nigeria. Awka, Meks publishers.

Ministry of Education, (2000): Circular CDN/1.216/vol.III/682.

Ministry of Education. (2001): CDN/1.86/S.2T. Immediate disbandment of the academic and Non-academic Unions of College of Education Waka-Biu chapter and suspension of the Deputy Provost and a senior officer in the Registry department from office.