MANAGING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AMIDST EXTERNAL THREATS: THE EXPERIENCE OF UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study identifies managerial strategies that improve effective institutional management and determine the level of institution effectiveness during the Boko Haram insurgency in Maiduguri. It adopted descriptive research approach with a population comprises of all categories of management team who are involved in the day-to-day administration of the University totaling one hundred and three (143). It utilised self-designed questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The study adopted Test-retest method to examine the reliability of the instruments and the resultant data were analysed use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The study revealed that there is effective communication between management, staff, students and other stakeholders; guarding and monitoring of campus through the use of joint security personnel, perimeter fencing, modern security equipment and devices. Based on the findings, the University effectiveness were measures of the proper functional in all respects and experiencing of high learner attainment; accomplishment of stated goals and objectives within the given inputs or available resources.

Keywords: Educational institution, Effective management, External threats, University of Maiduguri experience.

Introduction

Nigeria higher educational institution is established with aim of giving any student who enrolls a very sound and qualitative education to be able to function effectively in any environment in which he/she may find him/herself so as to become more productive (Fafunwa, 1975). Institution leadership reputation and achievements

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depend on the standard of stability in the institution more than any other factor as Griffin (1994) affirms that a principal's public and professional reputation will depend more on the standard of stability in his school than any other single factor. Effective institution management ensures that institution resources and facilities are effectively used for teaching and learning as well as other statutory responsibility with little or no interruption.

For a University system, the management is expected to provide conducive environment for teaching and learning, research and community services, and also ensure safe, secure, hygienic and comfortable shelter for students, teachers and other staff as teaching, learning and other activities of the school take place. A very significant issue in the running of University is security. To ensure the safety, security and good health of the learner as well as other staff of the institution is of paramount importance since educational activities take place effectively in an environment in which the learner feels safe and secure. The responsibility of managing the University rests with the Vice Chancellor assisted by other principal officers.

Beside internal crises, which the management supposed to be able to solve with various conflict resolution techniques, management also faces conflict/ crises from external forces which tend to be impediments in the attainment of the institutional goals and objectives. The managerial strategies adopted by the Institutions' authorities would have a far reaching impact on the effective management of the Institution under any situation and/or condition. The University of Maiduguri enjoyed a high reputation for a long time. But in recent time, the challenges of Boko Haram insurgency have taken their toll. This has the tendency of damaging the quality of education been provided to the students if the school system is not properly managed. As rightly put by Marguba (2016) "As the Boko Haram insurgency traumatizing our dear nation since 2009 draws to an inevitable end, a subject that must engage our minds is the need to reposition our educational system for the development of our youths". Silva and McGann (1995) reported that it has been acknowledged that in many cases, it is not the crisis that kills or badly hurts companies, but it is the way the crisis is handled. And conversely, good crisis management can turn even the most horrifying and unthinkable crisis into an opportunity for growth and innovation (Silva and McGann, 1995).

Effective management conveys the sense of quality and of competence or efficiency in the whole process or in any part of it that has been selected for study (Jibril, 1997). According to Cameron (1978), there are four main fields of organizational effectiveness which are compatible with the effectiveness dimensions. The following are the outlines: (1) The academic field which is concerned with the students' academic progress, professional development and the productivity of the lecturers as well as the potential to obtain resources. (2) The moral field. This deals with the student's educational satisfaction, the organizational health and the faculty and administrator employment satisfaction. (3) The external adaptation field which deals with the student's career progress and system openness and community interaction. (4) The extracurricular field discusses the single dimension of student's personal development. Later, Cameron incorporated the student's personal progress dimension into the academic field and deleted the last field.

Shefali and Srivasatava (2016) has reported that organizational effectiveness requires the satisfaction of multiple stake-holders – each having an impact on the primacies which form the criteria of ascertaining the magnitude of organizational performance. They have also affirmed that Students' Psychological Well-Being, Organizational Health, Satisfaction with Quality of Campus Life and Student Engagement have been found to be influencing organizational effectiveness measured in terms of Academic Performance of students. In order to maintain stability and development in academic institution, the management team may have to develop remarkable ideas to respond successfully to the rapid changes in the operating environment due to crises. Also, it has to demonstrate managerial and leadership competence with clear sense of purpose by applying various management strategies that suit the peculiar situation since leaders carrying around old strategies won't be any better equipped to handle new crises. Moreover, Silva and McGann (1995) have suggested the designing of an efficient and successful crisis management plans and that one should understand the vital importance of values in designing a crisis plan.

It is important to note that despite the insurgency in the North East of Nigeria, the University of Maiduguri remained open, working towards meeting the goals for which it was established. Though researchers have worked on management strategies and effective management e.g. Griffin 1994, Caroline 2014, Richard 2015, Shonubi and Akintoro 2016, and also Silva and McGann (1995) have suggested that crises should not be treated in the same way, and that attacking problems with insight and positive values is the best spin one can put on a crisis, but none has carried out study on the impacts of managerial strategies on the effective management of University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, Nigeria, during the Boko Haram insurgency. Since the management of the University of Maiduguri is responsible for the effective running of the University as well as in making major decisions on planning, growth and development of the institution during this period, proper description and analysis of management actions during this period is highly needed. Hence, the objectives of this study are to identify and assess the various managerial strategies adopted to cope with Boko Haram insurgency as well assess the effectiveness of the University of Maiduguri during the Boko Haram insurgency.

Methodology

The study area is the University of Maiduguri located in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State in Northeastern Nigeria. The study population comprised of all the 143 management team which include the Principal Officers (6), Provost (1), Deans (18), Directors (32) and Head of Departments (86) of the University of Maiduguri who are involved in the day-to-day administration of the University. The sample size comprised the entire 143 management team in the University to capture the impacts of managerial strategies on the effective management of the institution during the Boko Haram insurgency period**.** 128 questionnaires were retrieved correctly for analysis.

The instrument used for this study was in the form of self-designed questionnaires. Test-retest method was used to examine the reliability of the

instruments. The questionnaires were constructed on a 5 point Likert scale to rate the views and opinions of respondents on the level of their perceptions. The data collected were analyzed by the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question One: What are the various managerial strategies adopted by the University of Maiduguri to cope with Boko Haram insurgency?

Managerial strategies based on 5 items analysis was found to be agreed upon based on respondents' opinions. The detailed descriptions are presented in Table 1.

Table1: Managerial Strategies

S/N	Items	No. of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	There is effective communication between stakeholders, management, staff and students.	**128**	5(3.9)	15(11.7)	8(6.3)	71(55.5)	29(22.7)	3.8125	1.04052
2.	The campus is well guarded and monitored through the use of joint security personnel perimeter fencing, modern security equipment and devices e.t.c.	**128**	-(-)	17(13.3)	12(9.4)	65(50.8)	34(26.6)	3.9063	.94275
3.	There is effective students' administration.	**128**	1(.8)	20(15.6)	14(10.9)	76(59.4)	17(13.3)	4.4688	6.4551
4.	During the insurgency, the management has embarked on regular staff promotion.	**128**	7(5.5)	5(3.9)	11(8.6)	57(44.5)	48(37.5)	4.0469	1.05636
5.	There is improvement in staff training and development for both academic and non-academic staff.	**128**	7(5.5)	15(11.7)	18(14.1)	59(46.1)	29(22.7)	3.6875	1.11362

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows that out of the total number of respondents 5 (3.9 %) Strongly Disagree, 15 (11.7 %) Disagree, 8 (6.3 (%) Undecided , 71 (55.5 (%) Agree, 29 (22.7 (%) Strongly Agree on the issue of effective communication. It also shows that 17(13.3%) of the respondents Disagree, 12 (9.4%) Undecided, 65 (50.8%) Agree, Strongly Agree 34 (26.6%) on issue of campus well guarded and monitored. The respondents of 1(.8%) Strongly Disagree, 20 (15.6%) Disagree, 14 (10.9%) Undecided, 76 (59.4%) Agree, 17 (13.3%) Strongly Agree on effective students' administration. The respondents of 7 (5.5%) Strongly Disagree, 5 (3.9%) Disagree, 11 (8.6%) Undecided, 57 (44.5%) Agree, 48 (37.5%) Strongly Agree on Staff promotion. The respondents of 7(5.5%) Strongly Disagree, 5 (11.7%) Disagree 1, 18

(14.1%) Undecided, 59 (46.1%) Agree, 29 (22.7%) Strongly Agree on improvement in staff training and development.

Research Question Two: Does the University of Maiduguri function effectively during the Boko Haram insurgency?

To answer this research question, descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage were used to analysis the data. The results of the analysis of the data on effectiveness of the University of Maiduguri during the Boko Haram insurgency based on 7 items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Effectiveness of University of Maiduguri

S/N	Items	No. of Respondents	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	The University function properly in all respects and experiences high learner attainment during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	7(5.5)	30(23.4)	21(16.4)	51(39.8)	19(14.8)	3.3516	1.15418
2.	The University accomplished its stated goals and objectives within the given inputs or available resources during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	-(-)	16(12.5)	13(10.2)	81(63.3)	18(14.1)	3.7891	.83856
3.	The University was able to obtain or acquire valued resources needed for running the institution during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	3(2.3)	18(14.1)	22(17.2)	68(53.1)	17(13.3)	3.6094	.96583
4.	The stakeholders are at least minimally satisfied with the performance of the University during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	-(-)	12(9.4)	11(8.6)	80(62.5)	25(19.5)	3.9219	.80948
5.	The University survived undisputed and legitimacy academic activities during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	-(-)	9(7.0)	9(7.0)	71(55.5)	39(30.5)	4.0938	.80781
6.	The University was able to make improvements and adaptations to its environment during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	2(1.6)	6(4.7)	8(6.3)	73(57.0)	39(30.5)	4.1016	.83090
7.	There was absence of ineffectiveness (poor performances, poor results, conflicts, problems etc.) at the University during the Boko Haram insurgency.	**128**	12(9.4)	37(28.9)	20(15.6)	42(32.8)	17(13.3)	3.1172	1.23353

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2019

The results in Table 2 shows that the total number of respondents of 7(5.5%) Strongly Disagree, 30 (23.4%) Disagree, 21(16.4%) Undecided, 51 (39.8%) Agree, 19(14.8%) Strongly Agree that the University function properly in all respects and experiences high learner attainment during the Boko Haram insurgency. The respondents of 16(12.5%) Disagree, 13 (10.2%) Undecided, 81 (63.3%) Agree, 18 (14.1%) Strongly Agree that the University accomplished its stated goals and objectives within the given inputs or available resources during the Boko Haram

insurgency. The respondents of 3 (2.3%) Strongly Disagree, 18(14.1%) Disagree, 22 (17.2%) Undecided, 68 (53.1%) Agree, 17 (13.3%) Strongly Agree that the University was able to obtain or acquire valued resources needed for running the institution during the Boko Haram insurgency. The respondents of 12 (9.4%) Disagree, 11 (8.6%) Undecided, 80 (62.5%) Agree, 25 (19.5%) Strongly Agree that the stakeholders are at least minimally satisfied with the performance of the University during the Boko Haram insurgency.

The respondents of 9 (7.0%) Disagree, 9 (7.0%) Undecided, 71 (55.5%) Agree, 39 (30.5%) Strongly Agree that the University survived undisputed and legitimacy academic activities during the Boko Haram insurgency. The respondents of 2 (1.6%) Strongly Disagree, 6 (4.7%) Disagree, 8 (6.3%) Undecided, 73 (57.0%) Agree, 39 (30.5%) Strongly Agree that the University was able to make improvements and adaptations to its environment during the Boko Haram insurgency. The respondents of 12 (9.4%) Strongly Disagree, 37 (28.9%) Strongly Disagree, 20 (15.6%) Undecided, 42 (32.8%) Agree, 17 (13.3%) Strongly Agree that.

Discussion

The research question states that; what are the various management strategies adopted by the University of Maiduguri to cope with Boko Haram insurgency? From the findings of this study it could be noted that majority of the respondents agreed that there is effective communication between stakeholders, management, staff and students. And also majority of the respondents agreed that campus is well guarded and monitored through the use of joint security personnel (Internal and External security operators), perimeter fencing, modern security equipment and devices. The study also reveals that majority agreed that there is effective students' administration in the University of Maiduguri. Moreover, majority of the respondents agreed that the management of University of Maiduguri has embarked on regular staff promotion during the insurgency as well as improvement in staff training and development for both academic and non-academic staff in the University.

These strategies have been found to have influenced management effectiveness in a positive ways as found from the results that they were the identified management strategies adopted by the University of Maiduguri management to cope with Boko Haram insurgency. These managerial strategies concurred with Matter (1999) strategies which highlighted clear communication, the responsibility of building Test Coordinator, and rewarding and reinforcing quality for improving the process of educational assessment. In the view of Agharuwhe (2014) Institution leaders should apply administrative strategies that suit the individual institution since various instructional and administrative strategies may be desired in various circumstances, locations and settings. Hence, the other strategies which did not form part of Matter (1999) could have been chosen because of the circumstances University of Maiduguri found its self.

Research question two states that, does the University of Maiduguri function effectively during the Boko Haram insurgency? From the findings of this study it could be noted that majority of the respondents agreed that the University function properly in all respects and experiences high learner attainment during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents also agreed that the University

accomplished its stated goals and objectives within the given inputs or available resources during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents agreed that the University was able to obtain or acquire valued resources needed for running the institution during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents agreed that the stakeholders are at least minimally satisfied with the performance of the University during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents agreed that the University survived undisputed and legitimacy academic activities during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents agreed that the University was able to make improvements and adaptations to its environment during the Boko Haram insurgency. The majority of the respondents also agreed that there was absence of ineffectiveness (poor performances, poor results, conflicts, problems etc.) at the University during the Boko Haram insurgency.

Evidence from this study on managements' perceptions on effectiveness has revealed that the University was able to achieve a good level of effectiveness during the Boko Haram insurgency. These findings were not fully supported by Olowoselu et al., (2014) report that the activities of Boko Haram have crippled the socio-economic activities between Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger Republic and Republic of Chad where Maiduguri in Borno is immediate neighbours of these other countries. The earlier findings of Babakura (2014) on the effects of violence and insecurity on the academic performance of some selected secondary school students in Maiduguri metropolitan council and Jere Local Government Area of Borno State, Nigeria does not also agreed with this results which revealed that the violence and insecurity have great impacts on the students' academic performance and have led to massive failure recorded in NECO, WAEC, NABTEC and JSS examination results.

The difference could be due to the strategies put in place at the University of Maiduguri which the secondary schools might have not done. Teodorović (2009) study which summarizes the most common findings of each of the three major research paradigms in school effectiveness reported that in both industrialized and developing countries student background factors play a large role in student achievement (more so in industrialized countries). Input-output variables seem to be more important in developing countries. Instructional effectiveness factors seem to have an important role in both sets of countries, while the impact of effective-schools factors seems to be most debated. The author's effective –school factors are strong educational leadership, emphasis on acquiring basic skills, orderly and secure environment, high expectations of student achievement, frequent assessment of student progress, co-operation and strong parental outreach. These are similar to the factors considered as institution effectiveness factors in this study.

Conclusion

This study identified and examined various managerial strategies adopted by the management of the University of Maiduguri during Boko Haram insurgency as well as the effectiveness of the University of Maiduguri during the Boko Haram insurgency. The following conclusions emerge from the results of the study:

i. The strategies adopted by the management are: effective communication between stakeholders, management, staff and students; guarding and monitoring

of campus through the use of joint security personnel, perimeter fencing, modern security equipment and devices; effective students' administration; embarking on regular staff promotion; and improvement in staff training and development.

ii. The University effectiveness were measures of the proper functional in all respects and experiencing of high learner attainment; accomplishment of stated goals and objectives within the given inputs or available resources; ability to obtain or acquire valued resources needed for running the institution; stakeholders satisfaction with the performance of the University; survival of undisputed and legitimacy academic activities; and the absence of ineffectiveness (poor performances, poor results, conflicts, problems etc.).

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

i. The present study was intended for only one unit of analysis (e.g. management) whereas the nature of University system may requires management of multiple units of analysis (i.e. students, lecturers, non-academic staff, classrooms, e.t.c.). Future research should focus on multiple units of analysis.

ii. Further study can also be carryout on the impact of University factors or management strategies on students' achievement as a measure of educational achievement.

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