

## **Transformation of Tertiary Education System in Cross River State through Good Governance: The Challenges for 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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### **Abstract**

*The study sought to examine the issue of good governance and the transformation of tertiary education system in Cross River state. Survey research design was adopted for this study. Three (3) hypotheses were formulated to test the relationship between good governance and transformation of tertiary education. The questionnaire schedule was used to gather data from five hundred (500) respondents. One hundred and fifty (150) respondents from Cross River College of Education and Three hundred fifty (350) from Cross River University of Technology were randomly selected. Responses from the two tertiary institutions were collated and analyzed using Pearson Correlation Coefficient, (r) Result of the analysis show that there is a significant relationship between good governance and transformation of tertiary education IT further revealed that financial efficiency, quality of leadership and workers participation in decision making which are attributes of good governance significantly influence Trans formation of tertiary Education in CRS Based on the result, it was recommended that quality leadership and prudent management of fund in tertiary institutions should be provided and utilized effectively.*

### **1. Introduction**

The concept of 'Education' is best understood from the point of view of the National Policy on Education document that described education as an Instrument Par excellence in the overall development of any nation (FRN, 2004). Tertiary education generally is considered to be major contributory transformation factor to industrialization, political stability, national integral ion and unit, economic and social stability of nation (Adeyemi 2000). It is the best way to human resource development.

According to National policy on Education, (2004), the goal of tertiary education in Nigeria is spelt out as to contribute to national development through high level relevance manpower training to develop and inculcate proper value for the survival of the individual and society, to develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand the local and external environment to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society to promote and encourage scholarship and country service.

Tertiary education serves as the key institution in fulfilling the enumerable goals. It is therefore very pertinent for the system to undergo some form of transformation which would in part be possible through good (corporate) governance). More so the quality of the products from tertiary institutions has been observed to be dependent on the quality and transformation as well as the management and governanceof the system. The achievement of any country's national objectives especially in the emerging economics of Cross River State, is largely anchored on the quality, qualify and transformation of the system and its constituents, the graduates from the tertiary institution.

Based on this fact, Brubache (FME, 2003) emphasized that the fundamental mission of tertiary educational institutions is to promote life of the mind through intellectual enquiry and to graduate, store and transmit specialized knowledge through teaching research, provisions of extension and community services. The establishment of tertiary educational institutions in 1975, 1973, and 1999 being University of Calabar, The defunct polytechnic Calabar and Cross River State College of Education respectively, marked the beginning of tertiary education system in the state. Historically, these early education institutions in Cross River State started well and did everything to meet educational standards.

They were well funded and staffed. Teaching, research and the governance in the ten existing tertiary institutions could compare to any Higher education system in the nation. Staffing, both teaching and management covers all sectors of the economy. There was high accountability in the system while academic ethics were traditionally observed. Their standard of programme delivery according to Adeyemi (2011) cited in Okon (2012) was of the best practice. All these greatly impacted on the quality of graduates they' produced. Then the hope of stakeholder that these institutions would promote the state to greatness was very high.

Unfortunately, according to Adeyemi (2011) things started falling apart due to mismanagement and dependent on mono-economy especially after the "oil boom" era of the 70s which was mismanage by the political elites of that time. The 'oil boom' later turned to 'oil doom' and there crashed the nation's economy in the 1980s with the attendant consequences which impacted negatively on all facets of the nation's existence, especially the educational sector. Tertiary education (Universities) felt the brunt more than the other levels of education. The infrastructure become dilapidated, all tertiary institutions became underfunded, leading to services erosion of some of the programmes, there was manifestation of brain drain as academic staff in particular left for greener pasture. The existing institutions lost their best talents in the teaching profession who ware both foreign expatriates and indigenous staff.

Adeyemi (2011) cited in Kola and Bolupc (2012) observed that many tertiary institutions became located both in staffing and students on roll. The process of governance of these institutions becomes very difficult. This development started affecting" the rating, ranking and image of the educational system. The quality of their output became very doubtful resulting in their products being subjected to all forms of humiliations and embarrassment when seeking for jobs and admission in other tertiary institutions outside the state. The internal/governance of the affected institutions became very poor and increasingly complex that the existing tertiary institutions lacked the basic tenets of good and corporate governance which is the hallmark of thriving modern institutions (Adeyemi, 2011).

During this period, many unethical practices crept into the system, especially the management and governance; such as tribalism, politicization, cultism, favouratism, corruption and mediocrity. It is on the basis of this observation and experience that this study intend to find out the extent of the success of institutions transformation process and the place of corporate governance for the attainment of their objectives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **2. Literature Review**

The concept of good governance for tertiary education system' these world over namely refers to the internal structural organization and management of existing institutions. According to Adeyemi (2011) cited in Kola and Bolupe (2012) the governance process that result in transformation of the system is the uncaused means by which tertiary educational system are managed and operated towards attainment of the set goals. The organization of the internal governance of tertiary institutions is generally composed of the following:

The governing council

The vice -Chancellor, Rector, Provost

The Principal Officers - Registrar, Bursar and Librarian.

The Dean of Faculties/schools

The Head of departments

Heads of other units, Directors, staff and students organizations (Adeyemi, 2012:115).

The governing structures of tertiary institutions are highly differentiated throughout the nation's education sector. Altbach (2005) however asserted that the different structural models for tertiary education and its management all over the world share a common heritage. For instance developed nations like United States, Britain, state institution governing Boards/councils often stress the concept of citizen governance, recognizing that all board members serve a civic role for the education system. While in Nigeria, according to Bokel (2004) the governing Council comprises internal and external members. The external members serve as representatives of stakeholders and function like the American civil role in the governance of the system.

In a normal society, the significant aspect of tertiary institutions governance is that power and authority to ensure smooth functioning of the system is widely distributed among the different unites in system schedules.

On the issue of good governance of tertiary institutions, Saint (2003) maintained that for transformation practically benefit the societies, good governance as an indicator of the system performance must ensure accountability of individuals towards reducing or eliminating problems in the system. Also, ensuring economic/financial efficiency through increased income generation, resource utilization and stakeholders' welfare improvement.

The success of tertiary education delivery and its resulting developmental impact on the society is hinged on adequate planning, effective administration, adequate funding of programmes and efficient utilization of resource, inspection and supervision (FRN, 2004) Since good governance is believed to be the modern management mechanisms through which tertiary institutions can be effectively managed, Wikipedia cited in Adeyemi (2014) enumerated the key elements in good governance to include honesty, trust, integrity, openness performance orientation, responsibility, accountability, mutual respect and commitment to the system organization process.

In essence, for any tertiary educational institutions to achieve results in the 2P<sup>1</sup> century world, the leadership and management must be transparent and honest in its operation and be trust worthy in handling the resources and must show integrity in its dealings and open to all forms of criticism. Every individual in the governance structure must perform to its optimum through performance orientation of the system.

The leadership must portray a high level of responsibility in carrying out its duties, ditto for other stakeholders of the system. Above all, there should be mutual respect for one another in the government structure so as to properly address the issue of transformation (Adeyemi 2012). Finally, from the above discussion, it is very clear that good governance if effectively and sincerely addressed would transform our tertiary education system in the society.

### **3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study in general terms was to examine the process of tertiary education governance and its contribution to educational transformation in Cross River State.

Specifically, the studies intend to investigate whether;

1. Good governance in respect of financial efficiency contributes to tertiary institution transformation.
2. Good governance in respect of quality of leadership for transform of tertiary educational institutions
3. Good governance in respect of quality of performance would transform tertiary educational institutions.
4. Good governance in respect of effective participation of workers towards transformation of tertiary institution
5. Good governance with respect to existence of industrial harmony for transformation of the education system

### **4. Research Hypothesis**

1. Good Governance in respect of financial efficiency does not significantly relate with tertiary institution transformation
2. Good Governance in respect of quality of leadership does not significantly relates with tertiary institution Transformation.
3. Good governance in respect of participation of workers in decision does not significantly relate with tertiary institution transformation.

### **5. Methodology**

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population comprises all the teaching and non-teaching staff of two state owned tertiary educational institutions in Cross River State. The sample of the study was made up of five hundred (500) respondents randomly selected from Cross River State University of Technology and Cross River State College of Education. A breakdown of the figure showed that three hundred and fifty (350) respondents were randomly selected from Cross River State (CRUTECH) University of Technology Calabar, while one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were randomly selected from Cross River College of Education Akamkpa. The selection was done without bias. That means that the researcher exercises no control over whom or what will be selected. The instrument used in the study was a researcher developed questionnaire titled: Transformation of Tertiary Education system in Cross River State through good governance. (TTESTGGE)

The instrument consist of 30 items structured on a 4 point scale of strongly agree (4 points), agree (3 points), disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 points) two experts in mathematics and statistics department validated the instrument by screening the questionnaire in line with the research items, and made necessary suggestions whereby items found relevant were retained for use while the irrelevant items were dropped. The data obtained from the respondent were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. This high coefficient indicated that the instrument was reliable for use in the study.

## 6. Results

Hypothesis one: Good governance in respect of financial efficiency does not significantly relate with transformation of tertiary education.

**Table 1**

Pearson product moment correlation analysis was employed to test the relationship between good governance and tertiary Institution Transformation.

N = 500

Variable	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	R
Good governance in respect of financial efficiency	4091	87067	70575	0.85
Transformation of Tertiary education	3796	70370		

- Significant at 0.05 df=498,crit r=195

The result of the analysis as presented in table one shows that the calculated r-value of 0.84 is greater than the critical r- value of .195 at 0.05 level of significance with 498 degree freedom. This shows that the calculated r-value is significant since it is higher than the table or critical value. This result means that there is a significant relationship between good governance through efficient utilization of school finances and transforming tertiary education system. In otherwords, the result of the hypothesis means that the more prudent fund is used there is possibility of transforming education system. Hence the hypothesis was rejected.

## 7. Hypothesis 2

Good governance with respect to quality of leadership does not significantly relate with tertiary education Transformation.

Table 2

Pearson product correlation analysis was employed to test the relationship between good government and tertiary education transformation

N = 500

Variable	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Good governance in respect of quality leadership	4851	104213	74490	0.78
Transformation of Tertiary education	3747	30323		

- Significant at 0.05 df=498,crit r=196

The result of the analysis in table 2 reveals that the calculated r-value of 0.78 is greater than the critical r-value of .195 at 0.05 level of significance with 4.98 degree of freedom indicative of this result is that the analysis is significant since r-value calculated is by far higher than the table or critical r-value. Thus, the result means that quality leadership in governing education system, is significantly related to. Tertiary education transformation.

Put differently, the result shows that the better the quality of leadership governing educational system, the higher the level of transformation. On the strength of this result, and the analysis thereof, the hypothesis was rejected

## Hypothesis 3

Good governance with respect to participation of workers in decision making dos significantly relates with tertiary educations transformation.

**Table 3**

Pearson product moment correlation analysis was employed to test the relationship between good governance education transformation

**N = 500**

Variable	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	R
Good governance in respect of workers participation in decision - making	5222	131182	9067	0.89
Transformation of Tertiary education system	3796	713805		

- Significant at 0.05 df=498, crit r=198

The result of the analysis indicated that the calculated r-value of 0.09 is greater than the critical value of .195 of 0.05 level of significance with 498 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated value is higher than the table or critical value, the result of the analysis is therefore significant. These imply that management posture in tertiary institutions significantly relates with Transformation of tertiary education. This result further reveals that the more the workers participate in decision making the better the good governance for transformation of tertiary education with this result, the hypothesis was rejected.

### 8. Discussion

The result of the analysis in table one revealed that there is a significant relationship between good governance and tertiary education transformation. In other words, the more prudent fund is used in the administration of the institution there is the possibility that tertiary educational institutions will be transformed of experience changes. The findings of the study is supported by Ecke (2004) who observed that financial support of education system enabled institutions of learning to meet minimum standards, attract quality teachers and students, provide adequate learning environment and attainment of objectives possible.

In a similar perspective, Hinchifile (2002) maintain that for the current financing trend of tertiary education to be sustained, there is need for the government and other stakeholders to increase allocations to institutions to enable them meet the rising costs or else tertiary education will suffer incur. Backs either in total number of staff or in relative ware and salary increasing on in capital and equipment.

Financial crisis may affect the level of transformation process. Findings from the test of hypothesis indicated that there is a relationship between quality of leadership and the transformation of tertiary education system to support this result, Okotoni and Okotoni (2003) in their study on schools and leadership question in Higher education. Concluded that the changes and success of educational system is dependent to a large extent on who is the head of that organization. The failing standard of the educational system has been blamed on leadership and management. The result in hypothesis two also revealed that the better the quality of leadership governing the education system, the higher the level of transformation. On this note the researcher observed that effort should be made in the choice and placement of people in responsible positions as leaders. In line with the reasoning above, Lopex Sanyal and Tres (2006) affirmed that administrators of higher educational institutions should improve in their leadership organizational effectiveness. That they should possess the knowledge of initiation of new structures or procedure for accomplishing institutional objective.

The result of this hypothesis corroborates the opinion of Chike-Okoli (2005) who emphasized in his study of "Leadership quality and Institutional effectiveness that transformation of organizations or institutions required people-oriented. Leadership, and above all, leadership that tries to achieve equilibrium in the organization by striking a balance between high productivity and good relations and also by ensuring that neither the needs of people nor the goals of the organization are neglected. In other words, result -oriented leaders are quality and transformational leaders.

The findings on participation of workers in decision making towards tertiary institution. Transformation is very significant. Observation of tertiary institution managers indicates that many institutions are yet to experience transformations in today's world due the inability of their leaders to recognized and accept the innovations as a key to transformation. It is important to note that the success of any institution arrangement depends on the collective decision making bodies in the system. This observation agree with Adeyemi (2000) in a study he conducted on University government and effective participation of staff in decision-making and industrial harmony", where he ascertain, if industrial peace and transformation can be achieved through participation of workers.

After generating and analyzing data from respondents, the result shows a significant relationship between participation in decision-making on policy formulation and transformation from the outcome of this analysis, it implies that organizational/institutional transformation can be engendered when workers are allowed through the process of good governance to contribute to the decision making process in institutional management particular when their interest is involved.

### **9. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that institutional transformation would be achieved through good government with respect to prudent management of fund, resources fullness and accountability of stewardship. Also, that transformation would be attained if tertiary institutions in Cross River State can totally adopt the features and principles of good governance with respect to quality of leadership and effective participation of workers in decision-making particularly in policy formulation.

### **10. Recommendations**

From the conclusion, the following recommendations are made

1. Quality leadership in the management of tertiary education should be encouraged. Institutional leadership should not be based on tribalism, sentiment, Godfatherism and ethnicity but on merit and performance.
2. Transformation of tertiary educational institutions should be considered by education managers based on changes in global economy that is affecting educational institutions to respond to new demands in the production on process study as teaching pedagogy, technology in research, community services and corporate governance.
3. The culture of prudent management of funds allocated to tertiary education system should be utilized only on transformation purposes.

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