

## **Slide of Fortune: The Painful Story and Management Problems of Bendel Insurance Football Club of Benin City, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper focuses on the management of Bendel Insurance Football Club, Benin City. It examines the reasons for the poor performance of the Club, since 2008, when it was relegated to National League till date (2014). The problem has been lack of government attention to the football club, which led to the dwindling fortunes of the club. The objective of this study was to identify the factors responsible for the poor performance of the club and make recommendations that would improve and strengthen the club. The study is a survey research and adopted the use of convenience random sampling involving the subordinate staff, current players, former (old) players and coaches. Data collection were from primary and secondary sources. And the methods of data analysis were the simple percentage and chi square.*

*The research found out that the welfare of the players was completely neglect; that there was no provision for camping facilities; that there was poor human resources management, absence of business-like managers and, above all, poor funding. In conclusion, this paper recommends the coordination of the organization's resources through the process of effective management in terms of provision of adequate funds, provision and improvement of camping facilities, recruitment of good players yearly without bias to strengthen the team, the complete and regular payment of the benefit and entitlement of players.*

**Key Words:** Bendel Insurance Football Club ( BIFC), Dwindling Fortunes, Management, Politics, Leadership, Motivation, Football Management, Management of BIFC, Management Problems, Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

The history of Nigeria's Football development and organization is, of course, the history of Nigerian Football, which dates back to the early part of the twentieth century. It is recorded that football was first introduced into Nigeria by British colonialists in about 1914 - the year of the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates by Lord Frederick Lugard (*Nigeria Football Federation, NFF, 2013*). Bendel Insurance Football Club metamorphosed from Vipers Football Club of Benin, which was transferred to Bendel Insurance Company PLC in 1972, and was later registered by Bendel Insurance Company PLC, as Bendel Insurance Football Limited with the corporate Affairs Commission.

The cardinal objective for which the company was established was; To establish, form, promote, play, and participate in, encourage the development of professional football league in Nigeria, and to take part in, participate in any organized football competition recognized and sanctioned by Football Association or any recognized body by Decree or Law in Nigeria or elsewhere in the world for the purpose of Football.

Earlier on, the Management Committee of Bendel Insurance Football Club prosecuted the mandate with passion, The strategies involved participation at training sessions, trips to match venues (home and away), boardroom activities, and morale-boosting programmes. Crust and Lawrence [2006] observed that the process of managing people whether

in sports or business is a complex task and requires a systematic appreciation of the multi-dimensional skill or effort required. Also Perry [2000] stated that football managers must acknowledge the importance of their role from a business or financial perspective.

Bendel Insurance F.C. in contemporary times has lost its former glory of a “Top Flight Club” in the Nation’s Premiership Division One (1). It has been relegated to National Division Two (2) League, and this is certainly not a healthy development. This is not in any way the expectation. However, it is significant to note that the time, talent, and treasure put in by the management committee has not reflected in the overall performance of the team. This is an important observation for future consideration. This study will therefore examine the management problems of Bendel Insurance F.C. and proffer solutions to the identified problems.

Managing entails doing careful planning, setting up organizational structure that would aid human and material resources to achieve plans and staff the organization with the requisite power. Set goals can only be achieved by managers if they are able to lead their subordinates well and understand the human factors in their operation to produce desired result or set goals. It is pertinent to note that many organizations have managerial problems, due to poor management of human resources. This can be traced to diverse factors such as lack of discipline, lack of motivation, lack of good welfare services, communication gap, inability to delegate responsibility and so on.

In all, management embraces practice/ a set of activities, a discipline and a team. (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2004). For many years Bendel Insurance Football Club had great management committees spanning from 1972 to 1994, when the then two State Administrators of Edo and Delta States, decided that the Club should no longer be funded with the insurance fund collected solely from insurance premiums. Following this decision, the problems of: poor remuneration, lack of incentives, unfavourable environmental factor etc. paved the way for poor performance.

Members of Bendel Insurance Management Committee were usually appointed by the company/government. It had mostly between seven and nine (7 and 9) members comprising: Chairman, Vice Chairman,

General Secretary, Head Coach, Team Manager, two to three (2-3) businessmen with proven interest in football, Government nominee or representative(s). The Committee holds general meetings twice a month and emergency meetings as situation demands.

People make up an organization, they are the primary resources of all organizations. Resources are combined to achieve organizational set goals and objectives. Industrial psychologists and sociologists have attested to this statement. Human beings are bound to interact under a particular setting in various forms that may be formal or informal and there is bound to be problems in their participation, objectives, attitude amongst themselves and with the organization where they work.

These problems may be poor management of employees, poor formulation of policies, inability to provide conducive environment for recruitment, selection, induction etc. and inadequate provision of fair treatment to all employees of all categories as well as inability to create effective ways of assessing employee's performance, etc.

The general objective of this study is to find out the causes of poor performance of Bendel Insurance Football Club and management impact on the club, and make suggestions that will enhance the performance of the club. The specific objectives are: To enhance the productivity and efficiency of staff and the achievement of organizational goals through efficient management, policies and strategies for implementation, to develop confidence- building and morale-boosting programmes for staff and players in the league season and other challenge cup campaigns; to seek the dissolution of the present technical crew; to seek the recruitment of new players to strengthen the team in the area of attack, to seek improvement in camping facilities and camp rules; and to develop measures towards ensuring adequate funding and timely release of funds.

This study is important because, it is hoped that at the end of the day, there will be an improvement in the management of Bendel Insurance Football Club and, indeed, football administration in Edo State. This will help to enhance the standard of football in Nigeria. Also, there will be an increase in knowledge on part of the populace on how a football club is managed and the consequences of improper management and funding. The study will also be of immense importance to the

government, policy makers, as it will aid them in taking appropriate decisions on sports-related matters particularly in the area of planning, allocation of resources and fund to the football sector. All these will go a long way to reduce the poor performance of various football clubs across the states, either owned by government or private individuals.

#### Formation of Bendel Insurance Football Club

The name Bendel Insurance Football Club, Benin City actually came into existence in January 1972. Before that, in 1970, the then Bendel State government under Brigadier S.O. Ogbemudia (retired) formed four (4) clubs namely:

- Vipers Football Club, Benin City,
- Ethiope Football Club, Sapele. Warri,
- Wolves Football Club, Warri,
- Ika Rangers Football Club, Agbor.

These four football clubs were later renamed and reverted to reflect names of companies owned by the State. Vipers Football Club became Bendel Insurance Football Club, Benin City. Unfortunately, the two other clubs have since gone into extinction, except Bendel Insurance Football Club and Warri Wolves which was revived a few years ago.

Bendel Insurance Football Club carried the banner of the state (Bendel State / Edo State) for twenty-four (24) years. The parent company, Bendel Insurance Company Plc nurtured it until recently when it relinquished ownership. During these years the club, Bendel Insurance Football Club, won several national and international championships. They include:

- Nigeria Challenge Cup trophy in 1972,
- Amachree Cup (National League Cup) 1973.
- Nigeria Challenge Cup in 1978 and 1980.
- National League Division I in 1979.
- Confederation of African Football(CAF)
- West African Football Union(WAFU) 1993-1996;

the club also participated very many times in African clubs cup competitions,

West African club (WAFU) competitions, etc.

This is not the case anymore as the club's fortune has greatly dwindled. This may be as a result of financial problems. These days, the team and its staff seem not to be getting adequate financial, material and management support. Sports in the old Midwest State, Bendel State and indeed the two sister states of Edo and Delta consider sports generally as a major attraction and football in particular for unification, week in and week out. To revive the Bendel Insurance Football Club, a good management structure must be put in place in addition to serious financial back-up. Governments in those days were interested in sports development especially under Samuel Ogbemudia and Ambrose Alli regimes in the then Bendel State. However, successive governments were not that interested in sports development which affected Bendel Insurance Football Club. The creation of states (Edo and Delta) in 1991, resulted in controversy as to who takes over the ownership of the Club. Agreement was reached to disband the team under the governors of Edo and Delta states in 1991. Consequently, Mr. Igbinomwanha. Ekhosuehi offered to continue the funding of the Club, pending when the owners take a final decision on the funding of the Club.

The Nigeria Football Federation benefited from Bendel Insurance F.C. then, because most of the Green Eagles (now Super Eagles) top players were invited from the Club. Amongst such players are: Victor Oduah who captained the Green Eagles on January 8, 1973, when Nigeria won her first continental honour by scooping the soccer gold of the 2<sup>nd</sup> All-Africa Games in Lagos, defeating Mali's national team. Others are Osaze Odemwingie, Nosa Igiebor who were among the Super Eagles that won the Africa Cup of Nations in South Africa in 2013. The situation would have been better, but the government of the day does not seem to have shown enough interest in the football club. Football today is an expensive business that an individual cannot run. Government must invest on football since it is for popularity and development (Ekhosuehi, 2013).

### **Clarification of Concepts**

The term management connotes different meanings to some people. According to Koontz and Weihrich (1980), management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals working

together in groups accomplish selected goals efficiently. Every organization is set up to realize certain aims. The task of management is the accomplishment of such aims. Thus, management is a system of operation in an organization directed towards goal attainment. Simply, it is getting things done through and with people. The meaning of management could perhaps be better understood if we consider the illustration of Herbert Simon and others. According to them, when two men join or come together to roll a stone that neither of them could roll on its own, the rudiments of management or administration have been established or carried out (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2004).

This implies that management is a co-operative effort to achieve. It is the organizing and directing of men, materials, equipment and money to achieve specified organizational goal and objectives. It is the marshaling of human and material resources towards the accomplishment of laid-down objectives. (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2004). According to Schwartz (1950), management is the process of achieving organizations goals through the coordinated performance of specific functions as stated below:

Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Control and Reporting.

**Planning:** Planning can be seen as a determination of courses of action that enable an organization to meet its stated goals and objectives. Planning is concerned with identification of various activities required to achieve set goals and analyzing them in terms of sequence according to their priorities. These have to be systematically and efficiently arranged in order to achieve set goals and objectives (Dale, 1978).

**Organizing:** It involves a process of engaging two or more people in working together in a structured way to achieve a specific goal or set of goals. The tasks are related to levels of organization, delegation of authority, hierarchy, span of control and division of labour (Nwachukwu, 1985).

**Staffing:** This implies many aspects of personnel administration. This includes recruitment, promotion, discipline, reforming, training etc. one function which according to Gulick must receive the attention of managers as the efficiency of the organization largely depends on it. (Nwachukwu, 1985).

**Directing:** The directing of work in the organization has to do with the manager or divisional head finding out what is happening in the enterprise or a section of it. He or she wants to find out what is going on, how work is being done. The purpose of directing is to ensure that things are done at the spot or unit it is to be done, and possibly, at the right time and specification.

**Co-ordinating:** It is the building of harmony into the work of the organization. It is synchronizing the effort of all in the establishment, the integration of the activities of the different departments and units which make up the enterprise into a smooth and harmonious pattern. Co-ordination is the attempt on the part of management to see that all members of an organization work towards an agreed, pre-determined and unified goal (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2004).

**Control:** The fact about the practice of management is that plans must be guided to their destination, that is, accomplishing stage. A plan is really not a plan until it has been implemented. Set goals and objectives are largely useless until they bear fruits. It is not enough to prepare blueprints, thinking that they will yield the desired results without being guided. Control relates to the setting of standards and desirable measurements. It is the process of ensuring that standards are met and measurements are maintained. This is how to assure quality on the goods and services produced as well as increased patronage and goodwill. Control enables deviations from plans and set purposes to be prevented. It checkmates derailment from predetermined mission. Or, at least, it makes it possible for errors, omissions or lapses to be detected and corrective steps taken. (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2004; 25).

**Reporting:** Reporting is concerned with ensuring good communication system through which progress or failure could be reported to the executive. It is through reporting that the executive becomes aware of the problems in the organization for which he may initiate corrective measures by issuing necessary directive. Reporting stands for upward flow of information. (Agbato, 1990).



## **Leadership**

Leadership is the power of individual to inspire co-operation personnel decision by creating faith. A leader is a person who motivates and controls his subordinate to work towards goals which are regarded by the organization as desirable and positive. Mary Park Follet defined leadership as a leader who can encourage his group, who knows how to draw all when each has to give. He is the man who can show that the other is integral to the situation. He does not only influenced his group but he is also influenced by the group (Nwachukwu, 1985).

## **Politics**

The word 'Politics' does not lend itself to any precise definition. Definitions of politics vary wildly. The word politics stresses the process of decision-making about public action or goods about what is done and who gets what. It is primarily concerned with government. Thus to some people, "politics" and "government" are synonymous. It is very common to find people equating politics with government. Politics is identified with what goes on in the various institutions of government. To be sure, politics or the political as pointed out by Alfred de Grazia (1969) includes the events that happen around the decision-making centres of government. Yet it is wrong to equate politics with government. Definitions that equate politics with government are unrealistically restrictive because they do not take cognizance of legally binding decisions taken outside formal governmental institutions. (cited in Imuentinyan, 2003).

Political activity goes on not only within the framework of the state, but also in other constituent elements of the socio political system such as political parties, trade unions, international organizations such as the United Nations and so on. The political system is understood in this instance not simply as the sum of its institutions, but as the system of interconnections among social forces, strata and groups by means of which authoritative decisions are worked out and implemented. For a proper definition of politics, therefore, emphasis should be placed on a kind of activity or behaviour that may express itself through a variety of institutions. Politics, according to Max Weber (1947), means striving to

share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, among states or among groups within states. Politics has to do with the struggle to gain and retain power, to exercise power or influence over others or to resist that exercise. Politics Influence all aspects of social life: economy, culture and ideology. The study of politics is the study of power and authority; it is about the definition and delimitation of power and authority, the institutions and processes of power and authority, it is about the ends to which power and authority are put. (cited in Imuentinyan, 2003).

Politics is involvement in the affairs of the state, the direction of the state, determination of the forms, goals and substance of the state activity. Politics is the form of interrelations among classes, social groups and nations, a form directly or indirectly connected with the manifestation and implementation of power. The most characteristic feature of politics as a social phenomenon is its direct or indirect connection with power and activity to implement power. It is only on this basis that we can isolate politics and political relations from other social relations. William Bluhm (1965) defines politics as “a social process characterized by an activity involving rivalry and co-operation in the exercise of power, and culminating in the making of decisions for a group”. Similarly, Vernon van Dyke (1960) defines politics as “a struggle among actors pursuing conflicting desires on public issues”. A widely known modern definition of politics is that put forward by David Easton. For Easton (1965), politics is the authoritative allocation of values. Politics is equated here with the process by which values (things or relationships which people would like to have or enjoy) are allocated in a society in an authoritative manner (in a manner that is legitimate). To be sure, a policy is binding for all or most members of the society to the extent that people feel they must or ought to obey the policy, even though its effective range may be limited to a few members of society directly.(cited in Imuentinyan, 2003).

### **Motivation**

Koontz, Donnell and Wehrich (1984:479) defined motivation as a process “involving a chain reaction, starting out with felt needs, resulting in wants

or goals sought, which give rise to tension (that is, unfulfilled desires), then causing action towards achieving goals, and finally satisfying wants". For Edosa and Agbadudu (2004), motivation stands for all means and methods by management to encourage people to work, to put in more effort. To raise their spirit to perform. To increase his/her inner power to carry out tasks. To energize him/her to continue to work.

A worker may have his own reasons (motives) for working. He/She may even be providing his/her own propelling force (drive). To satisfy a given need for more pay? Promotion? Recognition? Achievement? And so on. A manager must strive to know the particular needs and aspiration of his/her workers, in order to be able to actually satisfy or motivate him/her. The more the expected needs of a worker are met, the more he or she may feel motivated to work harder. (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2003).

Human beings have several and varied needs such as needs for food, good shelter, need to attend a good school, do well in school, secure a high-paying job, build a good house, live in a beautiful settlement, be respected and honoured by all in society, and live in a peaceful and stable world. Human needs and desires are indeed many, diverse and complex. Some individuals just like to look good and be liked, be role models, be popular or famous; others like to be inventors great achievers and successful people. Yet, others are all right just being ordinary, generally friendly and easy-going, have concern for their fellow men and women and are generally people-oriented. (Edosa and Agbadudu, 2003).

Abraham Maslow writes that people have a hierarchy of Needs. That the satisfaction of one need leads to the demand or expectation of the satisfaction of another. According to him, the needs are physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Physiological needs are basic needs for food, water, clothing, sex, while safety needs are basic needs for security and shelter, etc. Social needs are affection or belongingness needs for love, association, and accommodation. Esteem or ego needs are needs for high regards, respect, favourable comments. Self-actualization needs, Maslow says, are the highest of needs. These are needs for recognition, achievement, honour, of having made one's mark in life, etc. It should be noted that

the physiological needs are the lowest level of needs, the highest are the self-actualization needs, according to Maslow.

### **Theoretical Framework**

As advanced by various scholars, football management is to have the right people on and off the pitch. You must have the right persons from the Chief Executive up to the grounds men. For a team to do well, the management has to be above board in their dealings. When teams fail and do badly on the field of play, the management looks at the technical team. They never look at off-the-field-management, in actual fact, themselves. They point finger at the coaching staff and they do not realize that the other three fingers are actually pointing at them. There are so many things that are controlled by the office that actually affect what goes on, on the field of play. If things go wrong in the office, it affects people who are playing. This is in the direction of resolving such constraints which may be financial constraints, provision of adequate manpower, facilities and equipment as well as proper attention and supervision of the players' welfare as part of management function. (www.ehow.com).

The 'super player' in this investigation is the government. The near abysmal level of the management of Bendel Insurance Football Club can be traced to this super player whose intervention has largely been disruptive in the sense that: (1) There is no adequate funding for the football club. (2) With the low funding, there is delay in release of fund. (3) The management board set up has largely not been functional hence, Bendel Insurance FC is at the level it is today (*Committee Report, 1997*).

It is important to note from the above, that the success of a football club depends to a large extent on the management. The management of any organization determines both its input and even output. The quality and utilization of the inputs are always affected by the decision taken by the management. Management is the guidance or direction of people towards organizational goals and objectives. In other words, it can be seen as the supervising, controlling and coordination of activity to attain optimum results with organizational resources. A key element of management is not just to get things done, but to carry out tasks efficiently and effectively. These imply reduced cost, time and energy,

minimum input for maximum output, impact, concrete result. To effectively manage a football club, there is need to apply the elements of management. Management function is identical in all formal organizations whether a profit-making or a non-profit-making organization. All people occupying management positions perform basically, the same type of functions. They plan, organize staff, direct and control. They get things done through and with subordinates. Their principal responsibility is to achieve organizational objectives through group efforts. Therefore, for effective management of Bendel Insurance F.C, a manager must perform managerial functions. Crust and Lawrence (2006) observed that the process of managing people whether in sports or business is a complex task and requires a systematic appreciation of the multi-dimensional responsibility required. Perry (2000) stated that football managers must acknowledge the importance of their role from a business or financial perspective. (cited in Annual Reports, 2012).

### **Football Management**

Football today should be treated like any business. You have to staff it with the right people on and off the pitch. You must have the right person from the Chief Executive up to the grounds men. If you do not do that, your club is going to suffer irreparable damage, at worst, or you are going to stagnate, at best.

#### **Football Management / Administration at World Level**

International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) is the international governing body of association football, futsal and beach soccer, its membership comprises 209 national associations. Its headquarters are in Zurich, Switzerland, and its President is Sepp Blatter. FIFA is responsible for the organization of football's major international tournaments, notably the World Cup. ([www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com)) The main objectives of FIFA are;

To improve the game of football constantly and promote it globally in the light of its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values, particularly through youth and development programmes;

To organize its own international competitions;

To control every type of Association Football by taking appropriate steps to prevent infringement of the statutes, regulations or decisions of FIFA or of the laws of the games;

To draw up regulations and provisions and ensure their enforcement;

To prevent all methods or practices which might jeopardize the integrity of matches or competitions or give rise to abuse of association football.

Other major objectives of FIFA is promoting friendly relations between Member-Countries, Confederations, Clubs, Officials and Players. Every person and organization involved in the game of football is obliged to observe the statutes, regulations and the principles of fair play in the society for humanitarian objectives. FIFA shall provide the necessary institutional means to resolve any dispute that may arise between Members, Confederations, Clubs Officials and Players (FIFA, 2012). Non-discrimination and stance against racism. Discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion. The laws that govern football, known officially as the laws of the game, are not solely the responsibility of FIFA, they are maintained by a body called the International Football Association Board (IFAB). FIFA has members on its board (four representatives); the others are provided by the football association of the United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which jointly established IFAB in 1882 and are recognized for the creation and history of the game. FIFA commits itself to constantly improving the sports of football. The FIFA status forms the overacting document guiding FIFA governing system.

Allegations of corruption and legislative interference; in May 2006 British investigative reporter, Andrew Jennings wrote a book, *Foul! The Secret World of FIFA: Bribes, Vote-Rigging and Ticket Scandals*, which according to Harper Collins, caused controversy within the football world by detailing an alleged international cash-for-contracts scandal following the collapse of FIFA's marketing partner, International Sports League (ISL) and revealed how some football officials have been urged to secretly repay the sweeteners they received. The book also alleged that the vote rigging had occurred in the fight for Sepp Blatter's continued control of FIFA.

In a further 'Panorama' documentary broadcast on BBC, on 29 November 2010, Jennings alleged that three Senior FIFA officials, Nicolas Leoz, Issa Hayatou and Ricardo Teixeira, had been paid huge bribes by FIFA's marketing partner International Sports Leisure (ISL) between 1989 and 1999, which FIFA had failed to investigate. The programme also alleged that another official, Jack Warner, had been repeatedly involved in reselling World Cup tickets to touts; but Sepp Blatter said that FIFA had not investigated the allegation because it had not been told about it via "official channels". British Prime Minister, David Cameron and Andy Anson, head of England's World cup bid, criticized the timing of the 'Panorama' broadcast, three days before FIFA's decision on the host for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, on the grounds that it might damage England's bid; the voters included officials accused by the programme.

After being re-elected as President of FIFA, Sepp Blatter responded to the allegations by promising to reform FIFA in the wake of the bribery scandal, with Danny Jordaan, CEO of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa saying there is great expectation for reform. Former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, was being tipped for a role on the newly proposed 'solutions committee'. UEFA Secretary General, Gianni Infantino said he hoped for "concrete" measures to be taken by the World games authority. Australian Sports Minister, Mark Arbib said it was clear that FIFA needed to change, saying there was no doubt there needed to be reform of FIFA.

### **Management of Football at African Level**

Confederation of Africa Football (CAF) is the governing body of African Football and was founded in 1957. The founding members were Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Africa. CAF's 54-member organization is based in Egypt. The wheels that led to the birth of CAF were actually set in motion outside Africa, in Lisbon, Portugal on June 1956 ([www.cafonline.com](http://www.cafonline.com)).

On 10 February 1957, after CAF's Constituent Assembly, the Sudanese capital witnessed the birth of the first African Cup of Nations which was won by Egypt. It would prove to be the start of an exhilarating adventure and one that is still counting today with countless unforgettable

moments along the way to help define the characteristics and traits associated with African football. In line with the CAF Contract with Africa, the Football Development Division is responsible for a wide spectrum of Technical and Educational issues in the entire African Continent, focusing on Men's, Women's and Futsal Football. The CAF Football development policy is guided by "CAF Contract with Africa" a strategic blue print development programme launched in 2005. Under this programme, managing African football, CAF is committed to empower its Member Associations by providing them support through the following three pillars of development; Grassroots. Human Resources and Infrastructures ([www.cafonline.com](http://www.cafonline.com)).

The above pillars are enhanced and improved, thanks to a proactive secretariat, which role is also to liaise on a regular basis with every member association and provide the relevant support to increase and optimize the use of available resources. The first phase of the CAF contract with Africa was achieved between 2005 and 2009, whereby each CAF member association benefited from a grant of 100,000 US Dollars to improve its current infrastructures and develop its football at the national and local levels. In addition to the provision of financial resources, the CAF contract with Africa aims at creating a cascading effort of knowledge transfer to all levels in African football, from the continental level to the regional and national levels through efficient communication between the Confederation and its members. ([www.cafonline.com](http://www.cafonline.com)).

### **Management of Football at National Level Nigeria Football Federation (N.F.F)**

The present NFF Management has shown great passion and commitment to the welfare of National Teams It is also a fact that the administration has articulated a well-defined structure for football administration at the centre, adopting the FIFA and CAF format, with a General Secretary, Directors of Technical, Competitions, Finance and Administration and marketing, media units, legal unit and other senior officers to coordinate the divisions, departments and units.



NFF Management has maintained the financial assistance to the state Football Associations (FAs) for development programmes, vehemently defended the status as the Rule Book governing administration of football, energized the leagues for better administration, pursued vigorously welfare schemes for staff and national team players, embraced all stakeholders through one programme/ project or the other.

The Technical department is charged with the responsibility of constant development of the game of football right from the grassroots to the highest level. The department is concerned with the players' development through adequate and modern coaching techniques, effective methodology, training and re-training of administrators, education of referees and medical methodology.

Other activities carried out by officers in the department include: Preparation of National teams which includes: Securing a suitable and conducive training site for teams; Proposing good welfare packages for the players in the area of feeding, medical attention, etc. Supervising and advising on the programme of the technical crew; Producing analytical and technical reports of National team programmes and matches; Scouting around the country and recommending talented players for the National teams both male and female; Monitoring of National team players and other prospective players in their respective club sides both within and outside the country; Implementation of policies as laid down by the Technical Committee; and other schedules as directed by management.

### **Management of Bendel Insurance Football Club**

Bendel Insurance Football Club, Benin City came into existence in 1972. The establishment of the club was to form a football team, promote the team, play and participate in football competitions. The development of youths was the main focus. Hence, it was given much publicity even before Nigeria's political independence in 1960. This aim/purpose now seems unattainable, because the government and management board appear to have lost focus.

The identified reasons behind this predicament are improper planning, lack of provision of adequate facilities, poor funding, neglected

welfare schemes for players and other staff, lack of appropriate institutional regulations, and above all, corrupt and sharp practices by the appointed management board. The government should ensure proper funding of the club, timely release of funds, proper management and restructuring of the football Club, to bring back the team to her lost glory.

Bendel Insurance Football Club metamorphosed from Vipers Football Club of Benin, which was transferred to Bendel Insurance Company Plc in 1972 and was later registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission, in 1990.

The Football Club was primarily managed by the Bendel Insurance Company Plc, as its social contribution to the State and to give the parent body Bendel Insurance Company Plc the back-up publicity it very much needed. The Club was solely financed by Bendel Insurance company Plc. The management of the club was in the hands of the Management of Bendel Insurance Company Plc with some supporters and invited persons as members.

In 1994, the then two Military Administrators of Edo and Delta States, decided that the club should no longer be funded with the insurance fund collected solely from insurance premiums. Consequently, Mr. Igbinomwanhia Ekhosuehi offered to continue with the back-up of the Edo State Government. Though the Government set up a Board to oversee the affairs of the team, there has not been serious commitment on the part successive Governments.

Presently, the club is being managed by the Government of Edo State through the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The Commissioner and the Permanent Secretary act as the major decision takers. Requests are presented to them for approval by the club especially during football matches. which is against the rules of a well-structured football club.

### **Administration of Bendel Insurance Football Club**

The administrative structure of Bendel Insurance Football Club is based on two aspects -The Technical Division and The Administrative Division.

The Technical Division comprises: Technical Adviser, Chief Coach, Trainer, Goalkeepers' Coach:

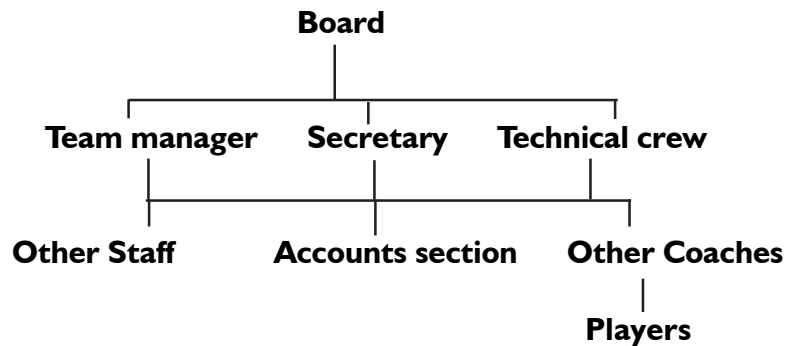
The Technical Adviser advises the management and the Chief Coach on how to move the team forward, problems that need urgent attention, modalities for motivation, and to the Coach, he advises them on method and pattern of play, and correction in areas of default. The Chief Coach takes care of all aspects of coaching the team, gives instructions to the other coaches as he takes instruction from the Technical Adviser. He also instructs the trainers on how to ensure the players' fitness and the training programmes to be adopted in training sessions.

The Trainer warms up the players, ensures they are fit in preparation for training and matches. The Goalkeepers' Coach gives instructions and training on goal-keeping to the goalkeepers.

On its part, the Administrative Division comprises: The Executive Secretary, Team Manager, Welfare Officer, Physiotherapist, Camp Commandant, Media Officers, Drivers. The Team Manager manages the team in terms of internal runs, that is, the day to day administration of the club. He liaises between the management and the team. He ensures adequate provisions of needed materials, ensures that camp allowances, match bonuses and other incentives are timely shared. The Welfare Officer takes care of players needs in the camp, ensures the environment is conducive. He makes adequate arrangement for feeding, in cases of ill-health, he ensure there is proper treatment. The Camp Commandant ensures adequate security system, watches over players movement and compliance with camp rules.

### **Organizational Structure of Bendel Insurance Football Club**

All organizations have some form of more or less formalized structure (Armstrong, 2001). According to Child (1977), Organizational Structures comprise all tangible and regularly occurring features, which help to shape their members' behaviour. Organizational structures are hierarchical and are a framework of the formal relationships that have been established in any organization. Bendel Insurance FC is no exception and its organizational chart is show below:



This is the current structure of Bendel Insurance F C Benin (2013). It consists of: Four Technical Staff, 12 Administrative Staff, and 35 Registered players. At the time of submission of paper for publication (2015), the structure still remains the same.

The technical staff includes; The Technical Adviser or the Chief Coach, who advises the management and other coaching crew on how to move the team forward; areas of urgent attention, and modalities for motivation to improve on the team’s performance. Concerning Registered Players, football clubs require about thirty (30) players, in a season, and could be less. All must be eligible to play, must not have registered for any other team, cannot register for two clubs in one season. They also must be properly transferred, in case of moving from club A to club B in a current season.

### **Management Problems of Bendel Insurance Football Club**

Funding; is the fulcrum on which meaningful success is achieved by organizations. Poor funding of the team has resulted in inability to pay sign-on fees to the players, inability to pay salaries, match bonuses, inability to camp the players, inability to transport players and officials to and from training and playing venues. The players sometimes publicly protest to the Edo State Ministry of Youth and Sports demanding for their accumulated salaries and allowances.

Poor human resources management: This function, according to Beach (1980:57), is the process by which an organization ensures that it has the right number of qualified persons available at the proper time,

performing jobs that are useful to the organization and which provide satisfaction for the individuals involved. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case in Bendel Insurance Football Club presently.

Low remuneration across board in the club: There is no good salary structure. Match bonuses are not paid as at when due, contracts signed are not respected, as most players only sign such agreement on paper without seeing the cash. Board members/administrators seem not to have sought good partners that will help and provide them with sponsorship contracts.

Lack of adherence to institutional regulations: The Nigerian Football Federation (NFF) makes rules and regulations but clubs do not abide by them. Coaches and players are just sacked without due regards to laid down rules.

Corrupt and sharp practices by the leaders/management team: The players' money is usually shared by the management team. Fund disbursed by the government is usually shared by the management without payment to the players.

Lack of financial assistance from Local Councils and stakeholders for development programmes: Over the years and in some states, Local Councils make monthly financial provision to football clubs; This is totally non-existent in recent years with Bendel Insurance F.C.

Welfare schemes for staff and team players have been neglected. Welfare packages for the team is the beginning of success; it is a motivational factor to boost players' morale. When the season is on, if the club does not do well, the management should not sack all the players as it is currently practised, for example, 20 players out of 30.

Solutions to Management Problems.

Owing to poor performance of Bendel Insurance Football Club, changes have become inevitable if the club is to restore its former glory of a "top flight" club. There should be dissolution of the Technical crew and the appointment of a new Technical Adviser to lead the team through the Challenge Cup competition and ensure victory in the league season. The Technical Adviser should be given the chance to choose his assistants (coaches) not exceeding two.

As a follow up to the above, all the benefits and entitlements of the players should be completed and paid without delay. New players should be recruited to strengthen the team in the area of attack. Management should specifically source for “good players”- “Goal poachers” and “six yard box” finishers to enhance good performance and promotion in the league season. There should be provision and improvement of camping facilities, good accommodation and good food. There should be no gambling by players. There should be adequate rest as at when due. There should also be sustenance, enforcement and compliance with camp rules and regulations.

After a league season, management should have confidence and morale-boosting programmes preparatory to the commencement of the Challenge Cup and other league campaigns. Funding is the fulcrum on which meaningful organizational success is achieved. The government and its agencies should release adequate funds to the club, to ensure its effectiveness. Timely release of the funds is equally expedient in the new dispensation. The new order is soliciting for an enhanced grant on monthly basis to ensure liquidity and sustainability. This is because this venture is capital intensive.

There is a responsibility on the shoulder of directors, a responsibility that in recent times many have avoided to ensure that any income the club generates after compliance with payment of bills, is reinvested in the team. Too many directors have used this income to finance their own external, un-football-related debts. Furthermore, the directors must also be in a position to find any additional player or buy players, repayable on an interest-free basis, and not to the detriment of continual compliance principle, should the manager make a good case for the investment.

Beyond successful management of clubs’ financial affairs by directors, there needs to be assistance from the Nigerian Football League to guarantee the long-term survival of all clubs. There should moreover be the presence of business-like managers. Proper marketing can lead to outstanding results. Once the right marketing machine is on board, and goes straight into marketing the club, they have created an atmosphere only comparable to what operated many years in the past.

The thinking behind this is that if management understands that the currency that runs football is fans, then, the game will be able to have untold success. Players will be able to succeed economically right in their home.

These measures, coupled with sound management principles, would assist in guaranteeing the future existence of Bendel Insurance Football Club and, indeed, all clubs, thus providing fans the return to their emotional investment - namely, a club and a team to support. Finally, management should respect principles of robust participation, consultations, probity, accountability and transparent operations to guarantee a confident, loyal, purposeful and result-oriented management team.

### **Conclusion**

The general objective of this study was to determine the causes of poor performance of Bendel Insurance Football Club, Benin City and management impact on the Club and make suggestions that will enhance the performance of the club. The study found out that the condition and management of Bendel Insurance Football Club is not satisfactory. The welfare of the players was almost completely neglected. The funding of the team was almost totally neglected by all concerned. There was absence of business-like managers. There was low remuneration across board in the club. There was incidence of corrupt and sharp practices by leaders/management team. There was poor human resources management. The Board members/administrators did not seek for good partners that will help sponsor league season.

For the effective management of Bendel Insurance Football Club, the study therefore recommends that the Board members of the club should demonstrate good leadership and effective directing of the affairs of the club. This role should be discharged by all stakeholders duly participating fully in all boardroom activities in order to achieve set goals.

It is also imperative that there should be provision and improvement of camping facilities, good accommodation, good food, other camping facilities and incentives, to ensure the wellbeing of the players. The Club should be adequately financed in addition to the provision of the right

quality and quantity of materials, equipment, including adequate manpower and “good players”. This will increase productivity in the Club. Also, incentives like allowances, bonuses, rewards for hard work, recreation facilities and other relevant materials should be provided for players and other officials in the form of motivation.

The government and other important stakeholders in sports who are the chief sponsors of the club should constitute a monitoring committee or team to checkmate the activities of the Club’s management /board and to give feedback and documentation or report where applicable. Thus, there should be current and terminal evaluation of the club to determine the effective or continuous use of a particular strategy to ascertain the extent of its success or failure.

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