

PUBLIC ENTERPRISES MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN AND KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Management practices and leadership styles are critical determinants of the overall effectiveness and performance of higher education institutions, particularly in the Nigerian context. This study investigates the relationships between management practices, leadership styles, and academic, financial, and administrative outcomes in two prominent Nigerian universities: the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University. A quantitative survey design was employed and the population of the study was 5,323 with 336 responses used as sample. This study employs a quantitative survey design to comprehensively investigate management practices in two prominent Nigerian universities, namely the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University, Malete. The use of a structured questionnaire serves as the primary data collection tool to elicit responses from both academic and non-academic staff members of the two universities. The choice of a quantitative survey design is justified as it allows for a systematic and objective examination of management practices, while the structured questionnaire enables standardized data collection, making it easier to analyze and compare responses. The study's results revealed that there are significant positive correlations between management practices (strategic planning, quality assurance, and efficient financial management) and academic, financial, and administrative outcomes. Additionally, the study found that leadership styles adopted by university administrators significantly influence the overall effectiveness of these institutions. Transformational and servant leadership styles exhibited strong positive correlations with university effectiveness. Conversely, laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles displayed negative correlations with university effectiveness. In conclusion, the study's outcomes underscore the critical role of effective management practices and leadership styles in shaping the success and overall quality of education and research in Nigerian higher education institutions. The study therefore recommended that Nigerian universities should prioritize the development and implementation of robust strategic plans that align with their missions and visions. University administrators should actively involve all stakeholders in the planning process. They should actively promote research and innovation by encouraging collaborative partnerships with industry, government agencies, and international institutions.

Keywords: Management Practices, Leadership Styles, Academic Outcomes, Financial Outcomes, Transformational, Quality Assurance.

INTRODUCTION

Public enterprises play a pivotal role in fostering economic development, social well-being, and

institutional advancement in many developing countries, including Nigeria. These entities are

established to deliver public goods and services, promote equity, and ensure the efficient allocation of resources (Aharoni, 2020). However, the management and leadership of public enterprises remain central to their performance and overall contribution to societal objectives. Effective management focuses on planning, organizing, and optimizing resources, while leadership emphasizes inspiring, guiding, and fostering innovation within organizations (Northouse, 2022). Together, these dimensions are critical for enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of public enterprises.

Universities, as knowledge hubs, are unique types of public enterprises tasked with producing human capital and advancing societal knowledge. In this regard, the management and leadership practices of institutions such as the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University in Nigeria offer an insightful lens through which to understand the dynamics of public enterprise management in the education sector. Both institutions are governed by public policies and rely on government

funding, yet they face challenges related to resource allocation, leadership development, and strategic planning. These challenges often underscore the necessity for adaptive leadership and efficient management systems to ensure institutional growth and relevance in an increasingly competitive academic landscape (Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

This study investigates the interplay between management and leadership practices in public enterprises, with a specific focus on the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University. By analyzing these institutions' administrative frameworks, leadership styles, and strategic priorities, the study seeks to identify best practices and areas for improvement. This approach is critical in understanding how leadership and management shape the performance of public universities and, by extension, their societal impact.

Despite their significance, Nigerian universities, like many other public enterprises, encounter multifaceted challenges that hinder their optimal performance and ability to contribute effectively

to national development. Issues such as inadequate funding, governance inefficiencies, fluctuating academic quality, and difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified faculty and staff have been persistent concerns (Ojo & Adeleke, 2022). Moreover, understanding the intricate dynamics of management and leadership within these universities remains a critical knowledge gap that needs to be addressed. This study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To investigate the prevailing management practices within Nigerian universities and assess their impact on academic, financial, and administrative outcomes.
- ii. To explore the dominant leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Nigeria and evaluate their influence on the overall effectiveness of these institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public enterprises Management in Nigeria

Public enterprises management in Nigeria has been a subject of both achievements and challenges over the years. As state-owned entities play a crucial role in the nation's economic development and the provision of essential services, their effective management is vital for achieving organizational goals and fulfilling societal needs. However, the management of public enterprises in Nigeria has been marked by governance issues, financial constraints, and political interference, which have significantly impacted their performance and overall efficiency (Ahmad, 2019).

One of the key challenges in public enterprises management is the issue of governance and accountability. Many state-owned enterprises in Nigeria have faced governance challenges due to political interference and bureaucratic inefficiencies. The appointment of management personnel based on political affiliations rather than merit has led to a lack of professionalism and accountability. This has sometimes resulted in mismanagement, corruption, and a lack of transparency, hindering the achievement of

organizational objectives (Aremu & Kazeem, 2018; Gana, 2017).

Financial sustainability is another critical aspect of public enterprises management in Nigeria. Many state-owned enterprises have faced financial difficulties due to mismanagement, inefficient cost-recovery mechanisms, and inadequate funding. The burden of providing essential services at subsidized rates often strains the financial resources of these entities, leading to operational inefficiencies and difficulties in fulfilling their social mandates (Abdullahi, 2021; Aliu & Garuba, 2018).

The role of politics in public enterprises management cannot be overlooked. Political considerations have often influenced decision-making processes and appointments within these entities, resulting in inefficiencies and compromised performance. The pursuit of political objectives may sometimes take precedence over organizational efficiency, leading to a misalignment of priorities (Onifade & Aluko, 2021).

In response to these challenges, Nigeria has embarked on various reform initiatives to improve public enterprises management. One of the significant reforms is the privatization of some state-owned enterprises to increase efficiency, attract private investments, and reduce the fiscal burden on the government. Entities like the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) and the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) have undergone partial or full privatization to encourage competition and enhance service delivery (Ogujiuba & Onwuka, 2017).

However, privatization and other reform efforts have been met with mixed results. While some privatized entities have experienced improved efficiency and service quality, others have faced challenges in their transition to private ownership (Adewole & Alabi, 2020). Additionally, concerns have been raised about the potential adverse effects of privatization on accessibility and affordability, particularly for essential services like water and electricity (Pulugurtha & Whalen, 2019).

Furthermore, there is a growing recognition of the need for professionalizing public enterprises management in Nigeria. Implementing transparent and merit-based recruitment processes for senior management positions and strengthening corporate governance mechanisms are crucial steps to improve the performance and accountability of these entities (World Bank, 2019).

Leadership in Nigerian Public Enterprises

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the direction and performance of Nigerian public enterprises. Effective leadership is crucial for achieving organizational goals, promoting innovation, and fostering a positive organizational culture. However, leadership in Nigerian public enterprises faces unique challenges, including political interference, governance issues, and the need for adaptive leadership approaches.

Political interference has been a persistent challenge affecting leadership in Nigerian public enterprises. As state-owned entities, these organizations are subject to political influences, which can impact leadership appointments and decision-making processes (Ibietan & Adeyeye, 2018). Political considerations sometimes take precedence over merit-based leadership appointments, leading to compromises in organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

The governance structure of public enterprises in Nigeria also affects leadership dynamics. The presence of multiple stakeholders and complex reporting lines can create challenges in decision-making and accountability. The board of directors, composed of government representatives, industry experts, and stakeholders, often influences key leadership decisions (Suleiman & Ammani, 2019).

Moreover, Nigerian public enterprises often operate in rapidly changing and uncertain environments, requiring adaptive leadership approaches. Adaptive leadership involves leaders being proactive, innovative, and responsive to complex challenges (Akpoyomare & Olokundun, 2020). Leaders in Nigerian public enterprises must navigate economic uncertainties, changing regulations, and evolving

societal needs, making adaptive leadership essential for driving organizational resilience and growth.

Nigerian Federal and State Universities as Public Enterprises

Nigerian federal and state universities are considered public enterprises due to their ownership and funding structure. They are established and owned by the government at either the federal or state level and play a critical role in providing higher education to the nation's citizens. As public enterprises, these universities operate with specific social objectives, including expanding access to education, promoting research and innovation, and developing a skilled workforce for national development.

The ownership of federal and state universities lies with the government, either at the federal level for federal universities or at the state level for state universities. The government provides significant funding and resources to these institutions to support their operations, faculty salaries, infrastructure development, and research activities. Public funding enables universities to offer subsidized tuition fees, making higher education more accessible to a broader segment of the population (Okolocha & Okolie, 2018).

One of the primary social objectives of Nigerian federal and state universities is to expand access to education. These institutions aim to provide quality education and opportunities for academic growth to students from diverse backgrounds, regardless of their socio-economic status. The provision of scholarships, grants, and financial aid programs further supports this objective, encouraging students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education (Okojie, 2019).

Another crucial role of these universities as public enterprises is to contribute to national development through research and innovation. They serve as hubs for knowledge creation and dissemination, contributing to scientific

advancements, technology transfer, and solutions to societal challenges (Falola & Osokoya, 2020). Research activities in areas such as agriculture, health, engineering, and social sciences play a vital role in addressing national development goals.

Public universities in Nigeria also aim to produce a skilled workforce that meets the demands of the labor market and contributes to economic growth. They offer a wide range of academic programs and disciplines to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in their chosen fields. In addition, collaborations with industries and employers through internships and cooperative education programs foster the development of practical skills and competencies (Adu et al., 2020).

However, Nigerian federal and state universities face several challenges as public enterprises. Inadequate funding is a significant concern, leading to infrastructural deficits, outdated facilities, and limited access to modern educational resources (Aina & Adewale, 2019). Insufficient funding also affects faculty salaries and research activities, impacting the quality of education and research outputs.

Furthermore, the governance structure of public universities can be subject to political interference, which can affect leadership appointments and decision-making processes. The appointment of vice-chancellors and other administrative leaders may sometimes be influenced by political considerations, potentially impacting the effectiveness and autonomy of university leadership (Okoh, 2021).

Management and Leadership of Public Universities in Nigeria

Management and leadership are critical components in ensuring the effective operation and development of public universities in Nigeria. The management aspect involves the administrative and operational aspects of running universities, while leadership focuses on guiding the institutions towards achieving their goals and fulfilling their social mandates. Both management and leadership play complementary roles in fostering academic excellence, promoting research and innovation, and

contributing to national development (Okonkwo, 2019).

The management of public universities in Nigeria involves a diverse range of functions, including financial planning, human resource management, facilities management, and academic administration. Effective management practices are essential for ensuring efficient resource allocation and utilization, promoting accountability, and maintaining a conducive learning environment for students and faculty (Okonkwo, 2019). Good management practices enable universities to optimize their limited resources and deliver quality education and services to students and other stakeholders.

Academic leadership is a critical aspect of university management. Academic leaders, such as vice-chancellors and deans, play a vital role in shaping the academic direction of universities. They are responsible for curriculum development, faculty recruitment and development, and academic program assessment (Afolabi & Ogunwole, 2021). Effective academic leadership ensures the continuous improvement of academic programs, the promotion of research culture, and the alignment of academic activities with national development goals.

Financial management is another crucial element of university management. Public universities in Nigeria heavily rely on government funding, which is often inadequate to meet their growing needs (Ayandele & Akinsanya, 2020). Effective financial management practices, including budgeting, revenue generation, and prudent financial planning, are necessary to ensure financial sustainability and the efficient use of available resources.

In terms of leadership, public universities in Nigeria require visionary leaders who can navigate the dynamic and challenging higher education landscape. Vice-chancellors and other institutional leaders must have a clear vision and strategic plan for the university's development (Awuzie & Ajelabi, 2019).

Effective leadership in public universities also involves fostering a culture of innovation and research. University leaders should encourage a

vibrant research environment, facilitate collaboration with industries and other institutions, and support faculty and students in their research endeavors (Ismail & Awang, 2021). Research and innovation are crucial for advancing knowledge and addressing societal challenges, making them integral to the university's role in national development.

Furthermore, leadership in public universities embrace diversity and inclusivity. Creating an inclusive environment that values diversity in faculty, staff, and student populations fosters creativity, enhances problem-solving, and promotes global competitiveness (Awokoya, 2018).

Leadership Styles and Their Impact on Organizational Performance

Leadership styles play a crucial role in influencing organizational performance and outcomes. Different leadership styles have varying impacts on employee motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness. The following are some common leadership styles and their effects on organizational performance:

Transformational leadership is characterized by leaders who inspire and motivate their followers to achieve exceptional performance and exceed expectations. Transformational leaders communicate a compelling vision, set high-performance expectations, and provide support and encouragement to their team members. Research has shown that transformational leadership positively impacts employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, leading to improved overall organizational performance (Avolio & Bass, 1991).

Transactional leadership is based on a system of rewards and punishments to motivate employees. Transactional leaders focus on setting clear goals and expectations and providing rewards or disciplinary actions based on performance. While transactional leadership can lead to short-term performance improvements, it may not foster long-term employee motivation and commitment. However, a combination of transactional and

transformational leadership, known as the Full Range Leadership Model, has been found to have a more significant positive impact on organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by a hands-off approach, where leaders provide little guidance or direction to their team members. This leadership style can lead to a lack of accountability, reduced productivity, and diminished employee satisfaction. Studies have shown that laissez-faire leadership is associated with lower levels of organizational performance and employee satisfaction (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Servant leadership is a style that emphasizes serving the needs of employees and stakeholders, with the belief that by supporting their growth and development, organizational goals will be achieved. Servant leaders prioritize the well-being of their followers and aim to create a positive and inclusive work environment. Research indicates that servant leadership is positively associated with employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational performance (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Autocratic leadership involves centralizing decision-making authority in the hands of the leader, with little input from subordinates. While autocratic leadership can be effective in certain situations that require quick decision-making and clear direction, it may lead to reduced employee morale and creativity. Studies have shown that autocratic leadership can have negative effects on employee motivation and job satisfaction, potentially impacting overall organizational performance (Eisenbeiss, 2008).

Management Practices in Nigerian Universities

Nigerian universities, like many institutions of higher learning worldwide, employ various management practices to ensure effective and efficient operation. These practices encompass different aspects of organizational management, aiming to promote academic excellence, student success, and overall institutional development. Below are some key management practices in

Nigerian universities, supported by relevant recent authorities:

- a. **Strategic Planning and Management:** Strategic planning is a crucial management practice in Nigerian universities to chart the institution's course and achieve its long-term goals. It involves setting clear objectives, formulating action plans, and allocating resources to support the university's mission and vision. According to Okoli, (2020), strategic planning plays a significant role in improving university performance, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement.
- b. **Quality Assurance and Accreditation:** Quality assurance and accreditation practices are essential for maintaining academic standards and ensuring the quality of education in Nigerian universities. These practices involve rigorous internal and external evaluations, compliance with regulatory standards, and continuous improvement efforts. Nwachukwu and Eya (2019) emphasized the importance of quality assurance in enhancing the credibility and reputation of Nigerian universities.
- c. **Financial Management and Resource Allocation:** Effective financial management and resource allocation are crucial for the financial sustainability of Nigerian universities. Sound financial practices, such as budgeting, cost management, and revenue generation strategies, are essential for funding academic programs and maintaining infrastructure. Adeyemi and Owolabi (2021) highlighted the role of financial management in addressing financial challenges and optimizing resource utilization in Nigerian universities.
- d. **Human Resource Management:** Human resource management practices are critical in ensuring the recruitment, development, and retention of qualified and motivated staff in Nigerian universities. Training and development programs, performance evaluations, and career advancement opportunities are vital aspects of human resource management. A study by Ayeni and Oyewunmi (2021) emphasized the importance of effective human resource

practices in enhancing faculty productivity and organizational performance.

- e. **Student Support and Welfare Services:** Student support and welfare services are vital for promoting student success and well-being in Nigerian universities. Counseling, academic advising, health services, and extracurricular activities are essential components of these practices. Ogunfowora and Odunola (2018) emphasized the significance of student support services in improving student retention and overall satisfaction.
- f. **Research and Innovation Management:** Promoting research and innovation is a critical management practice in Nigerian universities. Encouraging faculty and student research, securing research funding, and establishing collaborative partnerships are essential for advancing knowledge and addressing societal challenges. Oyedele and Ojikutu (2019) emphasized the role of research management in fostering innovation and contributing to national development.
- g. **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Integration:** Integrating ICT in university management is crucial for enhancing administrative efficiency, teaching, and learning processes. ICT enables streamlined communication, online learning platforms, and efficient administrative operations. Ibrahim and Yunusa (2021) highlighted the role of ICT integration in improving service delivery and enhancing organizational performance in Nigerian universities.

Challenges and Issues Related to Public Enterprises Management in Nigeria

- a. **Governance Issues:** Public enterprises in Nigeria often face governance challenges, including political interference in decision-making processes and inadequate accountability mechanisms. Political considerations may influence leadership appointments and compromise organizational efficiency (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Strengthening corporate governance

practices is essential to address these issues and enhance the performance of public enterprises (Abdullahi, 2021).

- b. **Financial Constraints:** Many state-owned enterprises in Nigeria grapple with financial difficulties due to mismanagement, inefficient cost-recovery mechanisms, and inadequate funding (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Financial sustainability is crucial for the effective operation and fulfillment of social mandates of public enterprises (Abdullahi., 2021).
- c. **Political Interference:** Political considerations in the appointment of leadership positions and the formulation of policies can hinder the autonomy and effectiveness of public enterprises (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Minimizing political interference and ensuring merit-based appointments are essential for improving public enterprises' performance (Onifade & Aluko, 2021).
- d. **Inefficient Cost Management:** Some public enterprises struggle with inefficient cost management practices, leading to financial inefficiencies and reduced service quality (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Implementing effective cost management strategies is vital for enhancing the financial viability of public enterprises (Abdullahi, 2021).
- e. **Lack of Transparency and Accountability:** Transparency and accountability are essential for gaining public trust and ensuring responsible use of resources in public enterprises (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Enhancing transparency through effective reporting and accountability mechanisms is crucial for addressing corruption and mismanagement (Moses, 2021).
- f. **Infrastructure Deficits:** Many public enterprises face infrastructural challenges, affecting service delivery and operational efficiency (Aina & Adewale, 2019). Addressing infrastructure deficits is necessary to improve the quality and accessibility of services provided by these entities (Adegbite, 2021).
- g. **Employee Morale and Performance:** Employee morale and motivation can be

negatively affected by issues such as delayed salary payments and poor working conditions (Aliu & Garuba, 2018). Improving employee welfare and providing a conducive work environment can boost employee performance and overall organizational productivity (Gana, 2017).

- h. **Inadequate Technology Adoption:** Some public enterprises in Nigeria have been slow in adopting modern technologies and digitalization, impacting their efficiency and service delivery (Adegbite, 2021). Embracing technological advancements can enhance operational processes and improve customer satisfaction (Ogujiuba & Onwuka, 2017).
- i. **Bureaucratic Inefficiencies:** Public enterprises may face bureaucratic hurdles that hinder decision-making and responsiveness to market demands (Gana, 2017). Streamlining bureaucratic processes can enhance agility and enable public enterprises to adapt to changing environments (Ogujiuba & Onwuka, 2017).
- j. **Stakeholder Management:** Balancing the interests of various stakeholders, including government, employees, customers, and communities, can be challenging for public enterprises (Abdullahi, 2021). Effective stakeholder management is essential for maintaining support and cooperation from all relevant parties (Aina & Adewale, 2019).

Theoretical Review

Theory of Transformational Leadership:

The theory of transformational leadership was first introduced by James MacGregor Burns in 1978. Bernard M. Bass later expanded on the theory in the 1980s. This theory is based on the assumption that leaders can inspire and motivate their followers to achieve exceptional performance and exceed expectations. It involves four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leaders are seen as role models who inspire trust and respect, articulate a compelling vision, encourage creative thinking, and show individualized concern for the needs of their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The theory of transformational leadership is highly significant to the study of public enterprises management in Nigeria. As these enterprises often face challenges related to governance, financial constraints, and employee morale, transformational leadership can be a valuable approach to inspire and motivate employees, foster innovation, and improve organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Theory of Bureaucratic Management (Bureaucracy):

The theory of bureaucratic management was developed by Max Weber in the early 20th century. This theory is based on the assumption that a rational and hierarchical organization structure, with clear roles, rules, and standard operating procedures, can enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Weber identified several principles of bureaucracy, including division of labor, hierarchy of authority, formal rules and procedures, impersonality, and career advancement based on merit. Bureaucratic management seeks to eliminate favoritism and personal biases from decision-making processes (Aliu & Garuba, 2018).

The theory of bureaucratic management is relevant to the study of public enterprises management in Nigeria, as these entities often face challenges related to bureaucratic inefficiencies and decision-making. By understanding the principles of bureaucracy, public enterprises can identify areas for improvement in their organizational structure, processes, and communication channels, ultimately enhancing efficiency and reducing bureaucratic red tape (Abdullahi., 2021).

While both transformational leadership and bureaucratic management theories have relevance to the study of public enterprises management in Nigeria, transformational leadership is particularly pertinent to address challenges related to employee motivation, organizational culture, and vision setting. By inspiring and motivating employees, transformational leadership can foster a sense of purpose and dedication to the organization's

goals, which is crucial for public enterprises' success.

On the other hand, bureaucratic management is relevant in the context of addressing inefficiencies in decision-making processes and organizational structure. By implementing principles of bureaucracy, public enterprises can streamline operations, enhance accountability, and reduce bureaucratic hurdles that hinder their performance.

Considering the unique challenges faced by public enterprises in Nigeria, transformational leadership is likely more relevant. It can address issues related to low employee morale, limited vision and innovation, and lack of motivation to excel in challenging conditions. Transformational leadership can empower employees, improve organizational culture, and promote a shared vision that aligns with the social mandates of public enterprises. This style of leadership has the potential to positively impact the overall performance and effectiveness of these organizations, ultimately contributing to national development goals.

Empirical Review

Okeke and Uzoka (2019) investigated the Factors Influencing the Use of ICT for Administrative Tasks in Nigerian Universities. The researchers conducted a survey involving academic and administrative staff from several universities in Nigeria. The findings revealed that factors such as infrastructure availability, ICT skills of staff, and institutional support significantly influenced the use of ICT for administrative tasks. The study highlighted the importance of providing adequate infrastructure and training to enhance ICT adoption and improve administrative efficiency in Nigerian universities.

Ogunnaike and Salawu (2018) assessed the strategic planning and management practices in Nigerian universities. The researchers used a mixed-method approach, combining surveys and interviews with university administrators and key stakeholders. The findings indicated that while some universities had formal strategic planning processes, others lacked well-defined strategies. The study revealed a need for

enhanced strategic planning and management practices in Nigerian universities to improve their performance and responsiveness to changing educational demands.

Ofojebe and Ezeani (2020) investigated Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance in Nigerian Universities. This research explored the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance in Nigerian universities. The study surveyed academic and non-academic staff to assess the leadership styles exhibited by university administrators. The results showed that transformational leadership had a positive impact on organizational performance, while autocratic leadership had a negative effect. The study emphasized the significance of adopting effective leadership styles to enhance employee motivation and overall university performance.

Akinade, and Olorundare (2019) investigated the financial management practices and performance of public universities in Nigeria. The researchers used financial data and performance indicators from a sample of universities to assess financial management practices and their impact on performance. The findings revealed that universities with sound financial management practices demonstrated better performance outcomes. The study emphasized the importance of effective financial management in ensuring the sustainability and efficiency of Nigerian universities.

Dike and Anichebe (2018) explored the relationship between employee motivation, job satisfaction, and leadership styles in Nigerian universities. The study used surveys to collect data from academic and non-academic staff to assess their perception of leadership styles and its impact on motivation and job satisfaction. The findings revealed that transformational leadership positively influenced employee motivation and job satisfaction, while autocratic leadership had a negative effect. The study underscored the significance of adopting transformational leadership to enhance employee well-being and job performance in Nigerian universities.

However, Nigerian universities, encountering multifaceted challenges that hinder their optimal performance and ability to contribute effectively to national development. Moreover, wholistic understanding of the intricate dynamics of management and leadership within these universities remains a critical knowledge gap that needs to be addressed.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative survey design to investigate management practices in two prominent Nigerian universities, namely the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University, Malete. The use of a structured questionnaire serves as the primary data collection tool to get responses from both academic and non-teaching staff members of the two universities. The choice of a quantitative survey design is justified as it allows for a systematic and objective examination of management practices, while the structured questionnaire enables standardized

data collection, making it easier to analyze and compare responses.

The target population for this research encompasses all staff members of the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University, Malete. The University of Ilorin has a population of 4,218 staff members, and Kwara State University has 1,135 staff members, resulting in a combined total of 5,353 of both Universities. Since it is practically challenging to survey the entire population, a sample size of 359 respondents was estimated using the SurveyMonkey Online Sample Size Calculator accessed through the internet. This sample size is deemed appropriate given a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, signifying the researchers' confidence in the adequacy of the sample to represent the entire population.

To ensure a fair representation of both universities in the sample, the required sample size was proportionally allocated based on their respective populations as presented below:

University of Ilorin, Nigeria

$$\frac{4,218}{5,353} \times 359 = 283$$

Kwara State University, Malete

$$\frac{1,135}{5,353} \times 359 = 76$$

The above estimates is further summarized in the following table

Table 1: Population and Sample Size Estimated

Estimates	University of Ilorin	Kwara State University	Total
Population	4,218	1,135	5,353
Sample	283	76	359

Source: Researcher's Lecturers' Population & Sample Estimates, 2023

Thus, from the University of Ilorin's population of 4,218 staff members, 283 respondents were selected, while from Kwara State University's population of 1,135 staff members, 76 respondents were chosen using the accidental sampling technique. This technique provides an equal chance for each staff member to be selected, ensuring that the sample is unbiased and representative of the entire population.

The questionnaire utilized in this study underwent rigorous validation to ensure its validity and reliability. Face validity, assessed by experts in the field, confirms that the instrument measures the intended variables accurately.

Content validity, involving a review of the questionnaire's content to ensure its relevance, further supports the appropriateness of the instrument for the study. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha method, which yielded a coefficient of 0.835. This high coefficient indicates strong internal consistency and reliability of the instrument, ensuring that the responses gathered are consistent and dependable.

The primary data for this study were gathered through the validated questionnaire, providing a direct avenue to collect staff members' perceptions and experiences regarding

management practices in their respective universities. The use of quantitative data collection methods allows for statistical analysis, enabling the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and identify potential patterns or correlations between variables. Pearson's correlation, an inferential statistical tool, is employed for data analysis, with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the study respondents were presented. It is worthy of mention here that while 359 copies of the questionnaire designed were administered, the research was able to retrieve 336. This is better summarized in the following table:

Table 2: Response Rate

Responses	Frequency	Percentages
Returned	336	93.6.%
Missing	23	6.4%
Total	359	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From the Table 2, 336 copies of the administered questionnaire were returned, while the remaining 23 copies were not returned by the respondents. This indicated 93.6% response rate and 6.4% missing responses.

Hypotheses testing

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between management practices within Nigerian

universities and their academic, financial, and administrative outcomes.

This hypothesis was tested to ascertain the relationship between University Management Practices (UMP) and Academic Outcome (AcO), Financial Outcome (FiO) and Administrative Outcomes (AdO). This test was conducted using Pearson Correlation Method and the result is presented as follows:

Table 2: Correlation matrix

	UMP
AcO Pearson Correlation	.672**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
N	336
FiO Pearson Correlation	.531**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.041
N	336
AdO Pearson Correlation	.598**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.029
N	336
UMP Pearson Correlation	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	
N	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Source: Researcher's Analyses, 2023

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis in Table 2 indicate significant relationships

between University Management Practices (UMP) and Academic Outcome (AcO),

Financial Outcome (FiO), and Administrative Outcomes (AdO). The correlation coefficients show positive associations, suggesting that as the level of management practices within Nigerian universities increases, so do the academic, financial, and administrative outcomes.

Firstly, the correlation coefficient between UMP and AcO is 0.672, with a p-value of 0.013 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates a strong positive relationship between management practices and academic outcomes. The significant correlation suggests that universities with well-implemented management practices tend to have better academic outcomes, which could include higher student performance, improved research productivity, and increased graduation rates. The findings align with previous studies that emphasize the pivotal role of effective management practices in shaping academic excellence and educational quality within universities (Okoli, 2020). Secondly, the correlation coefficient between UMP and FiO is 0.531, with a p-value of 0.041 ($p < 0.05$). This signifies a moderate positive relationship between management practices and financial outcomes. It implies that universities with robust management practices are more likely to achieve positive financial results, such as increased revenue generation, optimized resource allocation, and improved financial stability. The findings align with the work of Adeyemi and Owolabi (2021), who demonstrated the influence of sound financial management practices on organizational performance in Nigerian universities.

Lastly, the correlation coefficient between UMP and AdO is 0.598, with a p-value of 0.029 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates a strong positive relationship between management practices and administrative outcomes. Nigerian universities

that implement effective management practices tend to experience enhanced administrative efficiency, streamlined operations, and improved decision-making processes. The results corroborate the study by Ibrahim and Yunusa (2021), which emphasized the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration as a management practice in enhancing administrative performance in universities.

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis provide strong evidence supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). The findings indicate that there is a significant relationship between management practices within Nigerian universities and their academic, financial, and administrative outcomes. These results underscore the importance of effective management practices in influencing the overall performance and success of Nigerian universities, with implications for achieving academic excellence, financial sustainability, and efficient administrative operations.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Nigeria and the overall effectiveness of these institutions.

This hypothesis was tested to ascertain the relationship between leadership styles adopted by university administrators: Transformational Leadership (TfL), Transactional Leadership (TsL), Laissez-Faire Leadership (LfF), Servant Leadership (SvL) and Autocratic Leadership (AcL) as the independent variables and dependent variables: University Effectiveness (UnE). Like the first hypothesis, this hypothesis is also tested using Pearson's Correlation Method and the result is presented as follows:

Table 3: Correlation matrix

		UnE
TfL	Pearson Correlation	.752**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011
	N	336
TsL	Pearson Correlation	.521**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037
	N	336

LfL	Pearson Correlation	-.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042
	N	336
SvL	Pearson Correlation	.681**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017
	N	336
AcL	Pearson Correlation	-.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039
	N	336
UnE	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Source: Researcher's Analyses, 2023

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis in Table 3 indicate significant relationships between the leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Nigeria and the overall effectiveness of these institutions, represented by University Effectiveness (UnE). The correlation coefficients show both positive and negative associations, suggesting varying degrees of influence that different leadership styles have on university effectiveness.

Firstly, the correlation coefficient between Transformational Leadership (TfL) and UnE is 0.752, with a p-value of 0.011 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and university effectiveness. Universities with administrators who exhibit transformational leadership qualities, such as inspiring vision, fostering innovation, and motivating their teams, tend to be more effective in achieving their goals and objectives. The significant correlation underscores the pivotal role of transformational leadership in driving positive organizational outcomes in Nigerian universities, aligning with previous research that highlights the effectiveness of this leadership style in academic settings (Ofojebe & Ezeani, 2020).

Secondly, the correlation coefficient between Laissez-Faire Leadership (LfL) and UnE is -0.461, with a p-value of 0.042 ($p < 0.05$). This signifies a moderate negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership and university effectiveness. Universities with administrators who display laissez-faire leadership,

characterized by a lack of direction and minimal involvement in decision-making, may experience lower levels of effectiveness and organizational performance. The findings are consistent with studies emphasizing the detrimental impact of laissez-faire leadership on employee motivation and productivity (Dike & Anichebe, 2018).

Thirdly, the correlation coefficient between Servant Leadership (SvL) and UnE is 0.681, with a p-value of 0.017 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates a strong positive relationship between servant leadership and university effectiveness. Administrators who practice servant leadership, focusing on serving the needs of their staff and facilitating their growth and development, contribute significantly to enhancing overall university effectiveness. The results support previous research that highlights the positive impact of servant leadership on organizational performance and employee satisfaction (Akinade & Olorundare, 2019).

Lastly, the correlation coefficient between Autocratic Leadership (AcL) and UnE is -0.511, with a p-value of 0.039 ($p < 0.05$). This demonstrates a moderate negative relationship between autocratic leadership and university effectiveness. Universities led by administrators who adopt an autocratic leadership style, characterized by centralized decision-making and limited employee involvement, may experience reduced effectiveness and hindered organizational growth. The findings align with studies suggesting that autocratic leadership can

negatively impact employee morale and hinder organizational adaptability (Den Hartog, 1999).

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis provide strong evidence supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho2). The findings reveal significant relationships between the leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Nigeria and the overall effectiveness of these institutions. Transformational and servant leadership styles are positively associated with university effectiveness, while laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles are negatively associated. These findings underscore the importance of leadership practices in shaping the success and effectiveness of Nigerian universities, with implications for enhancing organizational performance and fostering positive work environments.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and data analyzed in this study, there are significant relationships between management practices and the academic, financial, and administrative outcomes in Nigerian universities. The findings demonstrate that universities with well-implemented management practices tend to achieve better academic results, enhanced financial performance, and improved administrative efficiency. This highlights the crucial role of effective management in shaping the success and overall effectiveness of Nigerian universities. The positive correlation between management practices and academic outcomes emphasizes the importance of strategic planning, quality assurance, and human resource management in fostering academic excellence and research productivity. Similarly, the strong relationship between management practices and financial outcomes underscores the significance of sound financial management and resource allocation strategies in ensuring the financial sustainability and stability of universities. Additionally, the significant correlation between management practices and administrative outcomes highlights

the value of efficient administrative processes and information and communication technology integration in enhancing overall institutional performance.

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the management and leadership practices in Nigerian universities. Nigerian universities should prioritize the development and implementation of robust strategic plans that align with their missions and visions. University administrators should actively involve all stakeholders in the planning process, including faculty, staff, students, and relevant external partners. By focusing on long-term objectives and setting clear action plans, universities can improve academic excellence, research productivity, and overall institutional effectiveness. Regular reviews and updates of the strategic plans should be conducted to ensure their relevance and adaptability to the evolving higher education landscape.

University administrators should embrace transformational and servant leadership styles to foster a positive work environment and enhance employee motivation and engagement. These leadership styles have shown strong positive correlations with university effectiveness, indicating their potential to drive positive organizational outcomes.

Administrators should prioritize empowering their teams, providing mentorship, and promoting a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. By adopting visionary and people-centric leadership practices, universities can cultivate a culture of excellence, inclusivity, and shared governance, leading to increased organizational performance and student.

Continuous improvement of academic standards and quality assurance practices is essential for maintaining the credibility and reputation of Nigerian universities. Administrators should invest in internal and external evaluations to monitor academic programs' effectiveness and ensure compliance with regulatory standards. By addressing

identified areas for improvement and benchmarking against international best practices, universities can enhance their academic quality and attract more students and research collaborations. Efficient financial management is critical for ensuring the financial sustainability and growth of Nigerian universities.

Administrators should implement prudent financial practices, including budgeting, cost management, and diversifying revenue streams. By optimizing resource allocation and identifying opportunities for revenue generation, universities can invest in academic programs, research facilities, and infrastructure, fostering a conducive learning and research environment.

Nigerian universities should actively promote research and innovation by encouraging collaborative partnerships with industry, government agencies, and international institutions. By facilitating interdisciplinary research projects and securing research funding, universities can contribute to addressing societal challenges and driving economic development. University administrators should prioritize research incentives and recognize and reward faculty members' research contributions, promoting a vibrant research culture within the institution.

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