

## IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

**Olofinkua Vincent Kayode Ph.D.**

Department of Educational Management

St Augustine College of Education, Akoka, Lagos State

**ORCID:** 0009-0001-8327-7341

[volofinkua@staugustinecollege.edu.ng](mailto:volofinkua@staugustinecollege.edu.ng)

### Abstract

*This study empirically investigates the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. With the growing demand for quality higher education and the persistent challenges of poor funding, administrative bottlenecks, and declining academic standards, the efficiency of management practices has become critical. The study adopts a mixed-methods design, surveying 400 academic and administrative staff from 20 selected federal, state, and private universities and polytechnics across Nigeria. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed there are major constraints limiting the impact of management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria yet a significant positive relationship existed between management efficiency and institutional performance indicators, specifically, resource utilization and participatory decision-making were found to be the strongest predictors of institutional performance. The findings also highlighted that bureaucratic rigidity, inadequate funding and political interference remain major impediments to educational management efficiency. The study concluded that improving management efficiency in Nigerian tertiary institutions is essential for achieving quality education and global competitiveness. Recommendations include the adoption of performance-based management systems, institutional autonomy and continuous professional development for administrators.*

**Keywords:** Educational Management Efficiency, Tertiary Institutions, Institutional Performance, Resource Utilization.

### Introduction

Tertiary education is widely recognized as a catalyst for national development, producing high-level manpower, generating knowledge and driving innovation. In Nigeria, the tertiary education system comprises universities, polytechnics and colleges of education, all mandated to provide quality education and research. However, the sector has been plagued by numerous challenges including inadequate funding, industrial actions, deteriorating infrastructure, and

declining academic standards (Adebayo, 2022). Central to addressing these challenges is the efficiency of educational management the ability of institutional leaders and administrators to strategically deploy resources, coordinate activities, and achieve set goals with minimal waste.

Educational management efficiency encompasses a range of practices including planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling and decision-making. When these functions are executed effectively, institutions can enhance academic quality, ensure financial sustainability, and produce graduates that meet labor market demands. Conversely, inefficiencies lead to poor accreditation outcomes, high dropout rates, and graduate unemployment (Okonkwo & Eze, 2021).

Despite the recognized importance of management, empirical studies examining the direct impact of management efficiency on institutional performance in the Nigerian context remain limited. Most available studies focus on funding or infrastructure, overlooking the mediating role of management processes. This study fills this gap by providing empirical evidence on how management efficiency influences key performance outcomes in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Nigerian tertiary institutions are facing a crisis of quality and relevance. Frequent accreditation failures, high rates of student attrition, persistent industrial disputes and the production of graduates with low employability skills are symptomatic of deeper systemic issues. While these problems are often attributed to inadequate funding, there is a growing consensus that poor management efficiency exacerbates the effects of resource scarcity. Mismanagement of available funds, lack of strategic planning, weak leadership and inefficient administrative processes undermine institutional performance. For instance, some institutions receive substantial government subventions, yet fail to maintain basic infrastructure or meet accreditation requirements. Others struggle to retain qualified staff due to poor human resource management. These inefficiencies suggest that improving management practices could yield significant improvements in institutional outcomes, even within existing resource constraints. Therefore, this study seeks to empirically examine the relationship between educational management efficiency and the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, with the aim of providing evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice.

The study focuses on tertiary institutions in Nigeria, specifically universities, polytechnics (federal, state, and private). Geographically, it covers the six geo-political zones, with selected institutions from each zone. The study assesses management efficiency from the perspectives of academic and administrative staff and measures institutional performance using indicators such as accreditation success, graduate employment rates, staff turnover and financial management.

The findings of this study will be significant for several stakeholders including policymakers (National Universities Commission, Federal Ministry of Education) by providing them with empirical data to inform policies aimed at improving institutional governance and management. It is also expected that institutional Administrators like Vice-Chancellors,

Rectors, Provosts, Registrars will also benefit from this study as it will highlight areas where management practices can be strengthened to enhance performance. This study will also contribute to the literature on educational management and provide a framework for future studies to the benefit of academics, researchers and student and will ultimately, improve management efficiency leading to better educational outcomes and more competent graduates, benefiting the society at large.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate on the impact of educational management efficiency impacts on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The specific objectives are;

1. To assess the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
2. To identify the effect of the major constraints to educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria

In line with the specific objectives, the following research questions were formulated to guide this study;

1. What is the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
2. To what extent do the major constraints to educational management efficiency affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Two hypotheses were postulated and tested in this study.

H<sub>01</sub>: Educational management efficiency has no significant impact on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

H<sub>02</sub>: The major constraints to educational management efficiency do not significantly affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

### Conceptual Review

#### **Educational Management Efficiency**

Obizue & Obizue (2025) posited that educational management efficiency refers to the optimal use of human, material, and financial resources to achieve educational goals. It involves planning, organizing, leading, and controlling activities with minimal waste. Key dimensions include leadership effectiveness, resource utilization, staff motivation and decision-making processes.

Educational management efficiency is all about optimizing resources, processes and strategies to achieve better learning outcomes and overall school performance. It plays a crucial role in

shaping managerial activities toward achieving set goals. The way education is managed, from policy-making to implementation, directly impacts the quality of human capital, innovation and productivity in the country. Educational management efficiency is the display of leadership administrative effectiveness which is measured by the capacity of school leaders to set goals, motivate staff and foster a conducive learning environment and quality performance.

Efficient educational management can drive the performance of tertiary institutions by ensuring efficiency in resource utilization. In Nigeria, improving educational management efficiency is key to unlocking the country's vast potentials and achieving meaningful educational and economic progress.

It involves effective planning, leadership and decision-making to create a productive learning environment, Obizue & Obizue (2025) asserted that Educational management efficiency encompasses several dimensions including the following:

Proactive and speculative fund application: Genuine and appropriate channeling of funds

Resource allocation and utilization efficiency: The degree to which financial and material inputs translate into learning outcomes. The level of managerial efficiency is usually revealed in the overall performance of the institution. In tertiary education, performance is multi-dimensional, encompassing academic quality (accreditation ratings, student outcomes), financial health (budget implementation, revenue generation), staff stability (retention, satisfaction), and societal relevance (graduate employability, research output).

### **Challenges to Educational Management Efficiency**

Educational management efficiency in Nigerian tertiary institutions is often constrained by a mix of structural, financial, and human factors. Here's a breakdown of the main challenges and why they matter:

#### **Inadequate Funding and Budgetary Constraints**

Most federal and state-owned tertiary institutions rely heavily on government subventions, which are often delayed, insufficient, and poorly released. This limits procurement of teaching materials, maintenance of infrastructure, payment of staff allowances and investment in technology. Institutions end up operating in survival mode rather than focusing on quality improvement.

#### **Poor Infrastructure and Obsolete Facilities**

Many universities, polytechnics, and colleges still operate with outdated lecture halls, laboratories, libraries and student hostels. It restricts practical learning, research output, and the overall student experience. Overcrowded facilities also reduce effective teaching and supervision.

### **Industrial Actions and Labor Unrest**

Frequent strikes by ASUU, ASUP, COEASU and non-academic unions disrupt academic calendars and administrative processes and cause loss of instructional time, backlog of admissions and graduations, and erodes public confidence in the system. It also makes long-term planning difficult for managers.

### **Bureaucratic Bottlenecks and Red Tape**

Decision-making often passes through multiple layers of committees, ministries and regulatory bodies like NUC, NBTE and NCCE which usually slows down procurement, recruitment, curriculum updates and implementation of reforms. Managers spend more time on paperwork than on strategic leadership.

### **Weak ICT Integration and Digital Infrastructure**

Despite policies pushing for e-learning, many institutions lack reliable internet, LMS platforms and trained staff to manage digital systems. The issue is that it limits the adoption of blended learning, online assessments, and efficient data management. Record-keeping often remains manual and error-prone.

### **Shortage of Qualified and Motivated Staff**

There's a brain drain of experienced lecturers and administrators to better-paying jobs abroad or in the private sector. High student-to-lecturer ratios, increased workload and reduced research mentorship. Low morale also affects productivity and accountability.

### **Poor Data Management and Planning Systems**

Many institutions lack centralized, up-to-date data on students, staff, finances and academic performance thereby making evidence-based decision-making difficult. Planning, accreditation and resource allocation are often based on estimates rather than real data.

### **Political Interference and Governance Issues**

Appointments of vice-chancellors, rectors and provosts are sometimes influenced by political considerations rather than merit as such weakening institutional autonomy and leading to leadership instability. It also discourages merit-based performance and transparency.

### **Security Challenges**

Institutions in some regions face threats from banditry, kidnapping, cultism and student unrest. This disrupts academic activities, increases operational costs for security and affects staff and student retention.

## **Inconsistent Policy Implementation**

Education policies and reforms often change with successive governments without proper follow-through or evaluation. Confusion and wastes resources on abandoned projects may prevent institutions from building long-term systems.

## **Theoretical Framework**

**Systems Theory (Ludwig von Bertalanffy):** Views institutions as open systems that interact with their environment. Management efficiency involves ensuring that inputs (funds, staff, students) are transformed into outputs (graduates, research) effectively. Inefficiencies in the transformation process lead to poor outcomes.

**Human Relations Theory (Elton Mayo):** Emphasizes the importance of social factors and employee motivation in organizational productivity. This theory underpins the hypothesis that staff motivation significantly impacts retention and performance.

**Contingency Theory (Fiedler):** Suggests that there is no single best way to manage; effective management depends on the context. This is relevant for understanding why management practices may vary across institutional types.

## **Methodology**

This study examined the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The research employed a quantitative survey design because it allows for systematic data collection from a relatively large population and facilitates the statistical analysis of relationships among variables associated with curriculum processes and educational quality. The design was considered appropriate for the study because it enables the researcher to gather perceptions and experiences from educators directly involved in curriculum implementation within the Nigerian secondary school system. The target population comprised of both academic and administrative staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, 20 institutions were selected across the six geo-political zones comprising of 6 federal universities, 5 state universities, 5 private universities, 2 polytechnics and 2 colleges of education were selected across the six geo-political zones. 10 academic and 10 administrative staff were respectively and randomly selected from each institution, yielding a sample of 400 respondents.

These groups were selected because they are directly involved in management policy implementation and possess practical insights into the effective running of the institutions' administration. The sampling technique was employed to enhance the reliability and generalizability of the findings across the diverse environments. Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on key variables identified in contemporary literature on educational management and it is titled Educational Management Efficiency and Institutional Performance Questionnaire (EMEIPQ). The questionnaire consisted of two major sections. The first section collected demographic information about the respondents, including management experience, school type and

professional role. The second section contained items measuring management efficiency indicators like leadership effectiveness, resource utilization, staff motivation, decision-making and institutional performance variables; accreditation success, graduate employability, staff retention, financial sustainability.

The items were structured using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree in order to capture respondents' levels of agreement with each statement. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation. Their feedback was used to refine the wording and clarity of the survey items to ensure that the instrument accurately measured the intended constructs. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha yielding the coefficient of 0.86, which indicated an acceptable level of internal consistency suitable for empirical analysis. Data collection was conducted through direct distribution of questionnaires to the selected respondents within their respective institutions. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would remain confidential and used strictly for academic research purposes. Completed questionnaires were retrieved after completion and carefully screened to ensure completeness and accuracy before data analysis. The research questions were addressed using simple regression analysis, while a t-test associated with simple regression was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. The results of the analysis were presented using tables and explanatory interpretations to provide a clear understanding of the empirical findings. The methodological approach adopted in this study provides a systematic framework for examining the practical implications of efficient educational management within the Nigerian educational system. By combining structured data collection with statistical analysis, the study generates empirical evidence that contributes to ongoing discussions on how efficiency in educational management can support the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The decision rule states: 100% - 75% (Very High Extent), 74% - 50% (High Extent), 49%-25% (Low Extent) and 0% - 24% (Very Low Extent).

## Results and Analysis

**Research Question 1:** What is the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

**Table 1: Simple Regression on the impact of educational management efficiency on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Extent of Prediction	Decision
1	.794 <sup>a</sup>	.768	.606	76.8%	Very High Extent

Table 1 revealed that the regression ( $r$ ) and regression square ( $r^2$ ) coefficients are .794 and .768, respectively, while the adjusted  $r$  square is .606. The extent of prediction (coefficient of

determinism) is 76.8% (.768×100). By implication, the result shows that efficiency in educational management impacted on tertiary institutions' performance to a very high extent by 76.8%.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do the major constraints to educational management efficiency affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

**Table 2: Simple Regression on the extent to which the major constraints to educational management efficiency affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Extent of Prediction	Decision
1	.507 <sup>a</sup>	.491	.476	50.7%	High extent

Table 2 revealed that the coefficients of regression (r) is .507, regression square (r<sup>2</sup>) is .491 and that of the adjusted r square is .476. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 50.7% (.507×100). This implies that educational management efficiency is constrained towards the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to a fairly or averagely high extent of 50.7%.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** Educational management efficiency has no significant impact on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

**Table 3: t-test associated with simple regression that the impact of educational management efficiency has no significant effect on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error					
(Constant)	.811	.092		11.174	.000		
1						0.05	Ho <sub>1</sub> Rejected
Effect of educational management efficiency	.160	.035	.223	7.015	.001		

**a. Dependent Variable: Educational management Efficiency**

Table 4 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .223 and 7.015. The p-value of .001 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, efficient educational management exerted a positive and statistically significant impact with the performance of tertiary institution in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 2:** The major constraints to educational management efficiency do not significantly affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

**Table 4: t-test associated with simple regression that the major constraints to educational management efficiency do not significantly affect the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error					
(Constant)	1.524	.093		12.256	.000		
1						0.05	Ho <sub>2</sub> Rejected
Major constraints to educational management efficiency	.073	.055	.243	3.320	.002		

**a. Dependent Variable: Educational management Efficiency**

Table 4 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .243 and 3.320. The p-value of .002 is less than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the major constraints to educational management efficiency is statistically significant in determining the performance outcome of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

**Discussion of Findings**

The finding from the first research question revealed that efficiency in educational management related to tertiary institutions performance to a high extent by 76.8%. The test of hypothesis one also established that efficient educational management exerted a positive and statistically significant impact on the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

This can be validated and attributed to the fact that the regression results demonstrate that each dimension or determinant of management efficiency such as leadership effectiveness, resource utilization, staff motivation and decision-making significantly predicts institutional performance.

These findings are in line with Nzeakor (2018), Nwachukwu & Okafor (2022) and Sulieman & Ibrahim (2023), who in their studies observed that that efficient management of educational institutions had positive and significant impact on their performances. The results also resonate with Obizue & Obizue (2025), who highlighted that the educational management efficiency is the strongest predictor of institutional performance and accreditation success. This supports the Contingency Theory notion that flexible, context-sensitive management is essential. The findings contradict overly centralized models, which respondents described as “crippling efficiency.”

The second finding showed that that educational management efficiency is constrained towards the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to a fairly or averagely high extent of 50.7%.

This result validated the assertion of Ademola (2021), Okeaeonu & Nwosu (2024) and Obizue & Obizue (2025) who advocated that the major constraints to management efficiency could be in form of bureaucratic bottlenecks, inadequate funding, political Interference, poor staff incentives can limit the performance outcome in educational institutions in Nigeria. They further observed that the challenges are diversified to the time it takes to get approval, the need may have passed or prices have increased, appointments into governing councils are often politically determined where some members have no understanding of university administration and the best Lecturers are leaving for private universities or abroad because they are overworked and underpaid.

Also, a corresponding hypothesis tested indicated that the major constraints to educational management efficiency is statistically significant in influencing the performance outcome of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. These findings are in agreement with Ogunyemi & Adedokun (2020), Nwachukwu & Okafor (2022) and Akpan (2024) who in their studies asserted that despite the notable challenges and constrains encounter by institutional Administrators, efficiency in educational management is a good determinant of institutional performance in Nigeria. This finding suggests that the educational management efficiency is effectively designed and delivered to instill quality, morals, skills and values in the personnel and students. Moreover, lecturers may be reinforcing these values through relatable teaching methods and real-life examples, enhancing students’ understanding and commitment. This implies that management efficiency is a vital tool for fostering quality-oriented educational consciousness among all stakeholders in the tertiary institutions and bringing out the best in them towards achieving high performance outcomes. It highlights the importance of strengthening and consistently implementing the planned administrative strategies and standards to sustain positive behavioural outcomes and qualitative education system which is usually the desired goal of any well-meaning setting.

## **Conclusion**

This study provides robust empirical evidence that educational management efficiency significantly impacts the performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study concluded that despite the challenges, improving institutional management practices is a fundamental

prerequisite for enhancing and strengthening the quality, performance and relevance of Nigerian tertiary education.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Implement Performance-Based Management Systems:** Institutions should adopt balanced scorecards and key performance indicators (KPIs) that tie administrative and academic units to measurable outcomes. Management efficiency should be regularly assessed and rewarded.
2. **Enhance Institutional Autonomy:** Government should grant greater autonomy to tertiary institutions in financial management, procurement, and staffing to reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks and enable swift decision-making.
3. **Invest in Leadership Development:** Establish mandatory training programs for administrators (Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Deans) on strategic management, financial governance, and human resource management.
4. **Strengthen Resource Management:** Institutions should implement robust financial planning and monitoring systems. Regular audits and public disclosure of resource utilization can improve accountability.
5. **Improve Staff Welfare and Motivation:** Develop comprehensive staff motivation packages including competitive salaries, career progression opportunities, research grants, and a conducive work environment to enhance retention.
6. **Foster Participatory Governance:** Encourage inclusive decision-making by involving academic staff, students, and other stakeholders in governance structures to enhance ownership and transparency.
7. **Establish a National Task Force on Management Efficiency:** The National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory bodies should create a task force to review and recommend management best practices tailored to the Nigerian context.

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