ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATION AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA. A THEORETICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines administrative innovation and challenges in Nigerian higher education. It highlights issues such as workforce shortages, limited ICT infrastructure, poor infrastructure, exam administration problems, a lack of research facilities, and gaps in skill training. The study proposes that adopting tools such as EIMS, quality assurance, and transformational leadership could help address these problems. Guided by Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory, it recommends implementing quality controls to enhance data accuracy and decision-making. It also promotes a transformational leadership style that encourages innovation, motivates staff, and develops future leaders. Additionally, given that funding is a major concern, stakeholders should pursue revenue-generating ventures, such as bookshops, farms, transport, and real estate, to support higher education funding.

Keywords: administrative innovation, contemporary issues, transformational management, leadership. quality assurance and control

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a knowledge-driven society shaped by contemporary issues and challenges, as technological advancements have turned the world into a global village. Changes and developments in society influence the school system and affect the actions and activities of secondary school administration. Modern technology has brought innovative practices in government, organization, and education. Recently, educational institutions have faced the challenge of doing more with fewer resources as administrators strive to meet society's complex and evolving demands. To keep up with globalization, educational managers have adopted innovative practices stemming from contemporary issues such as funding, technology, poor educational infrastructure (libraries, laboratories, sports equipment, conference and assembly halls, sanitation facilities), and teaching aids (projectors, computers, digital textbooks, smart boards, 3D printing, and public address systems). Challenges also include a shortage of quality teachers, polluted learning environments, poverty, student health and safety concerns, labor union activities (such as teachers' strikes), tendencies toward cultism, and policies like 'no child left behind,' among others.

Therefore, school administrators must have a comprehensive understanding of emerging administrative and management innovative techniques, as well as their application in addressing current issues and challenges in Tertiary Education Institutions. Innovations in administration and management are vital components in achieving a high-quality educational goal that fosters socio-cultural, economic, and democratic values and principles necessary in today's society (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2016). In this context, management innovation refers to a deliberate, organized, and risk-taking change introduced into Tertiary Education Institutions to promote efficiency and boost productivity. The integration of innovations into school management responds to global technological advancements, leading to creative and innovative practices worldwide. The goal is to enhance school standards, quality, and educational effectiveness. This paper, therefore, focuses on innovative practices in school administration and the contemporary challenges faced by secondary schools. It examines and discusses concepts of administration, management innovations, techniques, and current issues in Tertiary Education Institutions. The types of innovations, areas of innovative practices, rationale, and challenges of implementing innovations in schools are addressed. Additionally, the paper offers some recommendations for the way forward.

The management of Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria has failed to meet their main objectives fully. This can be traced to university administrators' inability to effectively address the contemporary issues and challenges facing universities in Nigeria. Previous empirical research has shown that university administrators are inadequately prepared to address current issues and challenges, such as a shortage of skilled lecturers, insufficient information and communication technology, and the absence of life skills training for students. These issues are often interpreted as a focus on the internal school environment rather than engaging with relevant external changes. Therefore, this study aims to examine various emerging administrative and management innovative techniques that, if effectively implemented, could help university administrators address the current issues and challenges in Tertiary Education Institutions. The purpose of this presentation is to carefully identify and analyze the emerging administrative and management innovations introduced by curriculum planners and policymakers to combat the challenges facing Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined:

   i.   Transformational management/leadership as an innovation technique to combat contemporary issues/challenges confronting Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria.
   ii.   EIMS (Education Information Management System), e.g., Information Communication Technology, e.g., E-learning programmes, Computer-based test, etc
   iii. Quality assurance and control as an innovation technique to combat contemporary issues/challenges confronting tertiary education institutions in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW
The study was guided by Transformational Leadership Theory by James MacGregor Burns (1978), which supports the use of emerging administrative and management innovation techniques to address contemporary issues and challenges in modern organizations. James defined transformational leadership as a process where "leaders and their followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation." Adoption of transformational leadership will encourage school administrators, academic and non-academic staff, students, and other stakeholders to increase innovation and goal-oriented approaches in Tertiary Education Institutions (Al-Husseini

& Elbeltagi, 2016). The higher education sector has been facing increased pressure to adopt and cultivate innovative leadership cultures. Moreover, due to dynamic shifts in leadership and management across other areas, such as business and government, the education sector has also seen a rise in demand for innovative and transformational leadership (Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016).

Transformational leadership is linked to knowledge sharing and innovation management. It serves as an effective measure of an organization's level of innovation. Transformational leadership theory promotes the adoption of technologies, innovative thinking, and creativity to address current issues across organizations and society. The advantage of applying a transformational leadership style in Tertiary Education Institutions is that it meets followers' emotional and cultural needs. A study by Owusu-Agyeman (2019) found that transformational leadership theory explains how joint operations function through behavioral, affective, and contingency factors to create a supportive environment in which administrative staff can develop new work processes and ideas.

Transformational leaders motivate and inspire followers to achieve extraordinary results while helping them develop their leadership abilities. These leaders support followers' growth by addressing their specific needs, empowering them, and aligning the goals of the followers, the leader, the team, and the larger organization. In a study of 250 academic leaders, Martins (2019) found that knowledge sharing and innovation are positively linked in universities. Therefore, when transformational leadership is combined with knowledge sharing, innovation levels tend to increase in education management and leadership within higher education institutions.

Conceptual clarifications

Management in the education system is defined as a systematic process of planning, organizing, coordinating, staffing, communicating, and effectively directing all educational activities and programs to achieve efficiency and growth. It can also be viewed as the process of effectively and efficiently utilizing people, money, materials, machines, and other organizational resources to accomplish the goals of a tertiary education institution. The primary purpose of management in education is to create and maintain environments within the education system that promote, support, and sustain effective teaching, learning, and productivity.

Administration in education refers to the management of educational policies, functions, and jobs, the setting of major objectives, and the oversight of programs and projects to achieve the common goal of education. Its primary focus is on developing plans, policies, and procedures for secondary schools to establish clear goals and objectives and enforce rules and regulations.

Techniques are a set of policies or behaviors aimed at achieving future organizational growth. A management technique is a recognized method for analyzing or solving a management issue in a detailed and systematic way.

Innovation involves designing new organizational structures that better support the production and delivery of services or products. Administrative innovation enhances an educational institution's learning capacity and creates a better environment for school administrators, teachers, and students, enabling them to focus on essential issues in educational development. Innovation in education encourages students and teachers to research, explore, and utilize all available tools to find new and creative solutions to current challenges. It requires a different approach to the

problem, viewing, and solving. Additionally, it enhances education by prompting teachers and students to use higher-level thinking skills to address complex issues.

Contemporary issues and challenges in education refer to current events, policies, and developments in the modern world. They are also defined as unresolved problems currently affecting Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria.

EMIS (Education Management Information Systems) are data-driven models used for data collection and analysis to provide information for effective administrative/managerial decision-making, planning, monitoring, and the implementation of educational policies and programmes.

SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results) is an EMIS policy domain launched by the World Bank's Human Development Network/Education in early 2011. Its goal is to help governments systematically evaluate and improve their education systems so that all children and youth can gain the knowledge and skills needed for life.

Conceptual model for transformational leadership
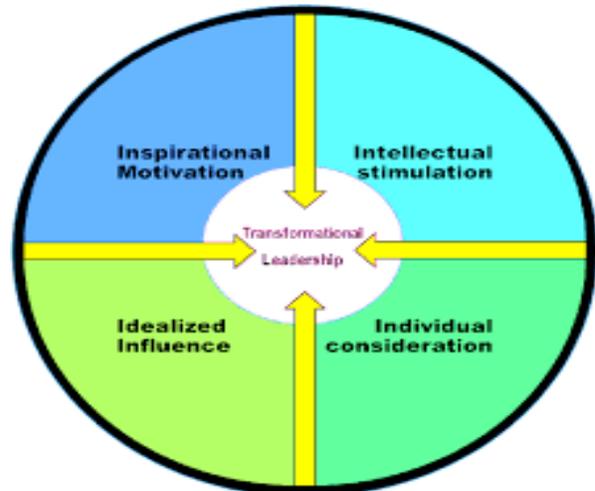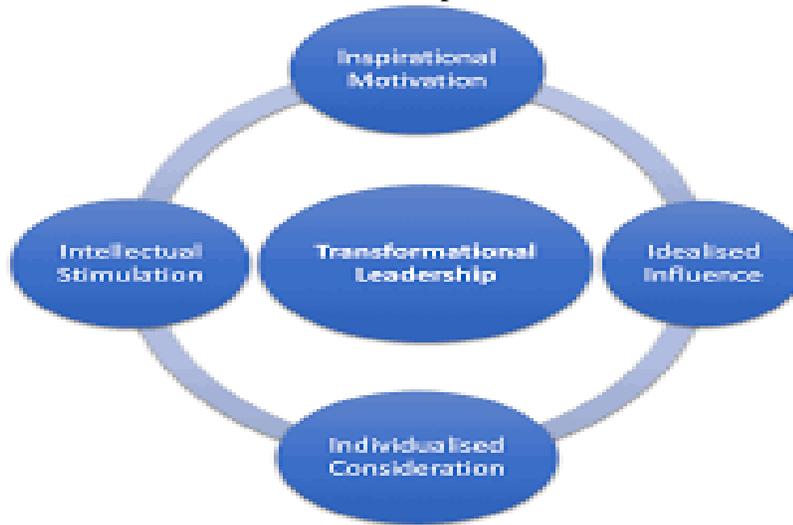
Source: afeedouhg.com (2016)   **Source:** Research Gate. Net (2018)

Idealized Influence

Idealized influence describes leaders who are charismatic, curious, and deliver messages with simplicity and tact. These leaders are exemplary role models and are readily trusted and respected by all team members. Curiosity, not intelligence, is the driving force behind their success. It is their job to find innovative solutions to problems and create new, dynamic paths for the team to follow. Charismatic leaders praise individual team members for each success, and they are the first to take responsibility when things go wrong. They also provide constructive feedback to each team member. Intended influence is also demonstrated through their curiosity.

Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational motivation describes leaders who are motivating and committed to a vision. They encourage team members to also commit to this vision by raising team spirit, fostering community, and creating a sense of purpose. An inspirational leader provides structure and order so that members can execute tasks without confusion. The leader articulates a clear plan and communicates expectations before the work begins. Leaders must also express their messages with

authority so that members respect their ideas and trust in their vision. A motivational leader notices small issues that could turn into bigger problems. He or she has an intuitive sense of what helps push their team and goals forward. These actions begin to build trust in their followers and confidence in their leader.

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation refers to leaders who encourage their members to think creatively and be innovative. Stimulating followers helps promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which can enhance the performance of the group or organization. Leaders must not criticize members' ideas or opinions. Quickly dismissing ideas can create distrust and hurt morale. Leaders should gently guide their followers to improve how they solve problems and brainstorm new, innovative ways to reach their team's goals. In summary, leaders need to recognize that there are many ways to achieve a goal, and there is no single path to innovation.

Individual Consideration

Individual consideration refers to the extent to which a leader attends to each follower's personal needs. Transformational leadership motivates members by focusing on how each person contributes to the overall goal. This involves recognizing and valuing the motivations, desires, and needs of individual members. Once the motivation behind an individual's drive is identified, leaders can then offer tailored training opportunities. This helps team members grow and learn in an environment where they feel comfortable. Engaging individuals requires emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence includes showing genuine compassion, empathizing with individuals' needs, and supporting their ongoing personal growth. When leaders consider their followers' emotions, they learn how to engage with them effectively. Emotionally intelligent leaders connect with members and build trust-based relationships. Leaders act as mentors or coaches and are open to listening to their followers' concerns.

The Pros and Cons of Transformational Leadership.
PROS:
- Establishes strong relationships.
- Serves as an ideal influence.
- Helps bring enthusiasm and motivation into being.
- Encourages learning and stimulates creativity.
- Reduces employee turnover.
- United in a Common Cause
- Reduces Turnover Costs
- Promotes Morale Through Better Communication.
- Gives Employees a Lot of Freedom.

CONS:
- Can be risky and disruptive.
- Can result in wrong decisions.
- Employees burn out.
- Assumption of motivation.
- Challenges in Details.
- Overlooking Reality.

What can I do to become a more transformational leader?
One of the key ways to start is by having faith. You must believe in the vision and path you have created so that you can inspire others to believe in it as well. Being charismatic, motivating, and focusing on each team member can help you achieve this through transformative leadership.

Yukl (1994) draws some tips for successful transformational leadership:
1. Develop a challenging and attractive vision, together with the employees.
2. Tie the vision to a strategy for its achievement.
3. Develop the vision, specify, and translate it into actions.
4. Express confidence, decisiveness, and optimism about the vision and its implementation.
5. Realize the vision through small, planned steps and small successes in the path for its full implementation.

Identified innovative techniques for handling educational issues:
   i.   Transformational leadership initiative
   ii.   Quality Assurance and Control
   iii.   EMIS (Education Management Information System/ICT compliance)

Quality assurance as an innovative technique in handling educational issues
Quality assurance at all levels of education is a tool designed to improve the quality of services provided by secondary schools. In educational organizations, quality assurance is a comprehensive concept translated into practical activities to ensure minimum standards and to verify that education services, activities, and programs meet students' needs and societal expectations. Introducing quality assurance mechanisms is one thing; ensuring their sustainability in the secondary school system is another. Generally, the importance of quality assurance in education cannot be overstated. It is expected that the government, educational administrators, and other stakeholders will facilitate and maintain the quality of educational services offered in the tertiary education system. According to Longe (as cited in Babalola, Adedeje & Erwat, 2007), the factors that can help improve the quality of education in Nigeria both in the short and long term include increased public spending, students' capacity, innovative learning methods, relevant subjects, skilled teachers, adequate learning time, necessary tools and technology, efficient use of inputs, and the establishment of performance standards.

Why quality assurance?
Adegbesan (2011) identified the need for quality assurance in Nigerian secondary schools as;
   i.   to serve as an indispensable component of quality control strategy in education
   ii.   to ensure and maintain a high standard of education at all levels,
   iii.   to assist in the monitoring and supervision of academic activities
   iv.   to determine the quality of the teacher's input,
   v.   to determine the number of classrooms needed based on the average class size.
   vi.   to ensure quality control of education, and
   vii.   to determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control.

The federal, state, and local governments, as well as alumni associations, non-governmental organizations, Parent-Teacher Associations, philanthropists, donor agencies, private individuals, and religious organizations have all made efforts and continue to focus their efforts on achieving

the goals of higher education institutions. These efforts are reflected in providing funds, facilities, and equipment; constructing classroom buildings; renovating old classrooms and administrative offices; hiring and deploying staff as needed; and paying salaries and wages. All these actions are taken to ensure quality within the school system. According to customer and society-at-large perceptions, quality is defined as the performance of finished products and the services provided.

EMIS (Education management information systems/ICT)
This is a data-driven model used for data collection and analysis to provide information that supports well-informed decision-making and planning, management, and monitoring in education systems. It is an innovative system that integrates technology, people, processes, and procedures, enabling education leaders to make informed management decisions. Simply put, EMIS is a database or an Information Technology (IT) system. EMIS enhances the timely processing of data, improving the relevance, reliability, and comprehensiveness of information, thereby supporting the effective completion of tasks in higher education. The system also automates educational management, simultaneously boosting leadership and assessment of educators and students (Martins et al., 2019). Therefore, EMIS is strategically important in areas facing challenges with physical monitoring. For example, EMIS can be used to strengthen education monitoring in developing secondary schools, ensuring high accountability, transparency, and innovation among students and teachers. People are a vital component of an EMIS, as they not only guide the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of data but also lead the transformation of data into statistics used to inform decision-making.

An education management information system is responsible for producing and monitoring education statistics within an education system. It has a multifaceted structure, comprising the technological and institutional arrangements for collecting, processing, and disseminating data in an education system. It is crucial for tracking changes, ensuring data quality, and timely reporting of essential information for planning and management, and for facilitating the utilization of information in decision-making by policymakers. An education information management system provides education stakeholders with information on the status of the education system as a whole and on learning outcomes within a country. The education management information system is intended to help government experts design and implement policies. Unfortunately, most secondary schools have not formulated policies for using EMIS data in planning and decision-making. By using an EMIS, the government can analyze and utilize data to improve the Tertiary Education Institution system. In Nigeria, reliable, relevant, and easily accessible information on specific schools, teachers, enrollments, and educational outcomes remains scarce. Therefore, this study recommends the effective implementation of quality assurance and control measures to check the quality, accuracy, validity, reliability, and usability of the data collected by respective EMISs in Tertiary Education Institutions.

To support the implementation of its Education Strategy 2020, the World Bank's Human Development Network/Education launched the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative in early 2011. SABER is designed to help governments systematically examine and improve the performance of their education systems so that all children and youth can acquire the knowledge and skills needed for life. The initiative is founded on the idea that while enhancing education quality requires actionable information, "there is far too little actionable, detailed knowledge about education policies and institutions available to policymakers and other education.

stakeholders" (World Bank 2013).

Identified contemporary educational issues in Nigeria.
1. Poor funding
2. Politicization of education
3. Poor educational infrastructures (libraries, laboratories, games equipment, conference/assembly halls, and poor sanitation facilities
4. Inadequate classrooms
5. Teaching aids (projectors, Computers, digital textbooks, and public address systems),
6. Paucity of quality teachers
7. Polluted learning environment and
8. Student health and safety.
9. Labour union activities (teachers' incessant strikes)
10. Tendencies to cultism among others

Administrative implications of the study for Heads of Tertiary Institutions
School administrators should note that there will be resistance from staff, students, and other stakeholders to any form of transformation and to the adoption of emerging administrative and management techniques, such as online programs, teaching aids, educational software, and social networking tools, that could help address contemporary issues in Tertiary Education Institutions. Additionally, technological transformation may create obstacles and disruptions to the traditional classroom environment. Moreover, it is important to recognize that most transformational leaders did not succeed at the initial stage of transformation. However, with determination and belief in their personal vision, they ultimately succeeded.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The study carefully examined some identified administrative innovation techniques that school administrators could adopt to address contemporary issues and challenges facing Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria. It also adopted a conceptual model that explains the theory on which the study was based, identifies current issues in Tertiary Education Institutions, and offers meaningful recommendations for addressing these challenges.

Recommendations
i. Since administrative decisions in Tertiary Education Institutions are based on available statistical data and information, this study recommends the effective implementation of quality assurance and control measures to check the quality, accuracy, validity, reliability, and usability of the data collected by respective EMISs in Tertiary Education Institutions to minimize errors and improve effective administrative decision-making.
ii. University administrators should develop transformational leadership skills that promote innovative thinking, stimulate, and inspire teachers and students to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and develop future personal leadership capacity.
iii. Since funding was one of the major challenges facing Tertiary Education Institutions, it is hereby recommended that stakeholders adopt innovative techniques—such as bookshops, commercial agriculture, commercial transportation, real estate, rentals, among other ventures—that could serve as sources of internally generated revenue to support the funding of Tertiary Education Institutions.

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