

Governance and Decision Making in Higher Education Management

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Abstract

Decision making is the most important task of university administrators or managers and it is often the most difficult task in the managerial process. This paper offers a step-by-step decision making procedure for solving complex problems. It outlines the concept of decision-making and processes for both public and private decision-making agendas, using different decision criteria and different types of information. This paper also describes barriers to effective decision making and decisions that must be made in conditions of certainty and uncertainty. Using a descriptive and suggestive research design, multiple statistical procedures; the results revealed that the types, styles and barrier to decision making processes are significantly related to the poor quality management of higher education in Nigeria? It is therefore imperative that institutional administrators are thoughtful and precise decision makers. This study recommends that the process of decision making ought not to be reactionary, but systematically planned and swift as well as planning for the unanticipated and unintentional situations as they arise. Knowledge management, experience, and the ability to predict or forecast the future in higher education administration play a critical role in its quality. Institutional administrators must prudently consider the short and long term consequences of their decision making actions, as opposed to searching for instant or personal gratification in solving pertinent institutional problems.

Keywords: Governance, Decision Making, Higher Education, Management, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education governance and decision making processes has dominated the academic landscape of higher education management globally. It appears to be gaining ground in present day Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education around the world. Nonetheless, decision making processes of these institutions are on a daily basis criticized because of their inefficiencies, sluggishness, bureaucratic nature as well as their ineffectiveness in reaching or meeting targeted goals (Ahiauzu & Ololube, 2016).

Effective institutional governance explains the approaches that combine the values, morals, principles and ethics of several different decision making practices that are used to better

restore effectiveness in higher education management. Institutional governance is used to describe fairness of decision-making processes and interpersonal treatment including equity and justice in the higher education (Ololube, 2017).

Decision making (decision from Latin *decidere* “to decide, determine,” literally “to cut off,” from *de-* “off” and *caedere* “to cut”) can be regarded as the intellectual processes resulting in the selection of a course of action from among several alternative scenarios. Every decision making process produces a final choice (whether an action or opinion/position) as its output. Some decisions, however, prove to be more than a simple choice among alternatives. Many managerial decisions are part of a process that entails a series of sub-decisions (Sadaghiyani, 2011). One common way of approaching decisions of differing complexities is to see the decision making process as one of problem solving or opportunity-finding. In this paradigm, a problem reflects a distance between an actual and desired situation. The essence of the problem-solving process, therefore, is to bridge this distance. A number of ways can assist administrators in problem solving. Amongst them are:

Problem identification and diagnosis are based on information. Many problems are very obvious or well defined and it then becomes the task of higher education administrators to properly analyze the available information. Once a problem and its associated causes are identified and defined, it is important to generate alternative solutions. A good manager is expected to be creative and satisfying in decision making. Creativity is the ability to generate new or novel ideas. Satisfying is selecting an acceptable rather than an optimal alternative if needed. After choosing an alternative, the choice must be implemented, which usually involves committing resources to a course of action. The poor implementation of a good choice may lead to failure. According to Ibara (2010), the decision making process involves not only making decisions but implementing the chosen decisions. Implementation, however, is not the final step in the process. An effective decision need to be monitored and controlled and results need to be judged in terms of the objectives for which the decision was made. For Hoy and Miskel, (2004), it is not until decision making is monitored and the results translated into achievement that a decision can be considered complete and successful.

Higher education institutions the world over aim is to generate value for its owners (private and government), customers (students) and other stakeholders (parents, community and society). It must decide how to combine valuable resources (human and materials) by making good decisions that would be beneficial in such a way that the value of the output exceeds the costs of the input. Unfortunately, most higher education institutions fail to fully satisfy the requirements of this process (Ololube, Agbor & Agabi, 2017; Ololube, Agbor & Kpolovie, 2016).

Many administrators or institutional leaders feel as though they are often faced with decisions that may succeed or fail. The nature of any decision depends on the beliefs about the cause-and-effect relationship and preferences about possible outcomes (Ololube, 2013). In rare situations, institutional administrators find themselves uncertain about the cause-and-effect relationship and/or outcome preferences, rendering their decision making even more difficult. Decisions by institutional administrators can involve a wide range of issues including curriculum planning, motivation, staff and students discipline, facilities and services management, school-community relations, conflict resolutions, staff welfare, and so on. In order to effectively address these issues, a number of possible principles need be considered (Ololube, Aiya, Uriah & Ololube, 2016).

One of the possible principles to be considered according to Githens (2010) is that good decisions are drivers of worthy performances. They involve decision makers and individuals who possess critical information; after decisions are made, all those involved and affected need to support the implementation of the decision; some administrators often do not support implementation because they neither understand the decision nor participated in it; there are consequences to both implementing and failing to implement decisions; as such administrators need to concern themselves about both the quality and timing of decisions. Therefore, there are different types of decisions that require different decision making styles and tools. Thus, categorizing decisions into types can help to make decision making more efficient and effective (Ololube, 2013).

Consequently, institutional leaders are expected to do more especially in terms of their primary responsibility of being able to initiate heartwarming decisions that would propel growth and development in higher education.

Purpose of the Study

The personal experiences of the authors' of this article have shown that administrators of higher education in Nigeria and in most sub-Saharan African countries have lost focus, and they show signs of inefficiency, sluggishness, too many bureaucratic bottle necks and they are largely ineffective in their decision making processes.

This article intends to recount the discoveries of research studies that reviewed and describes what was already well-known and what is yet to be known about higher education governance, the types of decision making processes, styles, and barriers to decision making in higher education in Nigeria. Therefore, this study is aimed at:

- Determining the influence of the types of decision making processes in Nigerian higher education;
- Determining the influence of the styles in decision making processes in Nigerian higher education;
- Determining the influence of the barriers to decision making processes in Nigerian higher education.

Research Questions

To direct and guide this research in line with its purpose, three research questions were raised:

- To what extent do the types of decision making processes influence the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?
- To what extent do the styles in decision making processes influence the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?
- To what extent do the barriers to decision making processes influence the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

To further guide this study, three hypotheses were raised:

- The types of decision making processes are not significantly related to the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?
- The styles in decision making processes are not significantly related to the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?
- The barriers to decision making processes are not significantly related to the quality of higher education management in Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Decision Making Process

According to Hoy and Tarter (2008), decision-making is an extremely important process for any organization. Decision making is a pragmatic way of addressing, analyzing, and solving institutional problems when they arise. The different types of decision making processes that institutional administrators typically encounter were identified by Gatzimos (n.d) as authoritative, consultative, delegate and facilitative.

Authoritative decision making process is decision made in response to authoritative communication from a superior officer (Ibara, 2010). According to Gatzimos, n.d), authoritative type of decision making is a decision making process in which an institutional administrator is the sole decision maker. Subordinates are bound to follow these decisions regardless of whether it is beneficial to the governance of the institutional goals. It does not rightly follow that the administrators have all the information and expertise required to make a quick or appropriate decision. However, it is essential that administrators are good decision makers because they are responsible for the consequences of the outcomes of their decisions.

Consultative decision making suggests that decisions are made in consultation with subordinates. Institutional administrators' requests inputs from team members but take the ultimate decision. It allows the administrators to have a strict control on the decision while engaging the team members in the decision making process by seeking and gathering their views and inputs (Abrioux, 2015). Wise institutional administrators consult subordinates when they think that they have valuable expertise to offer. Unlike in facilitative decision making, in consultative decision making, administrators retain decision making powers (Stern, 2003).

Delegate decision making process involves a situation where institutional administrators delegate responsibility of making decisions to one or more subordinates. This type of decision making is usually adopted by administrators who are quite confident of the capabilities of their subordinates (Ejimabo, 2015). In most cases, institutional administrators' delegates decision making to a team and they may or may not be part of decision making discussions. The administrators make their position clear to the team as to the criteria/constraints that must be met for their decision to be able to move forward. Failure to meet the criteria could result in the need for the team to reconsider their decision or the need for administrators to choose default and/or use another type of decision making process to move the decision forward (Armanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015).

In facilitative decision making, institutional administrators' and subordinates work together to arrive at decisions. Subordinates are believed to have expertise as well as access to the information required to make decisions. This approach can be useful when the risk of a wrong decision is very low as it is a great way of involving and encouraging subordinates in the operation of the organization (Adebola, 2015).

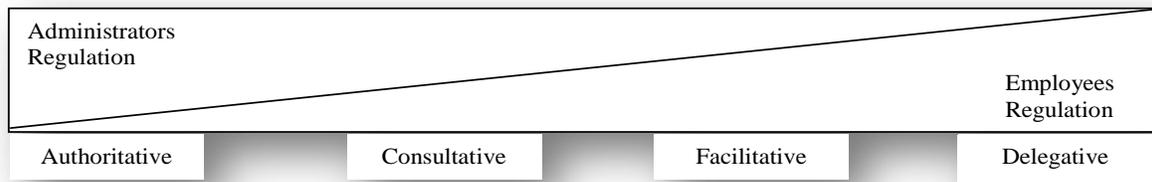


Figure 1: Types of Decision Making Processes

Common Styles of Decision Making

There is no doubt that taking wrong decisions can easily bring institutional goals to a near halt or destroy teams' morale and staff engagement. Developing effective decision-making habits becomes therefore critical for institutional administrators (Abrioux, 2015). According to Gatzimos (n.d), the most common types of decisions that administrators may have to make are irreversible, reversible, delayed, quick decisions, experimental, trial and error, and conditional styles of decision making. These styles of decision making may improve institutional success and they may as well destroy it.

Irreversible decisions are permanent. Once taken, they cannot be reversed. If, or when, hard luck strikes, and the repercussions are frightful, suitable recompense can be made if there is no other reasonable course of action (Johnson, 2013). The effects of these decisions can be felt for a long time to come; irreversible decisions are generally made when there are no other options. Be it before, during or after formulating an agreement to take action, irreversible decisions can be changed when the need arises (Verma, 2009). Ideally, reversible decision making permits one to acknowledge a mistake beforehand and alter the non-conducive circumstances instead of enduring the worst consequences (Johnson, 2013).

A major function of administrators of higher education is decision making. Administration is fundamentally the act of getting things done effectively for the good of the organization (Atulomah, 2011). In an attempt to carry out the function of decision making, delays are inevitable in the process. In decision-making processes, delays naturally occur. Many educational institutions face regulatory delays, which need to be taken into account when they make decisions (Evans, 2013). Delayed decisions can be implemented only after a certain amount of time elapses, for example, after paperwork and regulatory requirements have been satisfied (Bayraktar & Egami, 2000). The implementation of decisions can also be voluntarily put on hold until the decision makers' feel that the right time has come. While such delays may cause some losses, particularly in the case of business, they allow for sufficient time to collect all pertinent information and systematically review all of the decision making factors/inputs. Despite the possibility of delays, a true leader always approaches decisions assertively and is fully in charge of the decision-making process (Johnson, 2013).

Quick decisions are speedily taken to enable one to maximize the opportunities available at hand (Bolfíková, Hrehová & Frenová, 2010). This is not always the case, some quick and

hasty decisions are made to protect some interest in the high places, personal interest or bias (Ololube, 2013). However, only an experienced and capable decision maker can make decisions that are both immediate and accurate. In order to make the right decision within a short span of time, one must also take the long-term results into consideration (Gatzimos, n.d).

In experimental decision making, the final decision is not made until preliminary results are available and are positive. This approach is used when one is sure of the final destination but is not convinced of the course of action to be taken (Gatzimos, n.d). In this approach, a decision is not finalized until results prove themselves to be as pleasing as desired (Johnson, 2013).

Trial and Error is the category of decision making for a course of action, which is selected and tested (Ololube, 2013). If the result is positive it is followed further, if not, then a new course of action is adopted. This is continued until the decision maker arrives at a course of action that convinces him or her of success. Trial and error decision making allows administrators to change and adjust plans before a final commitment is made (Johnson, 2013).

Conditional decision making permit institutional administrators to keep all options open. Here, administrators stick to one decision so long as the circumstances remain the same. As competitors make new moves, conditional decisions allow the take up of different courses of action. In this style of decision making, multiple options are kept open and are considered backups so that one can react quickly to the ever-changing scenarios inside and outside the competitive environment (Ololube, 2013).

Barriers to Effective Decision Making

Ghumro (2014) identified a number of barriers to effective decision making: complacency, defensive avoidance, panic, decision making bias, decision escalation, group decision making, advantages and disadvantages of a decision type, enhancing group performance, creativity in decision making, divergent and non-divergent thinking, necessary skills, and enhancing group creativity. Ibara (2010) summarized these barriers into five. They include:

Power and Politics: School managers may make poor decisions, regardless of established policies, as a result of political influence on issues like student admissions, staff employment, student and staff disciplinary action, and termination of appointment. Power in this context is the ability to influence others because of formal position or through other means.

Personal Bias: institutional administrators who feel very strongly about an issue may not be able to consider alternatives without bias. In Nigeria, for example, administrators who dislike a particular ethnic group may refuse to hire persons from that ethnic group and may introduce employment criteria that will not favor the group.

Time Pressure: Deadlines set by others could bring about hasty decisions as they limit the time available to properly consider all options.

Factors in Decision Making Environment: Factors in a decision environment such as the level of risk involved, the degree of uncertainty and the conflicts to be encountered can affect the quality of decisions.

Influence of an External Reference Group: Decision makers may associate with groups or persons of their own socio-economic level. They may thus be favorably disposed to the ideas of these groups over those of subordinate status. This could lead to poor decision making.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study's research design was a descriptive and suggestive research method, because of the purpose of the study, which is to determine the extent to which higher education governance and the types of decision making processes, styles, and barriers to decision making influence higher education management in Nigeria. Firstly, this study evaluated higher education governance in relation to the types of decision making processes. Secondly, it highlights higher education governance in relation to the styles of decision making processes, and third, higher education governance in relation to the barriers to the decision making processes.

Sample and Procedure

The study sample consisted of academic and non-academic staff of one university, one polytechnic and one College of Education in South-South Nigeria. The academic staff are lecturers within the ranks of Professors, Associate Professors and Senior Lecturers (for university); chief lecturers, principal lecturers and senior lecturers (for polytechnic and College of Education). The selected academic staff includes Deans, Directors, Heads of Department. The non-academic staff are senior personnel in the Vice Chancellor's office, Rector's office Provost's office, Bursary Department, and Registrar's offices in the selected institutions of higher education (1 universities, 1 polytechnic and 1 College of Education). A manageable sample size of 222 was used during the data analysis. The respondents, 125(56.3%) were male, while 97(43.7%) were female. The ages of the respondents ranged between 39-65 years. 190(85.6%) of the respondents were married, while 32(14.4%) were either single or devoiced.

Measurement Instrument

A questionnaire structure along 4-point Likert scale was used for data collection. The questionnaire was focused at finding out the extent to which higher education governance and the types of decision-making processes, styles, and barriers to decision making influence higher education management in Nigeria. The instrument consisted of a total number of 16 items which were stated on the negative in line with the research hypotheses (see table 1). The items scale ranged from 1=totally disagree (TD) to 4=totally agree (TA). The first section of the questionnaire deals with the issues of respondents' demographic information. Section two highlights information on types, styles and barriers to decision making.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The validity of the instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability was scrutinized by calculating Cronbach alpha, which ranged from .827 for types of decision making; .866 for styles of decision making and .819 for barriers to decision making. As a result, the questionnaire was accepted to be very reliable.

Data Analysis

To analyse the data for this study, the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 23 was employed. Descriptive statistics (cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation) were performed. Chi-Square Tests (Pearson Chi-Square, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear Association) and Symmetric Measures (Interval by Interval: Pearson's (R); and Ordinal by Ordinal: Spearman Correlation) were used to determine the relationship between variables, and Cronbach's α reliability analysis was used to measure the reliability of the instrument.

In order to make decisions on the acceptance or rejection of the results, the mean responses were computed on the basis of the 4-point Likert scale of the questionnaire, thus, $1+2+3+4=10 \div 4=2.5$. From the computations, any mean score that is more than 2.5 indicate that the null hypotheses was rejected, while the mean scores that are less than 2.5 will be accepted. Thus, the Chi-square analysis was set at $p < 0.05$ significance level.

Table 1: Research questionnaire on the types, styles and barriers to decision making in higher education in Nigeria

1 Types of Decision Making (TDM)	
TDM 1	Nigerian institutional administrators use authoritative type of decision making processes.
TDM 2	Nigerian institutional administrators use consultative methods of decision making process.
TDM 3	Nigerian institutional administrators use delegate type of decision making process.
TDM 4	Nigerian institutional administrators use facilitative type of decision making process.
2 Styles of Decision Making (SDM)	
SDM 5	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for irreversible style of decision making.
SDM 6	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for reversible style of decision making.
SDM 7	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for delayed decision making.
SDM 8	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for quick decision making.
SDM 9	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for experimental style of decision making.
SDM 10	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for trial and error style of decision making.
SDM 11	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for conditional style of decision making
3 Barriers to Decision Making (BDM)	
BDM 12	Power and politics are not responsible for the woes of decision making higher education in Nigeria.
BDM 13	Personal biases are not responsible for the woes of decision making higher education in Nigeria.
BDM 14	Time pressures are not responsible for the woes of decision making higher education in Nigeria.
BDM 15	Decision making environment are not responsible for the woes of decision making higher education.
BDM 16	External reference group are not responsible for the woes of decision making higher education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1 and Hypothesis 1: Administrators and Types of Decision Making

The cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation analyses (see table 2) of the four items on respondents' answer to administrators types of decision making in higher education management in Nigeria revealed that respondents agree (85.1%) that Nigerian institutional administrators use authoritative type of decision making in running their institutions. This is reflected in the mean score of 3.3018, with a standard deviation of .86349. This finding is in line with Ibara (c.f., 2010) and Gatzimos (n.d) study, where they found that authoritative type of decision making is a decision making process in which an institutional administrator is the sole decision maker and

subordinates are bound to follow the decisions regardless of whether it is beneficial to the governance of the institutional and its goals.

Similarly, respondents (59.9%) agree that Nigerian institutional administrators use consultative methods of decision making process. The evidence is in the mean rating of 3.3548 and a standard deviation of .77544. Respondents are of the opinion that institutional administrators' requests inputs from team members but take the ultimate decision. This study is in line with that of Stern (2003) and Abrioux (c.f., 2015), which revealed that administrators are in strict control on the decision while engaging the team members in the decision making process by seeking and gathering their views and inputs.

Respondents (88.7%) were also of the opinion that Nigerian institutional administrators use delegate decision making process where institutional administrators delegate the responsibility of making decisions to subordinates. Their views were reflected in the mean score of 3.3559 and a standard deviation of .76368. In line with this study Ejimabo (2015) mirrored that administrators make their position clear to the team as to the criteria/constraints that must be met for their decision to be able to move forward.

On the use of facilitative decision making process, the respondents' (59.9%) were of the opinion that Nigerian institutional leaders scarcely use this type of decision making process. This is depicted in the mean score of 2.4847, and a standard deviation of 1.02000.

Chi-Square tests (see table 3) was used to test hypothesis one. The Pearson Chi-Square of 14.309, with a degree of freedom of 3 and significance (2-sided) of .003; including a Likelihood Ratio of 19.057, with a degree of freedom of 3 and significance of .000; and a Linear-by-Linear Association of 13.906, with a degree of freedom of 1, and significance of .000 show that the type of decision making processes employed by institutional administrators in Nigeria are significantly related to the poor quality of higher education management in Nigeria. Same is true in the Symmetric Measures (see table 4) analysis for respondents' answer to types to decision making processes used by institutional administrators in Nigeria. The Interval by Interval (Pearson's R) value of .251, Asymp. Std. Error of .045, Approx. T of 3.844 and significance of .000; in addition to Ordinal by Ordinal (Spearman Correlation) of .240, Asymp. Std. Error of .057, Approx. T of 3.668 and significance of .000 shows that significant relationship exists between the types of decision making processes and the poor quality management of higher in Nigeria. As a result, hypothesis one was rejected.

Research Question 2 and Hypothesis 2: Administrators and Styles of Decision Making

The cross tabulation statistical data in table 5 summarizes respondents' answer to the 7 items on styles of decision making. The respondents 134(60.4%) agree that Nigerian institutional administrators are known for making irreversible decisions. This is echoed with a mean score of 2.8964 and a standard deviation of 1.07337. This finding is in line with Johnson's (c.f., 2013) study where he asserted that irreversible decisions are permanent and once taken. If, or when, hard luck strikes, the repercussions are frightful damaging. The effects of this style of decisions can be felt for a long time to come (c.f., Verma, 2009). We can argue that most of the damages caused by this style of decision making may be the reason for the continuing poor quality management of higher education in Nigeria.

Also, 175(78.9%) of the respondents were of the view that Nigerian institutional administrators are not known for reversible style of decision making. This is reverberated in the mean score of 2.4243 and a standard deviation of 1.11066. On a normal situation, reversible

decision may permit one to acknowledge the mistake beforehand and alter the non-conducive circumstances instead of enduring the worst consequences (Johnson, 2013). This is the worst case in scenario that is obvious in Nigeria higher education management. Institutional administrators find it difficult to reverse decisions even if it is reversible because of the stigma that will be associated with the failure.

Majority of the respondents *153(68.5%)* agree that Nigerian institutional administrators are known for delayed decision making. This can be seen in the mean score of *2.8243* and a standard deviation of *.92758*. This study is in line with Evans's study when he averred that many educational institutions face regulatory delays, which need to be taken into account when they make decisions (c.f., Evans, 2013). Decisions can also be voluntarily put on hold because it affects some persons. Despite the possibility of natural delays, a true Nigerian institutional administrator always approaches decisions emphatically and he or she is fully in charge of the decision-making process (c.f., Johnson, 2013).

Respondents *200(90.1%)* strongly agree that Nigerian institutional administrators are known for quick and hasty decision making. This is portrayed in its mean score of *3.4054* and a standard deviation of *.69097*. This finding is in support of Bolříková, Hrehová and Frenová, (c.f., 2010), when they averred that quick decisions are speedily taken to enable the maximization of opportunities available at hand. Conversely, Ololube (c.f. 2013) argue that some quick and hasty decisions are made to protect some interest in the high places, personal interest or bias (c.f., Ololube, 2013).

The issue of the extent to which Nigerian institutional administrators are known for experimental style of decision making revealed that overwhelming majority of the respondents *218(98.2%)* agree that Nigerian administrators experiment with their decision to determine if the result of the decision will be successful or unsuccessful. This is shown in the mean score of *3.6306* and a standard deviation of *.55352*. This finding is in line with Gatzimos's study that experimental approach is used when the decision maker is sure of the final destination or not convinced of the course of action to be taken (c.f., Gatzimos, n.d). In this style of decision making, the decision taking is not finalized until results prove themselves to be as pleasing as desired (c.f., Johnson, 2013).

Data on the issue of trial and error depict that Nigerian institutional administrators are known for trial and error style of decision making. This is true in the mean and standard deviation obtained at *3.3784* and *.60247* respectively. The result from *216(97.3%)* respondents is in line with that of Ololube (c.f., 2013), who established that trial and error is the decision making style that is taking for a course of action, which is selected and tested over a period of time. If the result is positive it is followed further, if not, then a new course of action is adopted. This is continued until the decision maker arrives at a course of action that convinces the decision maker of success. Trial and error style of decision making allows administrators to change and adjust plans before a final commitment is made (c.f., Johnson, 2013). This situation is what most Nigerian institutional administrators find themselves.

Nigerian institutional leaders are known for conditional style of decision making. The data presented a mean of *3.5541* and a standard deviation of *.64116*. The respondents *208(93.7%)* agreed and the result is in line with the study of Ololube (c.f., 2013). His study revealed that conditional decision making permit institutional administrators to keep all options open. In this circumstance, administrators stick to one decision so long as the circumstances remain the same. In this style of decision making, multiple options are kept open and are

considered backups so that one can react to the ever-changing scenarios inside and outside the competitive environment.

Chi-Square tests (see table 6) was employed to test hypothesis two. The Pearson Chi-Square of *11.662*, with a degree of freedom of *3* and significance (2-sided) of *.009*; including a Likelihood Ratio of *14.604*, with a degree of freedom of *3* and significance of *.002*; and a Linear-by-Linear Association of *11.445*, with a degree of freedom of *1*, and significance of *.001* show that the styles of decision making processes employed by institutional administrators in Nigeria are significantly related to the poor quality of higher education management in Nigeria. Likewise, the Symmetric Measures (see table 7) analysis for respondents' answer to the styles to decision making processes used by institutional administrators in Nigeria revealed similar results. The Interval by Interval (Pearson's R) value of *.228*, Asymp. Std. Error of *.049*, Approx. T of *3.466* and significance of *.001*. Furthermore, the Ordinal by Ordinal (Spearman Correlation) of *.221*, Asymp. Std. Error of *.059*, Approx. T of *3.354* and significance of *.001* shows that significant relationship exists between the styles of decision making processes and the poor quality of higher education in management in Nigeria. Accordingly, hypothesis two was rejected.

Research Question 3 and Hypothesis 3: Administrators and Barriers to Decision Making

The cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation analyses of respondents' answer to barriers to decision making revealed that power and politics are responsible for the woes of decision making in the effective management of higher education in Nigeria. This is revealed by *199(93.7%)* respondents' mean score of *3.5225* and a standard deviation of *.64305*. The view of *218(98.2%)* respondents revealed that personal biases are responsible for the woes of decision making in the management of higher education in Nigeria. The mean of *3.3018* and a standard deviation of *.53298* showed the extent to which personal biases influence decision making in Nigerian higher education. Time pressure was seen by *191(86%)* respondents mean score of *3.2162* and a standard deviation of *.80615*, to be one of the major factors responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria. Equally, decision making environment was seen by *164(73.8%)* respondents mean score of *3.2162* and a standard deviation of *.88378* as a factor responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria. Respondents saw power and politics as responsible for the woes of decision making in the effective management of higher education in Nigeria. This is revealed by *204(91.9%)* respondents mean score of *3.1396* and a standard deviation of *.54925*.

These findings are in line with Ghumro (c.f., 2014) and Ibara's (2010) barriers to effective institutional decision making. Power and politics, personal bias, time pressure, factors in decision making environment, and influence of an external reference group as major factors responsible for the barriers to effective decision making in Nigerian higher education.

To further verify the researchers' descriptive analyses, Chi-Square tests (see table 9) was employed to test hypothesis three. The Pearson Chi-Square of *21.711*, with a degree of freedom of *3* and significance (2-sided) of *.005*; including a Likelihood Ratio of *15.952*, with a degree of freedom of *3* and significance of *.001*; and a Linear-by-Linear Association of *12.445*, with a degree of freedom of *1*, and significance of *.000* show that the barriers to decision making processes employed by institutional administrators in Nigeria are significantly related to the poor quality of higher education management in Nigeria. Likewise, the Symmetric Measures (see table 10) analysis for respondents' answer to the barriers to decision making processes used by institutional administrators in Nigeria exposed similar results. The Interval by Interval (Pearson's

R) value of .237, Asymp. Std. Error of .049, Approx. T of 3.623 and significance of .000. Furthermore, the Ordinal by Ordinal (Spearman Correlation) of .231, Asymp. Std. Error of .058, Approx. T of 3.521 and significance of .001 demonstrated that significant relationship exists between the barriers to decision making processes and the poor quality of higher education in management in Nigeria. Consequently, hypothesis three was rejected.

Table 2: Cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation of respondents' answer to types of decision making

Types of Decision Making		TD	D	A	TA	Total	Mean	SD
TDM 1	Nigerian institutional administrators use authoritative type of decision making processes.	13 (5.9%)	20 (9.0%)	76 (34.2%)	113 (50.9%)	222 (100%)	3.3018	.86349
TDM 2	Nigerian institutional administrators use consultative methods of decision making process.	36 (16.2%)	53 (23.9%)	78 (35.1%)	55 (24.8%)	222 (100%)	3.3548	.77544
TDM 3	Nigerian institutional administrators use delegate type of decision making process.	7 (3.2%)	18 (8.1%)	86 (38.7%)	111 (50.0%)	222 (100%)	3.3559	.76368
TDM 4	Nigerian institutional administrators use facilitative type of decision making process.	113 (50.9%)	20 (9.0%)	82 (36.9%)	7 (3.2%)	222 (100%)	2.4847	1.02000

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests for respondents' answer to types to decision making

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.309 ^a	3	.003
Likelihood Ratio	19.057	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.906	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	222		

Table 4: Symmetric Measures analysis for respondents' answer to types to decision making

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error^a	Approx. T^b	Approx. Sig.^c
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.251	.045	3.844	.000 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.240	.057	3.668	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases		222			

Table 5: Cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation of respondents' answer to styles of decision making

Styles of Decision Making (SDM)		TD	D	A	TA	Total	Mean	SD
SDM 5	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for irreversible style of decision making.	26 (11.7%)	62 (27.9%)	43 (19.4%)	91 (41.0%)	222 (100%)	2.8964	1.07337
SDM 6	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for reversible style of decision making.	124 (55.9%)	51 (23.0%)	22 (9.9%)	25 (11.3%)	222 (100%)	2.4243	1.11066

SDM 7	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for delayed decision making.	24 (10.8%)	46 (20.7%)	97 (43.7%)	55 (24.8%)	222 (100%)	3.1036	.92758
SDM 8	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for quick decision making.	2 (.9%)	20 (9.0%)	86 (38.7%)	114 (51.4%)	222 (100%)	3.4054	.69097
SDM 9	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for experimental style of decision making.	2 (9%)	2 (9%)	72 (32.4%)	146 (65.8%)	222 (100%)	3.6306	.55352
SDM 10	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for trial and error style of decision making.	4 (1.8%)	2 (9%)	122 (55.0%)	94 (42.3%)	222 (100%)	3.3784	.60247
SDM 11	Nigerian institutional administrators are known for conditional style of decision making	2 (9%)	12 (5.4%)	69 (31.1%)	139 (62.6%)	222 (100%)	3.5541	.64116

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests for respondents' answer to styles of decision making

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.662 ^a	3	.009
Likelihood Ratio	14.604	3	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.445	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	222		

Table 7: Symmetric Measures analysis for respondents' answer to styles of decision making

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval Pearson's R	.228	.049	3.466	.001 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal Spearman Correlation	.221	.059	3.354	.001 ^c
N of Valid Cases	222			

Table 8: Cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation of respondents' answer to barriers to decision making

Barriers to Decision Making		TD	D	A	TA	Total	Mean	SD
BDM 12	Power and politics are responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria.	2 (.9%)	12 (5.4%)	76 (34.2%)	132 (59.5%)	222 (100%)	3.5225	.64305
BDM 13	Personal biases are responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria.	2 (.9%)	2 (.9%)	145 (65.3%)	73 (32.9%)	222 (100%)	3.3018	.53298
BDM 14	Time pressures are responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria.	11 (5.0%)	20 (9.0%)	101 (45.5%)	90 (40.5%)	222 (100%)	3.2162	.80615
BDM 15	Decision making environment are responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria.	9 (4.1%)	49 (22.1%)	74 (33.3%)	90 (40.5%)	222 (100%)	3.2162	.88378
BDM	External reference group are	-	18	162	42	222	3.1396	.54925

16	responsible for the woes of decision making in higher education in Nigeria.	-	(8.1%)	(73.0%)	(18.9%)	(100%)
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Table 9: Chi-Square Tests for respondents' answer to barriers to decision making

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.711 ^a	3	.005
Likelihood Ratio	15.952	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.445	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	222		

Table 10: Symmetric Measures analysis for respondents' answer to barriers to decision making

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.237	.049	3.623	.000 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.231	.058	3.521	.001 ^c
N of Valid Cases		222			

CONCLUSION

Authors evaluated respondents' opinion on the types, styles and barriers to decision making as it affects the quality management of higher education in Nigeria. This study supports the need to promote effective decision making processes as it pertain to higher education management in Nigeria and sub-Saharan African higher education in general. Institutional administrators who find it difficult to make effective decision and those who find themselves being influence by the turbulent academic environment should be proactive and do the needful by throwing in the towel rather than been messed up by the ineffective decision they make.

The practical and conceptual implications of this study on institutional administrators and management are enormous. Internet searches revealed that this study has unique characteristics about the quality of management of higher education in Nigeria. It is our hope that we have been able to contribute to the emerging body of knowledge in the field of higher education management in Nigeria and Africa. To this end, this study has implications for higher education administrators, policymakers and government on the caliber of people that should be appointed to lead various institutions of higher education in Nigeria. The findings of this study confirm that strategic decision making processes in Nigeria need to be advanced to meet the 21st century global management of higher education. This innovative investigation is not an end in itself, but starting argument for the ongoing research institutional governance and decision making in higher education management.

To sum, it is imperative that institutional administrators should be thoughtful and precise decision makers. This study recommends that the process of decision making ought not to be reactionary, but systematically planned and swift as well as taking decisions for the unanticipated and unintentional. Knowledge management, experience, and the ability to predict or forecast the future in higher education administration play a critical role in its quality. Institutional administrators must prudently consider the short and long term consequences of their decision making actions, as opposed to searching for instant or personal gratification and biases in solving pertinent problem(s).

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