Decision-Making Mechanism and Administration of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

This study assessed the existing decision-making mechanism and administration of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree and analysed the challenges that affect the decision-making mechanism at the Polytechnic. The study utilised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were sourced through the administration of a questionnaire on a randomised sample of 268 members of academic and non-teaching staff of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. Content analysis was engaged to analyse the primary data. The study established that existing decision mechanisms enhanced polytechnic administration in the areas of sound academic management (2.62), student affairs management (2.62), and effective financial management (2.59). The study revealed that the decision-making mechanism statistically significantly predicted the polytechnic administration, F (5, 231) = 39.382, p < 0.000. In addition, insufficient funds (2.82), employee resistance to adaptation (2.73) and inadequate deployment of technology support solutions (2.70) constituted the main challenges associated with decision-making in Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree. The study concluded that the decision-making mechanism enhanced Osun State Polytechnic administration in Iree, Nigeria. Among others, the study recommended that there should be an enhancement in the incorporation of technology by providing financial support for strong technical solutions that are specifically designed to meet the distinct requirements of polytechnic decision-making processes, as this will ensure the accessibility of these solutions to all individuals in need.

Keywords: Decision making, polytechnic administration, governance, mechanism, leadership.

Introduction

Administration in higher education involves the efficient management and allocation of resources to achieve educational goals set by various entities, such as local governments, states, nations, and private owners (Hinjari, 2016). This is accomplished by utilizing a carefully designed framework that is characterized by managerial tasks like planning, organizing, directing, supervising, and evaluating. In the realm of higher education administration, there are various elements to consider. These include taking proactive measures, closely monitoring progress, and ensuring that outcomes align with the available resources. The school administration is responsible for a range of important tasks, including policy development, exercising authority, and student supervision.

Institutions of higher education, particularly public polytechnics in Nigeria, have a set of core objectives. These include fostering a conducive environment for teaching, learning, and research, as well as nurturing the personal and intellectual development of their students. As the head of the polytechnic institution, the Rector is entrusted with the crucial responsibility of overseeing the management of people, tasks and resources. This is done to ensure that goals are achieved. Ultimately, achieving this goal requires the institution's management to effectively engage with a wide range of stakeholders such as the general public, management hierarch, faculty, Board of Directors, staff, and student unions. It's important to recognize that this process involves both intentional and subconscious processes. Decision-making is employed when these processes are deliberate. Rectors, tasked with overseeing polytechnics, frequently encounter scenarios that require thoughtful decision-making to fulfil specific needs, tackle challenges, and accomplish institutional objectives (Oladejo, 2019).

The structure of Osun State Polytechnics, Iree in Nigeria has become more complex because of emphasis on technical education and its attendant tremendous increase in students' enrolment, number of staff and nature of different programmes run by the polytechnic; an increase in the quantity and quality of facilities, materials and equipment; and the corresponding financial resources in the polytechnic. This structure has resulted in administrative problems, particularly in the area of decision-making. A situation such as this may culminate in having issues affecting staff and students almost left unattended. Thus, a lot of human and material resources may be wasted in the polytechnic. Indeed, this may be a strong contributing factor to poor student performance (Isah, 2022).

Stressing the relevance of leadership to institutional development, Oyebamji (2018) posited that institutions with good leaders, that is, leaders who adopt the appropriate leadership style should achieve academic and administrative excellence in the Polytechnic, while others trail behind. This indicates that unwavering and effective leadership is instrumental to achieving institutional excellence. However, the success of leadership is a function of different factors of which leadership style is paramount. A leader must adopt a style that can elicit performance of a high standard from the staff at any given time.

The state of the art of decision-making seems to be defective in Nigerian polytechnic. The lack of effectiveness results in cases of stress, tension, frustration, isolation, selfishness, and conflicts between the staff and management; between students and staff; between the students and management, among staff themselves and in management ranks and file (Obi & Agwu, 2017). In polytechnics, academic staff often complain of a lack of involvement. Consequently, wrong decisions are made on issues involving their professional interests such as curriculum matters, selection of text and reference books, disciplinary matters, training, allowances, admissions and general welfare. It is in the light of the foregoing that this study attempts to bring to the fore, the decision-making mechanism at Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree, Nigeria.

Three (3) major research questions were designed to provide answers to the issue raised in the work:

(i)   What are the existing decision-making mechanisms for Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree, Nigeria?
(ii) How are the challenges associated with the decision-making mechanism tackled in Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree, Nigeria?

The specific objectives are to:
  i.   assess the existing decision-making mechanism at Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Osun State; and
  ii. analyse the challenges of decision-making mechanisms affecting Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree, in Osun State.

Research Hypothesis
H_0:   Decision-making mechanisms have no significant influence on Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree.
H_1:   Decision-making mechanisms have a significant influence on Osun State Polytechnic administration, Iree, Nigeria.

Literature Review
Decision Making
While a good decision does not guarantee a good outcome, such pragmatism does pay off. Growing sophistication in managing risk, a better understanding of human behaviour, and advances in technology that support cognitive processes have improved decision-making in many situations (Albert, 2016). The history of decision-making strategies is not one of unalloyed progress towards perfect rationalism. Over the years, we have steadily been coming to terms with constraints - both contextual and psychological - on our ability to make optimal choices and better decisions.

Dare (2016) posited that decision-making is a process of making choices out of many other conflicting and pressing alternatives. Similarly, Ovwigho (2024) opined that decision-making is the process of carefully selecting a course of action from various alternative measures. Hence, decision-making requires careful and conscious considerations of the possible course of action which does not negate the organisational goal and which is an extension of series of interrelated communication among stakeholders (Awodi, 2019). In addition, Adeleke (2020) posited that the decision-making process is the selection of an alternative course of action from available alternatives to achieve given objectives. To him, decision-making is a sequential process which culminates in a series of choices that stimulate moves or direct actions on a given problem.

In another development, Agboola (2016) viewed decision-making as a process by which a solution is sought to a problem through the selective elimination of alternative solutions. In their opinion, alternative solutions surface when a school administrator is faced with a problem and his ability to seek preferential alternative solutions from all available alternatives to the problem is decision-making.

Similarly, Adegbami & Makinde (2019) posited that decision-making is very crucial to the survival of any organization and functions of the type of importance attached to the decision made. This means that making decisions and what type of decisions are made determine to a large extent the attainment of goals in higher institutions. Furthermore, Ehulu & Ehulu (2020) viewed decision-making as the salient process of adaptation in an organization where the biological, personal,

physical and social factors of the situation are selected for a specific combination by volitional action.

This concept of decision-making is particularly pertinent in higher institutions, where the decisions made by the administration and faculty can have long-lasting consequences. It is therefore essential that decision-makers have a clear understanding of the impact and implications of their choices. To further this point, Ebele (2024) argued that decision-makers must also take into account the needs of their student body when making decisions. Additionally, it is important to consider the current state of the educational system and how decisions can lead to future success.

Maicibi (2024) identified four issues concerning decision-making which persistently divide scholars from various disciplines. The first is whether decisions are based on rational thinking and follow the logic of consequence or whether they are rule-based and follow the logic of appropriateness. The second issue rests on the dilemma of whether decision-makers are consistent in their choices or whether their actions are inconsistent and ambiguous. Third, decision-making is either primarily directed to problem-solving or to generating social meaning. The fourth matter of debate is whether the outcomes of decision-making are attributable solely to individuals or to the combined effect of interacting individuals, organisations and societies.

Polytechnic Administration

According to Davidaviciene et.al. (2020), a polytechnic is a higher education institution that is established to focus on education concerning applied technology. Polytechnics are regarded as technological institutions that produce technological manpower for the technological advancement of a country. Polytechnic education emphasizes personal development in the areas of teamwork, leadership, communication, practical problem-solving, critical thinking and analytical skills.

This type of education is vital to the technological growth and development of any country (Ebele, 2024). No nation can grow and develop technologically without technical education. It is important to note that polytechnic education is designed to blend theory and practice to solve real-life problems for the benefit of society (Daron, 2022). Polytechnics are established to produce high-quality technical manpower required for technological development and self-reliance in the country (Ebele, 2024).

Nwakwoala (2024) opined that Polytechnic in Nigeria evolved in response to the technical and industrial needs of the people. It is the training of technically oriented personnel who are to be initiators, facilitators and implementers of the technological development of a Nation by adequately training its citizenry on the need to be technically literate, leading to self-reliance and compelling sustainability. Polytechnic/Technical Education has a more direct impact on national welfare and their contributions are widespread and visible ranging from metalwork technology, mechanical/automobile technology, electrical/electronic technology, building and woodwork technology.

Polytechnic education is a multifaceted, multi-disciplinary and pragmatic field, which is aimed at equipping the individual with requisite vocational and functional technical education. Literacy skills will enhance their relevance and functionality in society. As a result, it plays a vital and indispensable role in the development of society (Umoh et al., 2020). Udey et al. (2022) saw Polytechnic/Technical education as a planned programme of courses that begins with an exploration of career options, support of basic academic and life skills, and achievement of higher academic standards, leadership, preparation for industry-defined work and advanced continuing education.

Polytechnic prepares learners for careers that are based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic and related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. It is an education

that is designed to develop occupational skills to live and work as a productive citizen in any community and across the new ubiquitous competitive global village of a new world order. Polytechnic has been an integral part of National development strategies in most societies because of its impact on human resource development, productivity, economic growth and human well-being, as well as the general contribution to easing where and how we live as individuals and as a community of civilized citizens of Nigeria (Umoh, et. al., 2020).

Methodology
This section presents the data collection method and procedure. These are discussed under the following sub-headings: research design, area of study, population of the study, sampling techniques and sample size, research tools and data analysis techniques.

Research Design
The study adopted a descriptive design, which involved a systematic collection, presentation and analysis of data on decision-making mechanisms in public polytechnics. It is a case study of an in-depth investigation aimed at providing a clear picture of the situation of the decision-making mechanism in the public polytechnic, Iree Osun State.

Study Area
The study covered Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, in Boripe local government of Osun State.

Administrative Structure at Osun State Polytechnic, Iree
For the efficient and effective management of the Polytechnic, the following bodies are put in place:
a) The Governing Council: The council is the governing body of the college whose scope of activities covers the general management of the affairs of the college through the formulation of policies, and in particular, the control of the property and the finances of the college. It is also within its power to do anything which in its opinion is calculated to facilitate the carrying out of the activities of the college and promote its best interests.

It is the responsibility of the council to appoint all the senior academic and administrative staff of the college, including particularly, the Rector, Deputy Rector, Registrar, Director of schools and Heads of Departments, and also to discipline any of them if the need arises.

The council is the highest authority in the college, as well as the employer of all the college staff, both Senior and Junior.

b) Academic Board: The body is responsible for all policies and management of academic matters—courses, examinations, graduations, award of diplomas, etc. Members are appointed by the Council via a recommendation by Management.

c) Management Committee: The body is administrative, to assist the administration of the Chief Executive. The body is made up of Principal officers – Rector (Chairman), Deputy Rector, Registrar, Bursar and Librarian, to meet once a month.

d) School Board: An academic body for each school, made up of all academic staff in the school with the Dean as chairman. It deals with all academic matters and any other matter of interest to the school or any other matter referred to it by Council or Rector.

e) Departmental Board: An academic body for each Department consists of all the academic staff in the Department to handle all academic matters of the Department. The Head of the Department is the Chairman.

f) Congregation: This body is made up of all academic staff and senior non-teaching staff. The Rector is the Chairman and meets at least once a year.

g) In addition to the above bodies/committees, there are still some administrative committees to assist in the management of the Polytechnic – Selection Board – A&PC, Student Disciplinary Committee, Students Welfare Committee, Tenders Board, Staff Welfare Committee etc.

Principal Officers
i. The Rector: The Rector is the chief academic officer, as well as the accounting officer of the college. He is also the chairman of the Academic Board, Management Board and Congregation. It is the sole responsibility of the Academic Board to approve the students' Results at the end of each Academic Semester. By the virtue of Decree establishing the college, he is empowered to exercise general authority over the staff and is responsible for the discipline in the college.
        While the appointment of the senior academic and administrative staff is the prerogative of the council, that of the junior staff is that of the Rector with the assistance of such committees as may be constituted by him for such purposes.

ii. The Deputy Rector: To assist the Rector and acts in his absence.

iii. The Registrar: The Registrar, as the Chief Administrative Officer, is responsible to the Rector for the day-to-day administration of the College. He is the Secretary to the Governing Council as well as that of the Academic Board and Management Committees. Besides his other administrative commitments, the Registrar prepares Council papers and communicates Council decisions to relevant quarters. He also serves as an adviser to the Rector on staff discipline and other relevant issues.

iv. Bursar: He is the chief financial officer

v. Librarian: He is in charge of the library for acquiring relevant books and administering library services. They are all responsible to the Rector.

By exploring these dimensions, the study contributes to a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing decision-making mechanisms and administration at the Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. The findings provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of management policies in sustaining a motivated and committed academic workforce within Osun State Polytechnic, Iree.

Population of the Study
The population for the study comprised the entire academic staff and the non-teaching staff of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. The study population is made up of 589 members of staff in the study area. Based on the preliminary study conducted in the Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, the academic staff stood at 234 and 355 non-teaching staff (See Table 3.1 for a breakdown).

Table 3.1: Distribution of the Staff Strength of the Selected Polytechnics

Polytechnic	Academic Staff	Non-teaching Staff	Population	Respondents (50.0%)
Osun State Polytechnic, Iree	234	355		268
Total	**234**	**355**	**589**	**268**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

In administering the questionnaire for the study, a two-stage sampling technique was used. In the first stage, the stratified sampling technique was used for the respondents who were grouped into two, namely, academic staff and non-academic staff. In the second stage, simple random techniques were applied to select 50% of the total population of 589, thus 268 respondents were used as the sample size for the study.

Research Tools

The data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected with the use of questionnaires and structured interviews. 268 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents, who were drawn from members of academic staff and non-academic staff in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. Structured interviews were conducted with the members of management staff and the members of the Governing Council and secondary data were collected from information already recorded and arranged in published and unpublished materials such as textbooks, newspapers, articles, publications and research reports.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed descriptively, with frequency distribution, percentages and content analysis. The responses to the questionnaire were coded and analysed using simple percentages and other factors of analysis. Data gathered from interviews were subjected to content analysis.

Decision-Making Mechanism and Administration of Osun State Polytechnics, Iree, Nigeria

This section examines respondents' perceptions of the various decision mechanisms of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria, providing significant insights into the governance dynamics of the institutions. Several parameters were used to assess these mechanisms including objectivity, reliability, transparency, accountability and evidence-based results. The frequency, percentage distribution, mean, and standard deviation of responses for various assertions connected to the decision-making mechanism can be used to determine how much participants agree or disagree.

The Governing Council (GC)

When the first dimension which evaluates the objectivity of decisions is examined, the statistics show a wide variety of viewpoints. 50.6% of respondents, a sizable portion, agreed that decisions are unbiased; 17.8% of respondents strongly agreed. In contrast, 7.6% disagreed and 13.9% strongly disagreed, while 10.1% remained neutral. With a standard deviation of 1.264 and a mean of 2.51, the data points to a significant degree of opinion dispersion among the respondents. This variation highlights the necessity of conducting a thorough investigation into the elements impacting the Governing Council's members' perceptions of impartiality.

Notably, when it comes to the effectiveness of decisions, 10.1% support and 63.3% strongly agree that decisions often lead to the desired results. While 6.3% remain indecisive on this, the percentage of disagreeing is slightly smaller, with 8.9% for strongly disagreeing and 11.4% for disagreeing. The large 1.397 standard deviation and the 3.08 mean demonstrate the disparities in opinions regarding the council's decision-making procedures. This variation necessitates a deeper investigation of the factors affecting various individuals' evaluations of the effectiveness of decisions.

The opinions of respondents are positive about the Governing Council's decision-making process's transparency and clarity. It is noteworthy that 57.0% agreed and 20.3% strongly agreed that decisions are made openly and transparently. But 2.5% strongly disagreed and 11.4% disagreed with 8.9% unsure. With a standard deviation of 0.971 and a mean of 2.81, the respondents appear to agree moderately. There is less variation in the replies, suggesting a more unified viewpoint of the GC's decision-making transparency.

Also, 43.9% of participants agreed that the Council is accountable for its decisions and outcomes, with 8.9% strongly agreeing. This represents the majority of respondents' views on accountability for decisions and outcomes. However, a sizeable responder of 37.1% remains indecisive on this issue with 3.8% and 6.3% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing, respectively, with 37.1% remaining undecided. With a standard deviation of 0.886 and a mean of 2.48, the data points to a considerable response dispersion. This implies that although a significant proportion of participants recognize the Council's responsibility, there are opposing opinions within the group. In addition, 64.6% of respondents are unsure, 12.7% disagree, and 3.8% strongly disagree when it comes to basing judgments on the best available evidence. In contrast, 12.7% strongly agreed and 10.1% agreed. The 2.19 mean and 0.903 standard deviation point to a significant amount of disagreement on whether the Governing Council regularly considers the best available data when making decisions.

The Academic Board

This section examines respondents' perceptions of the Academic Board (AB) of public polytechnics in Osun State, a case study of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria, providing significant insights into the governance dynamics of these institutions. Diverse viewpoints are apparent when evaluating the Academic Board's choices for objectivity. Although 26.6% highly agreed and 46.4% agreed that decisions are unbiased, 8.0% disagreed and 11.4% strongly disagreed with 7.8% undecided. A significant degree of variation in respondents' opinions is indicated by the mean of 2.69 and the standard deviation of 1.264, indicating that opinions about the Academic Board's impartiality are held by a variety of people.

Analysing the objectivity of Academic Board decisions reveals a wide range of opinions. On the question of whether decisions are unbiased, 46.4% agreed, 26.6% strongly agreed, 7.6% unsure, 11.4% disagreed and 8.0% strongly disagreed. With a mean of 2.69 and a standard deviation of 1.264, the data points to a considerable degree of opinion dispersion among respondents, indicating a range of perceptions of impartiality within the Academic Board. Regarding the effectiveness of decisions, a significant 48.1% agreed, and 27.8% strongly agreed that decisions often produce the expected results. However, 7.6% strongly disagreed and 8.9% disagreed with 7.6% undecided. The mean of 2.80, along with a standard deviation of 1.165, highlights the varied perspectives on the outcomes of the Academic Board's decisions. The high standard deviation indicates a broad range of opinions, implying a lack of unanimity among respondents.

In terms of decision efficacy, 48.1% agreed and 27.8% strongly agreed that decisions frequently generate the intended effects. While 7.6% chose to remain neutral, 7.6% strongly disagreed, whereas 8.9% disagreed. The mean of 2.80, with a standard deviation of 1.165, reflects the many opinions on the Academic Board's judgments. The high standard deviation suggests a wide variety of viewpoints, meaning that respondents were not unanimous. Diverse responses are revealed by looking at the Academic Board's transparency and clarity in decision-making. Notably, 47.3% disagreed and 22.8% strongly disagreed while 11.0% were unsure whether decisions are made openly and transparently. However, 8.9% agreed and 10.1% strongly agreed. A significant degree of dispersion is indicated by the mean of 1.36 and the standard deviation of 1.216. This range of answers emphasizes the necessity of a thorough investigation into the elements affecting the Academic Board's perceptions of transparency and clarity.

When it came to the Academic Board's accountability, a significant 58.2% disagreed and 20.3% strongly disagreed that the Board is responsible for its actions and decisions. Nevertheless, 15.2% remain indecisive on this with 1.3% supporting it and 3.8% strongly attesting to this. With a mean of 1.10 and a standard deviation of 0.867, the replies appear to be fairly dispersed. When compared to other dimensions, the low standard deviation suggests a more consistent position on this one. Regarding the use of the best available evidence in decision-making, 10.1% strongly agreed, 15.2% agreed, and 68.4% were unsure. Merely 6.3% disapproved, with a mean of 2.29 and a standard deviation of 0.733, the opinions exhibit a moderate dispersion. The lower standard deviation denotes a more consistent response, pointing to a consensus or shared ambiguity over the Academic Board's assessment of the best available data.

The Polytechnic Management Committee (PMC)
This section provides information regarding the respondents' opinions of the Polytechnic Management Committee (PMC) of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree on decision-making processes and provides important information about the dynamics of public polytechnic governance in Osun State, Nigeria. 18.6% opposed, 46.4% were unsure, 20.7% agreed, and 14.3% strongly agreed with the PMC's conclusions regarding their impartiality. A significant degree of dispersion is indicated by the mean of 2.31 and the standard deviation of 0.935. This diversity suggests that views regarding the impartiality of PMC decisions are not uniform, which calls for a thorough investigation of the variables affecting these views.

In terms of how effective PMC decisions were, 12.2% agreed, 7.6% strongly agreed, and 62.4% were unsure. 6.3% disagreed and 11.4% strongly disagreed. A certain amount of variability is indicated by the mean of 1.98 and the standard deviation of 0.974. This indicates that more research is necessary to determine the variables influencing different viewpoints on the results of PMC decisions. 47.0% opposed, 22.8% strongly disagreed, 5.1% undecided, 13.5% agreed, and 12.7% very agreed with the PMC's decision-making process's transparency and clarity. A high degree of dispersion is shown by the mean of 1.47 and the significant standard deviation of 1.320. A thorough investigation of the contextual elements affecting the committee members' judgments of openness is necessary in light of this variation.

Concerning accountability, 26.2% of respondents believed that the PMC is responsible for its actions and decisions with 10.1% strongly supporting this, while 10.1% maintain a neutral standpoint on this. Nevertheless, 43.5% disagreed and 10.1% strongly opposed this. A significant variety is shown by the mean of 1.83 and the standard deviation of 1.218. To improve governance procedures, it is imperative to comprehend the variables influencing these opinions. Regarding the evaluation of the best available evidence when making decisions, 67.1% of respondents were uncertain, 12.7% agreed, and 6.3% strongly agreed. On the other hand, 7.6% disagreed and 6.3%

strongly disagreed. A substantial amount of dispersion is shown by the mean of 2.05 and the standard deviation of 0.842. Less than 1.00 for the standard deviation indicates some agreement on the PMC's assessment of the evidence.

The School Board

Several important variables were evaluated to examine the data about the mechanism of decision-making at Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria, with a particular focus on the School Board. Each of these variables provided insight into a different facet of the decision-making process. Initially, the majority of respondents disagreed with the impartiality of choices made by school boards, with 5.1% strongly disapproving, 46.8% disagreeing, and 31.6% not sure. 5.1% highly agreed and 11.4% agreed that the school board makes impartial decisions. The mean of 1.65 and standard deviation of 0.930, which show disagreement rather than agreement, highlight this lack of agreement even more.

Regarding decision effectiveness, it is interesting to observe that although 41.8% of respondents agree that the School Board's actions frequently result in the desired outcomes, a sizable 25.3% strongly agree, indicating a higher degree of support in the interim. But 7.6% of those surveyed find this objectionable, 11.4% strongly disagree, and 13.9% remain unsure. The data indicates a substantial variation in the replies, with a matching mean of 2.62 and a standard deviation of 1.259, underscoring the lack of a clear agreement.

A sizeable percentage of respondents - 55.3% agree and 13.9% strongly agree that decisions are made openly and transparently. Only 3.8% strongly disagree, 13.5% oppose the idea, and 13.5% opt to remain neutral when it comes to transparency. However, the 2.62 mean and 1.008 standard deviation indicate a significant range of views, suggesting a lack of agreement on the matter.

A significant degree of disagreement can be seen in the area of accountability for choices and results, with 57.0% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction and 19.0% strongly disagreeing. However, 19.0% of respondents are still undecided, 8.9% agree, and 5.1% strongly support this. The mean and standard deviation of 1.24 and 1.024, respectively, highlight the wide range of answers and point to a lack of agreement on the School Board's accountability.

A startling 48.1% of respondents strongly disagree that the School Board considers the best available evidence when making decisions. In addition, a sizable 46.8% of respondents just disagree, 3.8% take a neutral stance, and 1.3% think the School Board carefully weighs the available data when making decisions. When compared to the other variables addressed, the low mean of 0.68 and the standard deviation of 0.630 indicate a better level of agreement on this issue.

The Departmental Boards

This section analyses the replies of respondents concerning the Departmental Boards' decision-making processes and offers important new perspectives on the workings of Osun State Polytechnic administration. In assessing the objectivity of decisions made by the Departmental Board of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria, a considerable proportion of respondents expressed scepticism regarding the impartiality of the boards' decision-making, with 8.9% maintaining a neutral stance, 11.4% agreeing, 5.1% strongly agreeing, and a noteworthy 51.9% disagreeing and 22.8% strongly disagreeing. A wide range of perspectives regarding the impartiality of the Departmental Boards' decisions is suggested by the mean of 1.24 and standard deviation of 1.084, which highlight their significant variability in replies. This variation highlights the need for more research to determine the variables underlying these kinds of perception differences.

A significant 41.8% of respondents were unsure about the efficacy of decisions, whereas 27.0% disagreed and 8.9% strongly disagreed that decisions frequently result in the desired outcomes. On the other hand, 8.9% strongly agreed and 21.1% agreed. The Departmental Boards' decision outcomes are subject to dispersion in viewpoints, as seen by the mean of 2.09 and standard deviation of 0.939. This dispersion emphasizes the necessity of a more thorough investigation of the contextual elements influencing differing opinions on the efficacy of departmental decisions.

A sizable 63.3% of respondents disagreed with 11.4% strongly dissenting about the transparency and clarity of decision-making within the Departmental Boards, whilst 11.4% strongly agreed, 5.1% also concur with this with 6.9% unsure that choices are made openly and transparently. With a standard deviation of 1.123 and a mean of 1.42, there appears to be a significant range of perspectives. This dispersion calls for a thorough examination of the contextual factors influencing differing opinions regarding the transparency and lucidity of the Departmental Board's decision-making procedures.

In terms of accountability, a sizable 44.7% strongly agreed and 31.2% supported, whilst 7.6% opposed, 8.9% strongly disapproved and 7.6% were unsure the Departmental Boards are accountable for decisions and results. The standard deviation of 1.276 and the mean of 2.95 suggest a significant degree of variation in the respondents' opinions regarding the accountability of the board. This dispersion highlights the need for a thorough investigation of the variables influencing various perspectives on accountability within the Departmental Boards.

Significantly, 44.3% of respondents agreed, and 27.8% strongly agreed, that the Departmental Boards take into account the best available evidence when making decisions. 3.8% strongly disagreed, whereas 7.6% disagreed and 16.5% remained neutral. A considerable degree of response dispersion is indicated by the mean of 2.85 and the standard deviation of 1.034. The significance of exploring the contextual subtleties of respondents' opinions on the Departmental Board's evaluation of the best evidence is underscored by this dispersion.

Discussion of Findings

The complex dynamics of governance are revealed by investigating the governing council, the supreme authority of polytechnics. The results of the study corroborate those of Afamefuna (2021), who emphasised the significance of openness and equity in the systems that control how businesses make decisions. Decisions should be founded on evidence, and stakeholders should be involved in this process (Ebele, 2024). This is in line with the challenges that the board of directors is encountering. In addition, accountability frameworks are crucial for ensuring that governance procedures are fair and reasonable and for giving practical ways to make the governing council more effective (Adegbami & Makinde, 2019).

The decision-making processes of the academic board in the polytechnics encompass a diverse range of perspectives on efficiency and justice. Afamefuna (2021) propose that to maintain justice in decision-making and address the challenges faced by the academic board, it is essential to establish clear and transparent standards and incorporate all key parties. Dare (2016) emphasized the importance of using evidence-based decision-making and being transparent when dealing with the difficulties involved in academic board operations. Abiodun-Oyebanji (2018) provided valuable insights on governance reform through their accountability framework, which offers practical methods to enhance fairness and rationality within the academic board.

Within polytechnics, the decision-making process within management committees highlights the challenges in effectively enforcing justice and accountability. Isah (2022) emphasises that process transparency and stakeholder interaction are of utmost significance. Enoh et al. (2017) provided insights on evidence-based decision-making and fairness as potential

solutions to the problem of inequities inside the Management Committee's activities. The accountability protocol proposed by Oladejo (2019) provides practical techniques to enhance fairness and reason. This protocol was created to streamline the establishment of a governance mechanism inside the management committee.

The school board of the selected polytechnics exhibits a wide range of perspectives on transparency and accountability. The argument put forth by Udey et al, (2022) advocates for the involvement of stakeholders and the use of clear decision-making criteria, hence this is logical. Enoh et al. (2017) argued that employing evidence-based decision-making and involving stakeholders is essential for effectively addressing potential challenges related to the school board's operations. In addition, Awodi (2019) presented an accountability framework that offers approaches to evaluate and promote fairness within the School Board, as well as tactics to strengthen leadership.

The examination of the departmental board as a decision-making platform at the polytechnics reveals concerns regarding objectivity and efficacy. This pertains to the assertion by Enoh et al. (2017) regarding the significance of maintaining transparency and impartiality in the decision-making process. These themes are pertinent within the department's board framework. Agboola (2016) argues that decisions should be grounded on empirical facts and should prioritise the principle of fairness. The establishment of governance procedures inside the departmental board could be informed by the accountability framework developed by Obi and Agwu (2017), which provides practical methods for improving fairness and rationality.

This section emphasized how the political culture and bureaucratic nature of polytechnic administration affect decision-making mechanisms. Maicibi (2024) shows how political dynamics and bureaucratic architecture affect policy decision-making in Nigerian polytechnics. The findings support Nigerian policy discussions and help understand the polytechnic system's strengths and weaknesses which the current study on decision-making mechanism in polytechnic administration echoes. His research showed that New Zealand's higher education institutions possessed decision-making power (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2019). This study found that most respondents support current leadership development methods. Congruence suggests that decentralized decision-making, especially in education, might boost leadership effectiveness. Given changing governance dynamics, adaptable and innovative leadership frameworks are needed to address education's current challenges. The research of Astill sheds light on the causes of decision-making decentralisation.

Adegbami & Makinde (2019) found that organisations had different strategic planning perspectives which is one of the influencing factors that must be thoroughly examined. Understanding an organization's culture, leadership style, stakeholder participation, and resource availability helps improve strategic planning. Similarly, the finding emphasizes the relevance of decision-making procedures in higher education's academic and student issues. A study by Umoh et al. (2020) on strategic decision-making at Nigerian universities supports this notion. This highlights the importance of proactive decision-making to overcome academic and student affairs issues. The school may emphasize academic performance and decision-making that supports its goals.

On the challenges, this study shows that leaders' self-management and stakeholders' involvement in decision-making are seen from many angles, demonstrating the complexity of organisational decision-making. Davidaviciene's et. al. (2020) research on management information systems (MIS) highlights the difficulties of increasing decision quality. Leadership styles, contextual knowledge, and interpersonal dynamics aid decision-making, according to the

essay. Combining the findings of both types of research shows that decision-making requires a comprehensive approach.

The concerns of ambiguity in decision-making connected to decision-makers view of technical help solutions match Daron's (2022) study on organisational decision-making. This research explained the factors that affect technological solution adoption and efficacy in decision-making situations. The current study revealed employee resistance to change as a concern, which might be political-oriented, Adegbami & Makinde (2019) examined state-level decision-making in Nigeria to determine how political upheavals might affect polytechnic administrators. Challenges connected to employees' unwillingness to respond to decisions may be better understood in light of Udey et al. (2022) remarks on the limits of decision-making. By delving into what causes resistance in decision-making processes, polytechnics can find ways to address employee concerns and cultivate a more flexible organizational culture.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the decision-making mechanism significantly contributed to Osun State Polytechnic administration, especially through the governing council, school board, and departmental boards, indicating the possibility for institutional restructuring of some of the decision-making mechanisms for productive polytechnic administration.

Recommendations

To address the issues with the decision-making processes in Nigeria's public polytechnic administration, a range of policy recommendations would be required:

a) There should be an enhancement in the incorporation of technology by providing financial support for strong technical solutions that are specifically designed to meet the distinct requirements of polytechnic decision-making processes. This will ensure the accessibility of these solutions to all individuals in need.

b) To minimise uncertainty in the process of making decisions and establish a precise comprehension of the expectations and obligations in polytechnic administration, it is beneficial to develop specific frameworks and standards.

c) If there is a change in the government's leadership, it is crucial to have established systems that ensure a smooth transition of power, allowing for ongoing decision-making in public institutions like the polytechnics in Nigeria.

d) The structure of the polytechnic system should be re-designed to promote active involvement and dedication of stakeholders, eliminating barriers to implementation, and cultivating a culture that prioritises responsibility and cooperation would all be beneficial.

e) There should a well-rounded training and support programmes that can help alleviate employees' resistance to change. Consequently, employees will acquire the necessary knowledge to adapt to the changing requirements of different organisations.

f) There is a need to implement strategies that promote employee involvement in decision-making to enhance innovation and achieve organisational excellence within polytechnic settings.

g) The management of the polytechnics should ensure that there are effective financial management systems are necessary to address budget limitations and allocate adequate resources for decision implementation and organisational priorities.

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