



Enhancing Public Institutions in Nigeria through Effective Self-Leadership and Management Practices

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine if Nigerian institutional leaders self-leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. This study employed a descriptive survey design to investigate the contribution of self-leadership and management practices on the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. The study targeted leadership personnel and staff across public institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. The sample consisted of individuals directly involved in or influenced by leadership and management practices within these institutions. Stratified random sampling was used to select a sample size from public office holders in Rivers State. Data were collected using a 16 item researcher's designed questionnaire titled "Effective Self-Leadership and Management Practices Questionnaire (ESLMPQ)". The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a reliability index of .876. Descriptive statistics

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including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed to analyze respondents' demographic variables and address the research questions. Hypotheses were tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at a significance level of $p < .05$. The analyses were carried out with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 25. The findings indicated that the self-leadership and management practices of Nigerian institutional leaders do not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. The study concluded that fostering self-leadership and management practices in Nigerian public institutions is crucial for enhancing accountability, transparency, and overall efficiency. Among its recommendations is the urgent development and implementation of structured leadership development programs tailored to the needs of Nigeria's public sector, emphasizing principles such as self-awareness and adaptive leadership.

Keywords: Effective; self-leadership; management; self-awareness; self-motivation; self-reflection; self-discipline; Nigeria; public institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-leadership and effective management practices are fundamental for public institutions to thrive in today's fast-paced and rapidly changing world. In the 21st century, institutions face numerous challenges, such as technological disruptions, shifting societal values, and increasing complexity. Self-leadership is essential for managers and leaders to navigate these challenges successfully. It involves developing a deep understanding of oneself, including one's strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations. Self-leadership enables leaders make informed decisions, build trust with their teams, and adapt to changing circumstances. Some key aspects of self-leadership in institutional management include—self-awareness, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, self-motivation, self-discipline, self-reflection, building resilience, positive self-talk, establishing responsibility, collaboration and empowerment, continuous learning and development, authenticity and integrity, cultural competence, digital literacy, and strategic thinking. For the purpose of this study, we shall limit ourselves to the first four key aspects of self-leadership.

Self-leadership refers to the ability to influence and direct one's own thoughts, feelings, and actions towards achieving personal and professional goals. Developing these characteristics, employees can enhance their self-leadership skills, which will lead to greater personal and professional success, and improved overall well-being. Self-leadership is a vital concept in the management of institutions in Nigeria in the 21st century. It involves taking personal responsibility for one's actions, setting

goals, and developing strategies to achieve them (Ololube, 2024). Effective self-leadership is crucial for institutional success, as it enables leaders to set clear visions and directions; build trust and credibility; make informed decisions; develop and empower teams; adapt to changing environments; nurture a culture of accountability and transparency; drive innovation and progress.

In Nigeria, institutions face unique challenges, such as cultural and political complexities, economic instability, and infrastructure gaps (Adeyemo & Adebayo, 2018). Self-leadership can help institutional leaders navigate these challenges by encouraging adaptability and resilience; encouraging collaborative leadership; promoting ethical decision-making; developing strategic problem-solving skills; enhancing communication and stakeholder engagement (Ojo & Ojo, 2019). To develop self-leadership in public institution management in Nigeria, leaders can engage in reflective practice and self-assessment; seek mentorship and coaching; develop emotional intelligence and empathy; build a strong support network; and stay updated on global best practices and trends.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, public institutions are pivotal to the nation's development, shaping policy and delivering essential services to the populace. However, these institutions often face significant challenges that impede their effectiveness and efficiency. One of the critical issues is the lack of self-leadership and robust management practices among public servants.

The current state of many Nigerian public institutions is characterized by bureaucratic

inertia, low morale, and a lack of proactive initiative among employees. This is exacerbated by insufficient training and development programs that fail to cultivate self-leadership skills and modern management competencies. As a result, public servants often exhibit a dependency on hierarchical directives, reluctance to take initiative, and resistance to change, which collectively stifle productivity and innovation. Furthermore, the absence of a culture that promotes self-leadership and sound management practices has led to issues such as poor service delivery, inefficiencies, and corruption. These problems undermine public trust and hinder the nation's socio-economic development. Without empowered leaders and managers who can think independently, act decisively, and lead by example, public institutions struggle to meet the needs and expectations of the Nigerian people. Therefore, it is imperative to address the deficiencies in self-leadership and management within Nigeria's public sector. This involves implementing comprehensive training programs, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and encouraging individual accountability and empowerment. In doing so, Nigerian public institutions might transform into dynamic, responsive, and efficient entities capable of driving sustainable national development.

1.2 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine if Nigerian institutional leaders self-leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. Specifically, the under listed objectives directed the study:

- Determine if self-awareness in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria.
- Assess if self-regulation in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria.
- Evaluate if self-motivation in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria.
- Ascertain if self-discipline in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions directed the study:

- How does self-awareness in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?
- How does self-regulation in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?
- How does self-motivation in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?
- How does self-discipline in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

The under listed hypotheses further directed the study:

- The self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.
- The self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.
- The self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.
- The self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Self-Leadership Theory

Self-leadership theory was primarily developed by Charles C. Manz in the 1980s. He is an organizational psychologist and professor at the University of Massachusetts, and he is

considered one of the pioneering researchers and theorists in the field of self-leadership. Self-leadership theory is a framework that emphasizes individuals' ability to influence their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to achieve personal and professional goals. It emerged and evolved into a comprehensive approach to the understanding of how individuals can take charge of their own leadership development and effectiveness.

Manz defined self-leadership as a comprehensive self-influence perspective that concerns leading oneself towards performance of naturally motivating tasks as well as managing oneself to do work that must be done but is not naturally motivating (Manz, 1986). Self-leadership theory revolves around the notion that individuals can act as their own leaders by employing specific strategies and behaviors.

One of the foundational concepts within self-leadership theory is self-awareness. This involves individuals gaining insight into their strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations. By understanding themselves better, individuals can align their actions and decisions with their personal goals and aspirations (Manz & Neck, 2017). Self-leadership also encompasses self-regulation, which refers to the ability to control one's emotions, impulses, and behaviors. This involves techniques such as goal-setting, time management, and stress reduction strategies to regulate personal effectiveness and productivity (Neck & Houghton, 2006).

A key aspect of self-leadership theory is self-motivation. This involves individuals setting meaningful goals, maintaining a positive attitude, and staying committed to achieving their objectives. The cultivation of intrinsic motivation—the drive that comes from within rather than external rewards—individuals can sustain their efforts and overcome obstacles (Houghton et al., 2012). Furthermore, self-leadership theory emphasizes self-efficacy, which refers to individuals' beliefs in their ability to successfully execute tasks and achieve desired outcomes. To develop a sense of self-efficacy through mastery experiences, social modeling, and feedback, individuals can enhance their confidence and competence in various domains of life.

Self-leadership theory has practical implications across different contexts, including business, education, healthcare, and personal development. In organizational or institutional

settings, for example, leaders can foster self-leadership among employees by promoting autonomy, providing opportunities for skill development, and create a supportive work environment that encourages innovation and initiative (Amanchukwu et al., 2015, Ananyi & Ololube, 2023). Additionally, self-leadership theory emphasizes the role of continuous learning and adaptation. This is a situation where individuals are encouraged to seek feedback, reflect on their experiences, and continuously update their skills and knowledge to stay relevant and effective in a rapidly changing world.

The relevant of self-leadership theory to this study is that it provides a comprehensive framework for individuals to take proactive steps in leading themselves towards personal and professional success. By enhancing self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, and self-discipline, etc. individuals are able to cultivate their leadership potential and navigate challenges with resilience and determination. Charles Manz aptly summarized self-leadership as the practice of intentionally influencing one's thinking, feeling and behaviors to achieve objectives (Manz, 2001). Thus, self-leadership theory offers valuable insights and strategies for individuals seeking to maximize their potential and achieve their goals in diverse domains of life.

3. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

3.1 The Nature of Nigerian Public Institutions

Public institutions in Nigeria constitute a vital component of the country's governance framework, tasked with delivering essential services, implementing policies, and upholding regulatory standards across various sectors of the economy. However, the nature of the Nigeria's public institutions is marked by complex dynamics shaped by historical legacies, contemporary challenges and ongoing reforms.

According to Ayittey (2016), Nigerian public institutions are structured along federal, state, and local government lines, reflecting a hierarchical model intended to distribute governance responsibilities and resources effectively. At the federal level, ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) oversee specific sectors such as health, education, finance, and defense. Each MDA operates within legal frameworks established by the Nigerian constitution and relevant legislation, defining their roles, mandates, and operational boundaries.

Central to the administration of these institutions is the civil service, characterized by a merit-based recruitment system designed to ensure professionalism and competence. However, challenges such as politicization, nepotism, and corruption often undermine meritocracy, impacting the effectiveness and public trust in these institutions (Olowu & Wunsch, 2004). Numerous systemic challenges impede the efficiency and efficacy of Nigerian public institutions. Corruption remains a significant issue, with Transparency International consistently ranking Nigeria poorly on its Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2023). This pervasive corruption manifests through embezzlement, bribery, mismanagement and misappropriation of public funds, diverting resources meant for development and service delivery (Ololube, 2016).

The bureaucratic inefficiencies in the Nigerian public institutions further complicate matters, leading to delays in decision-making, sluggish service delivery, and poor coordination among MDAs (Lawal et al., 2013, Eme & Onwuka, 2020, Morgan et al., 2019). Additionally, inadequate institutional capacity, including outdated infrastructure and insufficient human resources, limits the institutions' ability to meet the diverse and growing needs of Nigeria's population, particularly in rural and marginalized areas (Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012, Ololube et al., 2024).

The nature and performance of Nigerian public institutions have profound implications for governance outcomes and societal well-being. Weak institutional frameworks contribute to governance deficits, characterized by inconsistent policy implementation, ineffective regulatory oversight, and weak enforcement mechanisms (Oyedele & Adewale, 2019). This situation enables a climate of impunity, eroding public trust in government institutions and contributing to social unrest and political instability (Fosu, 2015). Societally, the shortcomings of public institutions translate into tangible impacts on development indicators such as access to healthcare, quality of education, and economic prosperity. Inadequate public services perpetuate poverty cycles that hinder socio-economic mobility, and exacerbate inequalities across the different demographic groups and six the geographical zones (Aigbokhan, 2000).

Efforts at addressing the challenges facing Nigerian public institutions require comprehensive reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and institutional effectiveness. A number of such reform efforts have been put in place, yet the challenges persist because of the politicization of civil service appointments, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and promoting ethical conduct among public officials (Ojo, 2018). According to Obi (2022), integrating and accepting technology and digital solutions can rationalize the administrative processes, improve service delivery, and enhance engagement. Efforts at fostering institutional culture of meritocracy and professional development within the civil service are vital towards building institutional resilience and responsiveness (Ololube, 2024). Investments in human capital development and infrastructure upgrades are seen as crucial for building institutional capacity and improving performance across public institutions in Nigeria (Okafor, 2017).

Additionally, Ogbo et al. (2020) argued that institutional leaders are encouraged to initiate partnerships with the private sector, civil society, and international organizations to leverage resources and expertise to address systemic challenges collaboratively.

3.2 Self-Awareness in Leadership and Management

Self-awareness is the ability to have an accurate and profound understanding of one's own thoughts, feelings, strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations. It is the capacity of leaders to observe one's self from an objective perspective, recognizing patterns, habits, and tendencies (London et al., 2023). Self-awareness is a vital component of personal growth, emotional intelligence, and success (Ololube, 2024). Self-awareness helps leaders make informed decisions that align with institutional values and goals. Understanding leaders' emotions and needs enables leaders to communicate more effectively. It further helps leaders manage their emotions, leading to increased emotional intelligence. Recognizing leader's strengths and weaknesses allows them to focus on self-improvement. More importantly, self-awareness fosters empathy, leading to more meaningful and healthy relationships in public institutions (Alicke et al., 2020).

Self-awareness helps leaders to practice meditation and mindfulness. Through these, leaders write down their thoughts, feelings, and experiences to gain insights by regularly taking time to reflect on actions, decisions, and outcomes. Leaders can seek feedback by asking for constructive criticisms from trusted individuals in the public institutions, which can assist them in engaging in self-examination through regular assessment of institutional values, goals, and motivations (London et al., 2023).

According to Ololube (2024), self-awareness as a component of self-leadership is a powerful tool for personal growth, emotional intelligence, for institutional success. Developing self-awareness can make leaders to make informed decisions, communicate effectively, regulate their emotions, and build stronger relationships. This can be done by being patient, kind, and compassionate. With time and effort, leaders can unlock their full potential of self-awareness to be able to live a more fulfilling life as leaders.

3.3 Self-Regulation in Leadership and Management

Self-regulation is a crucial aspect of self-leadership. It refers to the ability of a leader to manage their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in order to achieve personal and professional goals. Leaders who possess strong self-regulation skills are better equipped to handle stress, make sound decisions, and maintain positive relationships with their team members (Ololube, 2024). Self-regulation also plays a key role in fostering trust and credibility among followers (van der Werff et al., 2019).

To Kleynhans et al. (2021), self-regulation is essential for leaders as it enables them to remain composed and focused even in challenging situations, and by regulating their emotions, leaders can avoid impulsive reactions and instead respond thoughtfully and strategically. Self-regulation does not only help in conflict resolution but also contributes to creating a positive work environment where team members feel supported and valued.

Moreover, according to Ololube (2024), self-regulation allows leaders to lead by example. When leaders demonstrate control over their own behavior and emotions, they set a standard for others to follow. This can inspire team members to emulate similar self-regulatory practices, leading to improved overall performance

and productivity within the organization. Ololube (2024) further identified the benefits of self-regulations as a crucial aspect of self-leadership:

- Leaders with strong self-regulation skills are better equipped to make rational decisions based on logic and reason rather than being swayed by emotions or external pressures. This leads to more effective problem-solving and strategic planning.
- Self-regulated leaders are able to communicate clearly and effectively, foster open dialogue within the team. Managing their own emotions during interactions can prevent misunderstandings and conflicts, leading to stronger relationships with team members.
- Self-regulation helps leaders bounce back from setbacks and challenges more easily. They can maintain a positive outlook even in the face of adversity, inspiring confidence in their team during difficult times.
- Self-regulation is a fundamental skill for effective leadership. Leaders who prioritize self-awareness and emotional control are better equipped to navigate complex situations, build trust with their team, and drive organizational success through their exemplary behavior.

3.4 Self-Motivation in Leadership and Management

Self-motivation in leadership is central in driving the success of individuals in managerial roles. Self-motivated leaders possess certain key characteristics and follow specific strategies to maintain their motivation levels high, inspiring their teams and achieving organizational goals effectively. Leaders are adept at setting challenging and achievable goals for themselves. They maintain a laser-sharp focus on goals and work tirelessly to accomplish them, and inspiring their teams to follow suit (Yukl, 2013). In the same vein, Ololube (2024) noted that leaders are indeed skilled at setting ambitious yet attainable goals, and their focus on achieving these objectives is unwavering. Leaders create a clear direction and vision for their teams, inspire and motivate team members to work towards a common purpose, encourage a culture of accountability and responsibility, and drive innovation and progress through continuous effort and improvement.

Great leaders understand the importance of being flexible and adaptable in the face of changing work environments and global scenarios. They embrace change, demonstrating resilience and agility in navigating uncertainties. Successful leaders exhibit humility, respect for others, and a willingness to learn from those around them. They value every individual's contributions and strive to grow through observation and unbiased interactions. Self-motivated leaders engage in regular self-reflection to assess their progress towards goals, identify areas for improvement, and learn from both successes and setbacks. This introspective practice fuels continuous personal growth (Osland et al., 2007). Effective leaders harness their emotional intelligence to channel feelings positively, make sound decisions, and maintain a balanced perspective amid challenges. They view failures as opportunities for learning rather than setbacks. Leaders set ambitious goals that push boundaries that can fuel motivation by instilling a sense of accomplishment upon their achievement (Robbins & Coulter, 2018).

Altogether, self-motivated leaders embrace change as part of professional development, which can turn uncertainties into opportunities for growth, reinvigorating their motivation levels. Leaders recognize personal achievements, no matter how small, and celebrating successes can help sustain motivation levels amidst the demands of leadership responsibilities. Regularly reflecting on one's performance as a leader, analyzing what worked well and areas for improvement, enables continuous learning and revitalizes motivation. According to Ololube (2024), self-motivation is the cornerstone of effective leadership; it drives success not only for individual leaders but also for their teams and institutions or organizations.

3.5 Self-Discipline in Leadership and Management

Self-discipline is the ability to control one's thoughts, feelings, and actions in pursuit of long-term goals and objectives. It involves setting standards, sticking to them, and avoiding procrastination, distractions, and unhealthy habits. Thus, discipline plays a fundamental role in shaping exceptional leaders. It goes beyond mere control or punishment, focusing on creating structure, order, and purpose within a team or organization. Disciplined leadership involves bringing clarity, process, and focus to tasks and goals. Leaders with discipline as one of their key

attributes possess precision, routine, and structure in their approach. They pay attention to detail, follow timelines diligently, and thrive on maintaining order and control (Yukl, 2013).

Disciplined leaders have an eye for detail and appreciate clear processes. They focus on timelines, deadlines, and prefer structured routines over surprises or errors. These leaders have a need for order and enjoy being in control of their environment (Kolzow, 2014; Wijnants, 2023). However, while some may perceive disciplined leaders as control freaks, it is essential to recognize the positive contributions they bring to a team. These leaders are dependable, sticking to their decisions while effectively communicating expectations to team members. Their commitment to structure and order enhances productivity and ensures that objectives are met consistently (Ololube, 2024).

Ololube (2024) noted further that disciplined leaders often exhibit traits such as organized workspaces, meticulous planning with color-coded systems, and a strong sense of organization that ensures efficiency and effectiveness in their work. Disciplined leaders play a vital role in helping teams understand goals clearly and achieve success. Their ability to identify errors, streamline processes, and bring structure to operations enables teams to deliver results efficiently. Adhering to disciplined procedures and routines, leaders create an environment of clarity and predictability that fosters autonomy among team members (Wijnants, 2023). This structured framework allows for creativity and innovation to thrive within the organization.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, we adopted descriptive survey design, which is aimed at examining if self-leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. The target population comprised of all the leadership personnel and staff in public institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The sample for this study includes those individuals who are directly involved or affected by leadership and management practices within the public institutions. This includes senior leadership personnel like directors, supervisors, and executives within public institutions who are responsible for making decisions, setting policies, and leading teams. The staff categories

include individuals at various levels of the public institutions in Rivers State who work under the leadership and management structures. Their perceptions and experiences provided insights into how self-leadership practices are implemented and perceived within the various public institutions to ensure diversity in roles, levels of authority, and perspectives to capture a comprehensive understanding of self-leadership and management practices in public institutions in Nigeria. Surveys method was employed to gather data through the use of questionnaire from the group of respondents. Ethical considerations regarding consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were carefully addressed to maintain the integrity of the study.

Stratified random sampling technique was employed to draw a sample size from the public office holders in Rivers State. Researchers self-structured questionnaire titled "Effective Self-Leadership and Management Practices Questionnaire (ESLMPQ) (16 items) was specifically designed for data collection. Section 'A' comprised of respondents demographic information while Section 'B' comprised of variables that may or may not contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. The questionnaire employed a 6-point Likert scale of:

- 1) Strongly Disagree (SD) = I am extremely dissatisfied with my leader; (1 - 1.99)
- 2) Disagree (D) = I am mostly dissatisfied with my leader; (2 - 2.99)
- 3) Somewhat Disagree (SWD) = I have some dissatisfaction with my leader; (3 - 3.99)
- 4) Somewhat Agree (SWA) = I have some satisfaction with my leader; (4 - 4.99)
- 5) Agree (A) = I am mostly satisfied with my leader; (5 - 5.99) and
- 6) Strongly Agree (SA) = I am extremely satisfied with my leader. (6 - 00)

That is $1+2+3+4+5+6 = 21$. $21 \div 6 = 3.50$. From the above computation, any mean score that is equal to and greater than 3.5 indicates agree, while the mean scores that are less than 3.50 indicates a disagree.

To ensure face and content validity, the questionnaire was scrutinized by three research experts in the field of measurement and evaluation, and their feedbacks were incorporated into the final version that was later distributed. Furthermore, a pilot study was conducted with a subset of 20 participants to refine and enhance the clarity of the

questionnaire items. To assess the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha was employed and a reliability index of .876 was realized based on the outcome of the analysis. 1500 questionnaires were distributed to civil servants of several public institutions and universities in Rivers State, 1011 was retrieved, while 990(66%) was actually used for the analysis. The questionnaires were distributed and retrieved over a period of eight months. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were employed to provide information for the respondents' demographic variables and to answer the research questions, while One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses, which was set at $p < .05$ level of significance. The statistical analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software version 25.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Respondents Demographic Information

The analysis in Table 1 depicts that male were 511(61.6%), while female were 479(47.4%). Data for respondents age revealed that 307(31%) were below the age of 40 years, while 683(69%) were above 40 years. The records showed that 536(54.1%) hold a bachelor's degree, and 443(44.7%) hold master's degree, while 11(1.1%) hold doctorate degree.

5.2 Answer to Research Questions

Research Question 1: How does self-awareness in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?

Data in Table 2 revealed that respondents disagreed with the view that self-awareness helps Nigerian public institution leaders make informed decisions that align with institutional values and goals ($M = 2.8852$; $SD = .54658$). Also, the respondents somewhat disagreed that self-awareness helps Nigerian public institution leaders to practice meditation and mindfulness to increase self-awareness ($M = 3.0641$; $SD = 1.06941$), they further somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders seek feedback by asking for constructive criticisms from trusted individuals in the public institutions ($M = 3.1237$; $SD = 1.23550$). The respondents likewise somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders communicate effectively,

regulate their emotions, and build stronger relationships (M = 3.2578; SD = .98980). On the whole, the grand mean (M = 3.0827; SD = .09603) revealed that respondents somewhat disagreed that self-awareness in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria, which invariably means that Nigerian public institutions leaders and managers do not explore the benefits of self-awareness to their advantage to effectively propel public institutions to success in the country,

Research Question 2: How does self-regulation in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?

Figures in Table 3 showed that the respondents somewhat disagreed that self-regulation helps Nigerian public institution leader to manage their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in order to achieve personal and professional goals (M = 3.1759; SD = 1.26092). The respondents somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders avoid impulsive reactions and

instead respond thoughtfully and strategically (M = 3.4901; SD = .82270). Also, the respondents somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders demonstrate control over their own behavior and emotions, and they set standards for others to follow (M = 3.3726; SD = 1.10417). they further somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders inspire team members to emulate similar self-regulatory practices, which may lead to improved overall performance and productivity within the organization (M = 3.0656; SD = .90365). For the most part, the grand mean (M = 3.2835; SD = 1.09144) exposed that the respondents somewhat disagreed that self-regulation in leadership and management does not contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. What this transcends to is that the self-regulation of Nigeria’s institutional leaders and managers do not impact the effectiveness of public institutions.

Research Question 3: How does self-motivation in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of respondents; demographic information

Respondents Demographic Information		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	511	51.6
	Female	479	48.4
Age	Below 40 years	307	31.0
	Above 40 Years	683	69.0
Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	536	54.1
	Master's Degree	443	44.7
	Doctorate	11	1.1

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of respondents answer to self-awareness in leadership and management practices and effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Self-awareness in leadership and management of public institutions in Nigeria	Mean	SD.	Decision
1.	Self-awareness helps Nigerian public institution leaders make informed decisions that align with institutional values and goals	2.8852	.54658	Disagree
2.	Self-awareness helps Nigerian public institution leaders to practice meditation and mindfulness to increase self-awareness	3.0641	1.06941	Somewhat Disagree
3.	Nigerian public institution leaders seek feedback by asking for constructive criticisms from trusted individuals in the public institutions	3.1237	1.23550	Somewhat Disagree
4.	Nigerian public institution leaders communicate effectively, regulate their emotions, and build stronger relationships.	3.2578	.98980	Somewhat Disagree
Grand mean		3.0827	.09603	Somewhat Disagree

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of respondents answer to self-regulation in leadership and management practices and effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Self-regulation in leadership and management of public institutions in Nigeria	Mean	SD.	Decision
5.	Self-regulation helps Nigerian public institution leader to manage their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in order to achieve personal and professional goals	3.1759	1.26092	Somewhat Disagree
6.	Nigerian public institution leaders avoid impulsive reactions and instead respond thoughtfully and strategically	3.4901	.82270	Somewhat Disagree
7.	Nigerian public institution leaders demonstrate control over their own behavior and emotions, and they set a standard for others to follow	3.3726	1.10417	Somewhat Disagree
8.	Nigerian public institution leaders inspire team members to emulate similar self-regulatory practices, which may lead to improved overall performance and productivity within the organization.	3.0656	.90365	Somewhat Disagree
Grand mean		3.2760	1.09144	Somewhat Disagree

Table 4. Mean and standard deviation of respondents answer to self-motivation in leadership and management practices and effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Self-motivation in leadership and management of public institutions in Nigeria	Mean	SD.	Decision
9.	Nigerian public institution leaders are adept at setting challenging yet achievable goals for themselves, and work tirelessly to accomplish them, inspiring their teams to follow suit.	3.4545	1.09569	Somewhat Disagree
10.	Nigerian public institution leaders are indeed skilled at setting ambitious yet attainable goals, and their focus on achieving these objectives is unwavering.	3.2623	1.08575	Somewhat Disagree
11.	Nigerian public institution leaders create a clear direction and vision for their teams, inspire and motivate team members to work towards a common purpose, encourage a culture of accountability and responsibility.	3.4531	1.11051	Somewhat Disagree
12.	Nigerian public institution leaders harness their emotional intelligence to channel feelings positively, make sound decisions, and maintain a balanced perspective amid challenges.	3.1148	1.01051	Somewhat Disagree
Grand mean		3.3211	1.07561	Somewhat Disagree

The analysis of research question three shows in Table 4 that respondents somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders are adept at setting challenging yet achievable goals for themselves, and work tirelessly to accomplish them, inspiring their teams to follow suit (M = 3.4545; SD = 1.09569). They equally somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders are indeed skilled at setting ambitious yet attainable goals, and their focus on achieving these objectives is unwavering (M = 3.2623; SD = 1.08575). Similarly, the respondents somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders

create a clear direction and vision for their teams, inspire and motivate team members to work towards a common purpose, encourage a culture of accountability and responsibility (M = 3.4531; SD = 1.11051), and they somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders harness their emotional intelligence to channel feelings positively, make sound decisions, and maintain a balanced perspective amid challenges (M = 3.1148; SD = 1.01051). Overall, the respondents somewhat disagreed that leaders self-motivation in the leadership and management do not contribute to the effectiveness of public

institutions in Nigeria (M = 3.3211; SD = 1.07561). This further reinforces the collective perspective that emphasizes a consistent disagreement across all items.

Research Question 4: How does self-discipline in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria?

The analysis of research question four shows in Table 5 that respondents somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders have the ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions in pursuit of long-term goals and objectives (M = 3.4873; SD = .93493), they further somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders with discipline as one of their key attributes possess precision, routine, and structure in their approach (M = 3.0134; SD = 1.16470). The respondents disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders are dependable, sticking to their decisions while effectively communicating expectations to team

members (M = 2.9151; SD = 1.20333), and they further somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders often exhibit traits such as organized workspaces, meticulous planning with color-coded systems, and a strong sense of organization that ensures efficiency and effectiveness in their work (M = 3.1013; SD = 1.32997). The grand mean and the standard deviation (M = 3.12927; SD = 1.15823) further strengthened the respondents' collective opinion, by consistently emphasizing somewhat disagreement across all the items. Thus, the analyzed data suggests somewhat disagreement that Nigeria's leaders' self-discipline in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria.

5.3 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

Table 5. Mean and standard deviation of respondents answer to self-discipline in leadership and management practices and effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Self-discipline in leadership and management of public institutions in Nigeria	Mean	SD.	Decision
13.	Nigerian public institution leaders have the ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions in pursuit of long-term goals and objectives	3.4873	.93493	Somewhat Disagree
14.	Nigerian public institution leaders with discipline as one of their key attributes possess precision, routine, and structure in their approach.	3.0134	1.16470	Somewhat Disagree
15.	Nigerian public institution leaders are dependable, sticking to their decisions while effectively communicating expectations to team members.	2.9151	1.20333	Disagree
16.	Nigerian public institution leaders often exhibit traits such as organized workspaces, meticulous planning with color-coded systems, and a strong sense of organization that ensures efficiency and effectiveness in their work.	3.1013	1.32997	Somewhat Disagree
Grand mean		3.12927	1.15823	Somewhat Disagree

Table 6. ANOVA analysis of whether self-awareness in leadership and management significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-awareness of leaders and effectiveness of public institutions	Between Groups	.535	1	.535	1.750	.186
	Within Groups	302.337	988	.306		
	Total	302.873	989			

Hypothesis one sought to determine the opinions of respondents' based on their demographic variables towards whether self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. The different factors of the demographic variables—gender, age and qualification revealed that self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders regarding their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. There were no significant differences in their opinions. From the data in Table 6, it can be seen that the total sum of squares = 302.873, df. = 989 and mean square for between groups (.535) and within groups (.306) of the respondents run at the same score level, while the F-ratio (1.750) and F-probability (Sig .186) equally depicted likewise. Gender, age and qualification at this stage did not have an influence on their views. Thus, a large number of the respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. Therefore, null hypothesis one was accepted.

Hypothesis 2: The self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not

significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

Hypothesis two sought to assess the opinions of respondents' based on their demographic variables towards whether self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders with reference to their leadership and management practices significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. Respondents' demographic information as classified into three categories—gender, age and qualification indicated no significant differences in their opinions. They held that self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders vis-à-vis their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions; this is shown (see Table 7) in the total sum of squares = 1501.763, df. = 989 and mean square for between groups (1.895) and within groups (1.518) of the respondents' route at the same score level while the F-ratio (1.248) and F-probability (Sig .264) similarly depicted the same. Thus, it is obvious that null hypothesis two was accepted; because majority of the respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions, rather it contributes to if ineffectiveness.

Table 7. ANOVA analysis of whether self-regulation in leadership and management significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-regulation of leaders and effectiveness of public institutions	Between Groups	1.895	1	1.895	1.248	.264
	Within Groups	1499.867	988	1.518		
	Total	1501.763	989			

Table 8. ANOVA analysis of whether self-motivation in leadership and management significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-motivation of leaders and effectiveness of public institutions	Between Groups	2.896	1	2.896	2.914	.088
	Within Groups	981.936	988	.994		
	Total	984.832	989			

Table 9. ANOVA analysis of whether self-discipline in leadership and management significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-discipline of leaders and effectiveness of public institutions	Between Groups	.008	1	.008	.009	.923
	Within Groups	829.043	988	.839		
	Total	829.051	989			

Hypothesis 3: The self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

Based on the ANOVA analysis conducted to evaluate the opinions of respondents' based on their demographic variables towards whether self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders concerning their leadership and management practices significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. The different factors of the demographic variables—gender, age and qualification revealed that self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders regarding their leadership and management practices do not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. There were no significant differences in their opinions. With gender, age and qualification as independent variable and items 9-12 in section "B" of the research questionnaire as dependent variables, the respondents' views did not differ as reflected in the total sum of squares = 984.832, df. = 989 and mean square for between groups (2.896) and within groups (.994) of the respondents' are at the same score level while the F-ratio (2.914) and F-probability (Sig .088) equally represented the same. As a consequence, it is obvious that null hypothesis three was accepted; because 78% of the respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders with reference to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions (See Table 8).

Hypothesis 4: The self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

Hypothesis four sought to determine the opinions of respondents' based on their demographic variables towards whether self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their

leadership and management practices significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. The different factors of the demographic variables—gender, age and qualification revealed that self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders regarding their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of

public institutions. There were no significant differences in their opinions. From the data in Table 9, it can be seen that the total sum of squares = 829.051, df. = 989 and mean square for between groups (.008) and within groups (.839) of the respondents run at the same score level while the F-ratio (.009) and F-probability (Sig .923) equally portrayed likewise. Gender, age and qualification at this stage did not have influence on their views. Therefore, null hypothesis four was accepted. Thus, a large number of the respondents (91%) regardless of their demographic information held that self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders regarding their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

6. DISCUSSION

Self-Awareness of Nigerian Institutional Leader's Leadership and Management Practices / Effectiveness of Public Institutions:

The finding from research question one and hypothesis one shows that respondents somewhat disagreed that self-awareness in leadership and management contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. The respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-awareness of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions. This is in contrast to the studies of London et al. (2023), Ololube (2024) and Alické et al. (2020) who argued that self-awareness is the ability to have an accurate and profound understanding of one's own thoughts, feelings, strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations. It is the capacity of leaders to observe one's self from an objective perspective, recognizing patterns, habits, and tendencies. They noted that self-awareness is a vital component of personal growth, emotional intelligence, and success, therefore, self-awareness helps leaders make informed decisions that align with institutional values and goals. This is with the understanding that leaders' emotions and needs enable leaders to communicate more effectively. They (London et al., 2023; Ololube, 2024; Alické et al., 2020) further stated that self-awareness supports leaders in managing their emotions, leading to increased emotional intelligence, and recognizing leader's strengths and weaknesses allows leaders to focus on self-improvement. More importantly, they asserted that self-awareness

fosters empathy, leading to more meaningful and healthy relationships in public institutions. Unfortunately, the respondents did not see any of these qualities in Nigerian institutional leaders, because if these qualities are present in them, public institutions would have done better than the present situation they found themselves.

This is with the realization that self-awareness comforts leaders to practice meditation and mindfulness to increase self-awareness. Leaders in Nigerian public institutions could have been able to seek feedback by asking for constructive criticisms from trusted individuals in the public institutions, to assist them in engaging in self-examination through regular assessment of institutional values, goals, and motivations.

This study proved that self-awareness as a component of self-leadership is not a powerful tool for Nigerian institutional leader's personal growth, emotional intelligence, and institutional success. Nigerian public institution leaders have failed to develop self-awareness contents, they have failed in making informed decisions, communicate effectively, regulate their emotions, and build stronger relationships with staff, because they lack patience, kindness, and compassionate characteristics.

Self-Regulation of Nigerian Institutional Leader's Leadership and Management Practices / Effectiveness of Public Institutions: The results from research question two and hypothesis 2 showed that the respondents somewhat disagreed that self-regulation helps Nigerian public institution leader to manage their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in order to achieve personal and professional goals ($M = 3.2760$; $SD = 1.09144$), and majority of the respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-regulation of Nigerian institutional leaders with reference to their leadership and management practices does not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions ($p > .264$).

This finding is contrary to the findings of Ololube (2024) who noted that public institutional leaders who possess strong self-regulation skills are better equipped to handle stress, make sound decisions, and maintain positive relationships with their team members. The same is true when van der Werff et al. (2019) asserted that self-regulation also plays a key role in fostering trust and credibility among followers. Similarly, Kleyhans et al. (2021) distinguished that self-

regulation is essential for leaders as it enables them to remain composed and focused even in challenging situations, and by regulating their emotions, leaders can avoid impulsive reactions and instead respond thoughtfully and strategically. Regrettably, Nigerian public institution leaders do not lead by example. They do not demonstrate control over their own behavior and emotions, they set bad standard for others to follow. They inspire team members to emulate the negative self-regulatory practices, leading to poor overall performance and productivity within the institutions.

Self-Motivation of Nigerian Institutional Leader's Leadership and Management Practices / Effectiveness of Public Institutions: Results as presented in respondents answer to research question three and hypothesis three showed that respondents somewhat disagreed that leaders self-motivation in the leadership and management do not contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria ($M = 3.3211$; $SD = 1.07561$). 78% of the respondents regardless of their demographic information held that self-motivation of Nigerian institutional leaders with regards to their leadership and management practices do not significantly contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

These results is not in line with Yukl (2013) who observed that self-motivated leaders possess certain key characteristics and follow specific strategies to maintain their motivation levels high, inspiring their teams and achieving institutional goals effectively. Regrettably, Nigerian public institution leaders are not skillful at setting challenges yet achievable goals for themselves, they are motivated by corruption. They maintain and remain focus toward institutional goals and work less to accomplish goals, they are good at inspiring their teams to follow suit in corruption.

In the same vein, the respondents just like Ololube (2024) noted that Nigerian institutional leaders are indeed less skilled at setting ambitious and attaining goals, and they focus less on achieving objectives. Institutional leaders create less clear direction and vision for their team members and do not clearly motivate team members to work towards a common purpose. As a result, discourage a culture of accountability and responsibility

According to Osland et al. (cf., 2007), self-motivated leaders engage in regular self-

reflection to assess their progress towards goals, identify areas for improvement, and learn from both successes and setbacks. This introspective practice fuels continuous personal growth. But Nigeria institutional leaders do not harness their emotional intelligence to channel feelings positively, make sound decisions, and maintain a balanced perspective amid challenges, and do not view failures as opportunities for learning rather than setbacks (cf., Robbins & Coulter, 2018). Institutional leaders do not turn uncertainties into opportunities for growth, and their successes are tied to corruption level amidst the demands of leadership responsibilities.

Self-Discipline of Nigerian Institutional Leader's Leadership and Management Practices / Effectiveness of Public Institutions: Self-discipline is the ability to control one's thoughts, feelings, and actions in pursuit of long-term goals and objectives. It involves setting standards, sticking to them, and avoiding procrastination, distractions, and unhealthy habits. Thus, discipline plays a crucial role in shaping exceptional leaders. It goes beyond mere control or punishment, focusing on creating structure, order, and purpose within a team or organization. Disciplined leadership involves bringing clarity, process, and focus to tasks and goals. Leaders with discipline as one of their key attributes possess precision, routine, and structure in their approach. They pay attention to detail, follow timelines diligently, and thrive on maintaining order and control (cf., Yukl, 2013).

Regrettably, the results as presented by the respondents in their answer to research question four and hypothesis four showed that they somewhat disagreed that Nigerian public institution leaders have the ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions in pursuit of long-term goals and objectives, they further somewhat disagree that Nigerian public institution leaders with discipline as one of their key attributes possess precision, routine, and structure in their approach. The analyzed data suggests somewhat disagreement that Nigeria's leaders' self-discipline in leadership and management practices contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions in Nigeria. The results revealed that a large number of the respondents (91%) regardless of their demographic information held that self-discipline of Nigerian institutional leaders regarding their leadership and management practices does not significantly

contribute to the effectiveness of public institutions.

Accordingly, Nigerian public institutional leaders do not have an eye for detail and appreciate clear processes. They focus less on timelines, deadlines, and prefer structured routines. The leaders they have enjoy being in control of their environment without recourse to achieving institutional goals (Kolzow, 2014; Wijnants, 2023). However, their commitment to structure and order do not enhance productivity and ensures that objectives are met consistently (Ololube, 2024).

7. CONCLUSION

Promoting self-leadership and management practices within Nigerian public institutions represents a transformative journey towards enhancing accountability, transparency, and overall efficiency. This study highlighted the vital role of empowering individuals within the Nigerian public institutions to take ownership of their roles, make informed decisions, and exemplify leadership qualities. Developing a culture where self-leadership thrives, Nigerian public institutions can effectively address the longstanding challenges like corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a lack of innovation and motivation.

One of the key findings of this study is that investing in human capital development is fundamental to nurturing effective self-leadership. Through tailored training programs, mentorship initiatives, and continuous feedback mechanisms, employees can acquire the necessary skills and mindset to excel in their respective roles, because this does not only improves individual performance but also contributes to the overall public institutions success. Promoting a merit-based system of advancement and cultivating a positive work environment establishes the foundations for success.

Furthermore, instilling values of integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct at all levels of the organization is essential in creating a conducive work environment for self-leadership to flourish. When employees are motivated to uphold these values, they are more likely to contribute their best efforts towards building resilience and achieving common public institutional goals. This cultural transformation not only enhances internal cohesion but also

strengthens the institution's credibility and trustworthiness among stakeholders and the public.

Efforts to addressing the systemic issues within Nigerian public institutions require a multi-faceted approach that involves commitment from both leadership and employees. Leaders must demonstrate a clear commitment towards promoting and supporting self-leadership initiatives through policy frameworks and resource allocation. Equally important is the active participation and engagement of employees in embracing and driving these initiatives.

Looking ahead, the journey towards promoting effective self-leadership and management practices in Nigerian public institutions necessitates ongoing efforts in human capital development, building a culture of continuous improvement, and promoting accountability at all levels. Nigerian public institutions can position themselves as beacons of excellence that effectively meet the needs of citizens, drive sustainable development, and contribute to national growth and prosperity.

Promoting self-leadership and management practices represents not just a strategy for institutional improvement but a pathway towards achieving broader societal goals of transparency, accountability, and effective governance in Nigerian public institutions. With concerted efforts and sustained commitment, the potential for positive transformation is significant, thereby paving the way for a more prosperous and equitable future for public institutions.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, the following recommendations are made:

- The government should as a matter of urgency develop and implement structured leadership development programs tailored to Nigerian public sector needs, focusing on self-leadership principles such as self-awareness, resilience, and adaptive leadership.
- The government should as a matter of urgency provide comprehensive training in modern management techniques, including project management, strategic planning, and effective communication skills, to enhance managerial effectiveness within public institutions.

- The government should as a matter of urgency establish mentorship and coaching programs where experienced leaders guide emerging leaders in cultivating self-leadership qualities and applying them in practical public administration contexts.
- The government should as a matter of urgency introduce robust performance management systems that emphasize self-assessment, goal setting, and continuous feedback loops to encourage accountability and drive individual and organizational performance.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

CONSENT

As per international standards or university standards, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standards or university standards written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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