

ADOPTION OF INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between innovative management practices and sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, focusing on Jos North, Jos South, and Jos East Local Government Areas. Specifically, it explored how E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, and Capacity Development influence Sustainable Local Government Administration. The study adopted a survey research design, and data were collected from 146 employees using structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0, employing Pearson correlation analysis to test the relationships among variables. Findings revealed that E-Governance Practices had a weak negative but significant relationship with both Capacity Development ($r = -0.235$, $p = 0.004$) and Sustainable Local Government Administration ($r = -0.276$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting implementation and readiness challenges. In contrast, Performance Management Systems showed strong positive correlations with Capacity Development ($r = 0.635$, $p = 0.000$) and Sustainable Local Government Administration ($r = 0.453$, $p = 0.000$). Capacity Development also demonstrated a very strong positive relationship with Sustainable Local Government Administration ($r = 0.940$, $p = 0.000$). The study concludes that strengthening performance management and continuous capacity development significantly enhances sustainable local governance. It recommends improving accountability frameworks, promoting employee training, and ensuring the effective implementation of e-governance strategies to achieve administrative sustainability.

Keywords: Innovative Management Practices, E-Governance, Performance Management, Capacity Development

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public sector organizations around the globe are feeling the heat to upgrade their administrative systems as citizens' expectations grow and resources become scarcer. The old-school bureaucratic setups, with their strict hierarchies, reliance on paper, and lackluster feedback loops, just aren't cutting it anymore when it comes to delivering transparent, efficient, and citizen-centered services (Nwafor, Afuecheta, & Umetiti, 2024). As a result, experts are pushing for the embrace of fresh management practices like e-governance, performance management systems (PMS), and capacity development, which are seen as essential steps toward achieving sustainable and accountable governance (Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, & John, 2025; Eneanya, 2018).

Local governments, being the closest tier to the people, are tasked with providing crucial services such as education, healthcare, waste management, and infrastructure. However, in Nigeria, their effectiveness is hampered by limited fiscal independence, administrative hiccups, and inconsistent decentralization reforms (World Bank, 2021; Otinche, 2023). According to the World Bank's State and Local Governance Reform Project (SLOGOR), decentralization doesn't bring much benefit unless it's paired with reforms in financial management, human capacity, and information systems (World Bank, 2021).

Research shows that e-governance, through digital platforms, service portals, and data systems, can significantly improve accessibility, efficiency, and transparency (Nwambuko, 2025; Olabimitan et al., 2025). Still, challenges like poor infrastructure, low digital literacy, and inadequate ICT capacity continue to hold it back (Ihemadu, 2024). Similarly, PMS initiatives, which aim to align organizational goals with individual performance and accountability, often fall short due to weak measurement frameworks and a lack of managerial skills (Eneanya, 2018).

Investing in capacity development through staff training, strengthening institutions, and enhancing leadership skills is just as crucial for fostering sustainable administration. Recent studies show that local authorities equipped with systematic capacity-building frameworks are in a much better position to effectively roll out developmental initiatives (Cvetković et al., 2021; World Bank, 2021). The literature collectively highlights that innovative management practices especially the integration of e-governance, performance management systems (PMS), and capacity development are crucial for achieving sustainable local government administration. However, many existing studies in Nigeria tend to look at these factors separately, which limits our understanding of how they work together to impact sustainability outcomes (Eneanya, 2018; Olabimitan et al., 2025). Additionally, most of the evidence we have comes from pilot reforms,

with little comparative analysis across different Local Government Areas (LGAs) (World Bank, 2021). This study aims to fill those gaps by empirically examining the relationship between innovative management practices (like e-governance, PMS, and capacity development) and sustainable local government administration in Nigeria. It combines both quantitative and qualitative data to assess whether adopting these practices truly boosts administrative sustainability and under what circumstances. The findings are anticipated to contribute to the field of public administration, enhance evidence-based policy design, and inform reform implementation at both state and local levels (World Bank, 2021; Cvetković et al., 2021).

Objective of the Study

The following objective will guide this research:

- i. To determine the impact of innovative management practices on sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

- i. H_{01} : Innovative management practices have no significant impact on sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, Nigeria.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Innovative Management Practices

Innovative management practices have taken center stage in today's discussions around organizational and public administration, focusing on creativity, efficiency, and adaptability to achieve sustainable results. These practices involve rolling out new managerial processes and structures that change the way work is organized and carried out (Volberda, Van den Bosch, & Heij, 2013). As Fred (2024) points out, they include reforms and actions that boost organizational performance, accountability, and a culture of continuous learning. Rooted in classical management theories, which defined management as the process of achieving results through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Koontz & Weihrich, 2009), the concept of innovation has now expanded to embrace creativity and digital adaptability in management roles. Griffin (2021) highlighted that innovation is a key factor in decision-making, performance evaluation, and human resource development, marking a shift from strict control to a more technology-driven approach that encourages problem-solving and knowledge sharing (Guendüz, 2025). Gupta, Bostrom, and Huber (2010) pointed out that innovative management practices help maintain a continuous alignment between organizational systems and the demands of the environment. In the public sector, this includes initiatives like e-governance, results-based management, and structured capacity development, all aimed at enhancing transparency and

efficiency (Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, & John, 2025). Didin (2024) described these practices as multifaceted, incorporating creativity, participatory leadership, and evidence-based evaluation, while Liarte (2024) emphasized that fostering openness and a spirit of experimentation is vital for sustaining innovation. In local government administration, these practices tackle inefficiencies and resource challenges by promoting accountability, citizen engagement, and institutional resilience. The World Bank (2021) noted that sustainable local governance relies on the ability to embrace innovative managerial strategies, such as digital transformation and performance monitoring.

E-Governance Practices

E-governance has become a fundamental part of modern public administration, blending information and communication technologies (ICT) into government processes to boost transparency, efficiency, and citizen involvement. As Misuraca (2022) points out, e-governance is all about strategically using digital tools and data systems to revamp public service delivery, streamline administrative tasks, and enhance accountability. In a similar vein, Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, and John (2025) describe e-governance as the use of ICT in managing the public sector to improve responsiveness, accessibility of services, and decision-making efficiency. This concept is part of a larger digital transformation movement aimed at modernizing bureaucratic structures and encouraging participatory governance. Ndou (2023) highlights that e-governance not only digitizes administrative tasks but also reshapes how citizens interact with the government through online portals, mobile apps, and open data platforms. In Nigeria, e-governance initiatives have been associated with better public financial management, increased procurement transparency, and quicker service delivery, although issues like poor ICT infrastructure, low digital literacy, and inconsistent policy frameworks still pose challenges (Ihemadu, 2024; World Bank, 2021). E-governance typically revolves around four main dimensions: government-to-citizen (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-government (G2G), and government-to-employee (G2E) interactions which together enhance service integration, administrative efficiency, and coordination between departments (United Nations, 2022). Didin (2024) emphasizes that successful implementation hinges on institutional readiness, data interoperability, and strong cybersecurity measures to maintain public trust and ensure system reliability.

In the realm of local government administration, e-governance practices are essential for promoting accountability, encouraging citizen involvement, and enhancing service efficiency right at the grassroots level. According to the World Bank (2021), local e-governance systems like electronic budgeting, digital tax collection, and online platforms for addressing complaints play a vital role in fostering sustainability and governance that puts citizens first. As such, we can see e-governance practices as digital tools that drive administrative reform, paving the way for

greater operational transparency, active participation, and sustainable service delivery in local governments. When implemented effectively, these practices mark a significant shift from traditional bureaucratic management to a more data-driven, citizen-focused approach to governance in Nigeria.

Performance Management Systems (PMS)

Performance Management Systems (PMS) play a crucial role in today's organizational and public sector management, helping to turn institutional goals into measurable actions and results. Eneanya (2018) points out that PMS is all about the ongoing process of identifying, measuring, and enhancing the performance of individuals and teams, ensuring that these efforts align with the broader strategic goals of the organization. More recently, Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, and John (2025) highlighted that in the public sector, PMS serves as a structured framework for government agencies to assess how well they deliver services, maintain accountability, and evaluate policy effectiveness. The concept of PMS is rooted in traditional management principles, such as planning, monitoring, and control, but it has evolved to incorporate a more dynamic, data-driven, and participatory approach to organizational performance (Griffin, 2021). Today's PMS focuses not just on evaluating performance but also on enhancing it through feedback loops, capacity building, and incentives that encourage innovation and accountability (Nwafor, Afuecheta, & Umetiti, 2024). This shift means that performance management is no longer just a tool for punishment or evaluation; it has become a developmental and strategic approach to achieving institutional excellence. In the realm of public administration, PMS helps turn government plans and budgets into real service outcomes. Didin (2024) noted that a strong PMS allows local government departments to set clear objectives, track their progress, and adjust their activities based on performance data. The World Bank (2021) also stressed that performance management frameworks are essential for boosting transparency, fiscal responsibility, and public trust in institutions, especially when they are tied to evidence-based decision-making and performance-oriented budgeting. While research shows that the implementation of Performance Management Systems (PMS) in many developing countries, like Nigeria, is still quite limited and inconsistent (Eneanya, 2018; Otinche, 2023), there are several hurdles to overcome. Issues such as weak data systems, a lack of managerial skills, political meddling, and poor performance indicators often hinder the long-term success of PMS reforms. However, when designed and executed effectively, PMS can significantly boost accountability, foster learning, and improve public service delivery. In essence, Performance Management Systems can be viewed as organized, evidence-driven frameworks that focus on measuring, managing, and enhancing both organizational and governmental performance. They are crucial for a results-oriented administration, ensuring that public institutions especially local governments function efficiently, transparently, and in line with sustainable long-term goals.

Capacity Development

Capacity development has emerged as a crucial element in modern public sector reform, especially when it comes to achieving sustainable governance and enhancing service delivery. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2022) describes capacity development as the journey through which individuals, organizations, and institutions bolster their abilities to perform tasks, tackle challenges, and reach their goals sustainably. In the realm of public administration, this involves intentional efforts to improve human resources, organizational systems, and institutional frameworks that are vital for effective policy execution and service delivery (Cvetković et al., 2021; World Bank, 2021).

Eneanya (2018) points out that capacity development goes beyond just training and skill-building; it also means fostering supportive environments, restructuring systems, and encouraging ongoing learning within government frameworks. This perspective aligns with the insights of Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, and John (2025), who noted that the success of sustainable local governance heavily relies on the capability of staff to plan, implement, and oversee projects effectively. Therefore, capacity development is a comprehensive and evolving process designed to ensure that government institutions can adapt to the ever-changing social, economic, and technological landscapes. In practice, capacity development functions on three interconnected levels: individual, organizational, and institutional. At the individual level, it's about enhancing technical and managerial skills through training, mentoring, and professional growth. At the organizational level, the focus shifts to refining structures, workflows, and systems that drive performance. Meanwhile, at the institutional level, it aims to strengthen the wider regulatory and policy framework that underpins effective governance (UNDP, 2022; Didin, 2024). These interconnected dimensions ensure that capacity development not only boosts immediate skill sets but also promotes long-term sustainability within institutions. Empirical evidence indicates that local governments in Nigeria encounter enduring capacity limitations, characterized by insufficient human resource planning, restricted digital literacy, and ineffective performance monitoring frameworks (Otinche, 2023; Nwafor, Afuecheta, & Umetiti, 2024). The World Bank (2021) stressed that targeted capacity-building efforts, especially those that focus on planning, budgeting, and monitoring, are necessary to turn reforms into real improvements in service delivery. Cvetković et al. (2021) similarly discovered that well-organized capacity development programs improve a local authority's capacity to achieve participatory governance and sustainable development objectives.

Sustainable Local Government Administration

Sustainable local government administration means that local governments can manage public resources, provide important services, and improve the well-being of the community in ways that

meet current needs without making it harder for future generations to meet their own needs (World Bank, 2021). It represents values of accountability, openness, participatory governance, and long-lasting institutional strength. Otinche (2023) says that sustainability in local government goes beyond just environmental issues. It also includes economic viability, social inclusion, and administrative efficiency, all of which affect the quality and continuity of public service delivery.

The idea comes from the larger idea of sustainable development, which the United Nations (UNDP, 2022) says is about bringing together economic, social, and environmental goals in public administration. In this context, sustainable local government administration involves strategic management practices that guarantee responsible financial management, successful policy execution, and service delivery focused on citizens. Eneanya (2018) observed that sustainable governance relies on the robustness of local institutions to ensure operational efficiency, maintain accountability, and adapt to the evolving needs of the community. Many local governments in Nigeria have trouble being sustainable because they rely on higher levels of government for money, have weak institutional capacity, poor accountability systems, and don't get enough input from citizens (Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, & John, 2025; Nwafor, Afuecheta, & Umetiti, 2024). The World Bank's (2021) State and Local Governance Reform Project (SLOGOR) report says that local governments can only be sustainable if they use new ways of managing, like e-governance, performance-based budgeting, and systematic capacity development. These practices help make transparency, efficiency, and community involvement a part of the way things are run, which is important for long-term administration.

Additionally, Didin (2024) noted that effective local government administration necessitates an organizational culture that fosters ongoing learning, digital integration, and decision-making grounded in empirical evidence. This means that sustainability is not a one-time goal but a process of adapting governance that is guided by innovation, inclusion, and smart resource management. Cvetković et al. (2021) also stressed that sustainability at the local level is strengthened by capacity-building programs that give public officials the tools they need to handle change well and make sure that administrative practices are in line with long-term development goals. Sustainable Local Government Administration can be understood as a governance framework that incorporates accountability, efficiency, inclusivity, and adaptability in the management of local matters. It aims to make sure that local governments stay viable, responsive, and focused on development by making new management methods standard. In Nigeria, achieving sustainability necessitates a concerted emphasis on digital transformation, performance management, and the enhancement of human capacity as essential instruments for robust local governance. Capacity development can be seen as a process of change that never

ends, in which people and organizations learn, use, and keep the skills they need to govern well. It is necessary for the long-term success of local government in Nigeria because it promotes institutional resilience, innovation, and accountability

Theoretical Review

This study is grounded in Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) (Rogers, 1962; 2003). IDT explains how new ideas, technologies, or practices are adopted and diffused within social systems over time. The theory posits that the rate and success of adoption are influenced by five key attributes: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers, 2003). In the context of innovative management practices, such as e-governance, performance management systems, and capacity development, IDT provides a framework for understanding how these innovations are integrated into local government administration.

Relative advantage refers to the perceived benefits of adopting innovative management practices, such as improved transparency, accountability, and efficiency, compared to traditional bureaucratic approaches (Kaminski, 2011). Compatibility assesses how well these practices align with existing organizational structures and culture, while complexity considers the technical and managerial challenges that may hinder their implementation. Trialability and observability relate to the ability of local governments to experiment with new practices and the visibility of their outcomes to stakeholders, respectively (Eneanya, 2018; Otinche, 2023).

By applying Innovation Diffusion Theory, this study examines the factors that facilitate or impede the adoption of innovative management practices in local government administration. It also highlights the importance of managerial perceptions, institutional readiness, and environmental conditions in shaping the pace and impact of these innovations on sustainable governance outcomes. Thus, IDT serves as a guiding framework for evaluating the relationship between the adoption of innovative management practices and the achievement of sustainable local government administration in Nigeria.

Empirical Review

Olabimitan, Ogunmodede, and John (2025) conducted a multi-site survey of local government councils in Nigeria to assess the adoption of e-governance and its impact on administrative transparency and efficiency. Their findings indicated that while e-governance initiatives, such as digital record management and online service portals, improved access to information and accountability, their effectiveness was often constrained by limited ICT infrastructure and low digital literacy among staff. The study relied on cross-sectional survey data, which limited its ability to capture long-term changes, yet it provided foundational evidence that digital

innovations can promote more transparent and responsive local governance when adequately supported.

Nwafor, Afuecheta, and Umetiti (2024) examined performance management systems (PMS) within local governments using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Their research demonstrated that the presence of clear performance targets, regular staff evaluations, and outcome-based promotions were strongly correlated with improved service delivery and institutional accountability. However, the study also highlighted frequent challenges, such as weak data systems and inconsistent evaluation frameworks. Although the research offered robust empirical support for the role of PMS in strengthening governance, it was limited by its focus on select urban councils, leaving rural dynamics underexplored. These findings are directly relevant to the current study, as they underscore the importance of PMS in enhancing sustainable administration.

Cvetković et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between capacity development and sustainable governance across public sector organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Using structured interviews and survey data, they found that ongoing staff training, mentorship programs, and institutional support significantly improved policy implementation and organizational resilience. Notably, their study emphasized the necessity of aligning training programs with local needs and contextual realities. While the research covered a broad regional scope, its generalizability to Nigeria's local government context was somewhat limited by varying administrative structures. Nonetheless, it underscores the critical importance of continuous capacity development for fostering sustainable local government administration.

These empirical studies provide robust evidence that innovative management practices, particularly e-governance, performance management systems, and capacity development, are essential for sustainable local government administration. However, they also highlight continuing gaps, particularly regarding the integration of multiple practices and the adaptation to local challenges, which the current study seeks to address within the context of Plateau State, Nigeria.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, which is suitable for examining the relationships among variables at a particular point in time without manipulating any study conditions. This design was chosen to explore the impact of innovative management practices, specifically E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, and Capacity Development, on sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, Nigeria. The approach enabled the researcher to systematically collect standardized data from employees

across selected local government areas, allowing for empirical evaluation of their perceptions and experiences regarding innovative management practices as they are implemented within the local government context.

Nature and Sources of Data

Primary data for this research were collected via a structured questionnaire administered to employees of Jos North, Jos South, and Jos East Local Government Areas in Plateau State. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended items designed to assess respondents' perceptions and evaluations of E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, Capacity Development, and sustainable local government administration. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, with 146 valid responses subsequently analysed. All participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and the data collection process adhered strictly to ethical research standards.

Methods of Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including mean, median, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage, were used to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics and to identify general trends in the adoption of innovative management practices. Inferential statistics was then applied to test the study's hypotheses and determine the strength and significance of relationships among E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, Capacity Development, and sustainable local government administration. Specifically, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to assess associations between the independent and dependent variables. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25, and results were presented in tabular form for clarity, interpretation, and ease of comparison.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

Data Presentation

Table 4.1 displays the descriptive statistics for four key variables examined in this study: E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, Capacity Development, and Sustainable Local Government Administration. Data were analysed from 146 valid responses, with no missing values reported for any variable. The mean scores range from 7.97 (E-Governance Practices) to 9.41 (Performance Management Systems), indicating that respondents generally rated the adoption of these practices positively, with Performance Management Systems receiving the highest average score. The median values are close together, 8 for E-Governance Practices and Sustainable Local Government Administration, and 9 for both Performance Management Systems and Capacity Development, which demonstrates a consistent central tendency across responses.

The standard deviation values are relatively low, from 0.507 (Performance Management Systems) to 1.436 (Sustainable Local Government Administration), suggesting that participant responses were generally uniform, with little dispersion around the mean. The minimum recorded values are 7 for E-Governance Practices, 8 for Capacity Development, and 9 for both Performance Management Systems and Sustainable Local Government Administration, while the maximum values range from 11 to 12, reflecting the upper end of the scale used for these items.

These descriptive statistics reveal a high level of consistency in respondents’ perceptions across the four variables. The close grouping of the means and medians, as well as the similarity in standard deviation values, indicate that most participants share a similar view regarding the extent to which innovative management practices are adopted and their impact on sustainable local government administration.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics Analysis of Adoption of Innovative Management Practices for Sustainable Local Government Administration in Nigeria

Descriptive Statistics					
		E-Governance Practices	Performance Management Systems	Capacity Development	Sustainable Local Government Administration
N	Valid	146	146	146	146
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		7.97	9.41	9.00	8.60
Median		8.00	9.00	9.00	8.00
Std. Deviation		0.783	0.507	1.349	1.436
Minimum		7	9	8	8
Maximum		11	11	12	12

Source: Survey Data, 2026

The result in the Table 4.2 presents the correlation analysis between the elements of innovative management practices, E-Governance Practices, Performance Management Systems, and Capacity Development, and Sustainable Local Government Administration. The results indicate that Performance Management Systems and Capacity Development both exhibit strong, positive, and statistically significant correlations with sustainable administration ($r = 0.453$ and $r = 0.940$, respectively; $p < 0.01$). This suggests that the effective implementation of performance management mechanisms and ongoing staff development are crucial drivers of sustainability within local government operations.

Conversely, E-Governance Practices show a negative but still statistically significant correlation with sustainable administration ($r = -0.276$, $p < 0.01$). This finding implies that, while digital

governance initiatives are being introduced, their effectiveness in promoting sustainability may be hindered by challenges such as inadequate infrastructure or insufficient capacity among staff.

These results highlight that the integration of robust performance management systems and continuous capacity development is essential for enhancing sustainability in local government administration. The relatively weaker and negative correlation observed for E-Governance Practices underscores the importance of addressing implementation challenges to fully realize the benefits of digital innovation for sustainable governance.

Correlations					
		E-Governance Practices	Performance Management Systems	Capacity Development	Sustainable Local Government Administration
E-Governance Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	0.001	-.235**	-.276**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.991	0.004	0.001
	N	146	146	146	146
Performance Management Systems	Pearson Correlation	0.001	1	.635**	.453**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.991		0.000	0.000
	N	146	146	146	146
Capacity Development	Pearson Correlation	-.235**	.635**	1	.940**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004	0.000		0.000
	N	146	146	146	146
Sustainable Local Government Administration	Pearson Correlation	-.276**	.453**	.940**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.000	
	N	146	146	146	146

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data, 2026

Test for Hypotheses

To determine whether innovative management practices have a significant impact on sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, Nigeria, a Pearson correlation analysis was carried out using data from employees across the Jos North, Jos South, and Jos East Local

Government Areas. The analysis revealed that performance management systems had a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation with sustainable local government administration ($r = 0.453$, $p = 0.000$). Similarly, capacity development demonstrated a very strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation with sustainability outcomes ($r = 0.940$, $p = 0.000$). In contrast, e-governance practices showed a negative, but still statistically significant, correlation with sustainable local government administration ($r = -0.276$, $p = 0.001$).

Given that both performance management systems and capacity development exhibited significant and positive relationships with sustainability, and that e-governance practices also showed a significant, though negative, correlation, the null hypothesis is rejected. These findings provide substantial evidence that innovative management practices do, in fact, have a significant impact on sustainable local government administration in Plateau State. This underscores the importance of strengthening performance management systems and capacity development initiatives. Additionally, it highlights the need to address the challenges associated with the implementation of e-governance in order to fully realize its potential benefits for sustainable governance.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The results of this study demonstrate that innovative management practices are critical for achieving sustainable local government administration in Plateau State, Nigeria. Among the components examined, capacity development was identified as the most significant factor, exhibiting a very strong positive correlation with sustainability outcomes. Performance management systems also showed a strong and positive impact, emphasizing the importance of clear evaluation frameworks and accountability mechanisms. While e-governance practices were significantly related to sustainability, the correlation was negative, suggesting that without adequate infrastructure and staff readiness, digital initiatives alone may not yield the desired improvements in local governance.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that the implementation of innovative management practices, particularly capacity development and performance management systems, substantially enhances sustainable local government administration. These practices contribute to improved service delivery,

transparency, and institutional resilience. However, the effectiveness of e-governance initiatives is limited unless they are supported by adequate capacity building and technological readiness. The study's reliance on self-reported data and its focus on three local government areas are noted limitations; future research should expand the sample size and explore additional regions for broader generalizability.

Recommendations

It is recommended that local government authorities in Plateau State and beyond prioritize regular staff training, continuous professional development, and the establishment of robust performance management systems. Investments in digital infrastructure and targeted efforts to enhance digital literacy among employees should also be made to maximize the benefits of e-governance. Policymakers should develop clear guidelines and provide sufficient resources for the integration of innovative management practices into daily operations. Future studies are encouraged to broaden the scope to include more local government areas and to assess the long-term effects of these practices on administrative sustainability.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study provides empirical evidence that capacity development, performance management systems, and e-governance practices collectively influence the sustainability of local government administration in Nigeria. It contributes to the literature by highlighting the paramount importance of continuous capacity building and robust performance systems, while also addressing the challenges associated with digital transformation in public sector management. The findings reinforce the relevance of Innovation Diffusion Theory in understanding how new practices are adopted and sustained within local government settings, offering guidance for policy and practice in the quest for sustainable governance.

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