

LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS AND TEAM COLLABORATION: THEIR ROLE IN THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT: This study examined leadership dynamics and team collaboration as crucial factors for the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate how different leadership styles and collaborative practices influence school management outcomes. The population comprised 350 principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, consisting of 241 males and 109 females. Given the manageable population size, a census sampling technique was employed, involving all 350 principals. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire titled “Leadership Dynamics and Team Collaboration for Effective Management of Public Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (LDTCEMPSSSQ)”. The instrument’s validity was confirmed by experts, and its reliability, determined using the test-retest method, yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .791, which indicates high internal consistency. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions, while independent t-test statistics tested the null hypotheses at the .05 significance level. Findings revealed that principals effectively utilized instructional, transformational, distributed, and transactional leadership styles to promote efficiency, staff motivation, and goal achievement. Similarly, collaboration and teamwork were found to enhance communication, trust, shared responsibility, and alignment with school objectives. The study concluded that effective management requires a synergy of strong leadership and collaborative engagement to achieve quality education outcomes in Rivers State’s public senior secondary schools.

Keywords: Leadership Dynamics, Team Collaboration, Effective Management, Public, Senior, Secondary Schools, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Ugoala, B. I. (2025). Leadership dynamics and team collaboration: Their role in the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Leadership, Quality Education and African Development*, 2(4), 588-602. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18056812>.

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INTRODUCTION

Effective management of public senior secondary schools largely depends on the interaction between leadership dynamics and team collaboration. Leadership dynamics encompass the processes, styles, and behaviours through which principals and other educational administrators influence, motivate, and coordinate teachers toward achieving institutional goals. Team collaboration, on the other hand, refers to cooperative efforts among school personnel to solve problems, share knowledge, and implement instructional innovations. Together, these elements are pivotal to improving school performance and the quality of education (Akinola & Nwogu, 2021; Oboegbulem & Ogbonnaya, 2020).

Leadership in education is a dynamic process that determines how effectively human and material resources are utilised to achieve institutional goals. School leaders are not merely administrators but catalysts for organisational learning and innovation. Transformational leadership, which emphasises inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, has been shown to enhance teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Bass & Riggio, 2019; Nwadike, 2020). In Rivers State, empirical evidence indicates that transformational leadership behaviours among principals significantly correlate with teacher commitment, organisational citizenship, and school effectiveness (Nwadike, 2020; Oguru, 2022). Principals who demonstrate empathy, effective communication, and shared vision are more likely to cultivate environments where teachers collaborate and perform optimally (Ololube, 2017).

Leadership dynamics in schools can be classified into several interrelated dimensions—decision-making style (autocratic, participative, democratic), strategic orientation (instructional, transformational, transactional), and distribution of authority (distributed leadership). Distributed and participative leadership decentralise power and empower teachers to take part in decision-making, thereby creating ownership and collective accountability (Spillane, 2019). Studies in Rivers State reveal that consultative and democratic leadership practices significantly enhance staff morale and student academic outcomes (Chukwu, 2025). This suggests that school effectiveness is not achieved through authority alone but through shared responsibility and collaborative action (Onyebuchi & Agabi, 2023).

Team collaboration serves as the operational expression of effective leadership. Collaborative practices such as co-teaching, mentoring, peer observation, and joint problem-solving foster professional growth and mutual support among teachers (Harris & Jones, 2018). Collaboration also facilitates collective curriculum design, knowledge sharing, and pedagogical innovation, which are critical for adapting to changing educational needs. In the Nigerian context, teacher collaboration has been found to significantly influence instructional quality and student performance (Onyia, 2024). In Rivers State, collaborative teams help to address challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and teacher shortages by pooling expertise and resources (Nyeche, 2024).

However, effective leadership and collaboration face contextual constraints. Public schools in Rivers State often grapple with limited funding, inconsistent policy implementation, inadequate teacher motivation, and bureaucratic bottlenecks (Nyeche, 2024). These challenges tend to weaken institutional capacity for collaboration and innovation. Despite these obstacles, evidence shows that schools led by visionary and inclusive leaders often achieve higher levels of teacher cooperation and school goal attainment (Oguru, 2022). Such leaders employ adaptive and transformational strategies that build trust and enhance collective efficacy among staff (Adebayo & Olaniyan, 2022).

Leadership dynamics and team collaboration are therefore mutually reinforcing in promoting effective management. When principals demonstrate dynamic leadership characterised by shared vision, empathy, communication, and innovation. They encourage a culture of teamwork that translates into improved teaching effectiveness and student outcomes (Ololube, 2017; Bass & Riggio, 2019). Conversely, weak leadership or poor collaboration results in fragmented efforts, low teacher morale, and administrative inefficiency. Hence, in the Rivers State education system, strengthening leadership and fostering team collaboration remain indispensable strategies for enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of public senior secondary schools (Chukwu, 2025; Onyia, 2024).

The interplay between leadership dynamics and team collaboration forms the cornerstone of effective school management. Principals must adopt leadership styles that inspire trust, cooperation, and shared decision-making, while institutional frameworks should encourage professional learning communities and collaborative problem-solving. Strengthening these dimensions will help improve teacher performance, organisational cohesion, and student achievement across public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State has continued to generate concern among education stakeholders due to persistent issues of poor teacher morale, inadequate collaboration, and inconsistent leadership practices. Despite the government's efforts to improve school administration through policy reforms and capacity-building initiatives, many schools still experience low levels of staff motivation, weak teamwork, poor communication, and inefficient decision-making processes. The absence of dynamic and participatory leadership styles has often led to strained relationships between principals and teachers, resulting in diminished cooperation and suboptimal performance in the achievement of school goals.

In several public secondary schools in Rivers State, leadership tends to be hierarchical and bureaucratic, with limited teacher involvement in administrative and instructional decisions. This situation undermines the development of collective responsibility, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving. Furthermore, insufficient mechanisms for fostering teamwork among staff impede the smooth coordination of activities, affecting instructional delivery and student learning outcomes. Consequently, schools are unable to fully harness the potential of collaborative leadership to improve institutional effectiveness.

Therefore, the central problem this study seeks to address is the apparent gap between leadership dynamics and team collaboration in enhancing effective management practices in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study will explore how leadership behaviours and collaborative efforts among teachers and administrators jointly contribute to improved organisational effectiveness and educational outcomes.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate leadership dynamics and team collaboration: their role in the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study intended to:

- Investigate ways the leadership style is utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Find out how collaboration and teamwork is utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- How is leadership style utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.?
- How is collaboration and teamwork utilized for effective management of public senior secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on how leadership style is utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on how collaboration and teamwork is utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Participative Theory of Leadership

The Participative Theory of Leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is rooted in the belief that effective decision-making and organisational success are achieved when leaders actively involve subordinates in the leadership process. This theory emphasises inclusiveness, shared responsibility, consultation, and collective problem-solving as essential components of effective leadership (Likert, 1967; Yukl, 2013). The participative approach stands in contrast to autocratic leadership, which centralises authority, and laissez-faire leadership, which abdicates authority. It assumes that subordinates possess valuable insights, experiences, and competencies that, when harnessed, can enhance organisational performance and satisfaction (Koontz & Weihrich, 2015).

The Participative Theory emerged from the behavioural school of leadership thought in the mid-20th century, building upon democratic ideals and human relations principles advanced by scholars such as Kurt Lewin, Rensis Likert, and Douglas McGregor. Lewin's classic leadership studies identified the democratic leader as one who encourages group discussion and decision-making, fostering high morale and productivity (Lewin et al., 1939). Similarly, Likert's (1967) "System 4" management model proposed participative group decision-making as the most effective leadership system, where leaders and subordinates collaborate to achieve common objectives through trust and open communication.

Central to participative leadership is the leader's capacity to engage team members in setting goals, solving problems, and evaluating outcomes. This involvement builds ownership, commitment, and accountability among staff (Northouse, 2022). In the educational context, participative leadership empowers teachers to contribute to school management decisions concerning curriculum design, classroom supervision, student discipline, and professional development (Ololube, 2017). By engaging teachers in planning and problem-solving, school principals cultivate a sense of belonging and mutual respect, which strengthens motivation and cooperation.

Participative leadership is particularly relevant to the management of public senior secondary schools in Nigeria, including those in Rivers State, where hierarchical administrative

structures often limit teacher involvement in decision-making. Empirical studies have shown that principals who adopt participative leadership styles tend to achieve higher teacher morale, reduced conflict, and improved school effectiveness (Akinola & Nwogu, 2021; Onyebuchi & Agabi, 2023). Involving teachers in committees, staff meetings, and goal-setting processes encourages transparency and enhances teamwork, which ultimately contributes to better teaching and learning outcomes (Nwadike, 2020).

Moreover, participative leadership aligns closely with the principles of distributed and transformational leadership theories, which emphasise shared authority and empowerment (Spillane, 2019). Both approaches advocate that leadership is not the sole responsibility of the principal but a collective function shared among staff members. This collaborative model is vital in educational institutions where complex challenges demand multiple perspectives and innovative solutions. By promoting joint ownership of goals, participative leadership reduces resistance to change and enhances institutional resilience (Bass & Riggio, 2019).

However, participative leadership is not without limitations. Excessive consultation may slow down decision-making, especially in urgent situations, and differing opinions among staff can sometimes create tension. Additionally, leaders must possess strong interpersonal and communication skills to balance inclusiveness with authority (Yukl, 2013). Despite these challenges, the theory remains a cornerstone of effective educational leadership, promoting shared vision, teamwork, and sustainable school improvement.

The Participative Theory of Leadership highlights the importance of shared decision-making, communication, and collaboration between leaders and followers. In the context of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, adopting participative leadership enhances teacher commitment, fosters teamwork, and strengthens institutional management. When principals embrace democratic and inclusive practices, they lay the foundation for effective school governance and continuous improvement in educational outcomes.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Leadership Styles Utilized for Effective Management of Public Senior Secondary Schools

Leadership is a critical determinant of school effectiveness and institutional success. The style of leadership adopted by principals and educational administrators largely influences the behaviour, motivation, and productivity of teachers and students. In the context of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria, effective management requires leadership approaches that foster collaboration, innovation, and accountability (Akinola & Nwogu, 2021). Leadership styles represent the behavioural patterns through which leaders direct, guide, and influence others toward achieving institutional goals. The commonly utilized leadership styles in Rivers State schools include transformational, transactional, instructional, participative, and distributed leadership, each contributing in unique ways to effective school management (Ololube, 2017; Nwadike, 2020).

Transformational leadership is one of the most effective and widely practised styles among school principals. It emphasizes vision, inspiration, motivation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leaders are proactive; they motivate teachers to transcend personal interests and pursue collective institutional goals (Bass & Riggio, 2019). In Rivers State, principals who demonstrate transformational leadership qualities such as charisma, empathy, and intellectual stimulation have been found to enhance teacher morale, organizational

commitment, and overall school performance (Nwadike, 2020). By inspiring teachers through shared vision and values, transformational leaders promote a culture of trust, innovation, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning processes.

Transactional leadership, in contrast, relies on structured supervision, reward systems, and clear role expectations to maintain stability and efficiency. Transactional leaders emphasize performance-based rewards and sanctions to ensure compliance with established standards (Adebayo & Olaniyan, 2022). In the management of public senior secondary schools, this style helps to enforce discipline, accountability, and adherence to policy guidelines. Although transactional leadership may not promote creativity as strongly as transformational leadership, it is essential for maintaining order and ensuring that teachers meet performance benchmarks in resource-constrained environments like Rivers State (Oguru, 2022).

Instructional leadership focuses on the principal's role in improving teaching and learning outcomes through curriculum supervision, teacher mentoring, and evaluation (Hallinger, 2011). Instructional leaders prioritize academic excellence, teacher professional development, and student achievement. In Rivers State, principals who practice instructional leadership engage in classroom supervision, provide feedback to teachers, and promote effective pedagogical practices (Nyeche, 2024). This leadership style is vital in ensuring that schools remain focused on the core mission of student learning and academic performance.

Participative leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is another style that contributes significantly to effective school management. It emphasizes shared decision-making and collaboration between principals and teachers (Northouse, 2022). Principals who employ participative leadership create an inclusive environment where teachers feel valued and empowered to contribute to policy formulation and problem-solving. Studies in Rivers State have shown that democratic leadership fosters teamwork, job satisfaction, and commitment to school objectives (Onyebuchi & Agabi, 2023). This leadership style enhances trust, reduces resistance to change, and promotes innovation in school management.

Additionally, distributed leadership has gained increasing recognition as an effective model for managing complex educational systems. It involves delegating leadership responsibilities across multiple individuals and teams rather than concentrating authority in a single person (Spillane, 2019). In public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, distributed leadership enables teachers to assume leadership roles in curriculum committees, disciplinary panels, and extracurricular activities. This shared responsibility enhances institutional capacity, encourages collaboration, and supports professional learning communities (Ololube, 2017).

In practice, effective school management in Rivers State often involves a combination of leadership styles rather than reliance on a single model. Principals adopt a situational approach, applying transformational strategies to inspire teachers, transactional methods to enforce discipline, instructional approaches to improve learning outcomes, and participative mechanisms to enhance collaboration (Akinola & Nwogu, 2021). The effectiveness of these styles depends on the principal's ability to balance authority with empathy, vision with practicality, and control with participation.

Therefore, effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State depends on the application of multiple leadership styles tailored to context-specific challenges. Transformational and participative leadership foster motivation and collaboration, instructional leadership ensures academic quality, and transactional leadership maintains order and accountability. As a result, principals must adopt flexible and context-sensitive leadership approaches to improve institutional performance, teacher productivity, and student achievement.

Leadership training and policy reforms that promote participative and instructional practices are essential for sustaining the quality and effectiveness of secondary education in Rivers State.

Team Collaboration Strategies for Effective Management of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Team collaboration has become a cornerstone of effective school management, particularly within the dynamic and resource-constrained educational environment of Rivers State, Nigeria. The concept of team collaboration entails the systematic engagement of teachers, administrators, and support staff in collective planning, problem-solving, and decision-making processes aimed at achieving institutional goals (Harris & Jones, 2018). In public senior secondary schools, collaborative practices strengthen school governance, promote shared responsibility, and enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Effective collaboration ensures that leadership is not an isolated function of the principal but a distributed process involving all stakeholders (Spillane, 2019).

One of the most effective strategies for promoting collaboration in schools is shared decision-making. This involves creating structures such as school management committees, departmental teams, and staff meetings where teachers actively participate in developing school policies, curriculum design, and instructional practices (Northouse, 2022). In Rivers State, schools where principals adopt participative decision-making tend to experience greater staff commitment and lower conflict levels (Onyebuchi & Agabi, 2023). When teachers contribute to decisions that affect their professional practice, they develop a sense of ownership, which enhances job satisfaction and accountability (Nwadike, 2020). Collaborative decision-making also fosters transparency and ensures that diverse perspectives inform policy implementation.

Another important collaboration strategy is the establishment of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs are structured groups of teachers who meet regularly to reflect on instructional practices, analyze student data, and share best practices (DuFour & Fullan, 2013). In public secondary schools, PLCs help bridge knowledge gaps and foster continuous professional development. In Rivers State, where schools face challenges such as inadequate teacher training and limited instructional resources, PLCs provide platforms for mutual learning and mentorship (Nyeche, 2024). Through PLCs, teachers collectively develop innovative teaching approaches that improve student achievement and institutional performance.

Team teaching and peer mentorship are practical strategies that promote collaboration in instructional delivery. Team teaching involves two or more teachers jointly planning, delivering, and assessing lessons. This method encourages creativity, reduces instructional fatigue, and provides opportunities for teachers to learn from one another (Adebayo & Olaniyan, 2022). Peer mentorship, on the other hand, pairs experienced teachers with less experienced colleagues, facilitating professional growth and building confidence. In Rivers State, mentorship programs have been identified as key to improving teacher effectiveness and fostering collegial relationships (Chukwu, 2025). Both strategies enhance communication and trust among staff, contributing to a cohesive school climate.

Communication is the lifeblood of team collaboration. Open, transparent, and regular communication fosters trust and ensures that team members are informed and aligned with school objectives (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Principals in Rivers State who maintain consistent communication channels such as staff briefings, feedback sessions, and digital platforms report improved teamwork and fewer administrative misunderstandings (Oguru, 2022). Effective

communication also promotes inclusion, allowing teachers to voice concerns and contribute to problem-solving, which in turn strengthens organizational cohesion.

Conflict is inevitable in any collaborative setting; thus, effective conflict management is an essential collaboration strategy. Principals must employ mediation and negotiation skills to resolve disputes amicably (Northouse, 2022). Establishing clear norms for teamwork and emphasizing mutual respect help maintain positive relationships among staff. Research in Nigerian secondary schools indicates that principals who apply participative conflict resolution methods experience greater staff harmony and improved productivity (Akinola & Nwogu, 2021). Team cohesion, sustained through empathy, recognition, and shared goals, leads to improved school performance.

With technological advancement, digital collaboration tools such as WhatsApp groups, Google Workspace, and Microsoft Teams are being increasingly utilized by schools to enhance communication and coordination. In Rivers State, integrating technology into management processes facilitates remote collaboration, information sharing, and documentation of administrative decisions (Ololube, 2017). Such digital tools help overcome logistical challenges and strengthen teamwork among teachers across different departments.

Team collaboration is fundamental to effective school management and educational improvement in Rivers State. Collaborative planning, professional learning communities, team teaching, effective communication, conflict management, and digital collaboration are key strategies that promote unity and shared purpose among school personnel. When principals institutionalize these practices, they create a supportive school culture that enhances teacher motivation, organizational commitment, and student achievement. Therefore, the effective management of public senior secondary schools depends not only on leadership competence but also on the ability of school leaders to cultivate and sustain meaningful collaboration among all stakeholders.

METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine leadership dynamics and team collaboration as factors influencing the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This design allowed the researcher to collect firsthand information from participants, thereby facilitating a comprehensive description and analysis of prevailing conditions, opinions, and management practices within the school system.

The population of the study comprised 350 principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, consisting of 241 males and 109 females (Source: Planning, Research, and Statistics Department, Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, 2024). Owing to the manageable size of the population, a census sampling technique was adopted, allowing all 350 principals to participate in the study. This ensured full population coverage, minimized sampling error, and enhanced the reliability and validity of the results. Consequently, the sample included all 241 male and 109 female principals across the state's public senior secondary schools.

Data were gathered using a self-designed 10-item questionnaire titled "Leadership Dynamics and Team Collaboration for Effective Management of Public Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (LDTCEMPSSSQ)". The instrument consisted of two sections: Section 'A' obtained demographic data of the respondents, while Section 'B' addressed the two research questions. Items in Section B were rated on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

The validity of the instrument was confirmed through expert judgment. Three senior lecturers from the Department of Educational Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, relevance, and content adequacy. Their recommendations were incorporated before the final administration of the instrument.

To ensure, the test-retest method was used. The questionnaire was first administered to 20 principals of private secondary schools in Rivers State and re-administered after two weeks. The two sets of scores were correlated using the Cronbach Alpha method, which produced a coefficient of .791, indicating a high degree of internal consistency and temporal stability.

A total of 350 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to principals of public senior secondary schools across Rivers State by the researcher with the assistance of two trained research assistants. Respondents were encouraged to fill out the questionnaires immediately to ensure a high retrieval rate, while those unable to do so were revisited for collection. Out of the 350 copies distributed, 340 were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 97.14%, which was deemed sufficient for analysis.

Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while independent t-test statistics were applied to test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 28.

RESULTS

Research Question One: How is leadership style utilized for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on how leadership style enhance the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

s/n	Item Statements (N=340)	Male Principals N=236		Female Principals N=104		Mean Set	SD	Decision
		Mean	SD ₁	Mean	SD ₂			
1	Instructional leadership style inspires teachers and staff to work towards a shared vision of academic excellence	2.71	.68	2.63	.66	2.67	.67	Agree
2	Transformational leadership style prioritizes the needs of students, teachers, and staff	2.59	.65	2.64	.66	2.62	.66	Agree
3	Distributed leadership style involves teachers, staff, and sometimes students in decision-making processes	2.64	.66	2.56	.64	2.60	.65	Agree
4	Transactional leadership style sets clear expectations and rewards achievement	2.62	.66	2.59	.65	2.61	.66	Agree
5	transactional leadership style encourages collaboration and teamwork among teachers, administrators, and stakeholders	2.63	.66	2.57	.64	2.60	.65	Agree
Grand Mean Set & Standard deviation		2.64	.66	2.60	.65	2.62	.66	Agree

The results presented in Table 1 address Research Question One, which sought to determine how leadership style is utilized for the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings reveal that both male and female principals generally agreed that leadership style significantly enhances school management effectiveness. The overall grand

mean of 2.62 with a standard deviation of .66 indicates a collective positive perception among respondents regarding the influence of leadership styles on school administration. The low standard deviation also suggests that the responses were consistent across participants, showing minimal variation in opinions.

Across the specific items, all mean scores were above the decision benchmark of 2.50, which signifies agreement with each statement. Principals agreed that instructional leadership inspires teachers and staff to work toward a shared vision of academic excellence (Mean = 2.67). This suggests that effective school leaders motivate their teams through clear academic goals and by promoting instructional quality. The respondents also agreed that transformational leadership helps prioritize the needs of students, teachers, and staff (Mean = 2.62), highlighting the role of empathy, motivation, and shared commitment in achieving institutional objectives.

Furthermore, the finding that distributed leadership involves teachers, staff, and sometimes students in decision-making processes (Mean = 2.60) reflects the increasing recognition of participatory management as a tool for fostering inclusiveness and collective responsibility in school governance. Similarly, the respondents agreed that transactional leadership contributes to effective management by setting clear expectations and rewarding achievements (Mean = 2.61), as well as by encouraging collaboration and teamwork among teachers, administrators, and stakeholders (Mean = 2.60).

Taken together, these results suggest that principals in Rivers State apply a combination of instructional, transformational, distributed, and transactional leadership styles to achieve effective school management. Each style plays a complementary role in motivating staff, promoting teamwork, ensuring accountability, and maintaining high academic standards. The similarity in responses between male and female principals further implies that both groups share comparable perspectives on the importance of leadership dynamics in enhancing the management and overall performance of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: How is collaboration and teamwork utilized effective management of public senior secondary school in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on how collaboration and teamwork enhance effective management of public senior secondary school in Rivers State

s/n	Item Statements (N=340)	Male Principals N=236		Female Principals N=104		Mean Set	SD	Decision
		Mean	SD ₁	Mean	SD ₂			
6	Collaboration and teamwork among teachers allow for the sharing of best practices, resources, and ideas	2.75	.69	2.68	.67	2.72	.68	Agree
7	Collaboration and teamwork enable teachers to work together	2.61	.65	2.57	.64	2.59	.65	Agree
8	Collaboration and teamwork foster a sense of shared responsibility among teachers and staff	2.66	.67	2.62	.65	2.64	.66	Agree
9	Collaboration and teamwork ensure that all stakeholders are aligned with the school's goals and objectives	2.65	.66	2.64	.65	2.65	.66	Agree
10	Collaboration and teamwork create a positive school climate where trust, respect, and teamwork are valued	2.65	.66	2.63	.64	2.64	.65	Agree
Grand Mean Set & Standard deviation		2.66	.67	2.63	.65	2.65	.66	Agree

The results in Table 2 address Research Question Two, which sought to determine how collaboration and teamwork are utilized for the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings indicate a general agreement among both male and female principals that collaboration and teamwork significantly contribute to school effectiveness. The grand mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of .66 suggest that the respondents consistently perceive collaboration and teamwork as essential components of successful school management. The relatively low standard deviation indicates minimal variation in opinions among respondents, reflecting a shared understanding of the importance of these practices.

Across all items, the mean scores exceeded the benchmark of 2.50, signifying agreement on each statement. Principals strongly agreed that collaboration and teamwork among teachers promote the sharing of best practices, resources, and innovative ideas (Mean = 2.72). This implies that cooperative efforts enhance instructional quality and professional growth within the school community. Respondents also agreed that teamwork enables teachers to work more effectively together (Mean = 2.59), which helps strengthen communication, coordination, and problem-solving processes in daily school operations.

Furthermore, the finding that collaboration and teamwork foster a sense of shared responsibility among teachers and staff (Mean = 2.64) highlights their role in promoting accountability and collective ownership of school outcomes. The respondents also agreed that collaborative efforts ensure that all stakeholders are aligned with the school’s goals and objectives (Mean = 2.65), suggesting that joint planning and participation facilitate coherence in school vision and mission implementation. Likewise, the finding that teamwork helps create a positive school climate characterized by trust, respect, and cooperation (Mean = 2.64) underscores the social and relational benefits of a collaborative work culture.

Overall, the results reveal that collaboration and teamwork are central to the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. They enhance communication, build mutual trust, encourage the sharing of expertise, and strengthen a sense of unity among school personnel. The close similarity in mean ratings between male and female principals further indicates that both groups value collaborative practices as vital to achieving institutional effectiveness, promoting professional development, and sustaining a positive organizational climate in the school system.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the leadership style used for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis result on the significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the leadership style used for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Respondents’	N (340)	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	Decision
Male Principals	236	2.64	.66	338	.388	Not significant
Female Principals	104	2.60	.65			

Table 3 presents the summary of **t-test** analysis result on the significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the leadership style used for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The result of table above shows

that the t-calculated value of .388 is less than t-critical value of ± 1.96 at P-value of 0.05 level of significance at the degree of freedom of 338. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the leadership style used for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on the use of collaboration and teamwork for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis result on the significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the use of collaboration and teamwork for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Respondents'	N (340)	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	Decision
Male Principals	236	2.66	.67	338	.242	Not significant
Female Principals	104	2.63	.65			

Table 4 presents the summary of t-test analysis result on the significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the use of collaboration and teamwork for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The result of table above shows that the t-calculated value of .242 is less than t-critical value of ± 1.96 at P-value of 0.05 level of significance at the degree of freedom of 338. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the use of collaboration and teamwork for effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

Leadership Style for Effective School Management

The findings reveal that both male and female principals generally agreed that leadership style significantly enhances school management effectiveness. The overall grand mean of 2.62 with a standard deviation of .66 indicates a collective positive perception among respondents regarding the influence of leadership styles on school administration. Taken together, these results suggest that principals in Rivers State apply a combination of instructional, transformational, distributed, and transactional leadership styles to achieve effective school management.

This finding is in line with Adebayo and Olaniyan, (2022), Akinola and Nwogu (2021), Bass and Riggio (2019), Ololube (2017) and Nwadike (2020), when they found that leadership is a critical determinant of school effectiveness and institutional success. The style of leadership adopted by principals and educational administrators largely influences the behaviour, motivation, and productivity of teachers and students. In the context of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria, effective management requires leadership approaches that foster collaboration, innovation, and accountability. Leadership styles represent the behavioural patterns through which leaders direct, guide, and influence others toward achieving institutional goals. The commonly utilized leadership styles in Rivers State schools include transformational,

transactional, instructional, participative, and distributed leadership, each contributing in unique ways to effective school management.

Collaboration and Teamwork for Effective Management

The findings indicate a general agreement among both male and female principals that collaboration and teamwork significantly contribute to school effectiveness. The grand mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of .66 suggest that the respondents consistently perceive collaboration and teamwork as essential components of successful school management. Overall, the results reveal that collaboration and teamwork are central to the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

These findings are in line with the studies of Harris and Jones (2018), Spillane (2019), when they found that team collaboration has become the cornerstone of effective school management, particularly within the dynamic and resource-constrained educational environment. The concept of team collaboration entails the systematic engagement of teachers, administrators, and support staff in collective planning, problem-solving, and decision-making processes aimed at achieving institutional goals. In public senior secondary schools, collaborative practices strengthen school governance, promote shared responsibility, and enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Effective collaboration ensures that leadership is not an isolated function of the principal but a distributed process involving all stakeholders.

Same is true of Northouse (2022), One of the most effective strategies for promoting collaboration in schools is shared decision-making. This involves creating structures such as school management committees, departmental teams, and staff meetings where teachers actively participate in developing school policies, curriculum design, and instructional practices. Equally Onyebuchi and Agabi (2023), found that schools where principals adopt participative decision-making tend to experience greater staff commitment and lower conflict levels.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study reveal that both leadership dynamics and team collaboration play vital roles in the effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Principals in the state employ a combination of instructional, transformational, distributed, and transactional leadership styles to motivate teachers, foster shared vision, enhance participation in decision-making, and promote accountability. These leadership approaches collectively contribute to improved school performance and organizational harmony.

Similarly, collaboration and teamwork were found to be central to effective school management. Through cooperative engagement, teachers and administrators share ideas, align goals, and create a positive working atmosphere built on trust, respect, and shared responsibility. Such collaboration enhances problem-solving, encourages innovation, and ensures that all stakeholders work collectively toward achieving institutional objectives.

Generally, the results suggested that effective school management in Rivers State depends on the integration of sound leadership practices with strong collaborative efforts. Principals who embrace inclusive leadership and teamwork are better positioned to inspire staff, optimize resources, and sustain a productive learning environment. Therefore, promoting leadership competence and promoting collaborative school cultures remain essential for

achieving quality education and institutional success in the state's public senior secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Principals should ensure that leadership styles are maintained in school organizational culture to enhance effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Principals should ensure that collaboration and teamwork in school organizational culture is maintained to enhance effective management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

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