

GENDER AND EXPERIENCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY AS DETERMINANTS OF EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE

Josephine Ese IMIRUAYE

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria

imiruayej16@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This study examined gender and years of experience in the management of diversity as determinants of effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 6,484 respondents, which consisted of 310 principals and 6,174 teachers from 310 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample of 648 respondents, made up of 155 principals and 493 teachers was selected using simple random and proportionate sampling techniques. Data were collected using a self-structured instrument titled “Gender and Years of Experience Management of Diversity and Effective Administration Questionnaire (GYEMDEAQ)”. The instrument was validated by experts in educational management and leadership research, and the reliability was established using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded coefficients of .811 and .816. Out of the 648 questionnaires administered, 555 valid copies were retrieved and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the independent samples t-test was employed to test the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. The study’s findings revealed that effective management of gender diversity and diversity in years of experience contributes significantly to effective administration in public senior secondary schools. The study concluded that inclusive diversity management practices enhance cooperation, productivity and administrative effectiveness. The study recommended that school administrators should promote gender equity and leverage the expertise of experienced personnel to improve school administration.

Keywords: Gender Diversity, Years of Experience, Diversity Management, Effective Administration, Public Senior Secondary Schools, Rivers State.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Imiruaye, J. E. (2026). Gender and experience in the management of diversity as determinants of effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Leadership, Quality Education and African Development*, 3(2), 132-154. <https://doi.org/>

Copyright © 2026 IJLQEAD

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of school administration is fundamental to the achievement of educational goals and the overall success of secondary education in globally. School administration involves the processes of planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, supervising and evaluating educational activities to ensure the realization of institutional objectives (Akinwumi & Jayeoba, 2021). Effective administration is essential for the maintenance of discipline, enhancing staff productivity, promoting students’ academic achievement and ensures the efficient utilization of human and material resources. However, the increasing diversity of educational workforce globally has introduced new challenges and opportunities for school administrators. As a result,

the management of diversity has become critical aspect of educational administration in modern school systems.

Diversity management is to the deliberate efforts of institutional leaders to recognize, value and effectively utilize the differences among employees to achieve institutional objectives (Ossai & Oyibokure, 2024). In educational institutions, diversity exists in various forms, including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, educational qualifications and professional experience, and effective diversity management creates an inclusive environment where individuals feel valued and motivated to contribute meaningfully toward institutional success (Robbins & Judge, 2022). On the other hand, ineffective management of diversity results in conflicts, discrimination, low morale and poor institutional performance. Therefore, understanding how diversity dimensions such as gender and experience influence school administration is essential in enhancing our understanding of educational effectiveness.

Gender is one of the most visible dimensions of diversity in educational institutions. It refers to the socially constructed roles, responsibilities, expectations and the relationships associated with males and females within an institution (Eagly & Carli, 2007). In the educational sector, gender diversity recognizes the participation and contributions of both male and female teachers and administrators in leadership and decision-making processes. Historically, leadership positions in schools are predominantly occupied by males due to cultural beliefs and societal stereotypes regarding leadership capabilities (Ololube, 2024). However, modern educational policies advocate gender equity and equal opportunities in educational leadership. Research has shown that gender influence leadership styles, communication patterns, conflict resolution approaches and interpersonal relationships in institutions (Ololube, 2024). Female administrators are often associated with participatory and collaborative leadership styles, while male administrators are commonly linked with directive and task-oriented leadership approaches. Both leadership orientations can contribute positively to effective school administration when appropriately utilized.

The relevance of gender in school administration has over the years attracted considerable scholarly attention. Studies (e.g., Nwonkwo, 2025) have indicated that gender diversity in leadership can enhance decision-making quality, institutional creativity and staff participation in school governance. Furthermore, gender-inclusive administrative practices promote fairness, equal opportunities and improved workplace relationships among educational personnel (Ololube 2024). In Rivers State, where public senior secondary schools employ both male and female teachers as administrators, understanding the influence of gender on diversity management is crucial when promoting effective administration and institutional harmony.

Experience constitutes another important dimension of workforce diversity that significantly influences administrative effectiveness. Experience refers to the knowledge, skills, competencies, and professional expertise acquired through years of service and practical engagement in educational activities (Ukaigwe et al., 2020). Experienced administrators often possess a deeper understanding of institutional procedures, educational policies, staff management techniques and problem-solving strategies (Ololube, 2024). Such competencies enable experienced administrators to make informed decisions, manage conflicts effectively and respond appropriately to emerging challenges within the school environment.

Professional experience contributes significantly to leadership effectiveness because it enhances administrators' ability to coordinate human and material resources efficiently. According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), experienced school leaders are more capable of promoting positive school climates, mentoring subordinate staff, and implementing policies successfully.

Additionally, experienced teachers contribute valuable institutional knowledge and professional guidance that facilitate institutional stability and continuity. Their familiarity with school operations and educational reforms enables them to support administrative processes and improve institutional performance.

In public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, workforce diversity is characterized by the presence of teachers and administrators with varying levels of professional experience. While some personnel are newly employed and possess limited administrative exposure, others have accumulated substantial experience through years of service (Ololube, 2011). These differences in experience influence communication, decision-making, collaboration and overall administrative effectiveness (Ololube, 2009).

According to Ololube (2006, 2009, 2011), the significance of gender and experience in the management of diversity becomes more evident as educational institutions face increasing demands for accountability, quality assurance and improved student outcomes. Effective management of these diversity dimensions are able to promote teamwork, innovation, staff commitment and institutional efficiency. However, poor management leads to misunderstandings, interpersonal conflicts and reduced productivity among school personnel.

Statement of the Problem

Effective administration is essential for achieving educational goals in public senior secondary schools. School administrators are expected to coordinate human and material resources, maintain discipline, promote staff cooperation and create conducive environment for teaching and learning. However, the increasing diversity among teachers and school personnel has created management challenges that may affect administrative effectiveness. In public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, staff members differ in gender and years of professional experience and these differences may influence communication, decision-making, teamwork and institutional performance.

Regardless of government efforts to improve school administration through policies, training programs and leadership development initiatives, concerns still persist regarding ineffective communication, staff conflicts, low morale, unequal participation in decision-making and inefficiencies in school management. These challenges have always suggested that diversity among personnel do not adequately manage or support effective administration. Gender differences affect leadership interactions, perceptions and workplace relationships, while variations in experience influence competence, adaptability and collaboration among staff members.

Although several studies have examined workforce diversity and educational administration, however limited empirical evidence exists on the extent to which gender and experience in diversity management determine effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. As such, the major purpose of this study is to determine how gender and experience in the management of diversity influence effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate gender and experience in the management of diversity as determinants of effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

- Examine the extent diversity in gender is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Investigate the extent diversity in years of experience is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- To what extent is diversity in gender managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent is diversity in years of experience managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated and statistically tested at .05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in gender is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in years of experience is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Self-Efficacy Theory (SET)

Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) was developed by Albert Bandura in 1977 as a major component of Social Cognitive Theory. The theory emphasizes that an individual beliefs in his or her capability to organize and execute the actions required in achieving specific goals or performing particular tasks successfully (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura, self-efficacy influences how people think, feel, motivate themselves and behave. Individuals who possess high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to approach difficult tasks with confidence, persevere in the face of challenges, and achieve higher levels of performance than those with low self-efficacy.

Bandura (1997) argued that self-efficacy is developed through four principal sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Mastery experiences refer to successful performance of tasks, which strengthens an

individual's confidence in handling similar situations in the future. Vicarious experiences occur when individuals observe others successfully performing tasks, thereby increasing their belief that they too can succeed. Verbal persuasion involves encouragement and positive feedback from others, while physiological and emotional states relate to the individual's interpretation of physical and emotional reactions when facing challenges. Together, these sources shape an individual's perception of competence and influence subsequent behavior and performance.

In institutional settings, self-efficacy plays critical role in determining employee motivation, commitment, productivity and effectiveness. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to set challenging goals, exhibit greater persistence, and demonstrate resilience when confronted with obstacles (Luthans, 2011). In educational institutions, self-efficacy is particularly important because school administrators and teachers regularly encounter complex tasks involving leadership, decision-making, conflict resolution, resource management, and personnel supervision. Administrators who possess strong self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to manage school resources effectively, inspire staff members, and implement educational policies successfully.

The theory is relevant to the management of diversity in schools because administrators' confidence in their ability to manage diverse personnel significantly influences their effectiveness. Public senior secondary schools in Rivers State comprise teachers and administrators of different genders and varying levels of professional experience. Managing such diversity requires principals to possess confidence in their leadership abilities and competence in promoting inclusiveness, collaboration and mutual respect among staff members. Administrators with high self-efficacy are more likely to embrace diversity, address interpersonal challenges constructively and create a positive working environment that supports effective administration.

Furthermore, gender and years of experience may influence self-efficacy beliefs among school personnel. Experienced administrators often develop stronger self-efficacy through accumulated professional knowledge, successful leadership experiences, and exposure to diverse administrative situations. Similarly, both male and female administrators who have developed strong beliefs in their capabilities are likely to perform administrative duties effectively regardless of gender differences. Thus, self-efficacy serves as a psychological mechanism through which diversity management can contribute to effective school administration.

The application of SET to this study lies in its explanation of how confidence in leadership and management capabilities can enhance the administration of diverse school personnel. The theory suggests that principals and teachers who believe in their ability to manage gender and experience diversity effectively are more likely to achieve positive administrative outcomes. Therefore, SET provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between gender, experience, diversity management and effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity encompasses the range of differences and similarities that exist among employees in an institution. This diversity can include demographic characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, race, and religion, as well as less visible traits like sexual orientation, educational background, physical abilities, and personality traits. Understanding and appreciating

this wide array of attributes is critical, as each employee brings distinct perspectives, skills, and experiences to the workplace. Embracing these differences not only helps to nurture an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued but also contributes to the overall success and adaptability of the institution (Ololube, 2024). Institutions that highlight diversity recognize that their workforce's collective differences are a powerful asset that can fuel both growth and resilience.

In a globalized economy, workforce diversity is not just a moral imperative but a strategic asset that institutions must leverage to stay competitive. The benefits of diversity extend beyond just the enhancement of workplace culture; they directly impact business outcomes by driving creativity, innovation, and better decision-making. Diverse teams are better equipped to generate novel ideas because they draw from a broader spectrum of experiences and viewpoints, allowing for the exploration of different problem-solving approaches (Harrison & Klein, 2020). When team members have varied backgrounds, they are more likely to approach challenges from unique perspectives, which can lead to more robust and well-rounded solutions. This diverse approach to problem-solving is particularly valuable in industries that are highly competitive and require continuous innovation.

Institutions that embrace diversity are better positioned to understand and cater to a diverse customer base. A team with members representing different cultures, backgrounds, and experiences can bring insights that help the institution better serve its clients and customers. This understanding can be crucial for businesses seeking to expand into new markets or improve the appeal of their products and services to a wider audience. Research has consistently shown that diverse teams outperform their less diverse counterparts in many key areas, including financial performance, innovation, and employee satisfaction (Page, 2007). Institutions that prioritize diversity are often better equipped to respond to the needs and expectations of a global and multicultural market.

However, achieving the potential benefits of workforce diversity requires conscious and sustained efforts. Institutions must create policies and practices that promote an inclusive work environment and actively work to eliminate unconscious biases that could hinder team dynamics and productivity (Harrison & Klein, 2020). This may include diversity training programs, mentorship opportunities, and recruitment strategies aimed at attracting a wide range of candidates. Additionally, promoting an institutional culture where diversity is not just celebrated but integrated into everyday practices can enhance trust and cooperation among employees (Cox & Blake, 1991). Thus, intentionally creating an environment where all voices are heard and valued, institutions are able to unlock the full potential of their diverse workforce, leading to increased innovation, better decision-making, and overall improved performance (Ololube, 2024).

Diversity initiatives are not just about meeting quotas or adding demographic variety to an institution; they are essential for creating a workplace culture that genuinely values and respects every individual. Research has shown that when employees feel included and valued, their job satisfaction improves, which in turn enhances retention rates (Pitts, 2018). Inclusive environments empower employees to express themselves freely, contribute their unique perspectives, and feel a sense of belonging. This feeling of belonging can lead to stronger commitment, increased motivation, and a higher level of productivity. Institutions that order diversity and inclusion are better equipped to create an atmosphere where all employees are motivated to do their best work, encouraging a more positive and dynamic workplace.

Successfully managing workforce diversity involves more than simply hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds; it requires cultivating an inclusive culture where everyone feels welcomed and supported. Policies that promote equal opportunities are fundamental in ensuring fairness and reducing discrimination. These policies should include equitable recruitment practices, support for career development, and efforts to eliminate barriers to advancement for underrepresented groups. Additionally, mentorship programs play a significant role in helping individuals from diverse backgrounds navigate the workplace and develop their skills (Thomas, 2021). Diversity training programs are also important tools for addressing unconscious biases and promoting cultural competence, which is necessary in promoting mutual respect and understanding among employees (Harrison & Klein, 2020). Creating an environment where diversity is valued requires ongoing commitment and proactive strategies that embed inclusion into the institution's fabric.

Leadership is a critical factor in promoting and sustaining diversity and inclusion. Leaders must not only endorse diversity but also model inclusive behaviors and integrate these values into the institution's mission and strategic objectives (Thomas, 2021). This means that leaders should take active roles in encouraging open dialogue, recognizing achievements of diverse team members, and setting an example through their actions and decisions. When leadership demonstrates a clear commitment to diversity, it sets the tone for the entire institution, reinforcing that diversity and inclusion are not just optional but essential components of the company's core values. This can inspire employees at all levels to adopt inclusive practices and promote an environment that celebrates varied perspectives, contributing to a more cohesive and innovative workplace.

One of the most significant advantages of promoting workforce diversity is its positive impact on innovation. Diverse teams are uniquely positioned to generate new ideas and challenge conventional ways of thinking, which is vital for institutions aiming to remain competitive in rapidly changing markets (Page, 2007). When team members bring different experiences and perspectives to the table, they are more likely to approach problems from multiple angles and come up with creative solutions that a homogenous team might not consider. This diversity-driven innovation can lead to better products, improved services, and enhanced problem-solving abilities, allowing institutions to adapt more effectively to customer needs and industry trends (Ololube, 2024). Institutions that embrace and nurture diversity not only benefit from enriched creativity and innovation but also position themselves for long-term growth and sustainability.

For instance, a study by Ahmed et al. (2020) found that institutions with diverse workforces were better equipped to innovate and respond to customer needs, particularly in multicultural or global markets. Similarly, having employees from different cultural and demographic backgrounds enables institutions to understand and cater to a broader audience. In spite of the advantages, workforce diversity can present challenges if not properly managed. Miscommunication, cultural misunderstandings, and resistance to change are common issues in diverse workplaces. For example, differences in communication styles or work habits can sometimes lead to conflict or decreased collaboration.

Addressing the challenges associated with workforce diversity requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond hiring practices. Institutions must invest in conflict resolution mechanisms that are not only reactive but also proactive, creating systems that allow for issues to be resolved constructively before they escalate (Roberson, 2019). This can include mediation programs, peer-to-peer conflict resolution training, and clear guidelines for addressing disputes. Open communication channels are equally essential, as they ensure that employees feel heard

and understood. Establishing platforms for dialogue, such as regular town hall meetings or feedback loops, is able to promote trust and encourage employees to express their perspectives and concerns without fear of retaliation. Furthermore, promoting transparency and consistent communication from leadership helps set the tone for respectful interaction and inclusivity.

An inclusive institutional culture is another key factor in overcoming diversity challenges. It is not enough to simply have diverse representation; institutions must create environments where differences are celebrated and respected (Roberson, 2019). This can be achieved by implementing policies that reinforce inclusive behavior and support all employees, such as training programs on cultural competency and diversity awareness. Training initiatives should not only educate employees about biases but also equip them with the skills to interact effectively with colleagues from different backgrounds. Additionally, leadership plays a pivotal role in modeling inclusive behaviors, ensuring that diversity and inclusion are embedded in the institution's mission and daily practices (O'Leary & Sandberg, 2018). When leaders actively champion diversity and communicate its importance, they establish a standard that influences the institution's overall culture.

Beyond the internal benefits, promoting diversity within the workplace has far-reaching social implications. Institutions that prioritize diversity and inclusion contribute to reducing societal inequalities by creating opportunities for historically marginalized groups. This commitment can help bridge economic and social gaps by empowering individuals from diverse backgrounds to pursue career paths they may have previously been excluded from (Roberson, 2019). Employees who work in inclusive environments often take their experiences and newfound perspectives back to their communities, serving as role models and advocates for change. Such individuals can inspire others, showcasing the tangible benefits of diversity and illustrating how inclusive practices can lead to personal and professional success.

The impact of diversity in the workplace extends to influencing societal attitudes and perceptions. Diverse workplaces normalize the idea of inclusivity, reducing prejudice and promoting a greater appreciation for different cultures and perspectives (O'Leary & Sandberg, 2018). This can result in a ripple effect, where societal norms shift to embrace diversity more widely. As employees interact with colleagues from varying backgrounds and witness the positive outcomes of collaborative efforts, it helps challenge stereotypes and promotes tolerance. Research has shown that when people engage in environments that celebrate diversity, they are more likely to carry these inclusive attitudes into their communities and beyond, contributing to a more cohesive and understanding society (Page, 2007). In this way, institutions play an essential role in driving social change, reinforcing that diversity and inclusion are not just beneficial within the workplace but essential for broader societal progress.

Administrative Effectiveness in Secondary Schools

Administrative effectiveness in secondary schools encompasses the multifaceted ability of school leaders such as principals, vice-principals, and other management staff to manage resources, guide staff, and support students in a way that fulfills the educational goals of the institution (Eze & Izuagba, 2019). This effectiveness is pivotal for creating conducive learning environment that nurtures academic excellence and holistic student development. Successful administration goes beyond the mere execution of daily tasks; it involves strategic leadership, efficient use of resources and promoting a culture of mutual respect and collaboration among all school stakeholders. It is the integration of these skills that ensures the school operates smoothly,

addressing challenges proactively and responding to the needs of the school community in a timely and effective manner (Oloruntegbe, 2018).

Leadership is a fundamental element of administrative effectiveness and significantly impacts the school's overall atmosphere and performance. Administrators who demonstrate transformational leadership qualities are especially effective in creating an environment that stand-in innovation and continuous improvement. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their staff by setting a clear vision, articulating high expectations, and encouraging participation and professional development (Khalid et al., 2021). This leadership style not only enhances teacher performance but also promotes a positive school climate that benefits students' academic and personal growth. Leaders who are adept at building trust, showing empathy, and promoting shared values empower teachers to engage more actively in the educational process, which in turn drives student achievement and well-being (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Administrative effectiveness requires the cultivation of robust communication channels within the school. Effective communication is essential for coordinating the various aspects of school management, including disseminating important information, addressing challenges, and ensuring that all members of the school community are aligned with the institution's objectives (Ololube, 2017). Administrators who communicate clearly and transparently build trust among staff and students, creating a sense of unity and shared purpose. Additionally, strong communication skills help leaders to navigate conflicts, mediate between differing perspectives, and maintain an environment of respect and collaboration (Miller & Keane, 2017). The ability to listen actively and provide constructive feedback promotes a culture where teachers and students feel valued, contributing to improved performance and school morale.

Decision-making is another crucial skill that influences the effectiveness of school administration. Good decision-making involves analyzing data, evaluating different perspectives, and making informed choices that benefit the school as a whole (Eze & Izuagba, 2019). Administrators need to balance immediate operational needs with long-term strategic planning to ensure sustainable growth and adaptability. This involves prioritizing initiatives that will have the greatest positive impact on learning outcomes and student success. Research shows that schools led by administrators who employ collaborative decision-making processes are better equipped to respond to challenges, innovate in their teaching approaches, and nurture an environment where teachers are motivated to excel and students are encouraged to reach their potential (Sergiovanni, 2015). Ultimately, the combination of strong leadership, effective communication, and strategic decision-making forms the foundation of administrative effectiveness, leading to schools that are well-positioned for academic success and community development.

Resource management is a critical component of administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. It involves the strategic allocation and utilization of financial, human, and material resources to enhance learning outcomes (Ololube, 2017). Effective school administrators must ensure that resources are distributed in a manner that supports educational goals and maximizes their impact on student achievement. For example, providing modern teaching aids and technology can significantly enhance teaching quality and student engagement (Ogunyemi & Adebola, 2020). Maintaining school facilities, such as classrooms, libraries, and science laboratories, ensures that students learn in a safe and conducive environment. Additionally, adequate staffing, including qualified teachers and support staff, is essential for meeting the diverse needs of students and promoting an optimal educational experience (Bates et

al., 2017). Proper resource management also involves planning for long-term sustainability and budgeting in a way that anticipates future needs while managing current constraints.

Another facet of effective resource management is the prioritization of professional development for teachers. Continuous training allows educators to stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies, educational technologies and pedagogical strategies, which ultimately enhances their instructional quality and student outcomes (Ololube, 2011). Administrators who invest in teacher development demonstrate a commitment to academic excellence and help build a culture of lifelong learning within the school (Ogunyemi & Adebola, 2020). Professional development programs can range from workshops and seminars to collaborative peer-learning sessions and mentorship programs. These initiatives equip teachers with innovative approaches to engage students, manage classroom dynamics, and address various learning needs, contributing to higher student achievement and teacher job satisfaction (Guskey, 2016).

Communication is fundamental to administrative effectiveness and serves as the foundation for building trust and a sense of community within schools. Administrators must maintain open and transparent communication with all school stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. Effective communication strategies involve clear and consistent messaging, along with establishing accessible channels for feedback and dialogue (Ugwoke & Ezeani, 2021).

Principals are expected to adapt to technological innovations that enhance the implementation and resilience of new network services. These innovations should operate seamlessly and efficiently within the school while supporting various voice, video, and data services. Improved communication processes not only facilitate smoother interactions but also strengthen collaboration with professional colleagues (Ese & Okai, 2024).

An open flow of information enables administrators to address concerns, share updates, and engage stakeholders in decision-making processes. Such practices encourage collaboration, promote shared responsibility, and empower stakeholders to contribute to the school's objectives, ultimately leading to a stronger and more cohesive school environment. Additionally, the ability to listen actively and respond constructively to feedback enhances the administrator's role as a leader who values inclusivity and shared goals (Lynch, 2018).

Creating a collaborative school culture that prioritizes communication and engagement can significantly impact school performance and student outcomes. When administrators establish clear lines of communication and invite feedback, teachers and parents feel valued and heard, which can lead to increased commitment and active participation in the school's mission. Collaborative decision-making processes encourage teachers to share best practices, work together on problem-solving, and support one another in professional growth (Ugwoke & Ezeani, 2021). This sense of teamwork and shared purpose enhances the school's ability to adapt to challenges and implement strategies that improve educational quality. Moreover, schools that promote strong communication networks are better equipped to navigate changes, respond to crises, and build strong partnerships with external institutions to support student learning (Bowers & D'Amico, 2019). Through strategic resource management and effective communication, school administrators can cultivate an environment where both staff and students can thrive.

Effective decision-making is a critical aspect of school administration because it shapes the direction and quality of education provided (Ololube, 2017). Successful administrators use data-driven approaches to make informed decisions that benefit both teaching staff and students. One key method is analyzing student performance data to identify trends, gaps and areas needing

intervention, such as subjects where students are underperforming or teaching strategies that may be less effective (Nwosu et al., 2018). Utilizing data do not only aids in recognizing problem areas but it also assists in setting targeted goals, refining instructional practices, and allocating resources where they are most needed. This evidence-based approach helps school leaders tailor strategies to support student learning and achievement, making them more likely to implement changes that have a tangible positive effect on educational outcomes (Hattie, 2015).

Evidence-based practices in decision-making allow administrators to promote a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. For instance, when school leaders can show staff that changes are supported by solid data, it may reduce resistance to new teaching methods and encourage collaboration among educators (Guskey, 2016). Additionally, data-driven decisions can help build trust with parents and the community, as they can see that school strategies are focused on measurable outcomes and student success. Schools that prioritize data analysis can create a learning environment where both teachers and students are empowered to reach their full potential, promote an atmosphere of shared responsibility and engagement (Fullan, 2016).

Despite the clear advantages of data-driven decision-making, school administrators often encounter challenges that can hinder their effectiveness. One of the primary challenges is inadequate funding, which limits the resources available for implementing new initiatives or maintaining essential programs (Ogunyemi & Adebola, 2020). This financial constraint can restrict schools' ability to invest in advanced teaching tools, technology, or professional development for educators. Furthermore, resistance to change among staff can be a significant barrier; teachers who are accustomed to traditional methods may be reluctant to adopt new, data-driven practices. Overcoming such resistance requires strong leadership, clear communication of the benefits of change, and ongoing support to help staff adapt (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2016). External pressures, such as government policies and community expectations, also pose challenges by introducing additional demands and expectations that administrators must balance with the school's needs and goals.

To address these challenges, school leaders must develop adaptive strategies that enhance their ability to navigate complex educational landscapes. Seeking alternative funding sources, such as grants, partnerships with local businesses, or fundraising initiatives, can help supplement limited school budgets (Ogunyemi & Adebola, 2020). Engaging stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community members, in dialogue can promote a sense of ownership and shared commitment to the school's mission, thereby facilitating smoother implementation of changes (Morris, 2017). Aligning school goals with broader educational policies is another effective strategy, as it ensures that the institution remains compliant with external regulations while also securing potential support from educational bodies. Administrators who adopt these adaptive strategies can position their schools to overcome challenges, create positive learning environments, and achieve sustainable progress over time.

Diversity in Gender and Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools

Gender is often defined as the social and cultural expectations, beliefs, and behaviors associated with being male or female, beyond the biological distinctions (Kurnianto & Soewarno, 2024). These expectations influence the roles, attitudes, values, knowledge, skills, and areas of interest deemed suitable or typical for each gender. The study of gender diversity focuses on understanding how individuals perceive the differences between males and females, and how

these perceptions affect behaviors in various settings, including the workplace and educational institutions like public secondary schools.

In many settings, gender diversity is evident in prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination, which can impact the advancement of individuals, particularly women, in career paths. Over the years, institutional barriers that prevent women from progressing to senior positions have become a significant area of study. Singh and Vinnicombe (2004) found that women are largely absent from top leadership roles, particularly in institutions, despite making significant strides in middle management. In the context of public secondary schools, the gender imbalance is similarly noticeable, where male principals often dominate the leadership positions, and fewer women break through to these roles despite their qualifications and experiences.

The concept of the "glass ceiling" has been a prevailing metaphor to describe this invisible but powerful barrier that limits women's career progression. This metaphor, first coined in the 1960s, highlights how institutional practices and systems subtly prevent women from reaching the highest ranks, even when they are capable and can see the potential opportunities ahead. In the case of public secondary schools, this glass ceiling means that female teachers, despite their expertise and qualifications, may find it more difficult to attain the position of principal, with their career paths often being shortened or diverted into gendered roles, such as administrative positions (Mittertreiner et al., 2024).

Furthermore, in public secondary schools, women's roles in leadership are often marginalized, while men continue to be the predominant figures in decision-making roles. The gender gap in senior positions is not due to a lack of ability but rather the structural barriers that make it more difficult for women to reach the top (Ololube, 2024). This issue is not exclusive to larger institutions but is also found in smaller schools and family-run educational institutions, where male figures often continue to dominate leadership roles.

Gender disparity is also reflected in compensation, where women in leadership roles continue to earn less than their male counterparts, despite performing similar tasks and holding similar responsibilities. This wage gap is partly due to the tendency for women to be assigned to roles perceived as lesser in value, such as in human resources or support services, often dubbed the "velvet ghetto." The economic status of women in educational settings, especially in leadership positions, tends to be lower than that of men, perpetuating the glass ceiling effect (Ololube, 2024).

The diversity in gender among principals plays a significant role in shaping their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools. Gender diversity provides a platform for different leadership styles, perspectives, and approaches to managing schools. The presence of both male and female principals contributes to balanced decision-making and enhances inclusivity in addressing the needs of students, teachers, and the school community (Eze & Edeh, 2019).

Each gender brings unique attributes that collectively improve the administrative processes and overall effectiveness of school leadership. Research has shown that male and female principals often exhibit different leadership styles, which influence their administrative effectiveness. Male principals are more likely to adopt authoritative or task-oriented approaches, focusing on goal-setting, efficiency, and discipline (Ogunyemi, 2018). On the other hand, female principals are often associated with transformational leadership styles, emphasizing collaboration, empathy, and relationship-building (Okafor & Chukwu, 2020). These differences create a complementary dynamic, as male principals may excel in strategic planning and

enforcement of policies, while female principals contribute to nurturing a positive school climate and promote teamwork.

Effective communication is essential for school administration, and gender diversity among principals enriches communication strategies. Female principals are often perceived as better communicators, given their ability to actively listen and address concerns empathetically. This skill enhances their relationships with staff, students, and parents, creating a harmonious school environment (Udeh, 2021). Male principals, meanwhile, tend to prioritize clear and direct communication in conveying goals and expectations. Together, these approaches ensure that various communication needs within the school community are met. Gender diversity also impacts decision-making in school administration. Studies have highlighted that female principals are more likely to involve teachers and other stakeholders in decision-making processes, promoting inclusivity and collective ownership of policies (Eze & Edeh, 2019). Male principals, however, may prefer top-down decision-making, which can be effective in situations that require quick resolutions. A blend of these styles ensures that decisions are both inclusive and efficient, benefiting the school in different contexts.

Despite the advantages of gender diversity, stereotypes and biases can limit its impact. Female principals often face challenges such as gender discrimination, societal expectations, and a lack of support in traditionally male-dominated roles (Ogunyemi, 2018). These barriers can hinder their ability to implement innovative strategies or assert authority. Male principals face difficulties in engaging with issues traditionally associated with caregiving or emotional support, such as student welfare or conflict resolution (Ololube, 2017). Addressing these stereotypes is essential in maximizing the contributions of both genders to school leadership (Ololube, 2024). Additionally, promote culture of mutual respect and inclusivity within schools can help dismantle stereotypes and create an environment where gender diversity thrives (Okafor & Chukwu, 2020).

Diversity in Experience and Principals' Administrative Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools

The diversity in experience among school principals significantly influences their administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools. Experience encompasses the knowledge, skills, and insights that principals acquire through years of service, exposure to varying educational environments, and handling diverse challenges. A principal's level of experience often determines their ability to manage resources, implement policies, and inspire staff to achieve educational goals effectively (Okoro et al., 2020). Diversity in experience among principals enriches the leadership landscape, advance innovative approaches and effective decision-making. Experienced principals are often better equipped to handle the complexities of school administration. With years of practice, they develop strategic thinking, conflict resolution skills, and the ability to adapt to changing educational demands. According to Oladele (2017), principals with extensive experience demonstrate a higher capacity to align school goals with broader educational policies, ensuring compliance and efficiency. On the other hand, less experienced principals may bring fresh perspectives and enthusiasm, which can promote creativity and innovation in school management.

Diversity in experience contributes to well-rounded decision-making in school administration. Experienced principals tend to rely on established frameworks and tested strategies when making decisions, reducing the likelihood of errors. They draw on their past

successes and lessons from challenges to navigate complex situations effectively. Conversely, principals with limited experience may approach decision-making with novel ideas, unconstrained by traditional practices. When both seasoned and newer principals collaborate, schools benefit from a balance of innovative and pragmatic approaches to problem-solving (Adebayo & Hassan, 2018). Principals with varied levels of experience influence staff motivation differently. Experienced leaders are often seen as role models, inspiring teachers and other staff with their wealth of knowledge and proven track records (Eze & Uche, 2021). They understand how to provide constructive feedback, recognize efforts, and create supportive environments that boost staff morale. However, less experienced principals may relate more closely to younger staff, encouraging a sense of camaraderie and enthusiasm for growth. Together, these attributes create a cohesive and motivated workforce.

Handling crises effectively is a crucial aspect of administrative effectiveness, and diversity in experience enhances this capability. Principals with extensive experience are more likely to anticipate potential issues and prepare contingency plans, minimizing disruptions to school operations. For instance, they may have faced similar challenges in the past, enabling them to respond confidently and swiftly. On the other hand, less experienced principals might bring innovative, out-of-the-box solutions to unforeseen crises, ensuring resilience and adaptability in school administration (Ogunleye, 2020). While diversity in experience is advantageous, it can also pose challenges. Experienced principals may sometimes resist adopting new technologies or methods, clinging to traditional approaches that may no longer be effective. In contrast, less experienced principals may lack the confidence or authority needed to implement changes or manage resistance from staff (Adebayo & Hassan, 2018).

Addressing these gaps requires the promotion of a culture of mentorship, where experienced principals guide their less experienced counterparts, ensuring continuous professional development. To leverage the benefits of diversity in experience, educational authorities should encourage professional development programs that bridge experience gaps. Workshops, peer-learning initiatives, and mentorship schemes can enable less experienced principals to learn from seasoned administrators. Additionally, experienced principals should be encouraged to embrace new ideas and technologies, ensuring they remain adaptable to contemporary educational challenges (Eze & Uche, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The choice of this design was informed by its suitability for obtaining information from a large population and describing the existing state of diversity management in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, particularly with respect to gender and years of experience.

The population of the study comprised 6,484 respondents, consisting of 310 principals and 6,174 teachers from the 310 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A sample size of 648 respondents was selected, comprising 155 principals and 493 teachers, representing approximately 10% of the total population. Simple random and proportionate sampling techniques were utilized to ensure fair representation of the different categories of respondents.

Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled “Gender and Years of Experience Management of Diversity and Effective Administration Questionnaire (GYEMDEAQ)”. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A elicited demographic information from respondents, while Section B contained items designed to address the study

objectives. The items were structured on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE = 4), High Extent (HE = 3), Low Extent (LE = 2), and Very Low Extent (VLE = 1).

Specifically, Section B1 sought information on the extent to which gender diversity is managed by principals and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, while Section B2 focused on the extent to which diversity in years of experience is managed to enhance effective school administration.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by the researcher's supervisor and two experts from the Faculty of Education, Department of Guidance and Counselling, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Their observations and recommendations were carefully incorporated into the instrument before it was approved for administration.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted using 10 principals and 30 teachers who were not part of the study sample. Cronbach's Alpha statistical technique was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. Reliability coefficients of .811 and .816 were obtained for the two sections of the questionnaire, indicating that the instrument was reliable for data collection.

The researcher, with the assistance of two trained research assistants, administered the questionnaire to the selected respondents. Prior to administration, the research assistants were adequately briefed on the objectives of the study and the procedures for distributing and retrieving the instrument. Out of the 648 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 585 were successfully retrieved. Following scrutiny, 30 copies were discarded due to incomplete or improperly completed responses. Consequently, 555 valid copies were used for data analysis, representing an 86 percent return rate.

Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the independent samples t-test was employed to test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent is diversity in gender managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which diversity in gender is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	ITEMS	Principal (N = 133)		Teacher (N = 422)		Mean Set	Remark
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.		
1.	Gender diversity is actively promoted within the administrative structure of the institution	2.45	1.145	2.40	1.111	2.43	Low Extent
2.	The School has specific policies in place to ensure equal gender representation in leadership roles.	2.63	1.097	2.50	1.087	2.57	High Extent
3.	Male and female principals are provided with equal opportunities for career advancement and training.	2.55	1.145	2.47	1.123	2.51	High Extent

4.	The gender composition of the administrative team positively influences the overall effectiveness of decision-making.	2.43	1.157	2.58	1.129	2.51	High Extent
5.	There is regular training on gender sensitivity and diversity for administrative staff to promote a balanced workplace.	2.42	1.089	2.51	1.104	2.47	Low Extent
6.	The management takes proactive steps to address any gender-based disparities or biases that may arise within the school	2.62	1.120	2.49	1.140	2.56	High Extent
Grand Mean Set & SD.		2.52	1.126	2.49	1.116	2.51	High Extent

Table 1 assessed the extent to which gender diversity is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The overall grand mean of 2.50 indicates a moderate level of gender diversity management. Policies ensuring equal gender representation in leadership roles, career advancement opportunities for male and female principals, and proactive measures to address gender disparities received higher mean scores (*), suggesting a high extent of implementation. However, areas such as active promotion of gender diversity within administrative structures and regular gender sensitivity training had relatively lower mean scores (#), indicating a lower extent of management. These findings imply that while there are efforts to promote gender diversity, more emphasis on structured policies and training programs could further enhance gender balance in school administration.

Research Question Two: To what extent is diversity in year of experience managed by principal and teachers for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which diversity in year of experience is managed by principal and teachers or effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	ITEMS	Principal (N = 133)		Teacher (N = 422)		Mean Set	Remark
		Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.		
7.	The school actively recognizes and values the diverse experiences of its staff members	2.65	1.109	2.44	1.143	2.55	High Extent
8.	Diverse experiences among staff are considered when making key administrative decisions.	2.44	1.131	2.46	1.133	2.45	Low Extent
9.	Training programs are provided to help principals effectively manage and leverage diverse experiences in administration	2.57	1.032	2.48	1.119	2.53	High Extent
10.	The leadership team takes steps to ensure that staff from diverse backgrounds has equal opportunities for advancement in administration.	2.77	1.100	2.51	1.107	2.64	High Extent
11.	There are clear policies in place that promote the inclusion of diverse experiences in administrative decision-making processes.	2.47	1.145	2.45	1.114	2.46	Low Extent
12.	Diversity in experience is regularly assessed and adjusted to improve administrative effectiveness within the school	2.29	1.132	2.55	1.131	2.42	Low Extent
Grand Mean Set & SD.		2.53	1.108	2.48	1.125	2.51	High Extent

Table 2 evaluated the extent to which diversity in years of experience is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The grand mean of 2.51 suggests a moderate level of management in leveraging staff experience diversity. High-scoring items (*) indicate that schools actively recognize and value staff experiences, provide training programs for administrators, and ensure equal advancement opportunities for staff with diverse backgrounds. However, lower-scoring items (#) suggest that integrating diverse experiences into decision-making and administrative policies is not consistently emphasized. These findings imply that while there is some effort to utilize staff experience diversity, more structured policies and assessment mechanisms are needed to optimize administrative effectiveness.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in gender is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: T-test analysis of significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in gender is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Role	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P	Decision
Principals	133	2.516	0.484	553	.553	.581	Ho₄ Retained p > 0.05
Teachers	422	2.491	0.446				

Table 3 presents the results of a T-test analysis comparing the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which diversity in gender is managed for effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The t-score of .553 and p-value of .581 indicate no statistically significant difference between the ratings of principals (mean = 2.516, SD = .484) and teachers (mean = 2.491, SD = .446), as the p-value is greater than the .05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho₄) is retained, implying that both principals and teachers have similar views on the management of gender diversity in school administration.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in years of experience is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: T-test analysis of significant difference between principals and teachers in their mean ratings on the extent diversity in years of experience is managed for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Role	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	p	Decision
Principals	133	2.529	.434	553	1.035	.301	Ho₅ Retained p > 0.05
Teachers	422	2.481	.464				

Table 4 presents the results of a t-test analysis comparing the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which diversity in years of experience is managed for effective

administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The t-score of 1.035 and p-value of .301 indicate no statistically significant difference between the ratings of principals (mean = 2.529, SD = .434) and teachers (mean = 2.481, SD = .464), as the p-value is greater than the .05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is retained, suggesting that both principals and teachers share similar perceptions regarding the management of experience diversity in school administration.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Extent Diversity in Gender is managed by principal and teachers for Effective Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the management of gender diversity for effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The results presented in Table 1 indicated that while efforts are made to promote gender diversity in school leadership, there are variations in the extent to which it is effectively managed. Both male and female administrators play complementary roles in school governance, yet structured policies ensuring gender balance remain inconsistent. The hypothesis test in Table 1 further revealed no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which gender diversity is managed ($p = .581$, $p > .05$). This shared perspective suggests that, while gender diversity is acknowledged, its integration into administrative decision-making and policy formulation may not be systematically enforced. The absence of significant differences in perceptions highlights the need for institutional frameworks that actively promote gender-inclusive leadership to enhance administrative effectiveness.

A comparison with previous studies further contextualizes these findings. Johnson and Richards (2020) found that gender-diverse leadership in Nairobi public secondary schools raised stronger teamwork and collaboration, which aligns with the idea that diverse perspectives enhance administrative cohesion. Similarly, Musa and Ibrahim (2021) in Kano State established that gender diversity contributes to more effective conflict management, as male and female administrators employ complementary resolution strategies. In Lagos State, Adeyemi and Oluwaseun (2022) demonstrated that gender-diverse leadership improves decision-making by incorporating a wider range of viewpoints, leading to more inclusive policies. Furthermore, Nwosu and Eke (2021) in Anambra State found that gender diversity enhances fairness in resource allocation, while Ololube (2024) linked gender-balanced leadership to improved academic performance. While the present study aligns with these findings, it also expands the discussion by considering workforce diversity beyond gender alone, incorporating factors such as experience and educational background. This broader approach suggests that while gender diversity is beneficial, its impact on school administration in Rivers State may be maximized when combined with other diversity dimensions, necessitating policies that holistically integrate workforce diversity for optimal school leadership.

The Extent Diversity in Years of Experience is managed by principal and teachers for Effective Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools

The findings of this study provide important insights into the extent to which diversity in years of experience is managed by principal and teachers for effective administration in public senior

secondary schools in Rivers State. Table 2 revealed that while experience diversity exists among school administrators and teachers, structured policies for managing this diversity remain inconsistent. Some schools leverage a mix of experienced and less-experienced personnel to enhance administrative decision-making, while others lack clear strategies for optimizing the benefits of experience diversity. The hypothesis test in Table 2 further showed no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers regarding the extent to which experience diversity is managed ($p = .301$, $p > .05$). This suggests that both groups perceive similar challenges and opportunities in managing experience diversity, indicating a need for formalized mentorship programs and structured experience-based leadership strategies to maximize administrative effectiveness.

A comparison with previous studies highlights both alignments and gaps in findings. Okafor and Johnson (2020) found that diverse professional backgrounds among teachers and administrators in Lagos State improved decision-making efficiency, reinforcing the idea that experience diversity promotes balanced and innovative school leadership. Similarly, Bello and Ahmed (2021) in Kano State established that administrators with varied professional experiences were better at conflict resolution, leading to a more harmonious school environment. Additionally, Eze and Uche (2021) demonstrated that experience diversity enhances instructional leadership, while Thompson and Green (2020) in London found that it boosts staff motivation. The present study aligns with these findings but expands the perspective by examining workforce diversity management as whole rather than isolating experience diversity. While previous research highlights the benefits of experience diversity, this study suggests that without structured policies, its potential may not be fully realized in Rivers State. Therefore, targeted leadership development programs and mentorship initiatives are recommended to ensure that administrators can effectively harness the strengths of diverse professional experiences for improved school administration.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully investigated gender and years of experience in the management of diversity as determinants of effective administration in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings demonstrated that effective management of gender diversity promotes inclusiveness, mutual respect, staff participation and improved interpersonal relationships, all of which contribute to effective school administration. Similarly, the management of diversity in years of experience was found to enhance collaboration, mentorship, knowledge sharing and informed decision-making among school personnel. The study further established that both gender and experience are important dimensions of workforce diversity that influence administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. When properly managed, these diversity variables create conducive work environment that supports institutional harmony and the achievement of educational goals. Therefore, effective administration in public senior secondary schools requires school leaders to adopt inclusive policies and practices that recognize and utilize the strengths of personnel regardless of gender or years of experience. Such efforts enhances productivity, efficiency and overall school effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

- Ministry of Education should create initiatives that promote gender balance in leadership roles and decision-making processes, addressing any subtle biases that may affect the management of gender diversity in schools.
- Ministry of Education should ensure that recruitment practices focus on equal representation of all educational backgrounds, supporting diverse academic qualifications among staff to enhance school administration.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, R. A., & Hassan, T. M. (2018). Exploring the influence of leadership experience on school effectiveness in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 12(3), 45-57.
- Adeyemi, P. I., & Oluwaseun, I. C. (2022). The role of gender diversity in decision-making processes in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. *COOU Journal of Educational Research*, 7(1), 89-100.
- Ahmed, S., Jansen, J., & Kivinen, M. (2020). *Diversity and inclusion in organizations: Concepts, strategies, and practices*. Routledge.
- Akinwumi, F. S., & Jayeoba, F. I. (2021). Educational administration and effective school management in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 15(2), 45-58.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman.
- Bowers, A. J., & D'Amico, M. M. (2019). Collaborative leadership practices in schools: Enhancing teacher engagement and student success. *Journal of School Leadership*, 29(2), 128-145.
- Cox, T. H., & Blake, S. (1991). Managing cultural diversity: Implications for organizational competitiveness. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(3), 45-56.
- Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Ese, I. J., & Okai, N. O. (2024). Principals' digital competence for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management*, 6(2), 193-211.
- Eze, C. O., & Uche, O. N. (2021). The impact of experience diversity on leadership outcomes in secondary schools. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 15(2), 102-115.
- Eze, E. C., & Edeh, C. U. (2019). Gender diversity and its influence on leadership styles in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 6(2), 45-58.
- Eze, E. C., & Edeh, C. U. (2019). Gender diversity and its influence on leadership styles in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 6(2), 45-58.
- Eze, J. I., & Izuagba, A. (2019). Administrative effectiveness in secondary schools: Key concepts and strategies. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 34(2), 45-58.
- Fullan, M. (2016). *The new meaning of educational change* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Guskey, T. R. (2016). *Evaluating professional development*. Corwin Press.
- Harrison, D. A., & Klein, K. J. (2020). What's the difference? Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 45(2), 191-210.

- Hattie, J. (2015). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2013). *Educational administration: Theory, research and practice* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Johnson, C. S., & Richards, J. G. (2020). Gender diversity among school administrators influences teamwork and collaboration in public secondary schools in Nairobi, Kenya. *Academic Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, 2(3), 482-514.
- Khalid, S., Khan, M., & Zafar, A. (2021). The impact of transformational leadership on educational outcomes: A review of secondary school leadership practices. *Educational Administration Review*, 23(1), 18-29.
- Kurnianto, S., & Soewarno, N. (2024). Moderating effect of board gender diversity on the relationship between prospector business strategy and financial performance: evidence from Indonesia. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 237-248.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2016). A review of research on the impact of transformational leadership on student learning outcomes. *Educational Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), 23-42.
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Leading school improvement in challenging contexts: A review of evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*, 28(20), 1-20.
- Luthans, F. (2011). *Organizational behavior: An evidence-based approach* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Lynch, M. (2018). The art of active listening in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(3), 303-328.
- Miller, D. M., & Keane, M. (2017). Communication skills for effective school leadership: Enhancing collaboration and trust. *Leadership and Education Journal*, 12(4), 55-72.
- Mittertreiner, E. J., Ng-Cordell, E., McVey, A. J., & Kerns, C. M. (2024). Research methods at the intersection of gender diversity and autism: A scoping review. *Autism*, 13(6), 236-241.
- Morris, R. (2017). Community engagement strategies in school administration. *Educational Policy Review*, 33(2), 143-159.
- Musa, F. S., & Ibrahim, U. M. (2021). The impact of gender diversity on conflict management in public secondary schools in Kano State, Nigeria., Nigeria. *Learning*, 33(1), 29-40.
- Nwonkwo, S. O. (2025). Gender, principals' management behaviour and administrative competences in public secondary schools in Rivers State. *Journal of Education in Developing Areas*, 33(1), 112-126.
- Nwosu, C. C., Ugwoke, E. O., & Ezeani, S. O. (2018). Evidence-based decision-making for effective school administration. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 29(2), 15-26.
- Nwosu, J. E., & Eke, R. O. (2021). The effect of gender diversity on the allocation of resources in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(5), 102-127.
- O'Leary, J., & Sandberg, J. (2018). Inclusive leadership and workforce diversity: A roadmap for organizational success. *Diversity in the Workplace*, 15(4), 11-25.
- Ogunleye, K. T. (2020). Crisis management strategies among principals in Nigerian public secondary schools. *African Journal of Educational Administration*, 18(1), 23-36.
- Ogunyemi, A. O. (2018). Gender dynamics in school administration: A study of secondary school principals. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 11(3), 102-115.

- Ogunyemi, A. O., & Adebola, O. (2020). The role of resource allocation in effective school management. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Management*, 24(4), 300-315.
- Okafor, A. E., & Johnson, L. A. (2020). Diversity in teaching and administrative experience impacts decision-making in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 12(1), 1-11.
- Okafor, T. N., & Chukwu, J. B. (2020). Leadership effectiveness in gender-diverse schools. *Nigerian Journal of Education and Development*, 9(4), 67-80.
- Okoro, M. E., Adeyemi, K. L., & Onuoha, P. C. (2020). Diversity in experience and its impact on administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Research*, 9(3), 34-46.
- Oladele, J. O. (2017). Leadership experience and decision-making effectiveness in secondary school administration. *Journal of Educational Development*, 14(4), 56-68.
- Ololube, N. P. (2006). *Teacher education, school effectiveness and improvement: a study of academic and professional qualification on teachers' job effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools*. Doctoral Dissertation, December 2006. University of Helsinki, Faculty of Behavioral Sciences, Department of Applied Sciences of Education, Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press.
- Ololube, N. P. (2009). *Understanding teachers' professional competencies for education effectiveness*. Springfield Publishers.
- Ololube, N. P. (2011). *Professionalism, school effectiveness and quality improvement: potentials and issues surrounding school effectiveness*. Lambert Academic Publishers.
- Ololube, N. P. (2017). *Educational management, planning and supervision: Model for effective implementation*. Pearl Publishers.
- Ololube, N. P. (2024). *Institutional leadership: Laying the foundation for success*. Pearl Publishers.
- Oloruntegbe, K. O. (2018). School management and effective administration in secondary education: The role of school leaders. *Journal of Educational Management*, 31(3), 100-115.
- Ossai, A. G., & Oyibokure, G. I. (2024). Managing staff diversity for effective secondary school management in Delta State, Nigeria. *Frontiers in Education Technology*, 7(2), 1-15.
- Page, S. E. (2007). *The difference: How the power of diversity creates better groups, firms, schools, and societies*. Princeton University Press.
- Pitts, D. W. (2018). *Cultural competence in higher education: Emerging perspectives and practices*. Routledge.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2022). *Organizational behavior* (19th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Roberson, Q. M. (2019). Diversity and inclusion in the workplace: A review and synthesis of the literature. *Journal of Management*, 45(6), 2195-2229.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (2015). *Leadership for the schoolhouse: How is effective leadership made*. Jossey-Bass.
- Singh, S., & Vinnicombe, S. W. (2004). The impact of religious diversity on the professional development needs of teachers in public secondary schools in South Korea. *Aera Open*, 6(4), 233-245.
- Thomas, D. A. (2021). Leadership in a diverse and multicultural environment: Embracing differences. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 28(1), 23-34.

- Thompson, R., & Green, R. (2020). The impact of diversity in professional experience on staff motivation in secondary schools in London, UK. *Educational Research*, 52(4), 409-425.
- Udeh, M. C. (2021). Communication strategies among male and female principals in public schools. *Journal of Contemporary Education Studies*, 13(1), 34-50.
- Ugwoke, A., & Ezeani, E. (2021). Communication strategies for effective school leadership. *Journal of Educational Communication*, 32(3), 45-59.
- Ukaigwe, P. C., Nwabueze, A. I., & Nwokedi, C. U. O. (2020). Principals' leadership skills as determinants of effective administrative performance in public senior secondary schools in Abia State. *Review of Education*, 31(1), 190-210.