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## Principals' decision-making styles for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers state

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### Abstract

This study investigated Principals' Decision-Making Styles for Effective Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were used for the study. The correlational research design was used for this study. The population of the study consisted of all the 7, 142 teachers in the 276 Secondary Schools in the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The sample of this study comprised 714 teachers (respondents) in 24 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, representing 10 percent of the total population of the study. The simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The questionnaire instrument titled: "Principals' Decision Making Styles and Effective School Administration Questionnaire" (PDMSESAQ) was used for the study. The questionnaire were divided into two sections: section A was for collection of demographic data while section B contained 30 items on principals' decision-making styles for effective administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. Furthermore, the coefficients index value obtained was 0.75 and therefore the reliability of the instrument was established. Data gathered from this study were collated and statistically analyzed. The statistical tool used for answering the research questions were Mean and Standard Deviation statistics while the null hypotheses were tested using ANOVA associated with the regression analysis at 0.05 Alpha level of significance. The findings of this work revealed that principals' decision-making positively influence effective administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. The conclusion of the study is that decision-making styles should be used integratively with elements of biases of each. The study therefore, among others recommend that principals should be able to appraise a particular situation before using any decision-making styles in the administration of public secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Keywords:** Decision-making, administration, Principals, senior secondary

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### Introduction

Decision-making is an essential component of every organizational management. The school as an organization too cannot therefore be complete without effective decisions which are fundamental in the actualization of the school goals and objectives. The principal as an administrator pilot decision-making in the school system, deciding on how to run the school effectively, thereby making choices out of several alternatives in order to achieve the school goals. Everything in the school system, both human and material resources, the Curriculum, Methodology, and techniques of teaching as well as the effective achievement of administrative and organizational goals anchors or revolves on the school principal through ethical and accurate decisions. The kind of decision made by the school administrators (Principal) will determine the extent the school administration would achieve the school goals.

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Hence, the decision made will nevertheless go a long way to influence the entire school system, either positively or negatively. In this perspective therefore, making accurate and rightful decisions in the school system is very crucial for the development and sustainability of school goals, objectives and standards. And this is dependent on the choice of the principals' decision making style(s).

Having noted the importance and crucial function of decision making in the school system, it is however very expedient also to mention that making the right decision is always challenging and a taskful step to every school principal. The ability of the principal (School administrator) to make the right decision and adopt the right decision-making style is a path to effective administration. Hence the decision-making style adopted by the school principal even if it is based on his perception, experience, education, training, managerial capacity, should especially be engineered by the school requirements as at that point in time. In other words, it is expected that the school principal has to, in addition to the above approach, satisfy the basic decision making process, namely; identifying the problem, gathering information, identifying alternatives, weighing the evidences, choosing among alternatives, acting accordingly, evaluating decision and its consequences, for a worthwhile and sustainable decisions to be made.

The above stated decision-making processes when correctly applied in the school system, function as an innovative and problem solving procedure and can also assign decision making responsibilities to subordinates in the school system. This is emphasizing the fact that the school principal in utilizing any decision-making style should take into consideration the factors which can determine the effectiveness of the decision making style in order to attain the set educational goals of the school. In agreement to this, opined that the life span of an organization is related to the quality of the decision and the decision-making style adopted by the administrator. Effective decision-making in the school is a major concern for the principal which must occupy a significant proportion of the principal's professional administrative life. These arguments further imply that the principal must weigh the decision making style and its implications to the entire school system before adopting it.

Base on this, found that decision-making styles are deep-seated learned behaviours and greatly influenced by the emotional intelligence of each administrator, and include attributes such as; being coercive, authoritative, democratic, pacesetting and coaching. This emotional intelligence allows a principal to lead the school with soul and not merely guide the teachers.

An effective administration on the other hand is the active or successful running of the school system or organization by the principal. Effective administration is an important element of the school and the principals' administrative life. Administration department is the pillar of the school system. An effective principal is an asset to the school; he is the link between the administrative department and other departments in the school responsible for creating rules and regulations and directing the activities towards the achievement of the school goals and objectives. A school without effective administration cannot achieve its targeted goals and

objectives. The responsibility of the principal or administration depends on the school he or she is heading. Through the main responsibility of the school principal or administrator is ensure the efficient performance of the teachers and other staff in the school system.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Decision making is a salient part of the school as an organization and a core responsibility of a school administrator. Nevertheless, decision making is challenging and a taskful step to every organization including the school. Decision making in the school system anchors on the school principal. The ability of the school principal to make the right decision is centred on the decision-making style adopted. In the school system, the type of decision made determines how the activities of the school are carried out as well as the achievement of the school objectives.

Therefore the decision-making style of the school principal must be well structured if the negative outcome of a bad decision is to be avoided. The problem arising from a wrong decision technique can derail the achievement of the school goals, this can also assume different shapes. The subordinates, particularly the teachers are vital tools in the realization of the school goals and objectives. In this case, the principal as a decision-maker can lose face or hurt these teachers' feelings as a result of decision taken, especially where the principal may have failed to involve them in decision making process. The implication here is that, this attribute of the principal might lead to non-compliance of school decisions which could lead to setback and frustration of school goals.

In our school system today, the researcher has observed that most decisions taken by various school principals have at one time or the other generated challenges among the school members, instead of being a key variable for effective school administration. In some instances, the teachers may be unable to understand the principles behind such decisions, and the methodology to adopt in facilitating its implementation for effective school administration. Even the overall working climate was observed by the researcher to be grossly affected too. It is within these abysmal contexts that, the researcher intends to carry out an investigation on principals' decision making styles for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

This is with a view to addressing the above stated researcher's observations. Hence, the study was further delineated to the following variables: authoritative, consultative, delegative and collaborative decision making styles of the school principals.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to ascertain principals' decision-making styles for effective administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. The study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent principals' use of authoritative decision-making style influence effective administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.
2. Identify the extent principals' use of consultative decision-making style influence effective administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between principals' use of Consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework was anchored on Fiedler's Contingency Theory, 1967. The Contingency Theory postulated by Fred E. Fiedler in 1967, cited in respectively, is a theory of leadership effectiveness. The essence of Fiedler's theory is that, leaders' effectiveness to lead depended upon their leadership style and their control of the situation. A leader is most effective when his character and style of leadership is matched with the situation and his work environment, situational factors that includes capabilities preferred style, behaviour and competency of employee. The theory, among others identifies three conditions that can impact situation, via;

1. The relationship that existed between the leader and the subordinates
2. Task structure
3. Position of power

The leader-follower relationship is more important than power and task structure because of the condition that the situation the administrator and the subordinate's relations has to do with the extent to which group members like and trust the administrator and are willing to work in cooperation and obey him. The position of power distinguished from other sources of power, such as personality enables a leader to get group members to comply with directions.

The task structure implies specification which organization tasks are specified and responsibilities are delegated to members. If the tasks are well structured and divided there would be a room for evaluation of subordinate's performance.

The theory propounded by Fiedler (1967) claims that there is no single leadership style suitable for making decisions in different organizations, therefore leaders should adopt the leadership style which is best to the situation and immediately stimulates the employee performance thus, the achievements of school goals and objectives.

Thus, this theory is considered most appropriate for the study because the effectiveness of any decision making style adopted by the school administrators is contingent (dependent) upon the internal or external situation of the school system. No single decision making style is suitable for different organizational challenges. The school administrator should however adopt a decision style based on the situation at hand.

### Conceptual Review

#### Decision Making

Decision making has been defined by many scholars in different ways to some, decision making simply means selection of course of action from among several alternatives in order to arrive at solution for a given problem, others regard decision-making as cutting off deliberations thereby arriving at a singular opinion or choice.

Decision-Making as stated by Kalagbor (2017) <sup>[20]</sup> is the act of making valid judgment or choice about something, or the process of resolving about something that is fundamental or crucial. Decision-making on a general note deals with choosing from several alternatives. It plays a vital role in motivation of staff in the school and more so enhanced the achievement of objectives or set goals, when concrete decisions are made in any given organization, it curtails unnecessary delay and procrastination. Decision making is a process of making choices by identifying a decision, gathering information and accessing alternative resolution. MSG (2015) states that decision making involves the selection of a course of action from among two or more possible alternatives in order to arrive at a solution for a given problem furthermore, he states that decision making is consultative affair done by experts to accelerate the better functioning of any institution, it is a continuous and dynamic activity that pervades all other activities. Decision-making is a conscious act of making choices among one or more alternatives with the intention of making the decision maker achieve expected goals (ABBA in Ezeali & Uzomba). Decision-making is usually defined as a process or sequence of activities involving stages of problem recognition, search for information, definition of alternatives and the selection of an actor of one from two or more alternatives consistent with the ranked preferences".

Definition offered by the Oxford Concise Dictionary is, the mathematical study of strategies for optimal decision-making between options involving different risks or expectations of gain or loss depending on the outcome. Definition has been offered by the author of an article published in Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics. The author emphasizes on the rationality of individuals and at the same time how they should behave.

So we can say that decision-making denotes the formulation of general policy for the management of an organization which may be business organization or administrative organization. The point to note is that the nature and implementation of decision-making may be different in both places but it remains that in every case the importance of decision-making remains intact. To sum up, the decision-

making means the adoption and application of rational choice for the management of private, business or governmental organization in an efficient manner.

Decision-making in school system deals with the process of identifying problems, assembling information, generating alternatives and selecting a course of action. Enhancing the quality of decision-making in school by the school administration leads to effectual administration.

Sees decision making as an act of identifying and selecting a course of action to detect a problem or take advantage of an opportunity.

The aim of decision making in a school system is to address challenges or problems emanating from the school in order to direct or redirect human and material resources to the achievement of the school goals and objectives, thus improving and developing the school standard. Decision making in the school is very crucial and the school administrator (Principal) as the decision makers should be an anchor of decision making in school and not just an observer, the administrator should ensure that all effective decisions made should be implemented or put into action. A decision remains a good intention if not converted into action (Branch in Ololube, 2018) <sup>[31]</sup>.

The school administrators are responsible in handling diverse tasks and responsibilities, such as both human (Staff) and material resources at their disposal in order to achieve the school goals and objectives thereby maintaining the school standard. The decisions made either wrong or correct will lead to how well or bad the achievement will be (Orupabo in Ololube, 2018) <sup>[31]</sup>.

Decision-making entails selecting from diverse alternatives (Oguz, 2009) <sup>[30]</sup>. School administrators are therefore expected to select the most appropriate alternative when a situation or challenge arrived. According to Oguz (2009) <sup>[30]</sup>, decision making process in school administration is based on problem solving that has to do with the staff and the entire school system. School administrator are therefore responsible for making effective decisions in order to handle the challenges confronting the teachers as well other related problems. A healthy organization anchors on decision-making processes which are; identifying the decision, gathering information, identifying alternatives weighing the evidence, choosing among alternative, acting accordingly and evaluating decision and its consequences (UMASSD, 2018) <sup>[38]</sup>. When the decision making processes are sequentially adhere to , by the school administrator it averts confusion thereby giving a focus of direction to the school administrator in decisions concerning the school; this can only be true by well trained administrators (Ugurlu, 2013) <sup>[37]</sup>. The major principal purpose of the school administrator is to achieve the goals and objectives of the school of which one is impacting knowledge through teaching and learning (Banda, 2018) <sup>[4]</sup>. Setting goals and objectives becomes the foundation for identifying problematic areas, deciding the next course of action and evaluating the outcome of the decision, when the school administrator fails to achieved the desired goals and objectives it become a problem which must first of all be identified and solve by the administrator (Towler, 2010) <sup>[36]</sup>.

Eisenfuhr (2011) <sup>[11]</sup> sees decision making as a process of making a choice from several alternatives so as to achieve a desired result.

Eisen further definition of decision making emphasized three key components. Firstly decision making involves making a choice from a several options, which signifies that, there should be options for an individual to select that which suit them best for instance the school administrators and teachers may decide to go for wooden seats instead of plastic chairs. Secondly, decision making involves more than simply a final choice from among several alternatives. This would be in a situation whereby, the school district for instance decides to carry out an extension of the existing site or relocate to a bigger location. Finally, the desired result entails the purpose or focus resulting from mental activity that the decision maker engages in to reach a final choice or decision (Bubnicki, 2008) <sup>[7]</sup>.

### Decision Making Style

Decision making is an important element in every organization, through decision making an administrator is able to select a course of action from several alternatives. Decision involves commitment and adherence to action, a discrete and concrete phenomenon driven by rationality (Ejimabo, 2015) <sup>[12]</sup>. Different decision making styles have been identified in school management and administration. Decision making therefore is a complex, dynamics, tedious and challenging task (Ejimabo, 2015) <sup>[12]</sup>. A good and effective school administrator can adapt decision can adopt decision making style to make lucid and active decisions to accelerate the growth and achievement of goals and objectives of the school system ,thus effective administration define decision making style as the response pattern exhibited by an individual in a decision making situation. The response pattern is determined by the decision making situation, the decision making task and by the individual decision make. Individual differ between decisions maker include different in habit but also different in basic cognitive abilities such as information processing, self-evaluation and self-regulation, which have a consistent impact on the response pattern across different decision making tasks and situations.

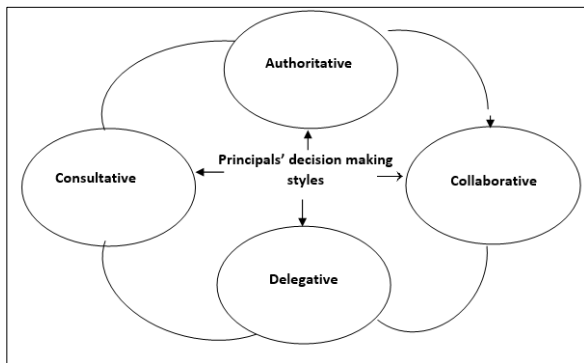
Identify two main approaches to decision making style. Firstly, decision making styles can be reflected to as a habitual pattern which individuals use in decision making. Secondly, decision-making styles can be view as individual's characteristics way of perceiving or viewing and responding to decision making tasks.

Loo (2002) <sup>[25]</sup> in agreement to Scott and Bruce assert that minimal attention has been paid to the character and attitude of the decision maker which has tremendous effect on effective administration leading to goals achievement compared to the attention paid to decision tasks.

Decision style is the way in which the mind view problems that involve discovery and judgment all the while providing means for understanding the way that human mind operates in making decisions (Rowe and Davis 1983) <sup>[35]</sup>. Pearman (1999) <sup>[32]</sup>, decision making style has been considered a crucial factor that affects an individual career development.

Jamian, Sidhu and Aperapar (2011) <sup>[19]</sup> asserted that individual decision styles form the vital (backbone) part of effective decision-making.

### Types of Principals Decision-Making Styles



**Fig 1:** A model of Principals' Decision Making Style

#### The Authoritative Decision-Making Style

The authoritative decision-making style is synonymous to autocratic and independent decision making style, where the school administration takes absolute control of making decisions. It is a style of decision making where by the school administrator take decision alone without involving the subordinates. The school administrator evaluates possibilities, select an alternative and the school as an organization implements it.

According to, an autocratic administrator is one who is very conscious of his position, has little or no confidence in his subordinates, command and seeks immediate response and obedience without excuses, is temperamental and controls by relying on his states.

Opined that authoritative leadership style is known for self (one man) control over all decisions and little or no input from subordinates. Authoritative school administrators select and rarely takes their subordinates opinions, they are directive in nature, the subordinates just follow and takes instructions without been allowed to contribute in the decisions view an authoritative administrator as one who intentionally decide on what suit him and announces to the subordinates expecting their compliances without any form of excuse or questioning. This is in line with who asserts that U.N authoritative leader derived his authority through the office more than from personal characteristics. The centre of power and authority under authoritative administration is with the school administrator and all the activities within the school system anchored on him as the head. The Principal alone exhibit decision making authority for policy implementation, material and human resources management instilling discipline, developing and implementing programmes, attainments of school goals and objectives, and student, teacher and parents relationship.

The School Administrators who adapt to authoritative or independent style of decision making seat alone to formulate policies and strategies for school management using their own ideologies. Rule and policies that are self-formulated

and imposed on the followers (staff), thereby expecting absolute adherence and compliance without questioning or relegating. According to Egwunyenga (2010), an authoritative administrator never accepts staff decision and usually distances himself from the subordinates. It is imposed and coercive leadership style of decision making (Baughman, 2008) <sup>[6]</sup>. Decision-making is done by authoritarians' administrators with little inputs from the subordinates which may or may not be considered.

Authoritative decision style could be of important in some instance, when the school administrator need to take an urgent decision, authoritative decision is the right decision to apply. There is no meaningful achievement when principals adopt authoritative decision making style; however, argued that, most of the led prefer authoritative decision style. This style of decision making of school administrator allows the subordinates to focus on carrying out their duties without distraction of making complex decisions which may develop or improved the organization.

The School Administrator who adheres to authoritative style of decision making, give orders and commands which are to be obeyed by the members with or without the members having idea or initiative towards the decision. The autocratic decision maker is an authoritarian. He orders and demand obedience, such administrators is to be feared rather than honored or respected, instead of directing, they command the subordinates while carrying out their duties, the authoritative decision style is mostly effective in organizations where the work involves requires quick decision-making.

Give the features of authoritative administrators as follows:

1. Staff not involving in decision making process.
2. All decision are made without subordinates agreement
3. Subordinates are under obligation of compliance and as well controlled.
4. Subordinates are uncompromising and most times refuse to air out their complaints.

Administrators who adopt authoritative style define task and the method by which such task should be achieved without considering whether or not the subordinate's initiative. Decision making is supposed to be a share responsibility. The authoritative style emphasized the leaders will, with or without consideration of the subordinates.

#### Consultative Decision-Making Style

Consultative or consensus decision making style is a style of decision where by the administrator ask for the teams information, ideas, opinions and contributions either individually or collectively while he takes the final decision as an administrator (Ololube, 2018) <sup>[31]</sup>. The management group are involved in the decision-making in the organization and its implementation. In case of occurrences of any challenge emanating from the concluded decisions by the team or group, they collectively stand together to tackle the challenge believing they are the stakeholders in the organization (school).

According to, consultative decision making occur when the decision maker (administrator) seeks the advice or opinions from his staff, and makes decision himself. He further stated

that, if the staffs are expertise, he will be endowed with enough information from the staff.

Consultative administrators ask key people for their idea, opinion and thought thereby allowing them space to process the challenges and render solution for what they see to be best possible solution (Ainomugisha 2019) <sup>[2]</sup>. Consultative school administrators 'aims at developing the people ability in order to influence, stimulates and motivates rather than impose and force on them their authority, involving subordinates effectively in making and handling challenges.

Consultative Principals' decision making style induced the fact that the school administrator is indeed the servant to the group of individuals he is leading. The subordinate exhibits powers thereby engaging in consultations with the school administrator (leader) giving contributions and suggestion which might aid the growth of the organization. It is worth to note that after the subordinates opinions are been seek, the school administrator own the mandate and power of taking the final decision. Consultative style encourages employee to be part of decision making. The school administrator keeps his subordinates informed about everything that affects their work and shares decision making and problem tackling responsibilities to the group.

The style requires coaching which is mostly done by the school principal, though information's are gathered from the subordinates before any active decision. Khan et al. (2015) <sup>[21]</sup> emphasized the importance of consultative style of decision-making in an organization, not withstanding, consultative decision making style should not be used when:

1. There is less time in decision making
2. It's easier and cost effective for the administrator to make the decision.
3. The organization (school) can't avoid mistakes.
4. The administrator feels threatened by this type of decision making style.
5. Employee safety is a critical concern.

Consultative decision-makers (school administrator) seek consensus, consulting decisions with subordinates, thereby providing guidance, empowering subordinates to make the best use of their competencies, skills and talents, and prioritizing social aspects of collective work (Dyczkowska & Dyczkowski, 2015) <sup>[10]</sup>. Such school administrators reward employees for commitment thereby not emphasizing their mistakes but work on problems in order to arrive at appropriate solution.

Agi and Adiele (2015) <sup>[1]</sup> assets that when members of the organization are motivated and involved in decision making it boosts their moral thus increased productivity and profitability.

Decision making in the school system is beyond power and authority display of the school administrator but shows that effort which engage and involve others subordinates is required to reach successful and effective decision for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the organization (school). Michael (2019) <sup>[27]</sup> stated that consultative style is task oriented, and focuses on the result almost as much as the authoritative style of the decision maker, however, there is no guarantee that a consultative leader will adopt absolutely to

subordinates advice when making decision since final decision anchors on him as an administrator.

### **Ethical Practices in Decision Making and Administration of Academic Issues**

Ethical practices in the administration of academic issues refers to set of professional code of conducts required of teachers, school personnel and administrators in order to achieve the goal of education (Heather, 2008) <sup>[18]</sup>. This code of conduct must be considered in making decisions that relates to administration of academic issues. It encompasses ethical standards, principles and rules that generate a feeling of ownership, responsibility and commitment among all school stakeholders crucial to ensuring the delivery of quality education (Ramirez, 2008) <sup>[33]</sup>. Heather (2008) <sup>[18]</sup> documented that the major ethical practices in the administration of academic issues includes ensuring objective instructional activity, quality students' supervision, ensuring performance based students' assessment, instilling academic discipline on students, inculcating the spirit of hard work on students, effectively utilizing human and material resources to ensure academic gain of students, non-utilization of students' for personal gains, prioritizing teaching/learning needs of students, ensuring continuous teacher education, proving a learning friendly environment and ensuring objective evaluation.

Kitchener (1985) <sup>[22]</sup> stated that some of the ethical practices that relates to academic matters include effective educational human resource management; quality planning and implementation of instructional activities by teachers, instructional supervision and classroom visitation by head teachers, total commitment to students' development and overall learning outcomes, respect for students' and other personnel characteristics, advocacy, fairness and justice.

### **Methodology**

The research design used for this study was correlational research design. A correlational research design is one which measures or tests two variables, that is dependent and independent variables, to ascertain the relationship between them with no influence of the researcher. (Mccombes 2019, & Kpolovie 2016) <sup>[26, 23]</sup>. The population of this study involved all 7, 142 teachers in the 276 Secondary Schools in the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. (Source, Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, 2019).

The sample for this study was 714 teachers (respondents) in 24 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, representing 10 percent of the total population of the study. To achieve this, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique.

The instrument used for this research was a self-structured questionnaire. The Researcher with the assistance of the project supervisor develop a self-structured instrument, titled "Principals' Decision Making Styles and Effective School Administration Questionnaire" (PDMSESAQ). It was a closed ended questionnaire which comprises of two sections 'A' and 'B' respectively.

Section 'A' was made of demographic data of the respondents. While section 'B' will contained 30 items consisting of the main body of the instrument, designed to

elicit information on the variables of the study. This specifically aided the researcher in answering the postulated research questions and interpret the null hypotheses. Specifically six items solicited answers to each research question. However, the instrument was in line with modified Likert 4- point rating scale of: Very High Extent (VHE) = 4 point, High Extent (HE) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point for research questions one to five. However, the Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) value of 2.50 and above will be interpreted as "High Extent", while the Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) value of 2.49 and below will be interpreted as "Low Extent" respectively.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by the Researchers' supervisors and two other experts from the Department of Educational Management. Their inputs and corrections were effected before the final drafting of the questionnaire for distribution.

The test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was administered in two instances on twenty (20) different respondents who we not be part of the sample of the study but part of the population. The first and the second scores were analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient inferential tool. The

result of the analyses yielded the r-coefficient value of 0.75. (75 percent reliable). This was to enable the researcher to identify if the instrument was adequate for the study.

The 714 copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher with the aid of research assistants to all the teachers sampled in this study. However due to unavailability of some respondents in various occasions the researcher went for the collection of the questionnaires, there was no maximum rate, hence the research recorded 656 questionnaires which accounted for 92 percent return rate.

The data gathered from the research instrument were collated, computed and scored for descriptive analysis using the Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and Standard Deviation (SD) to provide answers to the research questions. In respect of testing the null hypotheses, ANOVA associated with the regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS statistical tool, version 22.

## Results and Discussions

### Answers to Research Questions

**Research Question One:** To what extent does principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings and standard deviation of teachers on the extent principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Description of Items	$\bar{X}$	S. D	Rank Order	Decision
1	The principals authoritative decision aids in the smooth running of the school	2.31	1.20	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Low Extent
2	The principal gives directives virtually on everything without seeking input or opinion of teachers	3.22	.98	1 <sup>st</sup>	High Extent
3	It leads to cooperation among the teachers	2.42	1.16	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Low Extent
4	The principal decentralizes decision making process	1.65	.58	6 <sup>th</sup>	Low Extent
5	It makes the teachers to submit to his instructions.	2.30	1.11	4 <sup>th</sup>	Low Extent
6	The teachers perform according to the expectation of the principal.	1.88	1.19	5 <sup>th</sup>	Low Extent
	Grand Mean	2.29	1.03		Low Extent

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, February 2020

Data on Table 1 show the mean ratings and standard deviation of teachers on the extent principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

The table shows that the respondents jointly agreed to items 2 with the mean value of 3.22 which is above 2.50 decisions mean. This entails that the principals gives directives virtually on everything without consulting the teachers to a high extent as agreed by majority of respondents. However, majority of the respondents disagreed on item 1, 3, 4 and 5 with the mean values of 2.31, 2.42, 1.65, 2.30 and 1.88 respectively. This means that principals authoritative decision aids in the smooth running of the school, leads to

cooperation among the teachers, decentralizes decision making process, makes the teachers to submit to his instructions, makes teachers to perform according to the expectation of the principal to a low extent. From the ranking order, item 2 came 1<sup>st</sup> with the mean value of 3.22 while item 4 came 6<sup>th</sup> with the mean value of 1.65. In all, the grand mean of 2.29 shows that principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a low extent.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent does principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

**Table 2:** Mean ratings and standard deviation of teachers on the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Description of Items	$\bar{X}$	S. D	Rank Order	Decision
7	The principal involvement of staff members in decision making leads to effective administration	3.22	.99	1 <sup>st</sup>	High Extent
8	The principal accept the suggestions and opinions of staff members.	2.66	1.14	5 <sup>th</sup>	High Extent
9	The principal developed the ability of teachers by engaging them in decision making and problem solving process.	3.08	1.07	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High Extent
10	The principal give room for dialogue and is a good listener	3.00	.98	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High Extent
11	The principal have confidence in the teachers regardless of arguments that may arise from time to time	1.85	.96	6 <sup>th</sup>	Low Extent
12	The principal is patient with his sub-ordinates and encourage them to express their views without interruption	2.67	1.21	4 <sup>th</sup>	High Extent
	Grand Mean	2.74	1.05		High Extent

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, February 2020

Table 2 show the mean ratings and standard deviation on the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. From the table, the respondents agreed that the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State involves accepting the suggestions and opinions of staff members, developing the ability of teachers by engaging them in decision making and problem solving process, giving room for dialogue, having confidence in the teachers regardless of arguments that may arise from time to time and is a good listener, having patient with his sub-ordinates and encouraging them to express their views without interruption as seen on item 7,8, 9, 10 and 12, with the mean scores of 3.22, 2.66, 3.08,3.00, 2.67 respectively. However, the respondents did not agree with

item 11. Thereby, indicating that, having confidence in the teachers regardless of arguments that may arise from time to time are not the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State as revealed on item 11 with the mean score of 1.86. In all, the grand mean of 2.74 showed that the respondents to a high extent agreed on the items raised above as the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

#### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Table 3:** Summary of regression analysis on the relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Result	
1	.249 <sup>a</sup>	.062	.053	.96599		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Authoritative decision						
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	
Constant	2.882	.226		6.462	.000	
Use of authoritative	-0.0314	0.0698	-0.0342	-0.4388	.000	
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Significance
Regression	39.898	6	6.650	7.126	.000	Ho1 Rejected
Residual	605.608	649	.933			
Total	645.506	655				

a. Dependent Variable: Effective administration

b. Predictors: (Constant), authoritative decision

Table 3 shows the regression analysis of the relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State which could be described as weak and inverse (Beta= -0.0342). The regression equation  $y = 2.882 - 0.0314x$  show that an increase in principals' use of authoritative decision making style might lead to a decrease in the level of effective administration of public secondary school in Rivers State.

From analysis in table 4.6,  $R = .249^a$ ,  $R^2 = .062$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .053$  while standard error = .96599. From the R-square value, it is seen that authoritative decision making style account for about 62% for effective administration of public

secondary schools. ANOVA reveals calculated F of 649 and a Sig. value of .000<sup>b</sup>. ( $F, 649 = 7.126, P < 0.05$ ). The p value is less than 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate stated, hence there is a significant relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between principals' use of Consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.



**Table 4:** Summary of regression analysis on the relationship between principals' use of Consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Result	
1	.119 <sup>a</sup>	.014	.005	1.10982		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Consultative decision						
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
Beta			Beta		T	Sig.
2.545			.415		6.128	.000
1.0444			0.0648		0.748	.159
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	No Significance
Regression	11.472	6	1.912	1.552	.159 <sup>b</sup>	Ho Accepted
Residual	799.367	649	1.232			
Total	810.840	655				

a. Dependent Variable: Effective administration

b. Predictors: (Constant), Consultative decision

Table 4 shows the regression analysis on the relationship between principals' use of Consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State which could be described as weak and inverse (Beta= 1.0448). While the regression equation  $y = 2.545 + 1.0444x$  indicates that an increase principals' use of Consultative decision making style might lead to an increase in effective administration of public secondary schools.

The calculated R= .119<sup>a</sup>, R square=.014, Adjusted R square =.005, Standard error= 1.10982. The R square value of .014 shows a 1.4% impact of Consultative decision making style on effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The F-Statistics shows that there is no significant relationship between principals' use of Consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. (F, 649, = 1.5552, P>0.05) The hypothesis was accepted at 0.05 alpha level.

### Discussion of Findings

#### The extent principals' uses of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

The findings of this study reveals that the extent principals' use of authoritative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State includes; giving directives virtually on everything without seeking input or opinion of teachers to a high extent. The study also found out that principals authoritative decision aids in the smooth running of the school, leads to cooperation among the teachers, decentralizes decision making process, makes the teachers to submit to his instructions, makes teachers to perform according to the expectation of the principal to a low extent. This finding is in line with who opined that authoritative leadership style is known for self (one man) control over all decisions and little or no input from subordinates. This means that authoritative school administrators select and rarely takes their subordinates opinions, they are detective in nature, the subordinates just follow and takes instructions without been allowed to contribute in the decisions, thereby denying the subordinates the input of their initiatives which will lead to the overall growth of the institution. The school system that adopts this kind of decision making system will lose the meaningful contributions of teachers who also have positive impacts to offer due to the limited or one way communication; hence

leadership is a communication based activity (Hackman & Johnson). The principal as an administrator spends much of his time shaping messages that are presented to his subordinates either in the written form or verbal form which he or she will promote healthy administration of the school. Be it as it may, the teachers if allowed to make inputs in the decision making process, will make them have sense of belonging in the administration of the school system.

The finding that the principal under autocratic leadership style do not tolerate excuses from teachers is supported by, having opined that an autocratic administrator is one who is very conscious of his position, has little or no confidence in his subordinates, command and seeks immediate response and obedience without excuses. The autocratic principals never like to hear excuse from anybody; as such autocratic leadership style does not want to hear any form of excuse from any teacher because of its task centeredness. Further, the findings of this study is in agreement with Baughman (2008)<sup>[6]</sup> for his assertion that authoritarians' administrators creates room for little inputs from the subordinates which may or may not be considered. The study went further to reveal that, there is a significant relationship between principals' use of authoritative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. That is to say that the more principals apply authoritative decision making style, the more administration of secondary schools will not be effective.

#### The extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

The findings from the study reveals that the extent principals' use of consultative decision making style influence effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State includes; involvement of staff members in decision making leading to effective administration, accepting the suggestions and opinions of staff members, developing the ability of teachers by engaging them in decision making and problem solving process, giving room for dialogue and is a good listener, being patient with his sub-ordinates and encouraging them to express their views without interruption. The findings of this study is in line with Ainomugisha (2019)<sup>[2]</sup>, when he opined that consultative administrators ask key people for their idea, opinion and thought thereby allowing them space to process the challenges and render solution for what they see to be best possible solution. Under consultative

leadership style, school administrators aims at developing the people ability in order to influence, stimulates and motivates the staff rather than impose and force on them their authority, hence this involves subordinates effectively in making and handling challenges that may arise in the school system. The consultation undertaken by the school administrator is to harness the potentials in everybody which breeds about a fast and a transformed effective decision that will promote the overall interest of the school. Also, according to consultative decision making occur when the decision maker (administrator) seeks the advice or opinions from his staff, and makes decision himself. He further stated that, if the staffs are expertise, he will be endowed with enough information from the staff which makes available to him so many reliable choices to follow. Consultative style is task oriented, and focuses on the result almost as much as the authoritative style of the decision maker, however, there is no guarantee that a consultative leader will adopt absolutely to subordinates advice when making decision since final decision anchors on him as an administrator. By that act of consulting other staff, the principal expresses selfless liberals attitude towards work environment. In addition with sharing of power and authority and encouraging absolute participation of workers, Daft (2003) <sup>[9]</sup>. The involvement of other staff in decision making breeds better ideas, skills, talents and more solutions to tackle organizational challenges (khan et al., 2015) <sup>[21]</sup>. The consultative style of Principal is most successful and effective decision making style leading to effective administration.

The study went further to reveal that there is no significant relationship between principals' use of consultative decision making style and effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### Conclusion

The internal administration is always seen within the dimension of goal and role expectations engineered by careful and systematic management of human and material resources, situations and opportunities for the achievement of the specific objective contents. The present study had emphasized that principals constitute the major leadership that manages these resources to bring about worthwhile results expected of the school. Hence, the study maintained that effective school administration is to a high extent dependant on decision-making styles of the school principals. The principals employs the authoritative decision making style to compel staff to get committed to effective service delivery; however, care should be taken to avoid raising staff who will revolt against the school constituted authority. Consultative decision making style avails the principal the opportunity to get the opinions of the other staff for the achievement of the goals of the school.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and conclusion, the following recommendations are made;

1. The principals should adopt consultative leadership style to engineer effective administration.
2. Authoritative decision making styles should be utterly abhorred in secondary school administration if the school must experience progress.
3. The schools board should organize seminars for principals on decision making styles that will be adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools.

4. The principal should from time to time call a general meeting of the staff in order to have a collective binding force on the decisions that will be reached.

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