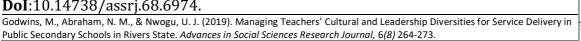
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# Managing Teachers' Cultural and Leadership Diversities for Service Delivery in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the management of teachers' cultural and leadership diversities for service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The research design was the descriptive survey. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Weighted mean score, standard deviation, and criterion mean were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Theory X and Y propounded by Douglas McGregor in 1960, and the Need Achievement theory propounded by David C. McClelland in 1961 were the theoretical frameworks for the study. The population of the study included all 268 principals in all 268 public secondary schools in Rivers State. There were 153 male and 115 female principals, and, 62 urban and 206 rural secondary school principals. The sample for the study was 160 principals from the 268 public secondary school principals in Rivers State. This sample represented 60% of the population. The sampling technique adopted for the study was the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled 'Management of Teachers' Diversities for Service Delivery Questionnaire' (MTDSDQ). The questionnaire had 10 items. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was determine through Crombach alpha statistics. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.81. The findings of the study revealed that the respondents agreed that the ways cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State include; teachers are asked not to speak their vernacular during general meetings held in the school, teachers are used as resource persons to help teach topics that are related to cultural diversities, teachers are allowed to form informal groups that is based on their different ethnic affiliations, there is no cultural discrimination in the way responsibilities are assigned to teachers and a deliberate effort is made to ensure that every ethnic group is represented in school committees. Findings also revealed that equal representation in committees, democracy in selections, are some of the ways of managing diversities arising from leadership. It was recommended that the government should organize annual inter-public-secondary-school teachers' talent competition where prizes will be given to teachers who emerge winners and special incentives should be given to those who make significant contributions toward service delivery through the use of their cultural and leadership diversities.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Diversity, Management, Secondary school, Service delivery, Culture, Cultural diversity, Leadership style, leadership style diversity

#### INTRODUCTION

Secondary education is the education which young people receive after completion of primary education and in preparation for admission into tertiary education. This position of secondary education in the structure of formal education in Nigeria makes it critical because it has a consumer and producer status by absorbing the products of primary and producing the intakes for tertiary education. Achuonye (2008) noted that secondary education delivery guards against wastage of the resources expended on offering basic education to young people. If the young people who compete the basic level of education in Nigeria have no secondary schools where they would be enrolled to receive quality secondary level of education, the resources spent for providing the basic education is wasted. This is because young people who complete the basic education cannot proceed to seeking admission into tertiary education without attending and completing secondary education. Furthermore, the curriculum of basic level of education is not designed to make those who complete that level of education to become resources and responsible members of a dynamic society (FRN, 2008).

Teachers are important educational resource for secondary school delivery. The quality of teachers in any school may be affected by the degree of diversity that exists amongst them. Teachers' diversities refer to the physiological and psychological characteristics that make a person unique and relevant to himself and his society. Diversities according to Kornblum (2005) cover all personal traits that are used to identify and categorize people into distinct groups within society. In a school, teachers' diversities are the physical, social, career, intellectual, personality, cultural and religious dispositions of teachers that are relevant to their service delivery and that can be used to classify teachers into different functional groups. Such characteristics usually form the basis for creating sub-sets in the population. People with similar characteristic features are grouped into the same sub-set. The diversities used for dissecting a population of people into sub-sets, are usually prevalent in the group and relevant to the management of the population. The implication of this is that teacher' diversities for instance will likely enhance effective utilization of the population of teachers in a secondary school.

Diversities which show the characteristic features of the population of teachers in a school, also helps school administrators to predict the needs of individuals and members of sub-sets of teachers in the school (Devoe, 1999). Teachers have their 'idiosyncratic needs' (i.e. personal needs) which they anticipate will be met as they join the workforce in a school. The needs of teachers could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic needs are the ones that can be satisfied not with a reward incentive but from the nature of his/her responsibilities, school climate and conditions of service. The extrinsic needs are the ones that can only be satisfied when a teacher receives monetary or non-monetary reward for his/her services. Reward is critical in human resource management. Effective administration of reward could foster effective human resource management (Wasiu & Adebajo, 2014). To reward a person, it is important to know what reward the person anticipates to receive and how the person is likely to value the worth of the reward. Teachers' diversity in secondary schools include; cultural diversity and leadership style diversity amongst others.

Culture refers to a way of behaviour that is relatively permanent. Kornblum (2005) defines culture as all modes of thought, behaviour and production that are transmitted from one generation to another by means of communicative interaction and not by generic transmission or heredity. Culture is therefore a learned ideology and norms that affects the way people perceive themselves, other people and their environment. Okujagu (1993) defines culture as the complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, skills, laws, customs and any other capabilities acquired from the structure and interactions of a society. Culture can be

material or non-material. The material culture refers the physical aspect of culture. It can be seen in the unique way people make their clothes, houses, language and predominant occupation. The non-material culture refers to the cultural psychological variables that are only inferred in the behaviour of people. It includes the values, skills, and habits that people uphold. Every society has a unique structure, pattern of interaction and value system (Haviland, William, Harald & Walrath, 2007). This makes the culture of one society to be different from that of another.

Culture is one of the sociological ways of identifying people from different societies. It is a universal phenomenon that is relative. This implies that the acceptable culture of a given society may be unacceptable in different societies. According to Dienye (n.d.:32), "Culture as a dynamic concept is not homogeneous in all groups of society – it varies from one group to another. It is also possible for a variation of culture to occur within the same group at different times." Culture of a people defines their needs, interests and motivation. This makes culture a critical diversity. Teachers belong to different communities or ethnicities thus every teacher has his/her unique culture. Teachers' culture is a diversity that should be taken into consideration in the management of teachers for effective service delivery. There appears to be a positive relationship between culture and motivation. Activities that are disrespectful or contrary to the culture of a person may be perceived as an offence and demoralizing situation.

Dienye (n.d) argued that no culture is superior to the other. The management of cultural diversity according to Hodgetts, Luthans and Doh (2006) are critical to the success of all organizations. They asserted that organizations with staff members from diverse cultures are likely to be more successful than organizations with staff members with homogeneous culture. School managers should realize that culture can affect preferred teaching methodology of teachers, preference for instructional materials, teachers' involvement in co-curricular activities, pattern of interpersonal interaction between teachers, as well as their participation in decision making process in the school. Teachers' culture can influence their perception of the various policies and programmes of the school (Edem, 2006). This could consequently affect the extent of their morale and commitment to service delivery. Educational administrators should critically manage cultural diversities amongst teachers. This can be done through the use of policy tools and sensitization strategies to promote cultural tolerance and adaptation amongst teachers. Culture is adaptive. This means that although cultures differ, culture is integrative and therefore is synthesized into a whole Dienye (n.d).

Culture shouldn't set the tone for division and conflict. Rather, it should be seen as what makes societies different yet mutually relevant to each other (Kornblum, 2005). In managing cultural diversity, emphasis should be placed on promoting unity in diversity. The diversity of culture amongst teachers should be harnessed as a learning opportunity and resource for intercultural approach to problem solving. Education and culture are interwoven phenomenon (Dienye, n.d.). In other to promote effective implementation of the curriculum and effective teaching and learning, teachers' cultural diversities should be considered a relevant and useful resource. Co-curricular educational porgrammes that directly promote culture are important aspect of education delivery. Schools depend on teachers for effective planning and implementation of such programmes in secondary schools. Public secondary schools principals can manage cultural diversities amongst teachers by developing, adopting or adapting organizational culture of the school. This will ensure that every member of the school realizes that the shared institutional culture is more relevant at the workplace than individual cultural differences. According to Kornblum (2005), culture is man-made. It is made to enable humans adapt to prevailing challenges and also to enable them meet their present and future aspirations.

Culture can be handed down from one generation to another. Through the processes of socialization, education, orientation and training, educational institutions can transfer their culture from one generation to another (Fafunwa, 2004). Culture however is subject to changes and can also be completely discarded. One important feature of culture is that it can be adopted. This means that culture can be borrowed from other societies or organizations where they are perceived to be advantageous. Leadership styles on the other-hand refer to the way leaders perceive their subordinates and the extent to which they involve their subordinates in decision making process. The leadership style of a person refers to the intensity of supervision which leaders give to their subordinates. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2011) defined leadership style as the various patterns of behaviour favoured by leaders during the process of directing and influencing workers. The three most common leadership styles are democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership. These leadership styles were developed at the end of a study conducted by Lewin, Lippit and White (Okorie, 2009).

Every individual is assumed to possess one of the three leadership styles. Teachers are expected to act as leaders. They are primarily the leaders of their classrooms. As leaders, the onus is on them to influence the behaviour of the students in their classrooms. Teachers are used in schools to head various departments and groups in the school. Leadership attribute is an important attribute or skill that teachers must possess in other to be effective in their service delivery. The training and development of teachers should include inculcation and development of leadership capabilities in teachers. Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) opined that teachers should be leaders. Leadership style is one of the diversities of teachers. This is because leadership and leadership style of a teacher could be a quality a teacher is born with or a learned skill. People can be grouped based on the leadership style they predominantly apply in course of leading other people. People have different leadership styles. According to Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2011), a person's leadership style is primarily influenced by his background, knowledge, values and experience.

The diversity of teachers' leadership styles in secondary schools can be grouped into democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style, and laizes-faire leadership style. The need for cultural and leadership style teachers' diversities management for service delivery in secondary cannot be overemphasized. It is therefore critical to examine how secondary school teachers' cultural and leadership style diversities are managed for service delivery.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Secondary school is an important level of education in Nigeria. It is the level of education where young Nigerians are expected to be prepared for integration into society and to meet the qualification for enrolment into tertiary education. The quantity and quality of candidates admitted into any of the institutions of tertiary education appears to depend on the quality of service delivery in secondary schools. Teachers play critical roles in this service delivery. The cultural and leadership diversities that exist amongst secondary school teachers appear to enrich the quality of teachers for service delivery. Sadly, it is observed that most secondary school students indulge in examination malpractices and social vices (like hooliganism, cultism and rubbery). It is also observed that there is a decline in the quality of secondary school leavers that are admitted into universities. This situation raises concerns amongst stakeholders. Furthermore, there is a growing concern by all stakeholders on the observed leadership crisis in most of our schools. This crisis sometimes are justified by teachers and principals who claim that differences in culture appear to be the major culprit. Could this be true? How can these be solved? These nagging questions require answer, hence this study.

# Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine managing teachers' diversity for service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study was conducted to:

- 1. Examine how cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.
- 2. Unveil how leadership diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- 1. How is cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers managed for service delivery in Rivers State?
- 2. What are the ways that leadership diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State?

# **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Each of the hypotheses was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

 $H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

 $H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how leadership diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research design that was used for this study is the descriptive survey. The population of the study covered all the 268 public secondary schools in the Rivers State. The respondents' population of the study included all the 268 principals in all the 268 public secondary schools in Rivers State with 153 male and 115 female principals, 62 urban and 206 rural secondary school principals (Source: Rivers State Senior Schools Board, 2018). Out of the 268, 160 principals representing 60% served as study participants. The sampling technique for the study was the proportionate stratified random sampling technique.

The instrument used for collection of data for the study was a self-designed questionnaire titled 'Managing Teachers' Diversities for Service Delivery Questionnaire' (MTDSDQ). Patterned after a Likert 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, with 2.50 as the criterion mean. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was established with the use of Crombach alpha statistics with an index of 0.81. Weighted mean and criterion mean (2.50) were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

#### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

**Research Question 1:** How is cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers managed for service delivery in Rivers State?

Table 1: Weighted mean  $(\bar{x})$  scores of urban and rural principals on how cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

		Maan Daan	State					
		Mean Resp Male	onses	Fema	nlo			
		Principals Principals						
		Timerpais		1111	icipais	Weighted		
S/No.		$(\bar{x}_1)$	$SD_1$	$(\bar{x}_2)$	$SD_2$	Mean	Rank	
,	Items	( 1)		( 2)		$(\bar{x})$	Order	Remarks
1.	In my school teachers are asked not to speak their vernacular during general meetings held in the school	3.21	1.32	2.80	1.12	3.01	3 <sup>RD</sup>	Agreed
2.	In my school teachers are used as resources persons to help teach topics that are related to cultural diversities	2.56	1.12	3.12	1.28	2.84	<b>4</b> <sup>TH</sup>	Agreed
3.	In my school teachers are allowed to form informal groups that is based on their different ethnic affiliations	3.04	1.24	3.38	1.42	3.21	2 <sup>ND</sup>	Agreed
4.	In my school there is no cultural discrimination in the way responsibilities are assigned to teachers	3.53	1.52	3.49	1.49	3.51	1 <sup>ST</sup>	Agreed
5.	In my school a deliberate effort is made to ensure that every ethnic group is represented in school committees	2.82	1.16	2.74	1.14	2.78	5 <sup>тн</sup>	Agreed
Weighte	Weighted mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score		1.27	3.11	1.29	3.07		Agreed

Data on Table 1 show that items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 have weighted mean scores that are above the criterion mean (2.50). This implies that the respondents agreed that the items are the ways cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** What are the ways that leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State?

Table 2: Weighted mean  $(\bar{x})$  scores of male and female principals on the ways that leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

		Mean Res Urban	Ponoco	Rura	1			
		Principals		Principals		Weighted		
S/No.	Items	$(\overline{x}_1)$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$(\overline{x}_2)$	$SD_2$	Mean $(\bar{x})$	Rank Order	Remarks
6.	In my school teachers with diverse leadership styles have equal chances of being democratically elected into leadership positions	3.35	1.40	3.67	1.62	3.51	3 <sup>RD</sup>	Agreed
7.	In my a teacher occupies a leadership positions for a limited tenure so that other teachers can be given a chance to occupy available leadership positions	3.46	1.47	2.85	1.66	3.16	<b>4</b> тн	Agreed
8.	In my school disciplinary committees are made up of teachers with diverse leadership styles	3.73	1.66	2.68	1.13	3.21	2 <sup>ND</sup>	Agreed
9.	In my school the leadership styles possessed by teachers is not a criterion for administration of reward	3.11	1.27	3.28	1.40	3.20	1 <sup>ST</sup>	Agreed
10.	In my school seminars are organized to help teachers effectively apply their leadership style diversities in the administration of the school	2.32	1.13	1.93	1.25	2.13	5 <sup>тн</sup>	Disagreed
Weighte	ed mean $(\bar{x})$ score	3.19	1.34	2.88	1.41	3.04		Agreed

Data on table 2 show that items 16,17,18 and 19 have weighted mean scores that are above the criterion mean score of 2.50. This reveals that the respondents agreed that the items agreed upon are the ways leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

# **Hypotheses**

 $H_{o1}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

Table 1: z-test Summary of Analysis of Differences between the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Principals on how Cultural Diversity existing amongst Public Secondary School Teachers is managed for Service Delivery in Rivers State

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Respondents	N	$(\overline{x})$	SD	df	z-Cal	z- Crit	Level of significance	Result
Male Principals	91	3.03	1.27	-				Not Significant
Female	69	3.11	1.29	158	-0.39	1.96	0.05	Но
Principals								(Accepted)

Table 2 shows mean, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State. The z-calculated score is -0.39;

using 158 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the z-critical score is found to be 1.96. Since the z-calculated score is less than the z-critical score, there is significant difference between the respondents. Based on this, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

 $H_{o2}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

Table 2: z-test Summary of Analysis of Differences between the Mean Ratings of Urban and Rural Principals on how Leadership Style Diversity existing amongst Public Secondary School Teachers is managed for Service Delivery in Rivers State

			10 11101110	80011010	01 1100 2 01110	- 3		
Respondents	N	$(\overline{x})$	SD	df	z-Cal	z- Crit	Level of significance	Result
Urban Principals	37	3.19	1.39					Not Significant
Rural Principals	123	2.88	1.40	158	1.191.96	1.96	0.05	Но
-								(Accepted)

Table 2 applies to the summaries of the object mean, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State. The z-calculated score is 1.19; using 158 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the z-critical score is found to be 1.96. Since the z-calculated score is less than the z-critical score, there is significant difference between the respondents. Based on this, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

#### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

# Management of Teachers' Cultural Diversity for Service Delivery

The respondents agreed that the ways cultural diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State include; teachers are asked not to speak their vernacular during general meetings held in the school, teachers are used as resource persons to help teach topics that are related to cultural diversities, teachers are allowed to form informal groups that is based on their different ethnic affiliations, there is no cultural discrimination in the way responsibilities are assigned to teachers and a deliberate effort is made to ensure that every ethnic group is represented in school committees. This finding is in agreement with the assertion of Hitt, Miller & Collella (2006) that every organization should maintain a standard way of behaviour that would become its culture. The culture of an organization is designed to promote control and harmony amidst the cultural diversity existing amongst individual members of the school. The culture of a school is enshrined in their rules and byelaws, professional code of conduct and bylaws. No school or organization can survive without maintaining institutionalized rules and regulations.

According to Kornblum (2005:51), "All familiar forms of social organization, from the simplest family to the most complex corporation, depend on culture for their existence." A policy that bans teachers from speaking their vernacular during general meetings held in the school is therefore a form of school culture where English Language is spoken during meetings so as to promote transparency, teamwork and to eliminate all forms of divisiveness and discriminations arising from the use of a vernacular during official staff meetings. The findings

also corroborated the position of Agabi, Onyeike and Wali (2013) that resource persons can be used to teach certain topics that require some form of specialized knowledge. Such topics may include topics that cut across health or culture. Resource persons for classroom teaching can be sourced inwards or outwards. Inward sourcing of resource persons include using teachers who are better experienced or better knowledgeable to deliver instructions on specific topics. The finding also contradicts the recommendation of Okorie (2009) that informal groups exist in all formal organizations and that they are instrumental to effective administration of the school. She also notes that informal groups that exist in formal organizations like public schools help to meet teachers' need for affection and association.

The morale and job satisfaction of teachers who work in schools that do not allow teachers to carryout informal group activities (including the activities that highlight ethnic affiliations) may negatively be affected. The findings also support the position of Kosemani and Anuna (2008) that there should be equity and justice in the administration of schools. Edem (2006) maintains that there should be no discrimination in school administration.

# Management of Teachers' Leadership Style Diversity for Service Delivery

The study revealed that the respondents agreed that the ways leadership style diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State include that: teachers with diverse leadership styles have equal chances of being democratically elected into leadership positions, a teacher occupies a leadership positions for a limited tenure so that other teachers can be given a chance to occupy available leadership positions, disciplinary committees are made up of teachers with diverse leadership styles and the leadership styles possessed by teachers are not a criterion for administration of reward. This finding agreed with the position of Abraham (2003) that schools should be democratic institutions. All teachers (irrespective of their leadership styles) should be given equal opportunity of being elected into positions when the need arises. This supports the assertion of Okorie, (2009) that no leadership style is the best style.

What is rather most critical is the suitability of each leadership style given the realities of each situation. A teacher with a democratic leadership style should not be seen as being a better leader than a leadership who perhaps possesses an autocratic style of leadership. Every teacher should be given equal and fair opportunity for growth in the career. The finding supports the position of Edem, (2006) and Agabi (1999) that interdisciplinary approach of problem solving is an effective way of solving problem. In applying interdisciplinary approach of problem solving the diversities amongst teachers' leadership style can be considered when setting-up committees that require interdisciplinary approach to problem solving. The finding also supports that proposition of Egbo and Okeke (2006) that employees should be rewarded based on performance and not on the basis of their differences. The school is a formal organization. Thus, reward should be given based on merit and not on any personal or demographic consideration. Teachers should not be rewarded because they possess either demographic, autocratic or laissez fair leader styles. Proponents of equity theory maintain that employees compare their reward to their workload and productivity and with the relevant other.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that the culture and leadership style diversities are managed for service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were made:

- 1. The government should organize annual inter-public-secondary-school teachers' talent competition where prizes will be given to teachers who emerge winners and special incentives should be given to those who make significant contributions toward service deliver by using their talents.
- 2. The government should make a policy that public secondary schools should organize annual programmes that will be used to celebrate the diverse cultures of teachers and students in the schools. The programme should also serve as opportunity for staff and students to learn something about the culture of other members of the school.

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