ADMINISTRATORS' INNOVATIVE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AND LECTURERS' INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY IN RIVERS STATE OWNED UNIVERSITIES.

Dr. Mrs. Blessing Wey-Amaewhule
Wey-amaewhule.blessing@ust.edu.ng
Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education, Rivers State University

&

Ezeugo, Chinyere Roseline
Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education, Rivers State University
chinyererozy@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined the administrators' innovative ethical leadership strategies and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. Three objectives, three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of this study was 2,449 administratorsand lecturers in the two public universities owned by the Rivers State Government. The sample size of the study was 360 respondents. The proportionate stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting a total of 24 administrators and 336 lecturers from the two universities under study. The instrument used for data collection was a self- structured questionnaire titled" Administrators' Innovative Ethical Leadership StrategiesQuestionnaire and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery Questionnaire" These instruments were validated by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was established through a test of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability co-efficient index obtained through the Cronbach Alpha method was 0.76, 0.78, 0.88 and 0.83 which was considered reliable. The data collected for the research questions and hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistics.. The result of the analyzed data revealed that there is a significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Administrators should actively involve lecturers in collaborative decision-making processes related to instructional delivery. This can be achieved through regular consultations, the establishment of participatory committees, and the implementation of feedback mechanisms. Collaborative decision-making fosters a sense of ownership among lecturers, leading to increased motivation and alignment with institutional goals and objectives.

Keywords: *Ethic, Instructional Delivery, Leadership, Administrators*

Introduction

In the contemporary educational landscape, the role of administrators as ethical and innovative leaders has become increasingly vital in shaping the instructional practices of teachers and, by extension, the overall quality of education. Universities in Rivers State, like many institutions globally, face evolving challenges that demand not only traditional management skills but also creative and ethical approaches to leadership. The nexus between administrators' leadership strategies and lecturers' instructional delivery is pivotal, as it determines the extent to which educational institutions can meet their goals of fostering academic excellence and societal development.

Ethical leadership is a cornerstone of effective administration in educational institutions, encompassing the principles of fairness, integrity, transparency, and accountability. Studies suggest that

when administrators exhibit ethical leadership, they create an environment of trust and motivation, which directly impacts teachers' commitment to their instructional roles (Brown & Treviño, 2021). Lecturers working under ethical leaders are more likely to adopt best practices in instructional delivery, prioritize students' needs, and align their teaching strategies with institutional objectives. However, the dynamic nature of higher education today requires administrators to integrate innovation into their leadership, leveraging new technologies, pedagogical approaches, and collaborative frameworks to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

The concept of innovative leadership in educational settings involves the capacity to inspire change, encourage creativity, and adapt to technological advancements. This is particularly relevant in Rivers State universities, where diverse challenges such as inadequate resources, fluctuating enrollment rates, and the need for modernization in teaching practices persist. According to Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber (2020), administrators who combine innovation with ethical leadership are better positioned to address such challenges by fostering a culture of adaptability and continuous improvement. These leaders can encourage teachers to incorporate technology into their instructional delivery, experiment with innovative pedagogical methods, and engage in professional development to remain responsive to students' learning needs.

Instructional delivery is a critical component of teaching that directly influences students' academic achievement and holistic development. Effective instructional delivery involves not only the mastery of subject matter but also the ability to communicate it engagingly and interactively, often requiring the integration of digital tools and collaborative learning techniques. Rivers State universities, like many higher education institutions in Nigeria, grapple with inconsistencies in instructional quality due to factors such as resource limitations, lack of training, and insufficient administrative support (Eze & Igbokwe, 2022). In this context, the strategies adopted by administrators play a decisive role in determining how well teachers can deliver their instructional responsibilities.

The intersection of ethical and innovative leadership is particularly important in fostering an enabling environment for instructional delivery. For example, administrators who prioritize ethical decision-making and equitable resource allocation can reduce conflicts and grievances among staff, ensuring a harmonious working environment that enhances instructional focus. At the same time, innovative strategies such as implementing teacher mentoring programmes, adopting performance management systems, and providing access to cutting-edge teaching resources can improve the quality of instructional delivery (Lumby & Coleman, 2020).

Globally, there is a growing body of literature that underscores the transformative impact of ethical and innovative leadership on educational outcomes. However, in the Nigerian context, particularly in Rivers State, there is limited research exploring how these leadership approaches influence teachers' instructional practices in universities. This gap calls for an empirical investigation to provide insights into the specific strategies administrators employ and their effectiveness in enhancing instructional delivery. Some innovative ethical leadership strategies adopted by administrators include collaborative decision-making, equitable resource allocation and technology-driven professional development strategies.

Collaborative decision-making represents a transformative approach to administrative leadership that breaks down traditional hierarchical barriers in university governance. This strategy emphasizes collective input, shared responsibility, and inclusive participation in institutional decision-making processes (Chukwu&Enyeji, 2024).

Equitable resource allocation represents a critical ethical leadership approach that ensures fair distribution of institutional resources, addressing historical disparities and promoting educational quality (Ibrahim & Mohammed, 2023)

The technology driven professional development strategy leverages technological innovations to create continuous, accessible, and personalized professional development opportunities for lecturers. These opportunities include online learning platforms, virtual training modules, adaptive learning technologies, performance analytics and skill gap assessment tools (Nwosu & Okeke, 2024).

These innovative ethical leadership strategies represent sophisticated approaches to enhancing educational quality, promoting institutional transparency, and supporting lecturers' professional growth in Rivers State universities. This study is therefore situated at the intersection of leadership and pedagogy, focusing on how administrators in Rivers State owned universities can deploy innovative ethical leadership strategies to address the challenges facing lecturers in instructional delivery.

Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of universities in achieving their mandate of teaching, research, and community service is heavily dependent on the quality of instructional delivery by teachers. However, in Rivers State owneduniversities, there is growing concern over inconsistencies in instructional practices, marked by outdated teaching methods, inadequate use of technology, and limited engagement with innovative pedagogical strategies. These issues have been compounded by challenges such as resource constraints, lack of professional development opportunities, and limited administrative support, which hinder teachers from optimizing their instructional delivery.

The leadership strategies adopted by university administrators significantly influence teachers' ability to overcome these challenges. Ethical leadership, which promotes trust, fairness, and transparency, is critical in creating an enabling environment where teachers feel valued and motivated to excel in their instructional roles. Similarly, innovative leadership, characterized by adaptability, creativity, and technological integration is essential in fostering a culture of continuous improvement in teaching practices. However, evidence suggests that many administrators in Rivers State universities struggle to effectively combine ethical and innovative leadership strategies to address the complexities of modern instructional needs.

While previous studies have explored the impact of leadership on educational outcomes, there is limited empirical research focusing on how administrators' innovative ethical leadership strategies specifically influence teachers' instructional delivery in the context of Rivers State universities. This gap in knowledge leaves stakeholders without a clear understanding of the mechanisms through which effective leadership can enhance instructional quality, thereby undermining efforts to improve educational standards in these institutions.

The problem, therefore, lies in the underutilization of innovative ethical leadership strategies by administrators, which affects teachers' instructional delivery and, by extension, the overall quality of education in Rivers State universities.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the relationship between administrators' innovative ethical leadership strategies and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. investigate the relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities.
2. Find out the relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation andlecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities.
3. assess the relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities?
2. What is the relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities?
3. What is the relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities?

Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and s' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities
2. There is no significant relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities.
3. There is no significant relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State owned Universities.

Methodology

The study adopted the correlational survey research design. The population of this study was 2,449 administratorsand lecturers in the two public universities owned by the Rivers State Government. This comprises 2425 lecturers and 24 administrators from Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The sample size of the study was 360 respondents. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane formula. However, the proportionate stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting a total of 24administrators and 336 lecturers from the two universities under study. The instrument used for data collection were two sets of self- structured questionnaires titled" Administrators' Innovative Ethical Leadership Strategies Questionnaire (AIELSQ) and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery Questionnaire" (LIDQ) and the instrument contained 15 items which were designed based on the research questions. Responses to the items were structured on a four point summated rating scale of "Strongly Agree=4", "Agree=3", "Disagree=2" and Strongly "Disagree=1".

This instrument was validated by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was established through a test of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability co-efficient index obtained through the Cronbach Alpha method was 0.76, 0.78, 0.88 and 0.83 which was considered reliable. Data were collected through the direct delivery method by the researcher and two research assistants. Only 340 copies of the questionnaire administered were completely filled and retrieved.The data collected for the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistics. The research questions were answered based on the value and direction of the correlation coefficient, (positive and high, positive but low, or negative and high or negative but low or moderate). Values of 0.1-0.4 were counted as low correlation, values of 0.5 were considered moderate correlation while 0.6-1.0 were considered high correlation. Similarly, the hypotheses were tested for significance of relationship at 0.05 level of significance. This was further tested by transforming the coefficient of correlation (r) to t in order to establish the significance or otherwise of the r – value.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities?

Table 1: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Collaborative Decision-Making Strategy and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery

Variable	N	$\sum X \sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	r-cal	Remarks
Administrators' Collaborative Decision-Making Strategy (X)	340	882.14	2037.40			
				2213.01	0.88	High Positive
Lecturers' instructional delivery (Y)	340	987.10	3118.32			

The analysis from Table 1 revealed that the correlation value of r is 0.88. This value is high and positive which implies that there is a significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. In other words, this means that administrators' adoption of collaborative decision-making strategy leads to enhanced instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities.

Research Question two: What is the relationship between administrators' implementation of transparent and equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities?

Table 2: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Implementation of Equitable Resource Allocation and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery

Variable	N	$\sum X \sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	rcal	rcrit	Remarks
Administrators' Implementation of Equitable Resource Allocation (X)	340	912.02	2822.03				
				2786.05	0.83	0.195	High Positive
Lecturers' Instructional Delivery (Y)	340	1201.03	3123.02				

The analyses from Table 2 revealed that the correlation value of r is 0.83. This value is high and positive which implies that there is high and positive relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This implies that administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation leads to improved instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities?

Table 3: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Promoting Professional Development Through Technology-Driven Training Strategy and Teachers' Instructional Delivery

Variable	N	$\sum X \sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	Rcal	Remarks
Administrators' Promoting Professional Development Through Technology-Driven Training Strategy (X)	340	850.05	2542.10			
				2466.10	0.85	High positive
Lecturers' Instructional Delivery (Y)	340	1058.11	3318.04			

The analyses from Table3 revealed that the correlation value of r is 0.85. This value is high and positive which implies that there is high and positive relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This indicates that administrators' promotion of professional development through technology-driven training strategy leads to improved instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities.

Table 4: T-test Analysis between Administrators' Collaborative Decision-Making Strategy and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery

Variable	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	df	A	r_{cal}	t_{cal}	t_{crit}	RMKS
Administrators' Collaborative Decision-Making Strategy (X)	340	882.14	2037.40							
				2213.01	338	0.05	0.88	26.10	1.96	Sig. Reject H_0
Lecturers' instructional delivery (Y)	340	987.10	3118.32							

Table 4 shows Pearson correlation summary between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. The analysis on the table revealed that the sum and sum of squares for administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy are 882.14 and 2037.40 while that of lecturers' instructional delivery are 987.10 and 3118.32 respectively. The sum of product of scores on the two variables (administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery) is 2213.01. The t-cal value is 26.10 is greater than the critical t-value (1.96) at 338 degree of freedom under 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities

Table 5: T-test Analysis between Administrators' Implementation of Equitable Resource Allocation and Lecturers' Instructional Delivery.

Variable	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	Df	A	r_{cal}	r_{crit}	t_{cal}	t_{crit}	RMKS
Administrators' Implementation of Transparent and Equitable Resource Allocation (X)	340	912.02	2822.03								
				2786.05	338	0.05	0.83	0.195	27.21	1.96	Sig. Reject H_0
Lecturers' Instructional Delivery (Y)	340	1201.03	3123.02								

Table 5 shows Pearson correlation summary between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. The analysis on the table revealed that the sum and sum of squares for administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation are 912.02 and 2822.03 while that of lecturers' instructional delivery are 1201.03 and 3123.02

respectively. The sum of product of scores on the two variables (administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery) is 2786.05. The correlation coefficient is 0.83. However, the t-calculated value is 27.21 which is greater than the critical t- value of 1.96 at 338 degree of freedom under 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities was rejected. This implies that there is a significantrelationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities.

Table 6: T-test Summary Analysis between Administrators' Promoting Professional Development Through Technology-Driven Training Strategy and Teachers' Instructional Delivery

Variable	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum X \sum Y$	Df	A	r_{cal}	r_{crit}	t_{cal}	t_{crit}	RMKS
Administrators' Promoting Professional Development Through Technology-Driven Training Strategy (X)	340	850.05	2542.10								
				2466.10	338	0.05	0.85	0.195	30.12	1.96	Sig. Reject H_0
Lecturers' Instructional Delivery (Y)	340	1058.11	3318.04								

Table 4.8 shows Pearson correlation summary between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This analysis in the table revealed that the sum and sum of squares for administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy are 850.05 and 2542.10 while that of teachers' instructional delivery are 1058.11 and 3318.04 respectively. The sum of product of scores on the two variables (administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery) is 2466.10. The correlation coefficient is 0.85. However, the t-calculated value is 30.12 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 338 degree of freedom under 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study for research question one revealed that there is a high and positive relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. The implication of the findings is that administrators' adoption of

collaborative decision-making strategy leads to enhanced instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities. The corresponding hypothesis one revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between administrators' collaborative decision-making strategy and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This is in line with the finding of Lalić and Savković (2024) which revealed that collaborative decision-making in educational institutions fosters flexibility, innovation, and enhanced instructional delivery. By involving teachers in administrative decisions, school leaders create an environment where educators feel valued and motivated, ultimately improving their engagement with instructional tasks. This aligns with your study's finding that collaborative decision-making by administrators leads to improved instructional delivery. Similarly,

The findings of the study for research question two revealed that there is high and positive relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This implies that administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation leads to improved instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities. The corresponding hypothesis two revealed that there is a positivesignificant relationship between administrators' implementation of equitable resource allocation and lecturers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This finding was supported by Rodríguez, Díazand González (2024) who emphasized the importance of transparent resource allocation in optimizing instructional delivery. Their study reveals that administrators who equitably distribute resources such as digital tools and instructional materials enhance teacher effectiveness and encourage innovative teaching practices. This resonates with your findings on the positive impact of equitable resource allocation on instructional delivery.

The finding of the study for research question three revealed that there is high and positive relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This indicates that administrators' promotion of professional development through technology-driven training strategy leads to improved instructional delivery among lecturers in Rivers State Universities. The corresponding hypothesis three revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between administrators' promoting professional development through technology-driven training strategy and teachers' instructional delivery in Rivers State Universities. This finding was supported by Hadi, Imron, Pristian, Ranu and Jamil(2024) who asserted that professional development initiatives focused on technology-driven training empower teachers to adopt innovative instructional techniques. Their study highlights that when administrators invest in such programs, teachers' engagement and effectiveness in the classroom significantly improve, which is consistent with your findings.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is a high positive significant relationships between collaborative decision-making, equitable resource allocation, and professional development through technology-driven training, and the enhancement of lecturers' instructional delivery. These findings underscore the importance of ethical and innovative leadership practices in fostering an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. Administrators who adopt inclusive decision-making processes, allocate resources transparently, and invest in the professional development of their staff are better positioned to improve instructional quality and educational outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that:

1. Administrators should actively involve lecturers in decision-making processes related to instructional delivery. This can be achieved through regular consultations, the establishment of participatory committees, and the implementation of feedback mechanisms. Collaborative decision-making fosters a sense of ownership among lecturers, leading to increased motivation and alignment with institutional goals.

2. Administrators should adopt clear policies for the equitable distribution of resources. Utilizing data-driven approaches to identify instructional needs and involving lecturers in resource allocation decisions that can ensure fairness and improve trust. Adequate provision of teaching materials, technological tools, and infrastructural support should be prioritized to enhance instructional delivery.
3. Administrators should regularly organize professional development programmes focused on the integration of technology into teaching. Workshops, training sessions, and certifications on the use of digital tools for instructional purposes should be made accessible to lecturers. Additionally, universities should establish support systems to encourage the adoption of innovative teaching methodologies, fostering continuous improvement in instructional delivery.

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