



ADMINISTRATORS' ETHICAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AND EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN RIVERS STATE



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Abstract

The study examined administrators' ethical strategies and effective administration in public Universities in Rivers State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlation research design. The area of the study was Rivers State. The population of the study consisted of 1,286 administrators in three Universities in Rivers State, which comprises of Rivers State University (RSU), University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT) and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size used for the study. Sample size of 305 administrators from the three Universities were drawn from the population using stratified sampling technique. Two structured instruments titled "Administrators' Ethical Leadership Strategies Questionnaire (AELSQ)" and "Effective Administration in Public Universities Questionnaire (EAPUQ)" were used to elicit data from the respondents. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation in Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability of the instrument gave a Cronbach Alpha index of 0.77, 0.73 and 0.83 which was considered reliable. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that, there is strong positive relationship between administrator's role modelling strategy, administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy, administrator's transparency strategy and effective administration in public Universities in Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, university administrators should demonstrate ethical leadership by maintaining high moral standards, professionalism, and integrity in all decision-making processes.

Keywords: Administrators, Ethical Leadership, Strategies, Effective Administration

Introduction

Public universities serve as pivotal institutions in the advancement of knowledge, societal development and the cultivation of future leaders. In Rivers State, Nigeria, these universities face a myriad of challenges, including financial constraints, infrastructural deficits and a rapidly changing educational landscape. Central to addressing these challenges is the ethical framework within which university administrators operate. Ethical strategies are not merely guidelines for conduct; they shape the very culture of an institution, influencing decision-making processes, stakeholder relationships, and ultimately, educational outcomes.

Recent studies have highlighted the critical role of ethical leadership in enhancing institutional effectiveness. For instance, a study by Oduro, Agyemang and Asare (2022) emphasized that ethical leadership fosters an environment of trust and accountability, which is essential for effective governance in educational settings. Furthermore, Alabi (2023) argues that administrators who prioritize ethical considerations in their decision-making processes are more likely to achieve Sustainable

Development Goals within their institutions. These findings underline the necessity of integrating ethical strategies into the administrative practices of public universities, particularly in regions where corruption and mismanagement have been prevalent.

Ethical leadership in administration is essential for fostering integrity and trust within organizations. Administrators employ various ethical strategies to guide their decision-making and actions, ensuring that they uphold the values of their institutions (Johnson & Smith, 2023). These strategies not only influence organizational culture but also affect stakeholder perceptions and outcomes. Recent studies emphasize the importance of ethical frameworks in administration, highlighting how effective ethical strategies contribute to positive organizational performance and stakeholder relationships (Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2022; Johnson & Smith, 2023).

In the administration of public universities, ethical leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and overall institutional effectiveness. Ethical leadership in university administration involves decision-making based on integrity, fairness, and the commitment to uphold ethical standards in all aspects of governance. Administrators who adhere to ethical leadership principles foster a culture of trust, respect, and professionalism among faculty, staff, and students. Brown and Treviño (2021), ethical leadership enhance institutional credibility, improves staff and student morale, and promotes adherence to regulatory frameworks that guide the operations of higher institutions. In Rivers State, where public universities play a significant role in higher education development, the adoption of ethical leadership strategies is essential for maintaining quality education, reducing corruption, and ensuring that policies are implemented for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Administrators' ethical leadership strategies encompass leading by example, promoting transparency, enforcing ethical conduct, ensuring inclusivity, and making ethically sound decisions that align with institutional goals. Ethical leaders influence institutional effectiveness by discouraging favouritism, academic fraud, financial mismanagement, and administrative inefficiencies (Treviño, Weaver, & Reynolds, 2022). When administrators model ethical behaviour, they inspire faculty and students to uphold ethical values, which translates to a more disciplined and effective academic environment. Public universities in Rivers State have faced challenges related to mismanagement, corruption, and leadership inefficiencies, which have affected students' academic performance and overall institutional progress. Addressing these challenges requires a strategic focus on ethical leadership practices that prioritize fairness, accountability, and the well-being of all university stakeholders.

Ethical leadership among administrators' is essential for fostering transparency, integrity, and accountability within organizations, especially in educational institutions, government agencies, and corporate settings. Administrators who implement ethical leadership strategies help to create a culture of fairness, respect, and professionalism, ultimately enhancing institutional efficiency and productivity. Below are types of ethical leadership strategies that administrators can adopt:

- i. **Leading by Example (Moral Role Modelling):** Administrators who demonstrate ethical behaviour through their actions set the tone for ethical conduct within their institutions. Brown and Treviño (2021) emphasize that leaders who act with honesty, fairness, and accountability inspire employees, faculty, and students to uphold similar values. By consistently making morally sound decisions, administrators reinforce ethical expectations, discourage corruption, and promote a culture of trust and respect. Example: A university administrator who transparently handles promotions and admissions fosters an environment where merit and integrity thrive.
- ii. **Establishing and Communicating Clear Ethical Policies:** A well-defined ethical framework provides guidelines on acceptable behaviour and decision-making within an institution. Administrators must develop codes of conduct, anti-corruption policies, and ethical guidelines to ensure compliance with organizational values (Treviño, Weaver, & Reynolds, 2022). Ethical policies should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders through training programs,



institutional handbooks, and periodic reinforcement. Example: A school principal implementing a zero-tolerance policy on bribery and favouritism in grading students ensures fairness and academic integrity.

- iii. **Promoting Transparency and Accountability:** Ethical administrators' prioritize open communication, fairness in decision-making, and accountability in financial and administrative processes. When employees and students trust that leadership decisions are based on merit and fairness, institutional credibility is strengthened (O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2020). Transparency also discourages unethical behaviours such as embezzlement, favouritism, and academic fraud. Example: A university vice-chancellor who makes the institution's financial reports publicly available demonstrates transparency, building confidence among students and staff.
- iv. **Encouraging Ethical Decision-Making:** Ethical administrators ensure that policies and decisions align with ethical principles such as fairness, justice, and integrity. They promote ethical reasoning by considering both the short- and long-term consequences of their decisions. Ferrell and Fraedrich (2021) suggest that administrators should apply ethical frameworks like consequentialism (focus on outcomes), deontology (following rules), and virtue ethics (moral character) when making decisions. Example: A school administrator who refuses to manipulate students' grades for political or financial gain upholds ethical decision-making.
- v. **Enforcing Ethical Conduct through Disciplinary Measures:** Ethical leadership requires that administrators hold individuals accountable for their actions by enforcing disciplinary measures for unethical behaviours. Kaptein (2022), leaders must implement whistle-blower protection policies to encourage the reporting of corruption, harassment, and other misconducts. Ethical enforcement ensures that violations are addressed fairly and consistently. Example: A university administrator who ensures that faculty members engaging in sexual harassment face disciplinary action reinforces ethical standards.
- vi. **Fostering an Inclusive and Respectful Work Environment:** An ethical administrators' values diversity, fairness, and respect for all stakeholders, regardless of gender, religion, or social background. Institutions that foster inclusivity experience higher engagement, reduced conflicts, and improved performance (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2020). Ethical administrators promote policies that support equal opportunities in hiring, promotions, and academic participation. Example: A university chancellor who implements policies that prevent discrimination in staff recruitment and student admissions promotes inclusivity.
- vii. **Investing in Ethical Training and Professional Development:** Ethical leadership is strengthened through continuous education, training programs, and awareness campaigns. Administrators should organize ethics workshops, leadership training, and mentorship programs to instil ethical values among faculty, staff, and students (Treviño & Brown, 2021). These initiatives help build moral awareness and ethical reasoning skills among all stakeholders. Example: A school administrator who mandates annual ethics training for teachers and students ensures that ethical leadership remains a core value in the institution.

Effective administration in public universities depends on the implementation of strong ethical leadership strategies that support policy enforcement, fair decision-making, and stakeholder engagement. Kaptein (2022) emphasizes that institutions led by ethical administrators experience higher academic integrity, improved governance structures, and stronger institutional reputation. Ethical leadership ensures that university policies are student-centered, faculty members are treated fairly, and financial resources are utilized transparently. In Rivers State, public universities can significantly improve their service delivery by embracing ethical leadership strategies that prioritize quality

education, inclusivity, and sustainable institutional growth. Therefore, administrators must continuously reinforce ethical values, provide training on ethical governance, and establish policies that discourage unethical behaviour in order to foster an academic environment that promotes excellence, integrity, and accountability.

Statement of the Problem

The effective administration of public universities in Rivers State is increasingly challenged by issues of corruption, mismanagement, lack of transparency, and poor ethical leadership. Many university administrators fail to adopt ethical leadership strategies, leading to a decline in academic integrity, financial accountability, and institutional efficiency (Brown & Treviño, 2021). The absence of clear ethical policies and accountability mechanisms has resulted in cases of nepotism, misallocation of resources, and administrative inefficiencies, negatively impacting the quality of education and research output. Without strong ethical leadership, universities struggle to uphold their mission of delivering quality education, fostering innovation, and maintaining global academic standards.

Furthermore, the lack of transparency in decision-making, financial management, and staff recruitment has contributed to poor governance structures, limiting the universities' ability to function effectively. Ethical leadership is essential for ensuring fairness in promotions, faculty development, and student support services (Kaptein, 2022). However, in many public universities in Rivers State, there is a gap between administrative policies and ethical leadership practices, leading to dissatisfaction among faculty, students, and stakeholders. The failure to adopt student-centered policies, uphold academic honesty, and integrate inclusive leadership strategies has hindered institutional growth and development.

If these ethical leadership gaps are not addressed, public universities in Rivers State risk continued academic decline, poor research output, and loss of credibility. There is an urgent need for ethical leadership strategies that promote accountability, fairness, and institutional effectiveness to enhance staff morale, student performance, and overall university administration. It is for these reasons the researcher carried out the study to find out; What is the relationship between administrators' ethical leadership strategies and effective administration of Public Universities in Rivers State? and to proffer solutions to the stated problems.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine Administrators' Ethical Leadership Strategies and Effective Administration of Public Universities in Rivers State. The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the relationship between Administrators' role modeling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.
2. Examine the relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.
3. Ascertain the relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between Administrators' role modeling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant relationship between Administrators' role modeling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlation research design. The area of the study was Rivers State. The population of the study consisted of 1,286 administrators in three universities in Rivers State, which consists of Rivers State University (RSU), University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT) and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size used for the study. Sample size of 305 administrators from the three Universities were drawn from the population using stratified sampling technique. Two structured instruments titled "Administrators' Ethical Leadership Strategies Questionnaire (AELSQ)" and "Effective Administration in Public Universities Questionnaire (EAPUQ)" were used to elicit data from the respondents. Responses to the questionnaire items were structured on a four- point summated rating scale of: Strongly Agreed (SA) – 4points, agreed (A) – 3points, disagreed (D) – 2points and Strongly Disagree (SD)– 1points. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation in Rivers State University.

The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability of the instrument gave a Cronbach Alpha index of 0.77, 0.73 and 0.83 which was considered reliable. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses 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 other wise of the r- value. The classification of r value magnitude used for decision making according to Mahdavi (2012) is stated as follows;

- i. + 0.30. A weak uphill (positive) relationship
- ii. + 0.50. A moderate uphill (positive) relationship
- iii. + 0.70. A strong uphill (positive) relationship
- iv. Exactly + 1. A perfect uphill (positive) relationship
- v. Exactly – 1. A perfect downhill (negative) relationship
- vi. – 0.70. A strong downhill (negative) relationship
- vii. – 0.50. A moderate downhill (negative) relationship
- viii. – 0.30. A weak downhill (negative) relationship
- ix. 0. No relationship

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State?

Table 1: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Role Modelling Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Decision
Administrators' Role Modelling Strategy	305	5459	84724	913830	0.73	Positive (strong)
			93615			

Effective Administration in Public Universities 305 6120

Source: Field survey (2024)

The information in Table 1 shows the relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. When university administrators' model ethical behaviour, they set a standard for integrity, honesty, and fairness, encouraging faculty, staff, and students to adopt similar values. Ethical role modelling builds trust among students, faculty, and external stakeholders, fostering a positive reputation for the university. Administrators who lead by example inspire faculty and staff to take responsibility for their actions, ensuring transparency in decision-making and governance. Ethical role modeling creates a positive work and learning environment, leading to higher job satisfaction among staff and improved student motivation. When administrators uphold ethical standards, they discourage malpractices such as bribery, favoritism, and embezzlement, ensuring proper allocation of resources and funds. The calculated r-value 0.73 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. This implies that Administrators' role modelling strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities. In other words, this is the type of relationship in which an increase in one variable leads to the increase in another variable.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State?

Table 2: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Ethical Policy Enforcement Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Decision
Administrators' Ethical Policy Enforcement Strategy	305	6314	85304			
			98564	948378	0.80	Positive (strong)
Effective Administration in Public Universities	305	7406				

Source: Field survey (2024)

The information in Table 2 shows the relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. Enforcing ethical policies ensures that administrators, faculty, and students uphold honesty, transparency, and accountability, fostering a corruption-free university environment. Strict enforcement of ethical policies prevents financial mismanagement, bribery, and favouritism, ensuring that university funds and resources are utilized efficiently for academic and infrastructural development. Ethical policy enforcement discourages plagiarism, exam malpractice, and academic dishonesty, leading to credible research outputs and a reputable learning environment. Strong ethical policies ensure that students and staff receive equal opportunities without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or political affiliations, promoting diversity and inclusivity. Ethical policy enforcement promotes responsible leadership, ensuring that university management adheres to best practices in administration, faculty appointments, and student welfare. The calculated r-value 0.80 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration

in Public Universities in Rivers State. This implies that Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Table 3: PPMC Analysis on Relationship between Administrators' Transparency Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Decision
Administrators' transparency strategy	305	5150	73518	821505	0.85	Positive (strong)
Effective Administration in Public Universities	305	5590	75548			

Source: Field survey (2024)

The information in Table 3 shows the relationship Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. Transparency in university administration fosters trust among students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders, enhancing the university's credibility and reputation. Transparent governance discourages financial mismanagement, embezzlement, and favouritism, ensuring fair allocation of resources and ethical leadership. When administrators uphold transparency, it reinforces strict academic policies, reducing plagiarism, examination malpractice, and falsification of research data. Transparency ensures that policy-making, budgeting, and administrative decisions are inclusive and evidence-based, reducing biases and promoting fair leadership. Public universities with transparent policies encourage faculty, staff, and students to take responsibility for their actions, fostering a culture of honesty and accountability. The calculated r-value 0.85 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. This implies that Administrators transparency strategy is elated to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. In other words, this is the type of relationship in which an increase in one variable leads to the increase in another variable.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Table 4: Significant Relationship between Administrators' Role Modelling Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State

	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Df	r-cal	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Administrators' Role Modelling Strategy.	305	5459	84724	913826	303	0.73	10.67	1.96	H ₀ Rejected
Effective Administration in Public Universities.	305	6120	93615						

* Significance at 0.05

Source: Field Survey (2024)

In Table 4, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 10.67 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. The implication is that Administrators' role modelling strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State, as such the positive relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities is significant.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Table 5: Significant Relationship between Administrators' Ethical Policy Enforcement Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State

	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Df	r-cal	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Administrators' Ethical Policy Enforcement Strategy.	305	6314	85304						
				948378	303	0.80	13.57	1.96	H ₀₂ Rejected
Effective Administration in Public Universities.	305	7406	98564						

* Significance at 0.05

Source: Field Survey (2024)

In Table 5, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 13.57 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. The implication is that Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. To confirm the significant relationship, a t-transformation of the computed r-value was done and the result is as presented above with $t\text{-cal} = 13.57 > t\text{-crit} = 1.96$.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Table 6: Significant Relationship between Administrators' Transparency Strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State.

Variables	N	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Df	r-cal	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Transparency Strategy.	305	5150	73518						
				821505	303	0.85	15.63	1.96	H ₀₃ Rejected
Effective Administration in Public Universities.	305	5590	75548						

* Significance at 0.05

Source: Field survey (2024)

In Table 6, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 15.63 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in

Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. The implication is that Administrators' transparency strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. To confirm the significant relationship, a t-transformation of the computed r-value was done and the result is as presented above with $t\text{-cal} = 15.63 > t\text{-crit} = 1.96$.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of research question one revealed that there is a high and relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. The calculated r-value 0.73 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. This implies that Administrators' role modelling strategy is related to Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. In hypotheses four, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 10.67 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. The findings of the study is in agreement with the assertions of Brown and Treviño (2021) which emphasize that leaders who act with honesty, fairness, and accountability inspire employees, faculty, and students to uphold similar values. By consistently making morally sound decisions, administrators reinforce ethical expectations, discourage corruption, and promote a culture of trust and respect.

Research question two shows the relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. The calculated r-value 0.80 shows an uphill strong positive relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. In corresponding hypothesis two, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 13.57 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. This is in agreement with Kaptein (2022) who argued that, leaders must implement whistle-blower protection policies to encourage the reporting of corruption, harassment, and other misconducts. Ethical enforcement ensures that violations are addressed fairly and consistently.

Research question three shows the relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. The calculated r-value 0.85 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. The calculated r-value 0.85 shows an uphill (strong positive) relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. The corresponding hypothesis three, the t-transformed (calculated) value of 15.63 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96 for 303 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Administrators' transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate is thus accepted. The finding of the study is in agreement with submission of O'Fallon and Butterfield (2020) who argued that, Transparency discourages unethical behaviours such as embezzlement, favouritism, and academic fraud. Ethical administrators prioritize open communication, fairness in decision-making, and accountability in financial and administrative processes. When employees and students trust that leadership decisions are based on merit and fairness, institutional credibility is strengthened.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that; There is strong positive relationship between Administrators' role modelling strategy, Administrators' ethical policy enforcement strategy, Administrators transparency strategy and Effective Administration in Public Universities in Rivers State. Administrators' ethical leadership strategies are fundamental to the effective administration of public universities. Ethical leadership fosters transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making processes, ensuring that universities operate with integrity and professionalism. By implementing ethical policies, enforcing standards of conduct, and promoting inclusivity, administrators can create an environment that supports academic excellence, faculty productivity, and student success. Ethical leadership also plays a crucial role in minimizing corruption, favouritism, and unethical practices, thereby strengthening institutional credibility and stakeholder confidence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

Strengthening Administrators' Role Modelling Strategy:

1. University administrators should demonstrate ethical leadership by maintaining high moral standards, professionalism, and integrity in all decision-making processes.
2. Administrators should serve as role models by promoting accountability, fairness, and respect for institutional policies, thereby fostering an ethical culture among staff and students.

Enhancing Ethical Policy Enforcement Strategy:

3. Universities should establish and enforce comprehensive ethical policies that clearly define acceptable behaviour, responsibilities, and disciplinary measures for violations.
4. Independent ethics and compliance committees should be created to oversee the implementation of ethical policies and ensure impartial handling of misconduct cases.

Improving Transparency Strategy in University Administration:

5. University administrators should embrace open governance by making administrative decisions, financial records, and institutional policies publicly accessible to stakeholders.
6. Regular stakeholder engagement meetings, such as town halls and public forums, should be conducted to promote inclusivity and participatory decision-making.

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