



## TEACHERS' GENDER AND TALENT DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT FOR SERVICE DELIVERY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract:

The study examined the management of teachers' 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 of 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 covered all 268 public secondary schools in Rivers State. 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. Also, there were 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 established using Cronbach alpha statistics. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.81. The findings of this study showed that the respondents agreed that the ways gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers are managed for service delivery in Rivers State include; equality in the rewards of male and female teachers without gender discrimination, maintenance of a policy that female teachers must be represented in every committee in the school and ensuring that female teachers are always assigned to head welfare committees. It was recommended amongst others that government should

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formulate policies that would ensure that teacher recruitment exercises foster the existence of diversities.

**Keywords:** teachers, diversity, management, secondary school, service delivery, gender, talent

## 1. Background to the Study

Teachers are trained and certified to deliver instructions in classrooms. They are members of the teaching profession. Teachers render different services for the achievement of education and national development goals hence they are critical to the education sector. They are considered to be responsible for the success or failure of education delivery in any society (Awotua-Efebo, 2005). No public secondary school can exist without teachers. Public secondary schools are schools that are owned by the government (Achuonye, 2008). In Nigeria, secondary school is the second level of education learners are enrolled into; after they have received basic education. The government is responsible for recruitment and deployment of teachers to public secondary schools (Achuonye, 2008). Public secondary school principals are saddled with the responsibility of managing and optimizing the use of all human and material resources available in secondary schools. Human resources do not just refer to the population of employees. It includes the characteristic features that make an organization's employee different from those of other organizations.

Human resources therefore refer to the quantity and quality of employees available for achievement of organizational goals. One of the important quality ingredients of human resources in any organization is the diversity that exists amongst employees. Diversity exists amongst every group of two or more persons. Diversity refers to individual differences existing between people. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2011) note that diversity amongst staff members refer to the unique advantages which each employee brings to the workplace. This means that staff diversity is part of the human resource assets that can be harnessed for the good of the organization. To strengthen this, Devon (1999) confirms that diversity amongst staff members exist in every organization. Teachers' diversity refers to various variables that reveal areas where individual differences exist amongst teachers. Teachers' diversity should be harnessed because of the potential advantages it can bring to bear in public secondary school administration. This implies that teachers' diversity is a blessing and not a curse. Although managing teachers' diversity makes human resource management in school a challenging task, the failure to harness its advantages can bring about underutilization of teachers. Conflict can also arise if teachers' diversity is not managed. Management refers to the process of getting the best out of the available. It is a systematic process of ensuring that available resources are optimized (Okorie, 2009; Abraham, 2003). Management of diversities amongst the teachers therefore refers to the systematic process of harnessing the advantages of teachers' diversity while at the same time, eliminating possible disadvantages (Devon, 1999). Management of teachers' diversity is

a deliberate effort that is geared towards getting the best out of each teacher. It also involves motivating and supporting each teacher to acknowledge the potential of his uniqueness and to motivate him to harness same in order to contribute towards the achievement of the goals of secondary school delivery. Gender diversity is one of the diversities in every workplace (Devon, 1999). Gender refers to being male or female. Male and female teachers do not have the same physiological structure. This may also account for differences in the needs of male and female teachers.

Gender also refers to learned roles and responsibilities for male and female members of a social system (Duruamaku, 2015). As societies evolve, new roles for male and female folks tend to emerge. It appears that every member of a group knows what roles can be performed by females and what roles can be performed by males. Gender is therefore a form of social discrimination (Kornblum, 2005). It can however be positive discrimination if it is done for the purpose of harnessing the advantages that can be derived from the differences that exist between males and females (Duruamaku, 2015). Principals are expected to manage such male-female gender diversity without outright discrimination or unfairness to any gender. Discrimination or unfairness to either gender in the school could lead to wastage, low morale and productivity. It is important for the principals to realize that gender diversity offers great potential for optimizing human resource in the school. In managing gender diversity, principals can assign duties based on physiological dispositions and needs. Another area where teachers' diversity may exist is differences in their talents. Talent is inborn or innate ability that each teacher possesses (Ikechukwu, 2015).

Talents help individuals to express themselves in a manner that they derive a feeling of uniqueness and self-actualization. There are arguments that every human being has a talent (Ikechukwu, 2015). It is the responsibilities of public secondary schools administrators to identify and harness the talents possessed by each teacher. Failure to harness and use advantageously the talent possessed by teachers will amount to human resource wastage. It could also lead to low morale and productivity. To harness talents, principals can assign teachers to school clubs that are in tandem with the talent of the teacher. Teachers are managers and leaders. They manage their classrooms, lead students and sometimes lead their colleagues when they are asked to head committees in the school. Gender and talent diversities are supposed to be managed for service delivery. Service delivery refers to the various non-tangible benefits which customers derive from organizations they patronize (Agi, 2010). Public secondary schools are organizations that are patronized by customers seeking various forms of non-tangible benefits to their customers.

School customers include students, parents, communities, individuals, corporate organizations, government and others. These customers patronize public secondary schools in anticipation of receiving various services. Agbe, Kwaghbo and Yawe (2013) are of the opinion that school services refer to the various planned programmes that are implemented to meet the aspirations of stakeholders of education in a society. The stakeholders make contributions to the development of education and operation of schools. In return they expect the schools to implement several programmes that will

bring about the achievement of educational goals of all stakeholders. Without service delivery, investment in public secondary school by the government and other stakeholders (households, donors, corporate organizations, communities and even students) would be irrational and wasteful.

Public secondary school service delivery therefore refers to all efforts made by public secondary schools to ensure that its output justifies the financial and other resources that are invested into it. Ebong (2006) noted that education is expensive. The need to examine how teachers' diversities (gender and talent) are managed cannot be overemphasized, hence the justification for this study.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

While managing teachers as human resource, public secondary school principals face the onerous task of ensuring that teachers' diversities are effectively and efficiently managed for service delivery. Despite the effort of government to recruit and deploy teachers to public secondary schools and the array of diversity that exist amongst teachers, it appears that service delivery of public secondary schools in Rivers State appears unsatisfactory. The high rate of students' indulgence in examination malpractice, cultism, drug abuse and high rate of students' failure in both internal and external examinations are worrisome indicators of unsatisfactory secondary school service delivery. Given the seeming unsatisfactory outcome of public secondary school delivery, the question which has continued to bother stakeholders is; do public secondary school principals consciously manage diversities existing amongst teachers in order to tackle the problem of unsatisfactory outcomes of public secondary school service delivery in Rivers State? Specifically, the question that bothers the researcher is; how do the public secondary school principals consciously manage gender and talent diversities existing amongst teachers for effective and efficient public secondary school service delivery?

### **2.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine teachers' gender and talent diversities management for service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study was conducted to:

- 1) Find out how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.
- 2) Identify how talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

### **2.2 Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- 1) How gender diversity is managed among public secondary school teachers for service delivery in Rivers State?

- 2) In what ways are talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers managed for service delivery in Rivers State?

### 2.3 Hypotheses

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

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

### 3. 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. There were 153 male and 115 female principals. Also there were 62 urban secondary school principals and 206 rural secondary school principals (Source: Rivers State Senior Schools Board, 2018). 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 that was used to select the sample 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 'Teachers' Diversities Management for Service Delivery Questionnaire' (TDMSDQ). The instrument was patterned after a modified four point Likert Scale

The reliability coefficient of the instrument was established after the tests using Cronbach alpha. The reliability coefficient obtained was 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. Weighted mean score was used to answer the research questions. A criterion mean of 2.5 was applied for agreement or disagreement of items. Furthermore, z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### 4. Presentation of Findings

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

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

Mean Responses		Male Principals		Female Principals		Weighted Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Rank Order	Remarks
S/NO.	Items	( $\bar{x}_1$ )	SD <sub>1</sub>	( $\bar{x}_2$ )	SD <sub>2</sub>			
1.	My school rewards male and female teachers equally without gender discrimination	3.56	1.54	3.16	1.30	3.36	1 <sup>ST</sup>	Agreed
2.	My school maintains a policy that female teachers must be represented in every committee in the school	3.00	1.22	2.83	1.17	2.92	4 <sup>TH</sup>	Agreed
3.	In my school certain responsibilities in the school are strictly reserved for female teachers	2.43	1.12	2.29	1.14	2.36	3 <sup>RD</sup>	Disagreed
4.	In my school female teachers are always assigned to head welfare committees	3.26	1.39	3.26	1.39	3.26	2 <sup>ND</sup>	Agreed
5.	In my school classes that has larger number of students are assigned to male teachers	2.18	1.16	2.13	1.18	2.16	5 <sup>TH</sup>	Disagreed
Weighted mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score		2.87	1.29	2.73	1.24	2.81		Agreed
Criterion mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score = 2.50								

Data on table 1 show that items 1,2 and 4 have weighted mean scores that are above the criterion mean score (2.50). Sequel to this, it was deduced that the respondents agreed that the items are the ways gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers are managed for service delivery in Rivers State. However, items 3 and 5 have weighted mean scores of 2.36 and 2.16 that are less than the criterion mean score (2.50). indicating that the respondents disagreed that the items are the ways gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

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

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

Mean Responses								
S/No.	Items	Urban Principals		Rural Principals		Weighted Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Rank Order	Remarks
		( $\bar{x}_1$ )	SD <sub>1</sub>	( $\bar{x}_2$ )	SD <sub>2</sub>			
6.	In my school, adhoc committees for special school events comprise teachers with diversity of talents	2.70	1.14	3.22	1.36	2.96	3 <sup>RD</sup>	Agreed
7.	In my school teachers are allowed to exhibit their talents during special events in the school	3.00	1.22	2.53	1.12	2.77	5 <sup>TH</sup>	Agreed
8.	In my school every teacher is given an incentive for using their talent to promote effective administration	3.45	1.47	2.65	1.13	3.05	1 <sup>ST</sup>	Agreed
9.	In my school, opportunities are given to teachers to mentor students who have interest in developing similar talent	3.38	1.42	2.29	1.14	2.84	4 <sup>TH</sup>	Agreed
10.	In my school the basis for assigning teachers to head school clubs is the talent possessed by teachers	3.19	1.32	2.87	1.18	3.03	2 <sup>ND</sup>	Agreed
Weighted mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score		3.14	1.31	2.71	1.19	2.93		Agreed
Criterion mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score = 2.50								

Data on table 2 show that items 6,7,8,9 and 10 have weighted mean scores that are above the criterion mean (2.50) indicating that the respondents agreed that the items are the ways that talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

#### 4.1 Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State.

**Table 3:** z-test Summary of Analysis of Differences 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

Respondents	N	( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Df	z-Cal	z-Crit	Level of significance	Result
Male Principals	91	2.81	1.63					Not Significant
Female Principals	69	3.83	1.74	158	-3.48	1.96	0.05	(Accepted)

Table 3 summaries of the 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 -3.48; 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 no significant difference between the respondents. Based on this, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals on how gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State was accepted.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State

**Table 4:** z-test Summary of Analysis of Differences between the Mean Ratings of Urban and Rural Principals on how Talent Diversity existing amongst Public Secondary School Teachers is Managed for Service Delivery in Rivers State

Respondents	N	( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Df	z-Cal	z-Crit	Level of significance	Result
Urban Principals	37	3.34	1.37					Not Significant
Rural Principals	123	2.71	1.31	158	4.49	1.96	0.05	(Accepted)

Table 4 summaries of the mean, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural principals on how talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State. The z-calculated score was 2.49; using 158 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance while the z-critical score was 1.96. Since the z-calculated score was less than the z-critical score, there is significant difference between the respondents. Based on this, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on how talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State was rejected.

## 5. Discussion of Findings

### 5.1 Management of Teachers' Gender Diversity for Service Delivery

The findings of this study showed that the respondents agreed that the ways gender diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers are managed for service delivery in Rivers State include; equality in the rewards of male and female teachers



without gender discrimination, maintenance of a policy that female teachers must be represented in every committee in the school and ensuring that female teachers are always assigned to head welfare committees. This finding agrees with the position of Wonah (2014) that rewards should be given to teachers without any form or bias or discrimination. Reward should be given to teachers for productivity and not a sign of favour or nepotism. Egbo and Okeke (2006) insist that there should be no nepotism or discrimination in administration of reward. Okorie (2009) explains that equity theory of motivation reveals that employees will be motivated if they receive a reward that is equitable with the reward received by colleagues performing the same task.

The findings also agreed with the position of Pascal (2016) that there should be greater adherence to the policy of affirmative action in administration of the different public institutions in Nigeria. It is not the responsibility of the government alone to respect the policy of affirmative action. Administrators of public institutions like public secondary schools should also ensure that they encourage greater participation of women in school administration. The perennial cultural and religious orientations that have made the world and industries appear to be some kind of a men's world have negatively affected women development and contribution to national development (Linus, 2015). A deliberate effort to ensure that women are given fair representation in committees in public secondary schools will raise the morale of female teachers. It will inspire them to become or acquire more skills, knowledge and proficiency that will enhance their productivity in their service delivery.

## **5.2 Management of Teachers' Talent Diversity for Service Delivery**

The study revealed that the ways that talent diversity existing amongst public secondary school teachers is managed for service delivery in Rivers State. These include; composition of adhoc committees for special school events with teachers with diversity of talents, encouraging teachers are allowed to exhibit their talents during special events in the school, granting incentive to teachers for using their talent to promote effective administration, creating opportunities for teachers to mentor students who have interest in developing similar talent and in my school the basis for assigning teachers to head school clubs in areas of proven talent. The finding also agrees with the position of Salmi, (2012) that educational institutions should ensure that they attract and develop diverse talents amongst teachers and students for effective administration and service delivery.

The finding agrees with the assertion of Weihrich, Cannice and Koontz, (2008) that employees should be given opportunities to use their talent at the workplace, since employees come to the workplace with several needs (which amongst others include the need for self-actualization). One of the ways schools can deliberately ensure that teachers' need for self-actualization is satisfied is by giving teachers opportunity to exhibit their talents in the school. Secondary school administration involves the use of adhoc committees. Adhoc committees are saddled with the handling of specific tasks. Teachers' will perhaps perform effectively in committees if their involvement in adhoc committees gives them opportunity to use their talent. Effective secondary school

administration requires the harnessing and utilization of the diverse talents which teachers bring to the workplace because when individuals are employed they enter the organization with their innate potentials apart from the acquired academic qualifications. These human elements have the potentials of learning, changing innovating and even providing the creative milieu upon which the educational programme is actualized.

From-time-to time, public secondary schools organize special events which includes, Annual Inter-House Sports Competition, Cultural Exhibition Day, Send-forth for staff and students and others. During such special events, students and teachers are allowed to make special presentations which require the exhibition of talent. Such special presentations include singing, dancing, acting of plays, reciting of rhymes or serving as moderators of programmes amongst others (Oyika 2014). The findings agree with the position of Egbo and Okeke (2014) that incentives should be given to teachers who make extra efforts to contributing towards the achievement of the goals of their organizations. In the same vein, Okorie, (2009) explained that incentives will motivate and cause teachers to increase their commitment and productivity. The finding corroborates the position of Abraham, (2003) that incentives reinforce desired behaviour. If teachers are given incentives for serving the school with their talent, they will be motivated to continue to serve the school with such talent.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that gender and talent are teachers' diversities that are managed for service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

### 6.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- 1) The government should formulate policies that would ensure that teacher recruitment exercises fosters (amongst other things) existence of diversities amongst teachers.
- 2) The government should formulate policies that ensure that female public secondary school teachers are given a preference to choose the various areas that will showcase their talent and corporate favourably with their male counterparts.

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