



## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES FOR MANAGING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE ERA OF PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract:

This study examined innovative approaches for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of the pandemic in Rivers State, Nigeria. Two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses were postulated to guide this study. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all the Public Junior Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample of 378 respondents representing 56% of the population, served as the study respondents. This sample was selected using the stratified random sampling technique. A validated Likert-modified 4-scale 16-item instrument titled: 'Innovative approaches for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of pandemic questionnaire (IAMSCPJSSEPQ)' was used for data collection and its reliability coefficient was established at 0.80 and 0.85 using the Cronbach Alpha Correlation coefficient. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the z-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that understanding the context and responding rapidly to all identified concerns by creating and intensifying attendance monitoring processes for all students; building and strengthening relationships for learning by adopting teaching methods relevant during the era of the Covid-19 pandemic are some innovative approaches for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State, Nigeria. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that Rivers State government should endeavour to champion the course of initiating proactive innovative approaches for principals, vice principals and teachers of Public Junior Secondary Schools, aimed at managing social capital with regard to the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the learning activities and relationships in Public Schools in Rivers State.

**Keywords:** innovative approaches, social capital, public secondary school, pandemic

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## 1. Introduction

The sustainable development of any nation is undoubtedly 'shouldered' by her educational system. This however makes education a top priority in the national development agenda of any nation especially in the acquisition of appropriate skills for developing mental, physical, social abilities and competences which in the long run, would help citizenry live and contribute to their society. Nanbak (2020) defined education as the fulcrum that posterity depends on for a smooth transmission of cultural, social and moral heritage from its ancestors. This definition however implies that education is a life-long process. Nevertheless, specifically, education is a process by which learning, knowledge, values and virtue are expedited and acquired. It aims at contributing to the development of its recipient around the globe. Basically, education serves as an instrument of modernization and development, especially in empowering its recipients with appropriate knowledge and skills. Nonetheless, the foregoing definition and descriptions of education deduce education as being more of an enduring process by which people gain information, develop skills, ethics and values.

Notwithstanding, it is a known fact that in Nigeria, the progression of education evolves via three (3) main strata – the primary, secondary and tertiary involving children (6-11 years), teenagers (12-17 years) and adults (18-21 years) respectively. Furthermore, as postulated by Ali and Ajibola (2019), with respect to the strata in the Nigerian educational system, educational institutions are either private or government (public) owned. Nevertheless, strata and ownership of educational institutions in Nigeria notwithstanding, it is an obvious fact that interactions or relationships take place in these institutions of learning. These interactions however as revealed by several literatures are usually between humans and non-human resources. Buttressing the afore-stated, Nelson (2018) in reviewing effective administration in public secondary schools, upheld the existence of undeniable interaction or relationship between secondary school stakeholders, particularly principals and teachers. This interaction however, according to the author (Nelson) indicates the existence of a networking or interacting system referred to as 'social capital'.

Social capital centers on the ability to leverage social connections in order to solve problems, improve well-being, pursue shared objectives and take collective action. It is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu, 1986: 251). According to Putnam (1998), social capital describes features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits. Similarly, Ryan (2017) described social capital as that 'binding force' upon which institutions and societies thrive. Reviewing the foregoing, however, it is clear that social capital canopies networks connecting all social relationships enabling societies and institutions function effectively as entities. Albeit, in viewing social capital vis-à-vis secondary schools (the focus of this study), it can be asserted that social capital is a form of resource in which

social networks are dominant and school activities are marked by trust and cooperation among principals, teachers, students as well as all other secondary school workers within the school.

Several literatures in acknowledging social capital in secondary schools postulated social capital of secondary school students as being linked to their academic performance and cognitive development. Supporting this assertion, Almeida et al., (2019); Peng (2019) and Mishra (2020) stated that a high social capital supports students' increased academic achievement and cognitive function. This implies an interrelatedness between social capital and secondary school students' academic performance. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the effectiveness of social capital in impacting on students' academic achievement is paramount on the utilization of the information and support it (social capital) receives through available powerful social networks in schools. To this vein, Halpern (2005) identified bonding, bridging and linking; the three (3) types of social capital, as the types of social networks and resources available in secondary schools. Nevertheless, a typical public secondary school setting in Nigeria, whereas proven by research, students are easily influenced, can be inferred to promote the concept of social capital as a resource aiding social cohesion while promoting individual participation in social interactions hence, the need to manage social capital in public secondary schools. Managing social capital in secondary schools involves managing groups within the school, maintaining trust among staff, advocating for cooperation among staff, maintaining social cohesion and maintaining effective communication among members of staff in the school (Nelson, 2018). Simply, it means coordinating the already identified types of social capital in secondary schools aimed at achieving the goals of secondary education. Nevertheless, in managing social capital in secondary schools, the social networks of bonding, bridging and linking social capital are, however, monitored and coordinated. Managing bonding social capital in secondary schools involves coordinating and controlling all networks or relationships involving students and staff who are 'alike' and within a group. It entails handling all horizontal relationships involving students in the same class, age mates, teachers who teach the same subjects, share the same years of experience, staff of schools including principals who have strong close relationships etc. In summary, managing bonding social capital aims at controlling ties between people in similar situations (Woolcock, 2001).

In managing bridging social capital, however, all vertical social networks or relationships between students and other secondary school stakeholders, who share similar interests and goals but contrasting social identities (such as cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic backgrounds and age), are coordinated and controlled. Basically, managing bridging social capital in secondary schools involves managing connections between all heterogeneous groups in the school (Nelson, 2018). Managing linking social capital in secondary schools, on the other hand, involves coordinating and controlling all social networks involving 'unlike' people in dissimilar situations. It is the act of recognizing and coordinating all vertical relationships between other stakeholders including the government, educational bodies, communities where schools are situated

and the school itself. Albeit, the foregoing descriptions of the concept of managing social capital however explain the construction of social networks in schools such that stakeholders including principals identify and map out relationship spheres both within and between the school, for proper coordination and control.

Notwithstanding, it is a known fact that in recent times, managing social capital in schools has been challenged by a pandemic – the Covid-19 pandemic. This is evident while considering the measures and social isolation imposed, in order to address and reduce the spread of the virus; informing a ‘tamper’ in the conventional form of social capital and its management in schools. Further evidence of the Covid-19, challenge imposed on managing social capital as postulated by Putnam (2000) includes observable changes in the mediation context of social capital which affected the social and political involvement, commitment, and participation of individuals in various social and political organizations including schools. Specifically, however, information from primary sources revealed that the conditions including the imposition of social distancing, created by the Covid-19 pandemic in the academic environment, with particular reference to secondary schools, transformed the way students, principals, teachers and other members of secondary school staff interacted during the Covid-19 era.

Nevertheless, contrary to some researchers who assert that pandemics have a negative effect on both the psychosomatic health and sociability of a person by increasing stress and anxiety; and reducing social interactions as well as lacking of human contact respectively, Parks (2020) asserted that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a catalytic effect on the reduction of stressful factors while strengthening the solidarity and social mutual support of individuals. The views of different literatures and researchers on managing social capital and Covid-19 pandemic notwithstanding, it is crystal clear that social capital is a resource managed in schools and in recent times, is being plagued by the Covid-19 pandemic which could have a more vigorous adverse effect on the academic performances of public secondary school students given to the declining state of public schools in Nigeria (Nanbak, 2020). This therefore informs the need to suggest ways to adequately manage resources including social capital during the era of a pandemic in schools. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that for continuity, in the case of future similar outbreaks or re-occurrence, inventive (innovative) practicable ideas or approaches in managing social capital rather than obsolete practices should be suggested and adopted. Innovative approaches in managing activities in schools refer to those groundbreaking follow-ups or rules guiding all the happenings in a school including its classroom activities. Broadly, there are innovative approaches for managing the resources of a school framework or strategies that encourage new ways of interaction between teachers and students particularly in the classroom. It is the introduction and adoption of novelty in running the affairs of a school in relation to adopting needed teaching methods or strategies geared towards ensuring that all desired and necessary classroom learning outcomes are achieved (Abimbade, 2017). Albeit, corroborating the above perceptions of innovative approaches in schools, Fiore (2018) defined innovative approaches as emerging developments subject to current happenings or events. This however implies

as afore-noted that an event or occurrence could precede the initiation of innovative practices. Supporting this assertion however, Obiakor and Adeniran (2020) acknowledged a pandemic, global warming, flood, earthquake, volcano eruptions, population explosion amongst others, as events or occurrences that could precede innovative practices with particular reference to schools and classroom activities.

Reviewing the foregoing however, it can be deduced that innovative approaches for managing social capital in public secondary schools during the era of a pandemic involve a deliberate act of deciding, adopting, organizing, coordinating and supervising rules, strategies and 'follow-ups' of a school aimed at handling all human and material resources of the school during the occurrence of a pandemic while scheduling classroom activities. It can be likened to an 'umbrella' covering all school-related applications involving the introduction of new ideas, strategies or policies for effective classroom teaching while at the same time, controlling all vertical and horizontal relationships in schools aimed at overcoming any possible adverse effect of a pandemic. Unarguably, the Covid-19 pandemic presented significant challenges for schools, including disrupting the continuity of learning and teaching across the world with particular reference to public secondary schools in Nigeria where research has proven classrooms to be overly populated and learners easily influenced hence, the need to provide guidance on practical strategies to maintain student engagement while managing social capital during the Covid-19 pandemic. This paper, therefore, examined innovative approaches for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of the pandemic in Rivers State.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The diffusion of innovation theory propounded by Rogers in 1977 was used as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory asserts that innovation primarily is about a change or shift from the norms and everyday activities including practices of individuals or organizations as a result of a purpose ranging from events, occurrences or new concepts thereby bringing about a change in the individual or organization's behaviours and practices enabling them to cope with the demands of the new concept, events or occurrences. This theory, however, provides a logical explanation to this study in that innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State emboldens the need to initiate changes in order to accommodate the evident changes in the relationships, behaviours, and practices of public secondary school stakeholders in Rivers State as a result of the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **3. Statement of the Problem**

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic as reported by primary and secondary sources, unarguably, distorted both classroom learning and relationship activities of schools thus,

led to schools having to restructure their calendar and all other school activities while seeking to adopt 'workable' practices in managing the much existing relationships in schools in an attempt to yet maintain the necessary school decorum. Nevertheless, first-hand observations revealed that the educational stakeholders, particularly that of public junior secondary schools in Rivers State, during the era of Covid-19 pandemic, were unable to adequately manage and plan classroom activities while striving to maintain healthy social networking, needed to achieve the educational goals of secondary schools. This, as revealed by previous studies, is evident in principals' inability to identify and adopt appropriate practices and policies during the pandemic era resulting to poor academic performances of public junior secondary school students as proven by their continued academic decline even after their advance to senior secondary school; and a large number of junior students' disengagements from school for fear of contracting the disease while relating with peers. This paper however aimed at examining those innovative approaches that could possibly be adopted for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

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

The aim of this study was to examine innovative approaches for managing social capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Identify innovative approaches for managing social capital in urban and rural public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.
- 2) Ascertain the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital amongst male and female respondents in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

### **3.2 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) What are the innovative approaches for managing social capital in urban and rural public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State?
- 2) What are the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital amongst male and female respondents in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State?

### **3.3 Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses tested at a 0.05 level of significance guided this study:

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural respondents on innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges militating against innovative approaches for

managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

#### 4. Methodology

This research adopted the descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study encompassed all the public junior secondary schools in Rivers State comprising 432 principals and vice principals (235 urban and 197 rural) and 6371 teachers (3084 males and 3287 females) (Source: Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2022). A sample size of 378 respondents (201 urban and 177 rural principals and vice principals; 127 male and 251 female teachers) representing 56% of the population was selected using the stratified random sampling technique. A 16-item 4-point Likert-type scale researcher-structured questionnaire titled ‘Innovative Approaches for Managing Social Capital in Public Junior Secondary Schools in the Era of Pandemic Questionnaire (IAMSCPJSSEPQ)’ was validated and used for data collection. A reliability index of 0.82 and 0.80 was established using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

#### 4.1 Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the innovative approaches for managing social capital in urban and rural public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Weighted mean scores and standard deviation of the responses of urban and rural respondents on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State

S/N	Innovative approaches for managing social capital in the era of pandemic	Urban Principals & Vice principals = 201		Rural principals & Vice principals = 177		Mean set (x <sub>1</sub> x <sub>2</sub> )	Rank	Remarks
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>			
1	Prioritizing the relationship between well-being and learning by providing a safe and predictable learning environment	3.35	1.42	3.42	1.58	3.39	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
2	Understanding the context and responding rapidly to all identified concerns by creating and intensifying attendance monitoring processes for all students	3.81	1.72	3.26	1.35	3.54	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
3	Building and strengthening relationships for learning by	2.99	1.22	2.06	1.20	2.53	7 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed

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	adopting teaching methods relevant during the era of the Covid-19 pandemic							
4	Communicating effectively with students by promoting students' engagements by means of providing reassuring messages to students in the era of Covid-19	3.57	1.55	3.41	1.44	3.49	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
5	Encouraging individualized learning by organizing small group tuition thereby promoting students' agency	3.11	1.27	2.03	1.21	2.57	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
6	Building trust in parents via increased communication such that on a regular basis, health and academic data of wards are shared in the pandemic era	3.33	1.39	1.91	1.26	2.62	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
7	Reframing and restructuring classroom approaches including issuing of flexible assessment to students, prioritizing lesson scheduling and plan to accommodate all students	3.18	1.31	1.86	1.31	2.52	8 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
8	Constantly organizing brainstorming meetings among stakeholders – parents, government, community heads, non-governmental organizations to constantly seek ways forward for public schools in the era of Covid-19 pandemic	3.86	1.76	3.58	1.55	3.72	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
		27.20	11.64	21.53	10.88	24.40		
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>		<b>3.40</b>	<b>1.46</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>3.05</b>		

The result from Table 1 above shows that all items; 8, 2, 4, 1, 6, 5, 3 and 7 have weighted mean scores above 2.50 hence, were all adjudged as innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. Consequently, the aggregate weighted mean score of 3.05 indicates that the urban and rural respondents agreed to all the items as the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** What are the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital amongst male and female respondents in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State?



**Table 2:** Weighted mean scores and standard deviation of the responses of male and female respondents on the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State

S/N	Challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in an era of pandemic	Male teachers = 127		Female teachers = 251		Mean set (x <sub>1</sub> x <sub>2</sub> )	Rank	Remarks
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>			
9	Capacity of administrative staff	1.99	1.22	1.35	1.60	1.67	7 <sup>th</sup>	Disagreed
10	Non-implementation of innovative approaches due to lack of technical-know-how	3.53	1.52	3.15	1.29	3.34	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
11	Availability of funds to facilitate selected innovative approaches	3.54	1.53	3.47	1.48	3.51	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
12	Lack of adequate information and awareness on available adopted innovative approaches in schools	1.81	1.31	1.51	1.49	1.66	8 <sup>th</sup>	Disagreed
13	Absence of curricular capacity to plan and support innovative approaches	3.76	1.68	3.60	1.57	3.68	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agreed
14	Poor organizational structure	3.63	1.59	3.45	1.47	3.54	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agreed
15	Lack of adequate support from key stakeholders	3.58	1.55	3.38	1.42	3.48	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agreed
16	Resistance to change	3.80	1.71	3.60	1.57	3.70	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agreed
		25.64	12.08	23.52	11.92	24.56		
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>		<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.51</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>3.07</b>		

The result on Table 2 above revealed that items 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 with mean scores 3.34, 3.51, 3.68, 3.54, 3.48 and 3.70 respectively. This implied that teachers agreed with these items as the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. Respondents disagreed with items 9 and 12 with mean scores of 1.67 and 1.66 respectively, as the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. Nevertheless, the aggregate mean score of 3.07 above the criterion mean score of 2.50 indicates that both male and female teachers of public junior secondary schools in Rivers State agreed that there are challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in the era of pandemic.

#### 4.2 Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural respondents on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

**Table 3:** z-test analysis on the mean ratings of urban and rural respondents on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State

Category	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Urban	201	3.40	1.46	376	5.86	1.96	Significant
Rural	177	2.69	1.36				

Sequel to Table 3, with a degree of freedom of 376, the z-calculated value of 5.86 is greater than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals and vice principals on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

**Table 4:** z-test analysis on the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State

Category	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Male	127	3.21	1.51	376	2.18	1.96	Significant
Female	251	2.94	1.49				

Table 4 above showed that with a degree of freedom of 376 and at an alpha significant level of 0.05, the z-calculated value of 2.18 is greater than the z-critical value of 1.96. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected. By implications, there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State.

## 5. Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question one revealed that prioritizing wellbeing and learning by providing a safe and predictable learning environment; understanding the context and responding rapidly to all identified concerns by creating and intensifying attendance monitoring processes for all students; building and strengthening relationships for learning by adopting teaching methods relevant during the era of Covid-19 pandemic; communicating effectively with students by promoting students' engagements by means of providing reassuring messages to students in the era of pandemic; encouraging individualized learning by organizing small group tuition thereby promoting students' agency; building trust in parents via increased

communication such that on regular basis, health and academic data of wards are shared in the pandemic era; reframing and restructuring classroom approaches including issuing of flexible assessment to students, prioritizing lesson scheduling and plan to accommodate all students and constantly organizing brainstorming meetings among stakeholders – parents, government, community heads, non-governmental organizations to constantly seek ways forward for public schools in the era of Covid-19 pandemic are the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

Nonetheless, a corresponding result from hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals and vice principals on the innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. This above finding implies that respondents agreed with the need for innovative approaches as a means of addressing possible disruptions between relationships in schools and students' academic performances due to the era of pandemic. Corroborating the above findings and implications, Obiakor and Adeniran (2020) noted that the era of pandemic is a delicate era that affects schools negatively hence, several innovative practices including social distancing, screening, and wearing of face masks should be devised as ways of managing social capital with regards to managing human resource in public schools.

Finally, the finding from research question two, revealed that respondents agreed to resistance to change, absence of curricular capacity to plan and support innovative approaches, poor organizational structure, availability of funds to facilitate selected innovative approaches, lack of adequate support from key stakeholders and non-implementation of innovative approaches due to lack of technical-know-how as the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. Nevertheless, the respondents rejected the capacity of administrative staff as well as the lack of adequate information and awareness on available adopted innovative approaches in schools as the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

Similarly, a corresponding hypothesis finding established a significant difference between the mean ratings of teachers on the challenges militating against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State. These findings however agree with the findings of Ryan (2017) in his study on bonding and bridging social capital in family and school relationships that in building relationships, there is a need for inventive practices notwithstanding, these practices are subject to some challenges including resistance from some school and family members, lack of adequate information and administration of practices, lack of resources to execute some practices amongst others.

## 6. Conclusion

This study revealed that managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State is a great task posing as a challenge needing as identified, innovative approaches or strategies to tackle while also being confronted with a lot of challenges for all professional teachers, secondary school authorities and educational stakeholders in general. This is due to the spread, persisting effect as well as after-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on public secondary school students in Rivers State.

### 6.1 Recommendations

- 1) Rivers State government should endeavour to champion the course of initiating proactive innovative approaches for principals, vice principals and teachers of public junior secondary schools, aimed at managing social capital with regards to the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the learning activities and relationships in public schools in Rivers State.
- 2) Principals, teachers and all other educational stakeholders of public junior secondary schools, should ensure to tackle absolutely or to its minimal, those challenge(s) that could militate against innovative approaches for managing social capital in public junior secondary schools in the era of pandemic in Rivers State.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflicts of interest.

### About the Authors

**Prof. Nwogu Uzoma Jonah** is a seasoned Educationist and researcher. He rose from the rank and file of the Education industry having served with the Rivers State Post Primary Education Board where he rose to the rank of Principal Grade 1 before joining the University of Port Harcourt. At the University of Port Harcourt, he has served in many capacities: Coordinator, Departmental Graduate Programme, Director, School of General Studies, Uniport, amongst others. He has to his credit over 70 academic publications. He is a professor of Educational Management with the Department of Educational Management, University of Port Harcourt.

**Nelson Mary** is an African researcher that hails from Nigeria, she is a Principal Executive Officer at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, she holds a masters' degree in educational management and currently pursuing her doctorate in the same field, her research interest lies in sustainable development, social impact, productivity, etc. Nelson has participated in various conferences, workshops, seminars, initiatives, and humanitarian acts that were geared toward adding value to humanity and solving issues within the educational field. Nelson belongs to various academic platforms such as; academia (<http://uniport-computerscience.academia.edu/>), she is passionate about leading social impact projects, lending a voice to global issues, and making informed decisions that will change perspectives of cultures and usher in new ways of thinking.

She looks forward to working with scholars in her line of interest to arrive at innovative ideas.

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