

LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS IN MANAGING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR GOAL ATTAINMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAYELSA STATE

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**Abstract**

The study examined leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education for goal attainment in the public secondary in Bayelsa State. A correlation research design was adopted for the study. Two (2) research questions and corresponding hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The population of the study comprised all teachers in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. A sample of 456 respondents was used in the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and validated by experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha formula, and a value of 0.84 was obtained and considered appropriate for the study. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that the extent to which communication effectiveness and resource allocation effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State was high. Also, the findings revealed that communication and resource allocation effectiveness significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

**Keywords: Leadership, Effectiveness, Managing, Inclusive Education, Goal Attainment**

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**Introduction**

Education is the process through which society passes on skills, knowledge, and beliefs from generation to generation. It may also be characterized as acquiring desirable information and abilities as well as developing favourable attitudes about life. It is essential in both an individual's life and the life of society. Inclusive education is a concept that guarantees education is open to all citizens, regardless of their socioeconomic background (Nel, et al., 2021). According to UNESCO, inclusion is "a dynamic strategy to constructively reacting to students' variety and recognizing individual differences not as problems but as possibilities for enhancing learning." It also entails embracing a comprehensive vision of education for all by addressing the diverse needs of learners, especially those at risk of marginalization and exclusion (UNESCO 2005). Inclusive education represents the belief that all learners can learn and should have equal access to education. This belief is echoed in the 1993 United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Chances for People with Disabilities and the 1994 Salamanca Framework for Action and Statement on

Special Needs Education, which reaffirms all Nations' commitment to Education for All.

The World Health Organization (WHO) believes that 10% of each population is impaired and in need of assistance. Furthermore, roughly 85% of the world's children with disabilities under the age of 15 reside in poor nations. Every kid has distinct qualities, interests, talents, and learning requirements, and those with special needs must have access to mainstream schools that can satisfy those needs through a child-centred pedagogy. The idea behind inclusive education is that all children and young people, regardless of their cultural, socioeconomic, or educational backgrounds, should have equal learning opportunities in all types of institutions (UNESCO, 2009; Eunice, et al, 2015). UNESCO highlights the importance of education systems, schools, and teachers focusing on creating inclusive environments that promote the ideals of respect and understanding of cultural, social, and individual variety. In essence, inclusive education is a method of investigating ways to adapt education institutions and other learning settings to react to the variety of learners. At the

heart of inclusive education systems is the removal of obstacles to participation in learning for all learners (Eunice, et al, 2015). Focusing on inclusive education may help guide policy and strategy creation that addresses the causes and effects of prejudice, inequality, and exclusion. The Nigerian constitution provides for appropriate education for all children. Since the number of children with special needs is around 0.42%, while that of their ordinary counterparts is about 67.05%, inclusion has not been achieved. Inclusion of all students in mainstream schools is part of a global agenda that advocates for complete inclusion of all students with learning difficulties in all sectors of society (Eunice, et al., 2015).

Inclusive education is an approach that ensures the presence, participation and achievement of all students in education. This can take place in conventional educational institutions as well as in less conventional learning environments, such as extracurricular groups and humanitarian camps. It often involves working to change the structures, systems, policies, practises, and cultures of schools and other institutions responsible for education, so that they can respond to the diversity of students in their locality. Despite the universally acknowledged importance of inclusive education in Nigeria, research report has consistently shown that it is plagued with a beehive of challenges which ranges from inadequate funding, corruption, political instability and weak leadership structure (Madume, & Accra-Jaja 2023). Gardner (2016) opined that leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers.

Effective management of inclusive education in secondary schools requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses various leadership and administrative practices. Communication effectiveness is fundamental in ensuring collaboration among stakeholders and fostering a shared understanding of inclusive education goals (Avramidis, 2023). Clear and transparent communication channels facilitate the exchange of information, ideas, and concerns among school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members,

thereby promoting a cohesive approach to managing inclusive education.

Resource allocation is crucial for ensuring that schools have the necessary tools, personnel, and support services to meet the diverse needs of students (UNESCO, 2017). Adequate funding, staffing, and infrastructure are essential for implementing inclusive practices effectively. Proper resource allocation enables schools to provide accommodations, support services, and assistive technologies that promote access and equity for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities.

The effectiveness of leadership in managing inclusive education can be assessed through various indicators, including academic achievement, student engagement, and social inclusion. Research by Avramidis (2023) suggests that schools with strong leadership in inclusive education tend to have higher academic achievement rates among students with diverse learning needs. Similarly, effective leadership is associated with increased student engagement and a sense of belonging among all students, regardless of their background or abilities (Sharma & Desai, 2018). In Bayelsa State, where educational outcomes are a priority, leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education can be measured by the extent to which all students are actively engaged in learning and achieving their full potential.

The issue of inclusive education in secondary schools has been comprehensively studied, but almost no research has been conducted to establish empirical evidence on the place of leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education for goal attainment within public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. So far, it has been understood that without an appropriate level of leadership structure within the school system, the attainment of this inclusive education policy goals are almost doomed to fail in this endeavour. Therefore, this study aimed investigating how leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary in Bayelsa State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Inclusive education, which aims to accommodate diverse learning needs within mainstream classrooms, poses significant

challenges in public secondary schools, particularly concerning leadership effectiveness in its management. Despite the recognized importance of effective leadership in promoting inclusive practices (Avramidis, 2023), public secondary schools in many regions, including Rivers State, often struggle with issues related to leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education.

Finally, the absence of a supportive and inclusive school culture can undermine efforts to promote inclusive education in public secondary schools. Negative attitudes, stigma, and discrimination towards students with disabilities or diverse learning needs can create barriers to their inclusion within the school community (Ainscow & Miles, 2018). Leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of acceptance, respect, and empathy, thereby creating an environment where all students feel valued and supported in their learning journey.

The effectiveness of leadership in managing inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State is hindered by various challenges, including inadequate training and resources, resistance from stakeholders, issues of resource allocation, and the absence of a supportive school culture. To this end, this study will examine leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary in Bayelsa State

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

The study examined leadership effectiveness in managing inclusive education for goal attainment in the public secondary in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study achieved the following:

- i) To determine the extent to which communication effectiveness can enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- ii) To determine the extent to which resource allocation effectiveness can enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- iii) To determine the extent to which community-relations effectiveness can enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- i) To what extent does communication effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?
- ii) To what extent does resource allocation effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?
- iii) To what extent does community-relations effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- i) Communication effectiveness does not significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- ii) Resource allocation effectiveness does not significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
- iii) Community-relations effectiveness does not significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

### **Methods**

This study adopted a correlational design. A correlational study involves the collecting of data to determine whether, and to what degree, a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. This design was selected because it enabled data to be collected to test the hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status of a phenomenon. Teacher performance (dependent or criterion variable) has several factors affecting it. A study that outlines some of such factors (independent or estimator variables) and studying them concurrently to establish their presence or absence and level of contribution to the dependent variable can only be carried out by a design.

The population of the study comprised all six thousand, eight hundred and ninety-three (6893) teachers in the 217 public senior secondary schools in Bayelsa State as of the time of the study. Stratified random sampling techniques based on the three senatorial districts in the state, were used to sample 3 out of the 8 Local Government Areas. Simple random sampling was used to select three (3) schools from each of the local government areas, making it a total of nine (9) schools. All 456 teachers from the 9 schools formed the sample of the study. “Leadership Effectiveness in Managing Inclusive Education for Goal Attainment Questionnaire (LEMIEGAQ)” developed by the researcher. The items are divided into 2 parts, viz-a-viz, part I and part II. Part I measured the demographic information of the respondents. Part II is classified into 7 sub-sections namely, A, B, and C which measured the variables: communication, resource allocation, and inclusive education for goal attainment respectively. The items on the instrument were structured on a 4-point Likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE). To score the items on the instrument, the response levels of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) were quantified by 4-Points, 3-points, 2-points, and 1-Point respectively. In scoring the questionnaire responses, the weighted points were added as  $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$ . Thus 2.5 is the Criterion Mean. Therefore, the remark for items below 2.5 was adjusted to

a low extent, and items above 2.50 were adjusted to a high extent. The content and face validity of the instrument was done by one expert from measurement and evaluation and two others from Education management. Their corrections and suggestions resulted to the final draft used in the study. The instrument was trial tested using twenty (20) teachers who did not participate in the research but possess the same characteristics as the population of interest. The reliability co-efficient of 0.84 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha formula which was considered appropriate for this study. The researcher administered a questionnaire to the respondents during school hours, in all, a 100% return rate was achieved. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were tested also using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC), at 0.05 level of significance. The data collected from the respondents were properly organized in tables, coded, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26.0.

**Results**

The results are presented according to research questions and hypotheses.

**Research Question 1**

To what extent does communication effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings and standard deviation on the extent to which communication effectiveness enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std.	Remarks
1.	I am absolutely satisfied when looked as a better teacher than others	1,356	3.34	0.60	High Extent
2.	It is my attitude to avoid teaching things for which I may be giped at, for my abilities	1,356	2.22	0.62	Low Extent
3.	My goal is to continuously develop my abilities as a teacher	1,356	2.80	0.74	High Extent
4.	I intend to try even more in order to learn new things for what I teach	1,356	2.89	0.74	High Extent
5.	It is important for me to learn new things all the time in the subject that I teach	1,356	3.31	0.50	High Extent
6.	I like learning new things on the subject that I teach, no matter how difficult they are	1,356	2.92	0.58	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>1,356</b>	<b>2.91</b>		

**Source: Field Survey (2024)**

Data on Table 1 shows the mean ratings and standard deviation on the extent to which communication effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The table indicated that the mean of each item was higher than the criterion means of 2.5 which implies that all respondents agreed that the extent to which communication effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment

in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State was high.

**Research Question 2**

To what extent does resource allocation effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the extent to which resource allocation effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.**

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
7.	My work on the present job is challenging	1,356	2.90	0.60	High Extent
8.	My work on the present job is fascinating	1,356	2.71	0.74	High Extent
9.	My work on the present job is routine.	1,356	3.22	0.69	High Extent
10.	My work on the present job is satisfying.	1,356	3.28	0.55	High Extent
11.	My work on the present job is creative	1,356	1.97	0.65	Low Extent
12.	My work on the present job is respected.	1,356	3.18	0.67	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>1,356</b>	<b>2.87</b>		

Source: Fieldwork (2024)

Data on Table 2 shows the mean ratings and standard deviation on the extent to which resource allocation effectiveness enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The table indicated that the mean of each item was higher than the criterion means of 2.5 which implies that all respondents agreed that the extent to which communication effectiveness

enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State in Bayelsa State was high.

**Hypotheses**

**H01:** Communication effectiveness does not significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

**Table 3: Summary of Pearson’s Correlational analysis on Communication effectiveness and inclusive education for goal attainment**

VARIABLE		Communication effectiveness	Inclusive Education for Goal Attainment
Communication effectiveness	Pearson’s Correlation	1	.637
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	456	456
Inclusive Education for Goal Attainment	Pearson’s Correlation	.637	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	456	456

The result in Table 3 shows the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between Communication effectiveness **and** inclusive education for goal attainment in public senior secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The result revealed a correlation between Communication effectiveness **and** inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State,  $r=.637$ ,  $n=456$ ,  $p<.000$ , therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus,

communication effectiveness significantly enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

**H02:**Resource allocation effectiveness does not significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

**Table 4: Summary of Pearson's Correlational analysis on Resource allocation effectiveness and inclusive education for goal attainment**

VARIABLE		Resource allocation effectiveness	Inclusive Education for Goal Attainment
Resource allocation effectiveness	Pearson's Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 456	.642 .000 456
Inclusive Education for Goal Attainment	Pearson's Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.642 .000 456	1 456

The result in Table 4 shows the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between Resource allocation effectiveness and inclusive education for goal attainment in public senior secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The result revealed a correlation between Resource allocation effectiveness and inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State,  $r=.642$ ,  $n=456$ ,  $p<.000$ , therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, resource allocation effectiveness significantly enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

State. This supports Okoli and Ukpere (2012), Dyson, (2017), and UNESCO, (2017) emphasize that communication serves as a fundamental tool for creating an environment where all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, feel valued and included in the learning process.

The findings in research question 2 revealed that the extent to which resource allocation effectiveness enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State in Bayelsa State was high. Also, the findings in hypothesis 2 revealed that resource allocation effectiveness significantly enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Efficient resource allocation is paramount for fostering inclusive education and achieving goals in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Adequate allocation of resources, including funding, personnel, and infrastructure, ensures that schools can accommodate diverse learning needs and provide necessary support to all students. This supports UNESCO, (2019), Slee (2018) and Ainscow (2019) who underscores the importance of resource equity in creating inclusive educational environments where

**Discussion**

The findings in research question 1 revealed that the extent to which communication effectiveness enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State in Bayelsa State was high. Also, the findings in hypothesis 1 revealed that communication effectiveness significantly enhances inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. This implies that effective communication plays a crucial role in fostering inclusive education and achieving educational goals in public secondary schools in Bayelsa

every student, irrespective of their socio-economic background or abilities, can thrive.

### Conclusion

Leadership effectiveness plays a pivotal role in managing inclusive education for goal attainment within public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The study has established that the extent to which communication effectiveness and resource allocation effectiveness enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State was high. Also, the study affirmed that communication and resource allocation effectiveness significantly enhance inclusive education for goal attainment in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

### Recommendations

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

1. Government and other stakeholders should make it a point of duty to enact policies that will improve teachers' communication effectiveness.
2. Post Primary School Management Board should as a matter of urgency organize training sessions to improve school leaders resource allocation effectiveness.

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