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MORALITY IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS A CORRELATE FOR INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated morality in educational leadership as a correlate for institutional management in Rivers State. A correlation study design was employed, with a population of 163 educational leaders including vice-chancellors, rectors, deputy vice-chancellors, deputy rectors, deans, and heads of departments from Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. The entire population (163) was sampled using the census sampling technique. The research instruments, Morality in Educational Leadership Questionnaire (MELQ) and Institutional Management Questionnaire (IMQ), utilized a modified four-point Likert scale. The questionnaires were validated and found reliable with a reliability index of 0.85. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Statistical Analysis was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The study found a significant positive correlation between morality in educational leadership and institutional management in Rivers State. The finding highlighted the critical importance of prioritizing integrity, accountability, self-discipline and humility in educational leadership for enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. In conclusion, educational leaders in tertiary institutions should prioritize and uphold integrity in their decision making processes, maintain discipline in enforcing rules and regulations, be accountable in all their interactions and demonstrate humility in their leadership approach so as to contribute to a conducive learning and working environment, fostering academic excellence and institutional development.

Keywords: Morality, Educational Leadership, Leadership Effectiveness, Integrity, Accountability, Self-discipline, Humility, Institutional Management.

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INTRODUCTION

Leaders in institutions work with a large number of people at all levels; from within the institution and from external sources. The leaders may not meet with all the subordinates face-to-face but will need to establish relation with them in order to improve the chance of success for the attainment of the goals of the institution. Leaders in institutions are saddled with increased roles coupled with the high and increasing competition to gain more control over the institutional and operational terrain. Thus effective control of an institution is facilitated by leadership, and this is considered basic in an institution (Ololube, 2019).

Institutions are organizations founded for professional, social, religious, political, economic or educational purposes established by law or practice (Ololube, 2024). Institutions are made up of group of people with different personalities, qualifications, perception, institutional goals and objectives. Masikirikwa (2019) asserted that in order to enhance effective growth, the energies and cooperation of the employees and the leaders are needed.

Institutional management encompasses planning, organizing, leading and controlling the human and non-human resources within an institution. Institutional management is enhanced by identifying the current situation, identifying the desired situation and determining the steps necessary to get there (Matthew & Akosubo, 2021). Institutional management is concerned with the human resources of the institution with regards to values and activities. Thus, handling the human resources is a major thrust in leadership, otherwise, conflicts may arise due to opposing interests which could be detrimental to institutional growth.

Leadership is not just a role one plays it is a life one lead (Myles, 2014). Leadership is not an end it is a means to an end. Leadership is a means to motivate staff for greater performance and productivity, thereby helping them to gain increased job satisfaction. The effective control of any system is facilitated by an effective leader and this is considered to be basic in achieving effectiveness in any institution (Ololube, 2024). Leadership plays a central role in institutions and in the world at large. Hence the leader must strive to fundamentally and appropriately build a balance with regards to the different behaviors of subordinate for varying situation in order to be effective.

Educational leadership is a term used to describe people who occupy leadership positions at different levels of educational institutions. Educational leadership is involved with team work, setting instructional direction, sensitivity, judgement, communication, result orientation, development of staff as well as maximizing the available resources. The staff can either be motivated or demotivated by the leadership of an institution. Educational leadership can be found in that individual who, by virtue of formal or informal power, authority and influence, directs and controls other people in the pursuit of educational goals (Abbasiahy, 2016). In the world of leadership training, there is an abundance of seminars and workshops that offer instruction on the leader's purpose vision and passion. There are also many academic courses available on leadership principles, business management, team building to mention but a few. However, very little emphases is made with regards to character development. Educational leaders are therefore, regarded as effective when they are able to influence the character and behaviour of their staff positively.

Morality is the recognition or certainty about the rightness or wrongness of our thoughts and actions (Myles, 2014). The moral conscience does not have to do with feelings or emotion, morality has to do with values and ethics. Values are integral to national, societal and institutional development. When leaders and subordinates of institutions begin to attach less

priority on the foundational values that once held the institution together, the institution starts to lose its morality. Morality in educational leadership is paramount in our institutions. Education is a basic and fundamental human right which promotes the acquisition of knowledge. Facts skills and ideas are learned through formal and informal education. Ololube (2017) opined that education is the mechanism by which a society generates knowledge and skills required for survival, sustenance and which transmits to the future generations through the process of instructions to its youths. Since education is an indubitable tool for economic advancement, social growth, political survival and effective for national development, educational leaders must pay attention to the issue of morality.

Statement of the Problem

As a result of the false ideas about leadership that our institutions have accepted, institutions have often hastily given roles of leadership and responsibility to people without considering their value for morality. There seem to be an existing believe that the primary qualities needed to address our troubled demanding times in institutions are great vision, academic and intellectual superiority, dynamic oratory and other interpersonal skills that have the power to persuade, management expertise and the ability to control others. However, time and again history has shown that the most important quality an educational leader should and must possess is the moral force of a noble and stable character. Across the globe, we have seen leaders fall apart ethically and morally. Many leaders start strong (or appear to), and end up “crashing and burning”.

Today, many leaders lack a framework for evaluating the suitability and consequences of their conduct and policies. Since values create character, a leader who does not have strong, positive values will be vulnerable to failing ethically thereby producing flawed policies. However, a leader who has established strong values for himself will exercise leadership that is ethically sound, as well as inspirational. A number of educational leaders have operated under a reputation of integrity that was a facade. While they appeared competent and well-adjusted on the outside, they lacked real substance within. They were missing the element of morality and their ethical poverty eventually became evident. The public did not know who these leaders really were- until the leaders became enmeshed in scandal due to their reckless conduct, often finding themselves facing legal consequence for unlawful financial practice, theft extortion, cheating perjury and the like. In a bid to proffer solutions this paper is interested to thoroughly examine morality in educational leadership as a correlate for institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Aim and Objective of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate morality in educational leadership as a correlate for institutional management in Rivers State. This study therefore, seeks to:

- Examine how integrity in educational leadership enhances institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- Determine how accountability in educational leadership enhances institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- Identify how self-discipline in educational leadership enhances institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

- Identify how humility in educational leadership enhances institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study:

- How does integrity in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- How does accountability in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- How does discipline in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- How does humility in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated and statistically tested at .05 level of significance:

- There is no significant relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The Path–Goal theory is a contingency theory of leadership by Evans (1970), House (1971), House and Dessler (1974) and House and Mitchell (1974) in Adiele (2020). Path –Goal theory states that a good leader provides clear direction, sets high goals, gets involved in goal achievement and supports his employees. The Path-Goal theory is relevant to this study such that it proposes that for leaders to be effective, in institutional management they are to engage in behaviors that complement subordinates environments (workplace culture, time lines and resources) and abilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate satisfaction and individual work unit performance. Four types of leadership behavior is recognized in the Path–Goal model: directive, supportive, participative and achievement oriented. It suggested that each types of leadership behavior have a different outcome on subordinate’s motivation. The theory further subsumes the 4 leadership behavior into task and relationship characteristics. Task characteristic involves providing guidance, structure and

expectations for followers while relationship characteristics focuses on supporting, motivating and developing the members on their teams and the relationship within.

Institutional Management

Management is an integral part of an institution. The survival of any institution depends largely on the quality of management. Ololube (2019) described management as a process of co-ordinated activities involving planning, organizing and directing the activities of an institution to determine and accomplish stated objectives with the use of human and material resources. In order words, management is the process of getting things done through the use of human and material resources.

Institutions are organizations founded for professional, social, religious, political, economic or educational purposes established by law or practice (Ololube, 2024). Many people view institutions with a mechanical mind-set that the institution is like a machine; if something is broken, it needs to be fixed. If the problem can be detected, “get the right part, stick it in, turn it on, it will work. But institutions are not mechanical; they are organic. To see institutions through the agricultural paradigm is to see them as living, growing things made up of living, growing people (Myles, 2004). Living things are not immediately "fixed" by replacing nonworking parts; they are nurtured over time to produce desired results.

Institutional management can be described as effective when institutional goals are achieved. Desired results in the institution are created not by the “mechanic” but by the “gardener”. The gardener knows that life is within the seed. Although it is impossible to make the seed grow, the gardener can select the best seed and then use logic to create the conditions—correct soil temperature, adequate sunshine, water, fertilizer, weeding, cultivation, and time that maximize growth. Just like the gardener, Joacim et al. (2018) pointed that favorable condition for effective institutional management includes:

- Strong administrative leadership
- High expectation for the achievement of all the stakeholders.
- Orderly atmosphere conducive in the workplace.
- An emphasis on basic-skill acquisition
- Frequent monitoring and supervision of the work process.

Thus, effectiveness in institutions means more institutional goals accomplished in shorter time, appropriating tactfully the available resources.

Institutional management is enhanced when resources are co-ordinated, programme policies are designed and implemented. For a successful implementation a detailed strategic planning is required (Owhondah, 2018). Thus, effectiveness in the institution is the reflection of dedication, good communication network and synergy among the staff. According to Oluwo and Asodike (2016), institutional management is built-on the "STAR" team model. The "STAR TEAM MODEL" suggested that teamwork is enhanced in the workplace when four elements (Strength, Teamwork, Alignment and Results) are in place. The "STAR" team model revealed that:

- Individuals flourish as they use and develop their strengths.
- People come together building relationships that result in effective teamwork.

- The team leader aligns the team through effective communication of purpose, so that individual strengths combine with work to deliver the teams results.
- Together everyone achieves more as performance flows and results that are meaningful and rewarding to the team are achieved.

Thus, institutional management is enhanced by identifying the current situation, identifying the desired situation and determining the steps necessary to get there (Matthew & Akosubo, 2021).

Leadership

The meaning of leadership is diversified because there are several perspectives to leadership. Basically there are four components central to leadership definitions; leadership as a process, leadership involves influence, leadership occurs in groups, leadership involves common goals. Leadership is a complex process having multiple dimensions (Northhouse, 2010). Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the institution... (House et al., 1999 in Adiele, 2020). Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2013).

According to Peretomode (2014), leadership is the human factor, which binds a group together. Leadership is further considered as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards greater performance (Igwe, 2015). Nwankwoala (2016) stated that leadership involves ensuring that institutional policies, decisions and programs are adequately implemented. Thus, leadership is the process of securing as well as guiding the talents and energies of the human resources towards achieving common institutional aims (Ololube, 2019).

Essential Traits of Leadership

Leaders practice integrating many qualities and characteristics into their lives. There are necessary attitudes for effective leadership and these serve as measures of leadership refinement as they continue to progress in increasing true leadership potential (Myles, 2004):

- Vision—the capacity to see beyond one’s natural eyes; it is a picture of purpose.
- Wisdom—the capacity to apply knowledge effectively.
- Decision making—the ability to study consequences and make sound decisions without fear; a willingness to fail rather than avoid responsibility.
- A positive attitude—the ability to see people and situations in a positive way.
- Courage—the ability not to be controlled or paralyzed by fear; the effective management of uncertainty.
- High energy—strength and stamina to work hard and not be worn down.
- Personal warmth—a manner and attitude that draws people.
- Humility—being in touch with oneself, accepting oneself.
- Righteous Anger—a capacity to resist and stand against injustice and abuse.
- Integrity—consistency in one’s words and actions; trustworthiness; true character.
- Responsibility—an ability to always come through; a lack of excuses; job delegated means job done.

- A good self-image—feeling good about self, others, and life.
- Friendship—the capacity to welcome and embrace others without friction.
- Mental horsepower—the ability to keep learning as the job expands.
- Authority—a highly positive influence over others.
- Absence of personal problems—personal, family, and business life in order.
- People skills—the ability to draw people to oneself and help them develop their gifts and characters.
- Inspirational power—the ability to communicate one’s passion to others.
- Sense of humor—the ability to laugh at oneself and at life and to not take life too seriously.
- Resilience—the ability to bounce back when problems arise.
- Track record—experience and success in previous situations.
- Great desire (passion)—a hunger for growth and personal development.
- Self-discipline—a willingness to “pay the price” and handle success.
- Creativity—an ability to see solutions and fix problems.
- Flexibility—not afraid of change; fluid; flows with growth.
- Sees “big picture”—able to look beyond personal interests and see a global view.
- Initiative—the ability to discern what needs to be done and commence action.
- Executive ability—the ability to get things done; the drive to finish an assignment.

Educational Leadership

Educational leadership is a term used to describe people who occupy leadership positions at different levels in educational institutions. Pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions are examples of educational institutions. Each of these educational institutions function with the presence of a head seen as a school leader. Educational leadership is the process of securing as well as guiding the talents and energies of the human resources in an institution towards achieving common educational aims (Ololube, 2019).

Effectiveness is paramount in educational leadership Effectiveness can be described as the achievement of or accomplishment of institutional goals. Effective educational leadership means more institutional goals accomplished in shorter time, appropriating tactfully the available resources. Thus, effective educational leadership is involved with the following:

Team work

Teams are classified according to shared responsibility, commitment and common goals. Leaders seek and encourage the involvement of team members, by modeling and encouraging the behaviours that move the group to successfully complete their task. Commitment to team success and shared goals is a key attribute, leaders should possess. The leader should make the staff understand their purpose and share strong common goals. Oluwo and Asodike (2016) posited that, one cannot succeed unless the other members of the team succeed. The relationship developed out of this commitment is key in team building, team success and institutional management. Hence, together the team can deliver more than the individuals who compromise, and feel it could be done in isolation.

Setting instructional direction

Setting instructional direction includes implementing strategies for improving teaching and learning such as inputting programmes and improvement efforts into action. It also implies developing a vision and establishing clear goals, providing direction in achieving stated goals, encouraging others to contribute to goal achievement.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity means securing commitment to a course of action from individuals and groups (Okagbaa, 2020). Sensitivity entails perceiving the needs and concerns of others, dealing tactfully with others in emotionally stressful situations or in conflict. More so, knowing what information to communicate and to whom, as well as relating to people of varying ethnic, cultural and religious background (Koko & Nwiyi, 2019).

Judgment

Reaching logical conclusions and making high-quality decisions based on available information. Judgement is giving priority and caution to significant issues, seeking out relevant data, facts and impression as well as analyzing and interpreting complex information (Northhouse, 2010).

Result orientation

Assuming responsibility. Recognizing when a decision is required. Taking prompt action as issues emerge. Resolving short-term issues while balancing them against long-term objectives

Organizational Ability

Planning and scheduling one's own and the work of others so that resources are used appropriately. Scheduling flow of activities, establishing procedures to monitor projects. Practicing time and task management, knowing what to delegate and to whom (Amah, 2016).

Communication

Communication may be oral or written. Oral communication clearly implies interacting and making oral presentations that are clear and easy to understand. On the other hand written communication has to with expressing ideas clearly in writing and demonstrating technical proficiency-writing appropriately for different audiences (students, teachers, parents).

Development of staff

Development are ways of equipping the staff of institutions for the present and the future (Igwe 2015). Teaching, coaching, and helping and providing feedback based on observations and data.

Understanding the leaders Own Strengths and Weaknesses

Understanding personal strengths and weaknesses and thereby taking responsibility for improvement by actively pursuing developmental activities (Koko & Nwiyi, 2019).

Maximizing the use of resources:

The resources allocated for education are in minimal supply, hence, a competitive demand for available resources (Adiele, 2020). Therefore, the educational leader should be able to identify educational needs, identify priority in their ranking order and dispense these resources based on the defined priorities.

THE CONCEPT OF MORALITY

Morality are strict principles based upon what is right and what is wrong. Principles are deep, fundamental truths, classic truths, generic common denominators. They are tightly interwoven threads running with exactness, consistency, beauty, and strength through the fabric of life (Myles, 2004). By centering our lives on correct principles, we create a solid bedrock for development of inherent potentials. Principles don't get mad and treat us differently. They cannot pave our way with shortcuts and quick fixes. They don't depend on the behavior of others, the environment, or the current fad for their validity. Principles don't die. They aren't here one day and gone the next. They can't be destroyed by fire, earthquake or theft. Correct principles are like compasses: they are always pointing the way (Sean, 2014). And if we know how to read them, we won't get lost, confused, or fooled by conflicting voices and values.

Morality surfaces in the form of values, ideas, norms, and teachings that uplift, ennoble, fulfill, empower, and inspire people. The lesson of history is that to the degree people and civilizations have operated in harmony with correct principles, they have prospered (Stephen, 2003). At the root of societal declines are foolish practices that represent violations of morality. How many economic disasters, intercultural conflicts, political revolutions, and civil wars could have been avoided had there been greater social commitment to morality?

Morality is based on the reality that we cannot violate these natural laws without consequence. Whether or not we believe in them, they have been proven effective throughout centuries of human history. Morality is seen in leader of character who work with competence on the basis of natural principles and build those principles into the center of their lives, into the center of their relationships with others, into the center of their agreements and contracts, into their management processes, and into their mission statements (Stephen, 2003).

Morality is a personal decision. Being intentional about morality always involves making personal decisions. Morality are not just principles we think are "good ideas" we would do well to follow, live our entire lives thinking that something is a good idea—but never follow it. So, morality are not just what we intellectually affirm to be right and beneficial; they are principles that we have made an active decision to follow (Stephen et al., 2014). Our beliefs determine our actions as they become our standards for living. Whatever we truly believe in, we will serve. We must decide beforehand what we will serve. If we don't, we will allow our impulses, our circumstances, or other people's opinions to control us. We will never fulfill our leadership purpose and convictions if we haven't already decided to serve the values and moral standards that align with them and by which they can be achieved.

Morality in Educational Leadership

Moral leadership does not always require many words. A moral leader can walk into a room of people and change the whole environment just by being there. Character has an ambience that goes with it. That is why morality is the key to educational leadership. When you have moral force, you will unavoidably inspire people. And that moral force comes from your convictions, which are translated into values and moral standards that set an example for others. True leaders with high moral standard are able to take criticism and mistreatment and still retain their character. Genuine character outlasts all disagreement, and attack (John, 2001). To an educational leader morality should mean the following:

Being Dedicated to Integrity: Morality means making a recurrent effort to integrate ones thoughts, words, and actions. The words *integrate* and *integrity* are both derived from the Latin word *integer*, meaning "whole" and "entire." Thus, one definition of *integrate* is "to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole" (Myles, 2014). An educational leader should be able to declare, "What I say, what I do, and who I am are the same." Achieving such consistency daily symbolizes integrity. An important aspect to remember is that there is no "break" in life from integrity. There is no point at which one would have "arrived, so that one no longer have to concern one self with values and principles. We must therefore keep vigil over our integrity.

Integrity requires daily maintenance, because often many times throughout the day-our integrity will be tested. Moral standards are derived from our values. We should compromise neither our values nor our standards. When principled leaders establish moral parameters for their life, they do not waver in their dedication to them. They do not violate them for anyone or anything. As an educational leader, let no one set moral standards for you. You are expected to set yours. Everyone, educational leaders inclusive experiences a moment of choice. A moment of choice is a moment of truth (Sean, 2014). Our integrity is tested at that point when we are to make a choice.

Having a Commitment to Accountability: An accountable leader in reality embraces submission to authority and is conscious of their stewards of the trust given to them by those whom they serve (Ololube, 2021). Accountable leaders seek to be faithful to the trust of the followers rather than doing what will please the leader. According to Stephen (2003), the dangers of leadership is its potential for flaunting power without answering to anyone, else. When leaders write down their principles, beliefs, convictions, values, moral standards and ethical codes for easy referral, as such it enhances their accountability.

Leaders of principle do not give up their values in the face of pressure to ignore their beliefs. Because their values are based on their convictions, they are willing to lose money, promotion, and other advantages for the sake of their values (Myles, 2014). Leaders' actions require to be evaluated by other qualified people, in order to examine them in line with the principles they are committed to. Lamentably, many leaders today are experts in compromise, they change their values based on what they think other people want them to do, not what they genuinely believe is right.

Accountability is answering to a higher leadership integrity, it is a principally taking total responsibility for our actions. Accountability affects the effective and quality improvement of

institutions by protecting students from incompetent staff (Ololube, 2019). Accountability is the active manifestation of submission to authority.

Imposing and Making Sacrifices to Maintain Discipline: A principled leader possesses beliefs so strong that he is willing to sacrifice for them—to experience the loss of popularity, friendships, colleagues, financial gain, and success for their sake. Such a quality must be reintroduced to institutions by leaders who hold morality in high esteem. Mahatma Gandhi was a lawyer from India who made some major sacrifices for his vision. For instance, he went on several hunger strikes, one of which drew attention to the unjust treatment of India's poorest classes in the caste system, the untouchables." People will continue to remember Gandhi for generations because of his willingness to sacrifice for what he believed in. In concurrence with making sacrifices, a leader must impose daily discipline upon himself, so that he will remain aligned with his convictions, and continue to adhere to his principles.

Embracing a Lifestyle of Humility: The word humble is derived from the Latin word humus, meaning "earth. To be humble, then, means to be "down-to-earth." In the context of morality, humanity means to express and manifest one's true self in accordance with one's unique, inherent purpose. Leaders can exhibit true humility only after they accept their significance as a person and as a leader. When they do so, they cease to be self-conscious about their actions. Thus, the quality of humility in a leader is manifested through "servant leadership.

When leaders are humble, they also have a healthy attitude towards the areas of their life in which he still needs to grow in morality. Abraham Lincoln is an example of a strong but humble leader. He was intelligent, wise, and perceptive. But he was also unpretentious, even as president, and he would often express that quality through his self-deprecating humor. Lincoln was comfortable with himself, and he did not feel the need to defend himself whenever criticism came his way.

Leaders who don't understand their inherent purpose and worth have difficulty being humble because they often need reassurance through the praise of others. But leaders with high moral standards have found something greater than other people's accolades—they have found a personal "assignment," or vision, and they are busy pursuing it. According to Myles (2014), they are occupied with being who they were created to be, so they don't feel a need to be continually puffed up by others.

Similarly, when we are genuinely humble, we are less likely to be controlled by other people's opinions of us. We can't be leaders of character if we are always afraid of what other people will think or say of us. Some people mistake timidity for the quality of humility, but they are opposites: Timidity is related to fear, while humility is related to peace—peace with oneself and peace with other people.

One way to gauge your fear of other people is to evaluate the way you talk to your boss or someone else in authority when you have a problem or concern.

Relevance of Morality to Institutional Management

The relevance of morality to institutional management cannot be disputed. Morality is a major element of a functioning institution. It provides guide lines for leaders to follow and encourages them to take care of themselves and members in the institution. It helps leaders to become better people and sets an example for subordinates and stakeholders to follow.

Morality supports speedy growth of the institution. It defines how staff should be treated and the best way to serve others to enhance effectiveness. The morality of educational leaders is of uttermost importance in institutions today. It is the guiding principle that influences decision making, shapes strategies and drives institutional success. In other words, morality is all encompassing as it entails the worth, significance, and benefits an institution delivers to its stakeholders. Thus, the morality of educational leaders shapes the culture and reputation of institution.

Leaders who continuously have strong convictions of morality recognize its importance, as such, surround themselves with staff that can hold them accountable in case of failure. Therefore, it is critical for educational leaders to be consistent and clear in their ethical standards. Work towards providing facts, flee from smokescreens, express their views even in challenging situations, and reward honesty and ethical behavior. Demonstrate proud membership of their institutions and abide by its values, and clearly make their staff know why they are proud to do what they are committed to do and their importance (Ololube, 2017).

Leaders who value morality learn to govern themselves, and they imbibe self-imposed restrictions on their lives for the purpose of achieving goals. They exercise self-control without the need to be disciplined externally. They learn to govern and discipline each area of their lives in order to protect them from ethical lapses and prepare for maximum productivity (Ololube, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlation researcher design. The population of the study was 163 educational leaders, it comprised the vice-chancellor/ rector, deputy vice chancellor/ deputy rector, deans and heads of department for the three institutions (Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Elechi Amadi Polytechnic). The sample size of the study was the entire population (163) from the three selected schools, using the census sampling technique. The research instrument for the study was a self-structured questionnaire titled Morality in Educational Leadership Questionnaire (MELQ) and Institutional Management (IMQ) which was designed to illicit responses from the respondents. A modified four point Likert-Scale research instrument with options of 4= Strongly Agree (SA), 3= Agreed (A), 2=Disagree (D) and 1= Strongly Disagreed (SD) was adopted for the study. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Statistical Analysis was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The questionnaire was validated by the research supervisor and two other experts in measurement and evaluation. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the test- retest technique was adopted. The instrument was administered to 20 respondents who were not part of the sample and a reliability index of 0.85 was determined which showcased the instrument as reliable. Statistical Package for the social services (SPSS) ver. 23 was used to run analysis.

RESULTS

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: How does integrity in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses to how integrity in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Integrity in educational leadership	Mean	SD.	Remark
1.	Leaders consistently demonstrate honesty and fairness in their decision-making processes.	2.6784	1.11589	Agree
2.	Leaders uphold ethical standards and values in their interactions with staff and students.	2.6952	1.12812	Agree
3.	Integrity positively influences trust and respect towards leadership within the institution.	2.7163	1.08868	Agree
4.	The integrity of leaders significantly impacts the institution's reputation and image.	2.6868	1.07729	Agree
5.	Leaders consistently adhere to rules and regulations in their leadership practices.	2.7612	1.13468	Agree
Grand Mean		2.7263	1.11563	Agree

The table presents an interpretation of the mean and standard deviation responses regarding the integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The mean values for all items are above the criterion of 2.5, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. The grand mean of 2.7263 and standard deviation of 1.11563 suggest a strong consensus among participants that integrity in educational leadership significantly enhances institutional management. Respondents emphasized the importance of honesty, fairness, and adherence to ethical standards in leadership practices, highlighting their positive influence on trust, respect, and the institution's reputation. The analysis emphasizes a shared belief among stakeholders in tertiary institutions in Rivers State regarding the crucial role of integrity in enhancing institutional management.

Research Question Two: How does accountability in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses to how accountability in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Accountability in educational leadership	Mean	SD.	Remark
6.	Leaders ensure that responsibilities are clearly defined and assigned within the institution.	2.6180	1.13386	Agree
7.	Leaders are held accountable for their actions and decisions within the institution.	2.6390	1.15970	Agree
8.	Leaders ensure that resources are used efficiently and transparently.	2.5197	1.09321	Agree
9.	Accountability promotes a culture of responsibility and ownership among staff and students.	2.6264	1.10911	Agree
10.	Leaders ensure that goals and objectives are regularly monitored and evaluated.	2.5478	1.10132	Agree
Grand Mean		2.5831	1.10431	Agree

The table presents the interpretation of the mean and standard deviation responses regarding accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. All items have mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. The grand mean of 2.5831 and standard deviation of 1.10431 suggest a strong consensus among participants that accountability in educational leadership

enhances institutional management. Respondents emphasized the importance of clear responsibilities, accountability for actions, efficient resource use, and regular goal monitoring in promoting a culture of responsibility and ownership. These findings aptly shared belief among stakeholders in tertiary institutions in Rivers State regarding the crucial role of accountability in enhancing institutional management.

Research Question Three: How does discipline in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation responses to how discipline in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Discipline in educational leadership	Mean	SD.	Remark
11.	Discipline contributes to a positive learning and working environment.	2.5983	1.10307	Agree
12.	Discipline in leadership positively influences the behavior and performance of staff and students.	2.6404	1.12756	Agree
13.	Leaders address misconduct and breaches of discipline effectively.	2.6025	1.12291	Agree
14.	Discipline contributes to the development of a culture of respect and order within the institution.	2.5534	1.14367	Agree
15.	Discipline contributes to the achievement of institutional goals and objectives.	2.5899	1.12524	Agree
Grand Mean		2.5925	1.0931	Agree

The table presents interpretation of the mean and standard deviation responses regarding the discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. All items have mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. The grand mean of 2.5925 and standard deviation of 1.0931 suggest a strong consensus among participants that discipline in educational leadership enhances institutional management. Respondents emphasized the importance of discipline in creating a positive learning and working environment, influencing behaviour and performance, addressing misconduct effectively, and fostering a culture of respect and order. These findings highlight a shared belief among stakeholders in tertiary institutions in Rivers State regarding the significant role of discipline in enhancing institutional management.

Research Question Four: How does humility in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation responses to how humility in educational leadership enhance institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

S/N	Humility in educational leadership	Mean	SD.	Remark
16.	Leaders demonstrate openness and willingness to listen to the ideas and concerns of others.	2.7303	1.12773	Agree
17.	Leaders acknowledge and learn from their mistakes and shortcomings.	2.6657	1.16708	Agree
18.	Humility in leadership fosters collaboration and teamwork within the institution.	2.6854	1.11601	Agree
19.	Humility contributes to the development of a supportive and inclusive organizational culture.	2.6770	1.12114	Agree
20.	Leaders ensure that their actions and decisions are guided by humility and respect for others.	2.6966	1.11786	Agree
Grand Mean		2.6914	1.13451	Agree

Table 4 provides an interpretation of the mean and standard deviation responses regarding the impact of humility in educational leadership on institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. All items have mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a consistent agreement among respondents. The grand mean of 2.6914 and standard deviation of 1.13451 suggest a strong consensus among participants that humility in educational leadership enhances institutional management. Respondents highlighted the importance of leaders demonstrating openness, willingness to learn from mistakes, fostering collaboration and teamwork, and ensuring that actions are guided by humility and respect. These findings emphasize a shared belief among stakeholders in tertiary institutions in Rivers State regarding the significant role of humility in enhancing institutional management.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 5: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

		Integrity	Institutional Management
Integrity	Pearson Correlation	1	.817
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	157	157
Institutional Management	Pearson Correlation	.817	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	157	157

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The table presents the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) results for testing the relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The Pearson correlation coefficient of .817 indicates a strong positive correlation between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management. The associated p-value ($.000 < 0.05$) indicates that this correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis H₀₁ is rejected. These findings suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 6: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

		Accountability	Institutional management
Accountability	Pearson Correlation	1	.712
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	157	157
Institutional management	Pearson Correlation	.712	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	157	157

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The table presents the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) results for testing the relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The Pearson correlation coefficient of .712 indicates a strong positive correlation between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management. The associated p-value ($.001 < 0.05$) indicates that this correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{02} is rejected. These findings suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 7: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

		Self-discipline	Institutional management
Self-discipline	Pearson Correlation	1	.679
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	157	157
Institutional management	Pearson Correlation	.679	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	157	157

**correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

The table presents the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) results for testing the relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The Pearson correlation coefficient of .679 indicates a strong positive correlation between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management. The associated p-value ($.003 < 0.05$) indicates that this correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected. These findings suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 8: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on the relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

	Humility	Institutional Management	
Humility	Pearson Correlation	1	.815
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	157	157
Institutional Management	Pearson Correlation	.815	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	157	157

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table presents the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) results for testing the relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The Pearson correlation coefficient of .815 indicates a strong positive correlation between humility in educational leadership and institutional management. The associated p-value ($.000 < 0.05$) indicates that this correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis H₀₄ is rejected. These findings suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Integrity in Educational Leadership and Institutional Management

The findings regarding the relationship between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management indicate a significant positive correlation, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .817. This suggests a strong association between integrity in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The statistical significance of this correlation is further supported by the p-value of .000, which is below the conventional threshold of .05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H₀₁) that posited no significant relationship. These findings align with existing scholarly literature that emphasizes the importance of integrity in educational leadership. Scholars such as Ololube (2024) argued that integrity is fundamental to effective leadership, as it establishes trust, credibility, and ethical behavior within an organization. In the context of institutional management in tertiary institutions, integrity in leadership can positively influence decision-making processes, organizational culture, and stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the role of integrity in fostering a positive organizational climate. Leaders who demonstrate integrity are more likely to inspire trust and confidence among staff and students, leading to a more cohesive and productive work environment. This aligns with the insights of Ololube (2017) who highlighted the impact of ethical leadership on organizational outcomes, including employee performance and job satisfaction. Therefore, the findings suggest that integrity in educational leadership plays a

crucial role in enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Leaders who prioritize integrity are more likely to promote a culture of transparency, accountability, and ethical behavior, which are essential for effective institutional management.

Accountability in Educational Leadership and Institutional Management

The findings regarding the relationship between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management reveal a strong positive correlation, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .712. This suggests a significant association between accountability in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The statistical significance of this correlation is further supported by the p-value of .001, which is below the conventional threshold of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{02}) that posited no significant relationship. These findings are consistent with existing literature on leadership and organizational management, which highlights the importance of accountability in driving organizational performance and effectiveness. Ololube (2024) argued that accountability is a key component of effective leadership, as it promotes transparency, responsibility, and trust within an organization. In the context of institutional management in tertiary institutions, accountability in leadership can lead to improved decision-making processes, better resource allocation, and enhanced stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that accountability in educational leadership can positively impact organizational culture and climate. Leaders who prioritize accountability are more likely to create a culture of trust and integrity, where individuals are held responsible for their actions and decisions. This aligns with the insights of Denga (2015), who emphasize the role of accountable leadership in fostering a positive work environment and driving organizational success. Therefore, the findings underscore the importance of accountability in educational leadership for enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Leaders who demonstrate accountability are more likely to promote a culture of responsibility, transparency, and ethical behavior, which are essential for effective institutional management.

Self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management

The findings regarding the relationship between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management indicate a significant positive correlation, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .679. This suggests a strong association between self-discipline in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The statistical significance of this correlation is further supported by the p-value of .003, which is below the conventional threshold of .05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{03}) that posited no significant relationship. These findings align with existing scholarly literature that emphasizes the importance of self-discipline in educational leadership. Okogbaa (2005) and Ololube (2021) argued that self-discipline is fundamental to effective leadership, as it establishes a sense of responsibility, focus, and dedication within an organization. In the context of institutional management in tertiary institutions, self-discipline in leadership can positively influence decision-making processes, organizational culture, and stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, the findings underscored the role of self-discipline in fostering a positive organizational climate. Leaders who demonstrate self-discipline are more likely to inspire trust

and confidence among staff and students, leading to a more cohesive and productive work environment. This aligns with the perceptions of Denga (2015) and Ololube (2024) who highlighted the impact of disciplined leadership on organizational outcomes, including employee performance and job satisfaction. The findings suggest that self-discipline in educational leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Leaders who prioritize self-discipline are more likely to promote a culture of responsibility, accountability, and ethical behavior, which are essential for effective institutional management.

Humility in Educational Leadership and Institutional Management

The findings regarding the relationship between humility in educational leadership and institutional management indicate a significant positive correlation, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .815. This suggests a strong association between humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The statistical significance of this correlation is further supported by the p-value of .000, which is below the conventional threshold of .05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H₀) that posited no significant relationship.

These findings align with existing scholarly literature that emphasizes the importance of humility in educational leadership. Scholars such as Brown and Osborne (2013) argued that humility is a key component of effective leadership, as it promotes a sense of openness, empathy, and respect within an organization. In the context of institutional management in tertiary institutions, humility in leadership can positively influence decision-making processes, organizational culture, and stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the role of humility in fostering a positive organizational climate. Leaders who demonstrate humility are more likely to inspire trust and confidence among staff and students, leading to a more inclusive and supportive work environment. This aligns with the study of Denga (2015), who highlight the impact of humble leadership on organizational outcomes, including employee engagement and organizational resilience. Above all things, the findings suggest that humility in educational leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Leaders who prioritize humility are more likely to promote a culture of collaboration, respect, and ethical behavior, which are essential for effective institutional management.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings highlight the critical importance of integrity, accountability, discipline, and humility in educational leadership for enhancing institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The positive correlations observed suggest that these attributes are vital components of effective leadership, contributing to a positive organizational climate, trust among stakeholders, and overall institutional success. Educational leaders in tertiary institutions in Rivers State are encouraged to prioritize integrity in their decision-making processes, uphold ethical standards in their interactions, maintain discipline in enforcing rules and regulations, and demonstrate humility in their leadership approach. In conclusion, educational leadership effectiveness contribute to a conducive learning and working environment, fostering academic excellence and institutional development. Policymakers and stakeholders in education are urged

to support initiatives that promote these attributes among educational leaders. By investing in the development of integrity, accountability, discipline, and humility in educational leadership, tertiary institutions in Rivers State can enhance their overall management practices and achieve sustainable growth and success.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study on integrity, accountability, discipline, and humility in educational leadership and institutional management in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Educational leaders should prioritize honesty, fairness, and ethical behavior in all decision-making processes. Institutions should establish codes of conduct and ethics training programs to promote integrity among leaders.
- Leaders in possession of educational resources should be held accountable for their actions and decisions. This can be achieved through transparent reporting mechanisms, regular performance evaluations, and clear delineation of responsibilities.
- Institutions should enforce rules and regulations consistently and fairly. Leaders should model disciplined behavior and address misconduct promptly to maintain a positive learning and working environment.
- Leaders should demonstrate humility by listening to and respecting the ideas and concerns of others. They should acknowledge their mistakes and learn from them, fostering a culture of openness and continuous improvement.

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