

# Administrative Abilities of Male and Female Principals and Goals Achievement in Nigerian Public Secondary Schools

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## ABSTRACT

The foundation of all levels of education is basic education whose problems are being reasonably addressed in Nigeria through a Universal Basic Education programme established by law. Secondary education is a feeder to tertiary level of education which produces the required manpower for development. Unfortunately, secondary education in Nigeria is experiencing an immense management crisis which has culminated in examination malpractices both in qualifying and University placement examinations. These problems question the management capabilities of male administrators who have held sway in Nigeria's school system. Can the secondary school system be better managed by female administrators than the domineering male gender? In order to answer this question the 245 vice-principals of secondary schools in Rivers State, were sampled. Out of the 245 principals only 63 are females and 182 males. For a balance the sample of the study consisted of 63 vice principals from the schools administered by male principals and 63 vice-principals from the schools administered by female principals. Out of the 2,394 teachers in the selected schools 1197 or 50% were chosen for the study and this gave a total of 1,323 respondents. An instrument known as 'Principals' Administrative Abilities Assessment Questionnaire (PAAAQ) was used for data gathering. The chi-square statistical method was used for the analysis of data. The study revealed that female principals are better achievers of school goals than their male counterparts. It is on this premise that the paper recommends that more females be appointed as school administrators to enable them contribute toward reviving the ailing educational system of Nigeria.

## Introduction

The leadership of secondary schools in Nigeria is provided by principals. The significant role of secondary education to the development of the entire educational system and, therefore, the development of Nigeria has placed high premium on the contributions of principals. The National Policy on Education (2004) provides that secondary education shall:

- (a) provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- (b) offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles;
- (c) provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- (d) develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage;
- (e) inspire students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence;
- (f) foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;
- (g) raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens; and
- (h) provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.

These lofty aims make secondary education a very important tier in Nigeria's educational system. Against this background Ehiametator (1988) opines that principals significantly influence the degree of goals achievement in secondary schools. In view of the fact that principals are responsible for the achievement of the goals of secondary education they are not expected to fail in their duties.

Principalship responsibilities are carried out by both men and women. No discrimination is allowed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). But this paper is worried by the observation of Maidugu (2004, p. 16) that:

*In spite of the overwhelming contributions that women have made and are expected to make to the socio-economic development of their respective nations, they are still faced with many constraints that tend to limit their activities.*

The limitation of women's activities implies that their performances or achievements will also be limited. Ihimodu (1996) believes that performance constraints are more common with women in developing countries. Among the constraints according to Kankwanda (2000) are:

- (i) status within the family as wife, mother and labourer;

- (ii) the precarious reproductive health aggravated by malnutrition, close pregnancies, early/late pregnancies in life;
- (iii) under-enrolment of girls and low literacy of women;
- (iv) insufficient inclusion of the female dimension in the design of development projects and programmes.

In view of these constraints and others it is the interest of this study to find out whether or not the Nigerian female principal is at par with her male counterpart in terms of goal achievement. In Nigeria, the word principal is popularly used to refer to the administrative heads of secondary schools (the equivalent of high schools in some countries). Rivers State is one of the States in Nigeria and has been used as a case study because the settings in most secondary schools in Nigeria are very similar in terms of structure, funding, staffing, management, etcetera. This prevails because a common National Education Policy guides educational activities in Nigeria.

Principals are the chief executive officers of secondary schools who influence the results that are obtainable with available educational resources. The administrative functions of planning, organizing, directing, staffing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting are part of the daily activities of principals. Staffing, however, is not strictly a main function of principals in Nigeria as a body known as the Post-primary Schools Management Board exist in every state for the purpose of personnel recruitment and deployment to all public secondary schools.

Principals are leaders who possess leadership attributes capable of blending teachers, students and other resources to achieve the goals of secondary education (Arubayi, 1988). Principalship is a very challenging assignment that requires the following leadership attributes enumerated by Stogdill (1974): intelligence, scholarship, dependability in exercising responsibilities, sociability, initiative, persistence, ability to get things done, self confidence, alertness, co-operativeness, adaptability, insight into situations, and verbal facility.

These attributes are necessary to keep principals ahead of their subordinates and also to guarantee them success. The leadership styles adopted by principals are also contributory to the degree of success they record. In their study, Ohikhenana and Aman (1974) found out that the transactional, task-oriented, and people-oriented styles were more commonly used by secondary school principals. Nwankwo (1979) discovered that principals equally adopted such styles as pseudo-democratic, democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership. Every principal is, however, expected to adopt the leadership style capable of producing the best results. Okoroma (2000) recognizes the need for principals to justify the use of educational resources by producing adequate results which will reflect good performances.

Quality decision making is a big asset to educational managers. Okeke et al (1985) note that "in the context of a school system decision-making is one of the major functions of educational administration and it is simply a process by which decisions are made and implemented". In the view of Igwe (1982) most organizational problems requiring decision-making are often problems associated with change which involves people, technology or situations. Armed with this understanding principals who make rational decisions through the rational decision-making process as suggested by Griffiths (1959) will have no problem producing good results through acceptable performance.

In order to perform at an acceptable level a school principal must be a good motivator. Motivation is concerned with the needs or drives of employees which influence their behaviour that is usually directed toward certain goals (Hoy and Miskel, 1987). Over the years Nigerian teachers generally feel cheated or inadequately motivated and have shown the tendency to be less committed to their duties (Okoroma, 2000; 2002). This is a great challenge which principals must address to enable them succeed.

Also important to the success of principals is their supervisory role. Plunkett (1975) and Ogunsaju (1982) assert that every person involved in the school system possesses some inherent values, which, when adequately exploited, will result in the achievement of their full potentials and for the benefit of the organization. In the light of this principals have to carry out their supervisory role with a sense of duty so as to enhance the effectiveness of teachers and for an improved overall performance.

Walker (1979) and other communication experts have highlighted the importance of effective communication in every organization, and particularly in the school system. Since school administrators have to interact with staff and students they have to be more careful as compared to other administrators who do business with only employees that are not prone to exuberances. Effective communication is, therefore, an important tool for the success of principals.

### **Hypotheses**

To place the study in the right perspective, the following hypotheses are proposed to guide the investigation:

1. There is no significant relationship between staff motivation by male principals and school goals achievement.
2. There is no significant relationship between staff motivation by female principals and school goals

- achievement.
3. No significant relationship exists between prudent resources management by male principals and school goals achievement
  4. No significant relationship exists between prudent resources management by female principals and school goal achievement
  5. There is no significant relationship between the leadership style exhibited by male principals and school goals achievement
  6. There is no significant relationship between the leadership styles exhibited by female principals and school goals achievement
  7. No significant relationship exists between adequate supervision by male principals and school goals achievement
  8. No significant relationship exists between adequate supervision by female principals and school goal achievement.

### **Theoretical Support**

The path-goal theory provides the basis for this work. The theory credited to Evans (1970), House (1971) and House and Dessler (1974) is anchored on the expectancy theory of motivation proposed by Vroom (1964), and Porter and Lawler (1968). They propose that the leader is a key individual in bringing about subordinate motivation, satisfaction and performance. Accordingly, a leader such as a school principal has a responsibility that includes (a) clarifying the task to be performed by subordinates, (b) clearing away or reducing roadblocks and pitfalls that prevent goal attainment, and (c) increasing personal satisfaction among subordinates. The leader has a supplemental task which involves the provision of coaching, guidance and performance incentives that are lacking elsewhere in the organization. Stoner (1978) states that the designation of the theory 'path goal' emanates from the fact that it focuses on how the leader influences and clears the paths that subordinates must take in order to reach identified goals. Furthermore, the emphasis of the theory on directive, supportive, participative and achievement-oriented leadership styles make it unique. Although House and Mitchell (1974) have identified two situational factors (subordinate characteristics and environmental pressures and demands) which may reduce overall performance, it is nevertheless believed that the path-goal theory is an asset to school administrators at all levels. No doubt, the theory will be relevant to all school principals in Nigeria barring factors that have special influences on sex differences.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Ehiametor (1988) has observed that principals influence goals achievement in Secondary education. Akani (1996), Falua (1989), and wokocha and Okujagu (1989) have identified cultism, falling standards and examination malpractice respectively as some of the challenges facing the Nigerian Principals. This paper tried to establish whether between male and female principals which gender has the greater potential for goals achievement despite the militating management factors.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

#### **Research Design**

A survey research design was used. This involved administering of copies of a questionnaire to be respondents and retrieved after completion. This is a survey research because data were collected and analyzed using a sample that is representative of the entire group being studied.

#### **Scope of the Study**

The study covered 126 out of the 245 Government owned secondary schools in Rivers State. Fifty (50) percent of the schools is headed by male principals and the other 50 percent by female principals.

#### **Population**

The population comprised of 126 Vice Principals, and 2,394 teachers in the 126 schools. This produced a total population of 2,520.

#### **Sample size and Sampling Techniques**

A randomization technique was used to obtain a sample of 1197 teachers representing 50% of the total number. All the 126 Vice Principals were taken for the study and this brought the total sample to 1323.

#### **Instrument**

An instrument tagged 'Principals' Administrative Abilities Assessment Questionnaire' (PAAAQ) was designed by the researcher for gathering information. The PAAAQ was designed after the Likert modified four point type

scale with response options of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The response options were assigned the following values: strongly agree (SA) = 4; agree (A) = 3; disagree (DA) = 2; and strongly disagree (SD) = 1.

### Validation of the Instrument

For the purpose of validating the instrument, it was subjected to a validity test. After intimating some of my colleagues who are experts in measurement and evaluation with the purpose of the research, copies of the instrument were given to them to determine the items capable of eliciting the data needed for the study. In addition, the experts were requested to review the questions to ensure clarity, appropriateness of the language as well as the appropriateness of the instructions to the respondents. This procedure ensured both the face and content validity of the instrument.

### Reliability of the Instrument

Following the validation of the instrument a reliability test was conducted to ascertain its consistency. A pilot study involving 20 respondents drawn from a none participating school was conducted. The test-retest method was adopted to determine the reliability of the instrument. The correlations between the test-retest method were calculated which produced the coefficient reliability level of 0.85 which the researcher found acceptable.

### Administration of the Instrument

The researcher used post-graduate students as research assistants. The distribution and retrieval of copies of the questionnaire were mostly handled by the research assistants. However, the researcher made the necessary controls to ensure a hitch-free survey. The questionnaire was distributed, filled and retrieved within an interval of 45 minutes to reduce extraneous influences that may detract from the validity of the results.

### Method of Data Analysis

The objectives, hypotheses as well as the nature of data collected determined the statistical method used in the analysis of data. Since the study involved nonparametric data which are counted or ranked the Likert method of summated Ratings was used. Each statement in the questionnaire was assigned four options as provided earlier under instrumentation. Copies of the completed questionnaire were decoded. The chi-square test was found most appropriate for analyzing the data obtained. The chi-square test is used to measure the discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies. The hypotheses of this study were, therefore, tested using the chi-square statistical method. Below is the chi-square formula:

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum((fo - fe)^2)}{fe}$$

where

fo = the observed frequencies  
 fe = the expected frequencies (Best, 1981)

### Results

The results of the study are presented below. All calculations are based on the chi-square formula as already stated.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between staff motivation by male principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 1: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Male principals appreciate the importance of staff motivation more than female principals	500	600	123	100
2	Staff in schools run by male principals are more committed to duty and more productive because of the high level of motivation they enjoy	300	450	200	373
3	Male principals are less committed to the issues of motivation because of corrupt tendencies	600	420	190	113

**Table 2: Summation of responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	85	872	957
Disagree	41	325	366
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 3: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	85	91	-6	36	0.396
b	872	866	-6	36	0.042
c	41	35	6	36	1.029
d	325	331	-6	36	0.109
	1323	1323			0.576

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 0.58

Degrees of freedom (df) = (r-1) (k - 1) = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 0.58 < the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value, hypothesis No. 1 is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between staff motivation by female principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 4: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Female principals appreciate the importance of staff motivation more than male principals	508	610	110	95
2	Staff in schools run by female principals are more committed to duty and more productive because of the high level of motivation they enjoy	450	520	250	103
3	Female principals are less committed to the issues of motivation because of corrupt tendencies	250	300	383	390

**Table 5: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	73	806	879
Disagree	53	391	444
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 6: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	73	84	-11	121	1.440
b	806	795	11	121	0.152
c	53	42	11	121	2.881
d	391	402	-11	121	0.003
	1323	1323			4.476

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 4.476

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 1) = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84.

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 4.48 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value, hypothesis No. 2 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

**Hypothesis 3:** No significant relationship exists between prudent resources management by male principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 7: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	School resources are usually better managed by male principals than females	280	300	343	400
2	School goals are better achieved by male principals than their female counterparts because of prudent management of available resources	265	302	348	408
3	Male principals are more dishonest with resources than female principals because of their numerous family and social commitments	410	550	240	123

**Table 8: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	79	623	702
Disagree	47	574	621
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 9: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	79	67	12	144	2.149
b	623	635	-12	144	0.227
c	47	59	-12	144	2.441
d	574	562	12	144	0.256
	1323	1323			5.073

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 5.07

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 5.07 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 3 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Hypothesis 4: No significant relationship between prudent resources management by female principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 10: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	School resources are usually better managed by female principals than males	350	540	233	200
2	School goals are better achieved by female principals than their male counterparts because of prudent management of available resources	315	480	280	248
3	Female principals are more dishonest with resources than male principals because of their numerous family and social commitments	265	315	343	400

**Table 11: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	90	665	755
Disagree	36	532	568
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 12: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	90	72	18	324	4.500
b	665	683	-18	324	0.474
c	36	54	-18	324	6.000
d	534	514	-18	324	0.630
	1323	1323			11.604

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 11.60

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 11.60 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 4 is consequently rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Hypothesis 5: There is no signification relationship between the leadership styles exhibited by male principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 13: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Male principals are often autocratic in their leadership approach which results in low goals achievement	410	495	250	168
2	Male principals achieve higher goals because they are often more democratic than female principals	325	350	270	378
3	Male principals are more consultative in decision-making than female principals and so are able to achieve higher goals	250	318	350	405

**Table 14: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	65	651	716
Disagree	61	546	607
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 15: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	65	68	-3	9	0.132
b	651	648	3	9	0.014
c	61	58	3	9	0.155
d	546	549	-3	9	0.016
	1323	1323			0.317

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 0.32

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 0.32 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 5 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant relationship between the leadership styles exhibited by female principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 16: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Female principals are often autocratic in their leadership approach which results in low goals achievement	277	319	360	367
2	Female principals achieve higher goals because they are often more democratic than male principals	358	400	300	265
3	Female principals are more consultative in decision-making than male principals and so are able to achieve higher goals	345	420	315	243

**Table 17: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	66	640	76
Disagree	60	557	617
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 15: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
A	66	67	-1	1	0.015
b	640	639	1	1	0.002
c	60	59	1	1	0.017
d	557	558	-1	1	0.002
	1323	1323			0.036

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 0.04

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 0.04 < the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 6 is accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected.

Hypothesis 7: No significant relationship exists between adequate supervision by male principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 19: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Male principals perform supervisory roles more effectively than female principals and, so are able to achieve goals faster	416	470	239	198
2	Male principals are feared and respected by staff which make their supervisory role more result-oriented	396	420	300	207
3	Supervision entails assisting teachers to be effective which male principals have superior qualities to accomplish and therefore record higher achievements	415	497	250	161

**Table 20: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	95	776	871
Disagree	31	421	452
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 21: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
A	95	83	12	144	1.735
b	776	788	-12	144	0.183
c	31	43	-12	144	3.349
d	421	409	12	144	0.352
	1323	1323			5.619

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 5.62

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 5.62 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 7 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Hypothesis 8: No significant relationship exists between adequate supervision by female principals and school goals achievement.

**Table 22: Distribution of Responses**

S/N	Parameter	SA	A	DA	SD
1	Female principals perform supervisory roles more effectively than male principals and, so are able to achieve goals faster	260	320	412	331
2	Female principals are feared and respected by staff which make their supervisory role more result-oriented	250	365	386	322
3	Supervision entails assisting teachers to be effective which female principals have superior qualities to accomplish and therefore record higher achievements	262	340	405	316

**Table 23: Summation of Responses**

Responses	Vice-Principal	Teachers	Total
Agree	82	517	599
Disagree	44	680	724
Total	126	1197	1323

**Table 24: Calculation of X<sup>2</sup> Value**

Cell	Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> ÷ fe
a	82	57	25	625	10.965
b	517	542	-25	625	1.153
c	44	69	-25	625	9.058
d	680	655	25	625	0.954
	1323	1323			22.130

Number of cells = 4; X<sup>2</sup> = 22.13

degrees of freedom (df) = (r - 1) (k - 10 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1) = (1) (1) = 1 or df = 1

X<sup>2</sup> critical table value of 1 degree of freedom at 0.05 = 3.84

**Decision:** Since the computed X<sup>2</sup> value, 22.13 > the X<sup>2</sup> critical table value hypothesis No. 8 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

### Discussion and Implications

The result of the study shows that male principals do not motivate their staff as much as female principals hence hypothesis one is accepted. On the other hand female principals are found to be a source of motivation to their staff. These results show that female principals are better able to achieve school goals than their male counterparts. Tables 1-6 illustrate the findings of hypotheses one and two which deal with motivation and goal achievement. These results are in agreement with the finding of Madumere-Obike (2004, p. 31) which opines that “women in management positions are inclined naturally towards people relationship and transformational management approaches”.

Hypotheses three and four sought to establish the abilities of male and female principals in respect of prudent resources management and school goals achievement. The results (Tables 7 – 12) show that both sexes



are good resources managers. However, female principals are found to be far better and prudent resources managers as indicated by the Computed  $X^2$  of 5.07 for male principals and 11.60 for female principals both of which are > the critical table value of 3.84. This finding supports the thesis of Gabriel and Obara (2002) that women can make better managers if given the opportunity.

Tables 13 – 18 present the results of hypotheses five and six which seek to ascertain the influence of leadership styles exhibited by male and female principals on school goals achievement. The findings show that the relationship which exists between leadership styles exhibited by male and female principals and school goals achievement is not significant. However, the computed  $X^2$  values of 0.32 for male principals and 0.04 for female principals indicate that male principals have more acceptable leadership styles that can result in enhanced achievement of goals. These findings do not agree with Obike (1987, p. 65), who found that female principals are more inclined towards participatory decision making than their male counterparts. It also does not support Blackmore (1996, p. 338) who noted that women are given positions as they are seen to be caring and sharing and are thus ideally placed to manage emotional fall out of change”.

Hypotheses seven and eight were interested in establishing the relationship between adequate supervision by both male and female principals and the influence of such on school goals achievement. The results are presented on Tables 19 – 24. The findings show that the supervisory roles of both male and female principals have significant relationships to school goals achievement. However, the computed  $X^2$  values of 5.62 for male principal and 22.13 for female principals against the critical table value of 3.84 shows that female principals are more committed to supervisory activities than their male counterparts. This implies that female principals will achieve more in terms of school goals.

## Conclusion

The following concluding remarks are derivable from the study:

1. Female principals motivate their staff more than their male counterparts. As a result they are better able to achieve school goals more than male principals.
2. Female principals are better managers of resources than male principals.
3. Male principals adopt better and more acceptable leadership styles than their female counterparts and this has some implications for school goals achievement.
4. Female principals are more committed to their supervisory roles than male principals. Since effective supervision is necessary for the achievement of organizational goals female principals are therefore at a better advantage.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the results of the study.

1. There should be no gender discrimination in the appointment of school principals. Of the 245 principals in Rivers State only 63 of them or 26% are females. However, this study has shown that females are better resources managers, better motivators of staff, and more committed to supervisory activities. These situations produce better achievement of school goals. Therefore, more females should be appointed principals and into other administrative positions in the school system.
2. The governments of Nigeria (State and Federal) should pay more attention to the education of females especially at the tertiary level. This is because only graduate teachers can rise to the positions of principals. Female access to tertiary education in Nigeria is low hence very few females are qualified for appointment as principals as well as into other positions. This study has revealed that the fewness of female principals who have been found to be better managers than their male counterparts is a big disadvantage to the educational system.

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