Students' Insights into School Management Leadership Practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria

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Abstract		**Original Research Article**

This study investigated students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South-West Nigeria. Two research questions were raised, and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 163 Colleges of Education in Nigeria, out of which 47 are located in South-West Nigeria. The study targeted students from both government and private institutions within the region. Using multi-stage, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques, eight Colleges of Education (two each from four states) were selected. A total of 160 students—80 male and 80 female—participated in the study, with 20 students selected from each college. Data were collected using a structured 21-item questionnaire titled Students' Insights into School Management Leadership Practices in Colleges of Education in South-West Nigeria. The questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23 and the Grand Mean Weighted Value (GMWV), while hypotheses were tested using the independent samples t-test at the 0.05 level of significance and 14 degrees of freedom. Findings revealed that 44.4% of students were below 20 years of age, 38.8% were between 21–30 years, and 16.9% were above 30 years. Gender distribution was equal, with 50% male and 50% female respondents. Marital status showed 70.6% were single and 29.4% married. In terms of academic level, 30.0% were in N.C.E I, 36.9% in N.C.E II, and 33.1% in N.C.E III. Half of the respondents were from private colleges, while 25% each were from federal and state colleges. Analysis of responses showed that students perceived school management leadership as professional and participatory. For example, they agreed that a qualified leader promotes teaching and learning effectively (MVW = 3.68), and that principal officers encourage participatory leadership styles to achieve institutional goals (MVW = 3.68). However, the results showed no statistically significant difference in perceptions based on gender, leading to the retention of the null hypothesis. This indicates that gender does not significantly influence students' perceptions of school management leadership styles. Based on the findings, it was recommended that institutional leaders adopt inclusive leadership strategies by involving both staff and students in policy formulation and decision-making. This approach would promote transparency, shared responsibility, and a sense of ownership within the academic community. Additionally, to mitigate the negative impacts of authoritarian leadership tendencies, colleges should establish safe and open channels for constructive feedback and dialogue. These measures are expected to enhance leadership competence and ultimately improve academic performance in Colleges of Education across South-West Nigeria.

Keywords: Colleges, Insight, Leadership, Management, Practices, Students, South-West, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in school management plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education and institutional effectiveness, especially in higher education institutions like Colleges of Education. As academic institutions strive to meet global standards, the role of effective leadership becomes increasingly central to achieving organizational goals, maintaining discipline, ensuring academic quality, and fostering a productive learning environment (Bush, 2011).

Leadership, according to Akindele & Adepoju (2021), is the use of power and decision-making. These definitions essentially center on three elements: the authority's source, the task-relevantness of its application, and the authority's functions, which include decision-making, directing, and coordinating. School management leadership refers to the strategic processes by which school leaders, such as provosts, deans, and heads of departments, plan, coordinate, and influence educational practices and policies to enhance institutional performance (Leithwood et al., 2006).

In Nigeria, the leadership practices adopted in Colleges of Education particularly in the South West region have been under growing scrutiny due to increasing demands for improved governance, student engagement, and educational outcomes. Students, being direct beneficiaries of school policies and administrative actions, are in a unique position to provide valuable insights into how leadership is practiced and its impact on their academic and social experiences. Their perspectives can serve as a crucial feedback mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership practices and identifying areas needing reform (Adepoju, 2018).

Despite the acknowledged importance of leadership in educational outcomes, limited attention has been given to the perceptions of students regarding how school management leadership practices affect their learning environments. Much of the existing literature tends to focus on the perspectives of school administrators and teachers, with little empirical focus on student voices (Olayanju & Akinwale, 2020). This gap underscores the need for research that explores students' insights as a way of offering a more holistic understanding of leadership dynamics in Colleges of Education.

The South West geopolitical zone of Nigeria, known for its concentration of educational institutions and cultural diversity, provides a fertile ground for investigating how leadership practices are perceived and experienced by students. Understanding these insights is essential for designing inclusive leadership strategies that promote transparency, accountability, and student-centered administration in tertiary institutions.

This study, therefore, aims to explore students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria, with the goal of identifying strengths, weaknesses, and possible areas of improvement in institutional leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Effective school management leadership is critical to the functioning and development of educational institutions. In Colleges of Education in Nigeria, leadership decisions influence not only administrative processes but also student learning, staff performance, and institutional growth. However, there is growing concern that leadership practices in many Nigerian tertiary institutions may not be adequately addressing the needs and expectations of students—the primary stakeholders in the education system. Reports of student dissatisfaction, poor communication, lack of transparency, and inadequate responsiveness to student welfare issues have raised questions about the effectiveness of current leadership styles and practices in these institutions (Adepoju, 2025; Olayanju & Akinwale, 2020; Adepoju, 2018).

While studies have examined leadership from the perspectives of administrators and staff, little empirical research has explored how students perceive these leadership practices and their impact on academic and social experiences. This gap in knowledge limits a comprehensive understanding of leadership effectiveness and the extent to which leadership in Colleges of Education is inclusive, participatory, and responsive to student concerns. Without incorporating students' insights, school management may continue to implement policies and leadership approaches that are misaligned with the actual needs and expectations of the student population.

This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by investigating students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. It aims to identify how students perceive leadership effectiveness, inclusiveness, communication, and decision-making processes, and how these perceptions influence their academic and social engagement.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigating students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria while the specific purposes are to investigate whether there is a significant difference in the perception of male and female students, government and private school students, on their insights into leadership practices by their school management.

Significance of the Study

A study on students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria has the following significance.

By exploring students' insights into school management leadership practices, this study would contribute to the growing body of knowledge on educational leadership. It would provide a unique student-centered perspective, which has been largely underrepresented in leadership discourse. This perspective would be essential for understanding how leadership practices affect the lived experiences of students and can guide the development of more inclusive and effective leadership models .

Researchers who might want to look into the same topics can use the study's findings as a source of secondary data references.

Policymakers and other education stakeholders, including heads of colleges of education and NCCE, can also benefit from the study when reviewing educational policies.

All lovers of the educational system will through the findings of this study gather enough knowledge and information on leadership in colleges of education while the findings of the study will add to the volume of knowledge and information on the leadership styles adopted by colleges of education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose and relative significance of

the study, the following
question was adopted to guide the research:

➤ What are the views of students on the school management leadership styles in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria?
➤ What are the views of student on the Implementation of School Programmes in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study.

Ho1. There is no correlation between a general perception of male and female students on the school management leadership styles in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Ho2. There is no correlation between the view of students in government and private colleges of education on management and leadership styles in colleges of education.

Leadership Theories

Over the decades, scholars have developed numerous leadership theories to explain how leaders influence their teams, make decisions, and adapt to varying contexts. These theories have shaped both academic understanding and practical applications of leadership in educational and organizational settings. Among the most influential are Trait Theory, Contingency Theories, and Transformational Leadership Theory, all of which emphasize the importance of individual characteristics and situational factors in effective leadership.

Trait Theory

Trait theory was among the earliest systematic attempts to understand leadership. It posits that certain innate traits or qualities predispose individuals to be effective leaders. Early research by Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) identified personality traits such as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability as common among effective leaders. However, Stogdill later revised his view, suggesting that leadership is not solely dependent on traits but also on situational factors. Despite criticisms, trait theory laid the foundation for subsequent leadership research and continues to influence modern competency-based models of leadership (Northouse, 2019).

Contingency Theories: In response to the limitations of trait theory, contingency theories emerged, highlighting that leadership effectiveness depends on the interaction between a leader's style and specific situational variables. Fiedler's Contingency Model (1967) introduced the concept that leaders are either task-oriented or relationship-oriented, and their effectiveness is contingent upon the degree of control and influence they have in a given situation.

Building on this, Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (1969) proposed that effective leadership depends on the leader's ability to adjust their style, ranging from directing to delegating, based on the maturity level of followers. Similarly, Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed a normative decision model, suggesting that the appropriateness of a leader's decision-making approach (autocratic, consultative, or group-based) is influenced by situational demands.

Contingency theories have been particularly useful in educational leadership, where institutional contexts and stakeholder expectations can vary widely. These theories underscore the need for flexibility and context-sensitive leadership in schools and colleges (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Transformational Leadership Theory: Transformational leadership, introduced by Bass (1985) and inspired by Burns (1978), focuses on the ability of leaders to inspire and motivate followers toward achieving higher levels of performance and personal development. Transformational leaders engage in behaviors such as articulating a compelling vision, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, and serving as role models. Bass identified four key components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

This theory has gained wide acceptance in educational leadership literature due to its emphasis on change, innovation, and the development of followers (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). In the context of Colleges of Education in Nigeria, transformational leadership is particularly relevant in driving reforms, improving quality assurance, and fostering a culture of collaboration and excellence.

Leading Others

D'Souza (2020) emphasizes that individuals who consistently deliver results and demonstrate reliability often earn admiration and respect from their communities. This admiration is not merely based on performance but also on an individual's awareness of their responsibilities toward group or community goals. Effective leadership, therefore, requires a deep understanding of group dynamics—including behavior patterns, interpersonal interactions, and emotional undercurrents within the group.

In elaborating on the concept of leading others, D'Souza (2020) identifies three essential group life needs that leaders must be attuned to: the **need to accomplish goals**, the **need for healthy interpersonal relationships**, and the **need for individual and collective satisfaction**. Meeting these needs is critical for fostering motivation, cohesion, and sustained productivity within a group setting.

Effective leaders, then, must not only guide task completion but also support the emotional and relational well-being of group members. This dual focus enhances group engagement, trust, and collective commitment.

Opposing Styles of Leadership

Leadership styles vary significantly among effective leaders, particularly in how they approach problem-solving,

decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. D'Souza (2020) contrasts two primary and opposing models of leadership: *traditional leadership and group-centered leadership*.

Traditional Leadership Approach

The traditional model assumes that leadership is rooted in authority, control, and directive power. Leaders operating within this style take on the role of the primary decision-makers and are responsible for setting objectives, issuing instructions, and ensuring compliance. According to D'Souza (2020), traditional leadership typically involves the following characteristics:

- A primary focus on tasks, often at the expense of personal relationships or emotions.
- Consultation may occur, but the leader retains ultimate decision-making authority.
- Group discussions are controlled by the leader, with disruptions and irrelevant inputs minimized.
- Emotional expressions are discouraged in favor of rational, logical dialogue.
- Leaders guard their authority, sometimes defending their position assertively to retain control.

While this leadership style can lead to efficiency and structure in group operations, it often comes at a cost. Group members may feel disconnected, apathetic, or resentful when their input is undervalued or overlooked. This can diminish motivation, reduce the quality and creativity of decisions, and hinder full acceptance of outcomes.

Group-Centered Leadership Approach

In contrast, **group-centered leadership** emphasizes shared responsibility and collective participation in both goal-setting and goal implementation. Leaders adopting this approach act more as facilitators than directors. D'Souza (2020) outlines the following traits of group-centered leadership:

- Leaders function as **coaches, consultants, and facilitators**, guiding rather than commanding.
- They model effective leadership behaviors and encourage group members to emulate these practices.
- An open and accepting environment is established where feelings and ideas can be freely expressed.
- The group is encouraged to address both task-related and interpersonal or process-related issues collaboratively.
- Control over decisions is shared, and group members are empowered to make final choices.

This leadership style fosters empowerment, ownership, and deeper group engagement. However, implementing it effectively requires a high level of emotional intelligence, communication skills, and cooperation from both the leader and the group members. Without adequate skill and mutual trust, the model may struggle to function as intended.

Students' Insights into Traditional Leadership

Students often perceive **traditional leadership** as:

- **Authoritative and Top-Down**: Many students view traditional leadership styles as rigid and hierarchical. They may feel that decisions are made without sufficient input from the student body, which can lead to a sense of **disempowerment**.
- **Efficient but Detached**: While this style is sometimes admired for its **clarity, decisiveness, and orderliness**, students often criticize it for lacking **empathy and emotional engagement**. This can affect relationships between administrators or faculty leaders and students.
- **Limited Student Participation**: Traditional leaders are often seen as gatekeepers who **control discussions**, suppress dissent, and avoid emotional or relational complexities. Students in such environments may express frustration over being treated as passive recipients of leadership decisions rather than as active stakeholders.
- **Reduced Motivation and Innovation**: Because traditional leadership tends to prioritize outcomes and discipline over collaboration and inclusion, students may feel **less motivated**, especially in environments that require creativity, critical thinking, or shared responsibility.

Students' Insights into Group-Centered Leadership

Students often respond **positively** to group-centered leadership, noting:

- **Sense of Inclusion and Voice**: Students feel more **valued and empowered** when leaders involve them in decision-making processes. They are more likely to describe their institution as democratic, participatory, and responsive.
- **Improved Communication and Trust**: When leaders encourage dialogue and transparency, students often report **increased trust** in school management and a stronger sense of community.
- **Supportive Learning Environment**: Group-centered leadership promotes **collaboration, emotional support, and mentorship**. Students often view such environments as more conducive to learning, self-expression, and personal development.
- **Greater Accountability and Initiative**: Students under this model tend to take more **responsibility** for their learning and actions because they feel a shared ownership of the institution's goals and values.

Table 1: Comparison of Students' Perspectives

Leadership Style	Perceived Strengths	Student Criticisms
Traditional Leadership	Clarity, structure, discipline	Distant, authoritarian, discourages input
Group-Centered Leadership	Inclusive, empowering, relational	Demands maturity, slower decision-making

Implications for Colleges of Education

Students' insights suggest that **effective leadership in colleges of education** should aim for a **balanced model** retaining the decisiveness of traditional leadership while adopting the participatory and emotionally intelligent aspects of group-centered leadership. Institutions that acknowledge and integrate student feedback into leadership practices tend to foster **higher engagement, trust, and academic performance**.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive-survey design. A survey design was considered appropriate because it involved some selected elements of the main and target population, with the view of generalizing the findings at the end. Also, it involved the collection and analysis of data to examine students' insights into school management leadership practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria, thus making it a descriptive study

Population

All the 5 federal colleges of education, 8 state colleges of education and 14 private colleges of education approved by NCCE in South West Nigeria constituted the main population of this study and all the NCE full time students in 27 colleges of education in South West Nigeria were the targets.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques used include multi-stage, stratified, and simple-random sampling techniques. The sampling was achieved in stages:
Stage I: The entire country was stratified into six region (i.e. North East, North West, North Central, South South, South East and South West). Out of these, South Western Nigeria was purposely selected.
Stage II: The selected region was thereafter stratified into the respective states such as, Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo and Lagos States. Out of these, Ekiti State, Ondo State, Osun State and Oyo State were randomly sampled.
Stage III: Two Colleges of Educations were randomly

selected from each of the sampled states for this study.
Stage IV: Twenty students each were randomly selected from each of the sampled colleges of Education in each state. Altogether, a total of one hundred and sixty students were sampled for this study.

Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect data for this study is a questionnaire titled, "Students' Insights into School Management Leadership Practices in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria". The questionnaire consists of three sections. Section A contains questions which sought after the personal information of the respondents and their schools. Section B contains General Perception of Students . Section C is questions on Students View on Leadership and Management Styles in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity was the most critical criterion and indicated the degree to which an instrument measures what was supposed to measure. Also was thought of as utility, in other words validity was the extent to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflected true differences among those being tested. To ensure validity of the instrument, a draft copy of the questionnaire was prepared and submitted to my supervisor, for correction. A copy of the questionnaire was also shown to University lecturers in the field of Educational Measurement and Evaluation, for suggestions and comments. The final version of the questionnaire was created after considering their recommendations and remarks, and it was sent to the research supervisor for approval before the requested copies were made and distributed.

Reliability of the Instrument

Data reliability was taken as the cornerstone of making a successful and meaningful study. In order to collect reliable data, after the approval by the supervisor, copies of the questionnaire were administered in six (6) colleges of education with similar settings but were not used for the study. After a period of two weeks, the same copies of this instrument were re-administered to the same respondents.

The data collected on the two occasions were collated and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment reliability coefficient test to determine the reliability coefficient for this questionnaire. A reliable coefficient of 0.75 was obtained.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The researchers visited the selected colleges of education personally to carry out the administration of a questionnaire to the respondents. On the authority of each provost of the colleges, copies of questionnaires were administered to the selected students in each school. To give room for proper attention on items in the questionnaire, two weeks were allowed for their completion by the students. All the administered questionnaires were retrieved at the end. To get the student's opinions, their responses were collected and completed into tables, frequency, percentages, the mean, and standard deviation to examine students' insights into school management leadership practices in colleges of education in South West Nigeria The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistic.

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2: Analysis of responses to demographic variables of questionnaire

Demographic variable	Groupings	Frequency	Percentage
The age bracket of students	Below 20 years	71	44.4
	21-30 years	62	38.8
	31years Above	27	16.9
Gender of the Students	Male	80	50.0
	Female	80	50.0
Marital Status	Single	113	70.6
	Married	47	29.4
Students' Level	N.C.E. 1	48	30.0
	N.C.E. 2	59	36.9
	N.C.E. 3	53	33.1
School Status	Federal	40	25.0
	State	40	25.0
	Private	80	50.0

Table 2 provides critical insight into the composition of students in the Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. The age distribution reveals that a significant proportion of the students (44.4%) are below 20 years, while 38.8% fall within the 21–30 years age bracket, and only 16.9% are above 30 years.

In terms of gender, there is an equal representation of male and female students, each constituting 50.0% of the sample. This balanced gender distribution suggests a fair level of gender inclusivity and equal educational opportunity across the surveyed institutions, which is critical for ensuring equity and promoting inclusive leadership practices.

The marital status of respondents shows that 70.6% are single, while 29.4% are married. Regarding academic level, 30.0% of the respondents are in N.C.E. 1, 36.9% in N.C.E. 2, and 33.1% in N.C.E. 3. This fairly even distribution indicates that the data reflects perspectives across all stages of the N.C.E. program, thereby ensuring that the findings of the study are representative of the entire student experience within the Colleges of Education.

Lastly, the distribution of school types attended by the respondents reveals that 50.0% are from private colleges, while 25.0% each are from federal and state colleges.

Table 3: General Perception of Students

Statement Items	Responses				Total	Likert Conversion				Total	Mean Weight	Deci sion
	VT	T	U	VU		4	3	2	1			
The college have fair, effective And timely procedure for handling Student's complaints and academic appeals	53	59	21	27	160	212	177	42	27	458	2.86	A
Effective Structures encourage Students and lecturers to be engaged in authentic, meaningful work	61	50	18	31	160	244	150	36	31	461	2.88	A
Creative a culture of learning in small, lecture rooms are essential to improve students' performance and achievement.	65	78	10	07	160	260	234	20	07	521	3.26	A
The college maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for students	62	61	16	11	160	248	153	32	11	444	2.78	A
Effective structures allow lecturers to known their student well in a personalized and caring learning environment.	70	75	11	04	160	280	225	22	04	531	3.32	A
Pleasant environment and friendly atmosphere exist in the college.	54	63	24	19	160	216	189	48	19	472	2.95	A
The institution focuses on student performance mostly and cares to improve the academic performance of the students.	69	51	18	22	160	276	153	36	22	487	3.04	A
GMWV											**3.01**	

Since the Likert scale ranges from 1 (Very Untrue) to 4 (Very True), a mean score of 2.50 and above generally reflects a positive perception ("Agree"). Thus, the general perception of students is positive, as indicated by the GMVW of 3.01.

Answer to Question

The analysis of Table 3 reveals a generally positive perception among students regarding the institutional structures and learning environment within the Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. With a **Grand Mean Weighted Value (GMWV) of 3.01**, which is above the neutral point of 2.50 on a 4-point Likert scale, the findings indicate that students largely **agree** that the colleges have established effective and supportive mechanisms that promote academic success and student well-being.

Specifically, the highest-rated item, "**Effective structures allow lecturers to know their students well in a personalized and caring learning environment**" (mean = 3.32), reflects strong student appreciation for close teacher-

student relationships and personalized academic support. Students also acknowledged the existence of "**pleasant environment and friendly atmosphere**" (mean = 2.95), and affirmed that the colleges "**maintain a safe and healthy learning environment**" (mean = 2.78). Furthermore, students expressed agreement with the college's "**fair, effective and timely procedure for handling complaints and academic appeals**" (mean = 2.86), which indicates a level of trust in the college administration's responsiveness and support systems. This is a vital aspect of institutional quality assurance and aligns with good governance practices in higher education (UNESCO, 2009).

Table 4.: View on leadership and management style of the colleges of education.

Statement Items	Responses					Likert Conversion					Mean Weight	Decision
	VT	T	U	VU	Total	4	3	2	1	Total		
A professional and qualified leader sets a leadership style by promoting teaching and learning professionally.	76	58	11	15	160	304	174	22	15	589	3.68	A
The colleges of education head help lecturers to improve their teaching skill through motivation and encouragement.	62	54	25	19	160	248	162	50	19	541	3.38	A
The heads of department helps their students to be well organized and well-focused to achieve their set objectives.	85	63	3	9	160	340	189	6	9	622	3.89	A
Provost as a bureaucratic leader expect respect from followers as he/she is also a legally constituted authority	50	71	16	23	160	200	213	32	23	493	3.08	R
Provost of the college do not like to be autocratic but considerate	35	48	38	39	160	140	144	76	39	401	2.51	R
The principal officer of the college encourage a participatory leader's style with the students' in order to achieve the college objective	80	51	19	10	160	320	153	38	10	589	3.68	A
The principal officer of the college are more united with the students in pursuit of higher goals common to both for more effective management	74	60	12	14	160	296	180	24	14	562	3.51	A
Heads of department aspire for a highly responsive system of education that equips students with required knowledge, skills and positive attitudes.	65	67	13	15	160	260	201	26	15	530	3.31	R

Educational leadership, the principal officers of the college aspires for a highly responsively system of education that equips students with required knowledge, skills and positive attitudes.	45	66	14	35	160	180	198	28	35	451	2.82	R
GMWV											**3.32**	

The subjective views of 160 students on leadership and management style of colleges of education in the study area were summarized and thereafter converted to objective responses using Linkert Conversion in conjunction with Mean Weight Value Analysis (Sunmola, 2017). From Table 4, the cut-off point or General Mean Weight Value (GMWV) for this is analysis is 3.32. According to Sunmola (2017), as a rule factors whose Mean Weight Value (MWV) is lesser to the GMWV is rejected and vice-versa.

The accepted views of 160 students on leadership and management style of colleges of education in the study area include: the principal officer of the college are more united with the students in pursuit of higher goals common to both for more effective management (MVW = 3.51), the heads of department helps their students to be well organized and well-focused to achieve their set objectives. (MVW = 3.89), the colleges of education head help lecturers to improve their teaching skill through motivation and encouragement (MVW = 3.38) and a professional and qualified leader sets a leadership style by promoting teaching and learning professionally (MVW = 3.68) and the principal officer of the college encourage a participatory leader's style with the students' in order to achieve the college objective (MVW = 3.68).

The rejected views of 160 students on leadership and management style of colleges of education in the study area include: heads of department aspire for a highly responsive system of education that equips students with required knowledge, skills and positive attitudes. (MVW = 2.44), Provost as a bureaucratic leader expect respect from followers as he/she is also a legally constituted authority (MVW = 3.08), Provost of the college do not like to be autocratic but considerate (MVW = 2.51) and Educational leadership, the principal officers of the college aspires for a highly responsively system of education that equips students with require knowledge, skills and positive attitudes (MVW = 2.82) implementation of the school programmes.

Text of hypotheses
Hypothesis 1

Ho1. There is no correlation between a general perception of male and female students on the school management leadership styles in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Table 4: X^2- test showing gender perception on the school management leadership styles in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria.

Perception	Male		Female	
	Observed mean	Expected mean	Observed mean	Expected mean
The college have fair, effective and timely procedure for handling Student's complaints and academic appeals	2.89	2.5	2.83	2.5
Effective Structures encourage Students and lecturers to be engaged in authentic, meaningful work	2.92	2.5	2.97	2.5

Creative a culture of learning in small, lecture rooms are essential to improve students' performance and achievement	2.97	2.5		2.88	2.5
The college maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for Students	2.84	2.5		2.88	2.5
Effective structures allow lecturers to known their student well in a personalized and caring learning environment.	2.88	2.5		2.91	2.5
Pleasant environment and friendly atmosphere exist in the college.	2.61	2.5		2.73	2.5
The institution focuses on student performance mostly and cares to improve the academic performance of the students	2.82	2.5		2.90	2.5

Using the chi-square statistic $X^2 = \dfrac{\Sigma\ (Ei - 0i\ )}{Ei} = 0.81288$

Table 5: Table to Test Hypothesis 1

Grouping	N	d.f	X^2 (calculated)	X^2 (tabulated)	Decision
Male	80	6	0.81288	138.39	Ho Accepted
Female	80				

The Chi-square test was conducted to examine whether there is a significant difference in male and female students' perceptions of school management leadership styles in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. With 115 degrees of freedom, the calculated Chi-square value ($X^2 = 0.81288$) was less than the tabulated Chi-square value at the 0.05 level of significance ($X^2\ 0.05,1152 = 138.39$). Therefore, the result is not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that gender does not significantly influence students' perceptions of school management leadership styles.

Hypothesis 2

Ho2. There is no correlation between the view of students in government and private colleges of education on management and leadership styles in colleges of education.

Table 6: X^2-test showing the view of students in government and private colleges of education on management and leadership styles in colleges of education.

Items	Government		Private	
	Observed mean	Expected mean	Observed mean	Expected mean
A professional and qualified leader sets a leadership style by promoting teaching and learning professionally.	2.95	2.5	2.72	2.5
The colleges of education head help lecturers to improve their teaching skill through motivation and encouragement	2.51	2.5	2.69	2.5
The heads of department helps their students to be well organized and well-focused to achieve their set objectives	2.60	2.5	2.81	2.5
Provost as a bureaucratic leader expect respect from followers as he/she is also a legally constituted authority	2.50	2.5	2.56	2.5
Provost of the college do not like to be autocratic but considerate	2.44	2.5	2.49	2.5
The principal officer of the college encourage a participatory leader's style with the students' in order to achieve the college objective	2.72	2.5	3.00	2.5
The principal officer of the college are more united with the students in pursuit of higher goals common to both for more effective management	2.71	2.5	2.88	2.5
Heads of department aspire for a highly responsive system of education that equips students With required knowledge, skills and positive attitudes	2.65	2.5	2.73	2.5
Educational leadership, the principal officers of the college aspires for a highly responsively system of education that equips students with required knowledge, skills and positive attitudes.	2.59	2.5	2.61	2.5

Using the chi-square statistic $X^2 = \dfrac{\Sigma\,(Ei - 0i)}{Ei} = 0.4892$

Table 7: Table to Test Hypothesis 2

Grouping	N	d.f	X^2 (calculated)	X^2 (tabulated)	Decision
Government Colleges	80	8	0.4892	3.841	Ho Accepted
Private Colleges	80				

The chi-square analysis based on data from Table 6, along with additional educational leadership metrics, yielded a calculated chi-square value of approximately 0.4892. This value is notably lower than the critical value of 3.841 at the 0.05 significance level with 8 degree of freedom. As such, the result indicates no statistically significant difference between students' responses from government and private colleges regarding perceptions of leadership and management styles. Overall, the acceptance of the null hypothesis is consistent with the findings presented in table above.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from table 4 indicate a general consensus among respondents that the leadership and management styles practiced in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria are largely effective and professional. The highest agreement was recorded on the role of heads of departments in helping students stay organized and focused, with a mean score of 3.40. Similarly, strong support was shown for participatory and goal-oriented leadership styles, where leaders are seen as motivating lecturers, engaging with students, and promoting a responsive educational system. These perceptions suggest that the leadership within these institutions is largely aligned with best practices that support academic development and institutional goals, which are in line with Adepoju, 2025; Olayanju & Akinwale, 2020; Adepoju, 2018, as contained in the reviewed literature.

Despite this overall positive outlook, some items such as the perception of leadership responsiveness in broader educational leadership (mean = 2.76) and attitudes toward autocratic tendencies (mean = 2.83) show slightly lower levels of agreement. This may reflect lingering concerns among some respondents about inclusiveness, transparency, or the extent of student-leader collaboration in decision-making. Nonetheless, all mean scores remain above the 2.5 benchmark, indicating that while there is room for improvement in certain areas, the overall leadership approach in these colleges is viewed favorably by students.

Each item evaluated ranging from perceptions of professional leadership to the influence of principal officers—contributed minimally to the overall chi-square value. This suggests that student opinions across both college types were closely aligned with the expected mean score of 2.5. The lack of significant deviation affirms the null hypothesis (H_o), which posits no meaningful association between college type and students' views on leadership and management practices, D'Souza (2020).

The findings suggest that, despite possible variations in governance structures and available resources between government and private colleges, students perceive leadership and management approaches in a relatively uniform manner. This consistency may reflect a broadly shared educational culture or similar institutional expectations across the sector. Nevertheless, minor differences were observed—for example, private colleges reported slightly higher mean scores on items such as "the principal officer encourages a participatory leadership style" (3.00 compared to 2.72 in government colleges). While statistically insignificant, these nuances could be worth exploring through further qualitative research.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that leadership and management styles in the colleges of education are generally perceived as effective and supportive. A majority of the respondents agreed that college leaders exhibit professionalism, promote teaching and learning, and encourage both staff and students through motivation and clear direction. The data also revealed that leadership is participatory in nature, allowing for stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes, which is a hallmark of democratic and transformational leadership styles.

Additionally, the heads of departments were recognized for helping students stay organized and focused on achieving their academic goals. These findings reflect a leadership culture that values discipline, shared responsibility, and continuous improvement. Although a few authoritarian tendencies were acknowledged, such as limited openness to being questioned, these did not significantly detract from the overall positive view of leadership in the institutions surveyed.

Implication of the Findings

The findings of this study imply that effective leadership practices in colleges of education play a crucial role in enhancing teaching, learning, and overall institutional performance. The positive perceptions of leadership, particularly those that promote professionalism, motivation, collaboration, and student support, suggest that transformational and democratic leadership styles are more effective in educational settings. When leaders are inclusive and involve staff and students in decision-making processes, it leads to improved morale, a stronger sense of direction, and better academic outcomes.

However, the limited support for authoritarian tendencies, such as leadership styles that discourage questioning, highlights the importance of fostering openness and participatory governance in educational institutions. These implications suggest that institutions must invest in leadership development programs that emphasize emotional intelligence, strategic planning, and participatory management. Doing so will not only strengthen institutional structures but also improve the quality of education and the satisfaction of both staff and students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Findings of the Study, the Researcher Recommends the Following:

◆ Colleges of education should invest in continuous leadership development programs that equip institutional leaders with modern management skills, emotional intelligence, and participatory leadership approaches. Such training will enhance their ability to foster collaboration, support staff, and guide students effectively.
◆ Institutional heads and department leaders should adopt inclusive leadership strategies by involving both staff and students in policy development and decision-making processes. This will promote transparency, shared responsibility, and a sense of ownership across the academic community.
◆ To overcome the negative effects of authoritarian tendencies, colleges should create safe channels for constructive feedback and dialogue between leadership and stakeholders. This will encourage trust, innovation, and mutual respect.
◆ Leaders should continue to support student development by promoting discipline, mentorship, and academic goal-setting. Emphasizing student-focused leadership practices can enhance student performance, engagement, and long-term academic success.
◆ Education policymakers and governing bodies should review existing leadership structures and policies in colleges of education to ensure they reflect best practices

in democratic and transformational leadership. Policies should encourage professionalism, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Further studies could explore the direct relationship between leadership styles and student academic performance, discipline, and engagement. This would provide deeper insights into how leadership practices translate into measurable educational outcomes. Also, a qualitative study could be conducted to explore the challenges that heads of institutions face in implementing participatory and transformational leadership styles. This can help in designing support systems and capacity-building interventions.

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