

Principals' Leadership Capacity and Teacher Productivity in Secondary Schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the leadership capacity of principals in ensuring equitable resource distribution and its influence on teacher productivity in secondary schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria. Two research objectives and research questions were raised to guide the study. Adopting a descriptive survey design, the population comprised 104 principals and 4,272 teachers, from which a sample size of 357 was drawn using research advisor table 2006, respondents were selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques, data were collected using the Principals' Resource Management Questionnaire (PRMQ) which was validated by experts and a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.73 was achieved. Findings indicate that principals demonstrate strong capacity in key administrative areas, including needs-based budgeting, ensuring access to facilities, and managing core staffing logistics like recruitment and assignment by expertise. However, significant gaps were identified in strategic leadership domains: principals showed limited effectiveness in distributing experienced teachers equitably, providing targeted support for struggling students, fostering collaborative mentorship, ensuring adequate physical working conditions, and building inter-school partnerships. The study concludes that while principals are proficient operational managers, their capacity for transformative, equity-focused leadership that directly enhances teacher productivity through collaborative culture and strategic resource responsiveness requires substantial development. Recommendations include targeted training and policy reforms to address these identified gaps.

Keywords: Principals-Leadership, Teacher Productivity, Secondary School

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Introduction

Globally, principals are recognized as key actors in the management of secondary schools, serving not only as instructional leaders but also as resource managers who shape the organizational climate. Their leadership capacity determines how effectively schools achieve their mandates of quality teaching and learning. Recent studies such as Nwachukwu and Nwosa and Orunbon & Nwogu emphasizes that principals' strategic leadership approaches directly influence teacher performance and student outcomes, underscoring their role as both administrators and vision-bearers in educational systems (Nwachukwu & Nwosa, 2025). In contexts where resources are scarce, the principal's ability to mobilize, allocate, and monitor institutional resources becomes even more critical, as it ensures that teachers are adequately supported to deliver on their instructional responsibilities (Orunbon & Nwogu, 2025).

Equitable distribution of resources is central to effective school leadership, as it guarantees fairness and inclusivity in access to teaching materials, infrastructure, and professional development opportunities. Principals who demonstrate capacity in equitable resource allocation foster environments where teachers feel valued and motivated, thereby enhancing productivity. Principals prioritize fairness in resource distribution, teachers are more likely to engage in innovative practices and sustain high levels of commitment to their duties (Makera, Mahmud & Kwashabawa, 2024). Conversely, inequitable distribution often leads to dissatisfaction, low morale, and diminished instructional quality. Thus, equitable resource management is not merely administrative but a leadership function that directly impacts the effectiveness of secondary education.

Teacher productivity is closely tied to the adequacy and fairness of resource distribution. Equitable access to teaching aids, conducive classrooms, and opportunities for professional growth enable teachers to focus on instructional delivery rather than resource struggles. Equitable resource allocation enhances teacher job satisfaction and performance, thereby improving student learning outcomes (Nwachukwu & Nwosa, 2025). However, Nigerian secondary schools continue to grapple with systemic issues in resource distribution, including inadequate funding, politicized allocation, and infrastructural deficits. These challenges often result in disparities across schools, where

some institutions are better equipped than others, creating inequities that undermine teacher productivity and student achievement (Makera et al., 2024).

The persistence of unequal resource distribution in Nigerian secondary schools has been linked to broader governance and policy gaps. Problems such as favouritism, mismanagement, and lack of accountability in resource allocation exacerbate inequities, leaving many teachers demotivated and unable to perform optimally (Orunbon & Nwogu, 2025). While several studies have examined principals' leadership practices in relation to teacher performance, few have specifically focused on Kebbi State, where contextual realities such as rural-urban disparities and limited institutional support present unique challenges. This research therefore seeks to fill this gap by assessing principals' leadership capacity in ensuring equitable resource distribution and its influence on teacher productivity in Kebbi State secondary schools.

Review of Related Literature

Principals in secondary schools are expected to demonstrate strong leadership capacity by ensuring equitable distribution of institutional resources, thereby creating supportive environments where teachers can thrive and maximize productivity. In such a situation, resources would be fairly allocated across schools, teachers would have access to adequate teaching materials and professional development opportunities, and student learning outcomes would improve as a result of motivated and effective teachers ((Makera, Mahmud, & Kwashabawa, 2024). However, in practice, many secondary schools in Nigeria, including those in Kebbi State, face persistent challenges in resource distribution. Inequities arise from inadequate funding, favoritism, mismanagement, and rural-urban disparities, which often leave some schools better resourced than others. These imbalances negatively affect teacher morale, reduce instructional quality, and widen performance gaps among schools. While existing studies have examined principals' leadership practices and teacher performance broadly, few have specifically addressed how principals' leadership capacity influences equitable resource distribution and teacher productivity in Kebbi State. This gap in knowledge underscores the need for research that investigates the extent to which principals in Kebbi State secondary schools exercise leadership capacity in ensuring fairness in resource allocation and how such practices impact teacher productivity (Makera, Mahmud, & Kwashabawa, 2024).

Principals' leadership capacity encompasses the knowledge, interpersonal competence, and strategic influence that enable school leaders to steer instructional quality and organisational functioning toward continuous improvement. Studies shows that strong leadership capacity emerges through sustained professional learning, reflective practice, and collaborative problem-solving structures that allow principals to diagnose instructional gaps and coordinate schoolwide improvement (Muhayimana et al., 2023). Building on this, large-scale syntheses emphasise that principals influence student learning primarily by shaping the conditions under which teachers work, particularly through staff motivation, instructional supervision, and strategic resource allocation (Grissom et al., 2021). Therefore, leadership capacity is best understood not as an individual trait but as a dynamic institutional capability that develops when school systems provide coaching, feedback loops, and organisational supports that help principals translate leadership knowledge into everyday practice.

Equitable resource distribution refers to the extent to which educational resources teachers, instructional materials, infrastructure, and funding are allocated based on need rather than equal numerical shares. Evidence increasingly shows that systems often misinterpret equality for equity, resulting in disadvantaged schools having fewer qualified teachers, weaker infrastructure, and insufficient learning materials even when per-pupil spending appears uniform (Omoeva et al., 2021). The outputs-based framework proposed by Omoeva, Menezes Cunha, & Moussa, (2021) has been influential in demonstrating that fairness in resource allocation must consider contextualised demand indicators such as student disadvantage, school location, and staffing gaps. Such data-driven approaches strengthen the capacity of ministries to correct mismatches and to design formulae that prioritise vulnerable schools, ensuring that resource distribution reflects both instructional demand and systemic improvement goals.

Teacher productivity reflects the extent to which teachers effectively convert professional knowledge, instructional time, and organisational support into improved student learning and school functioning. Empirical studies show that productivity increases when teachers have access to structured professional development, ongoing feedback, and enabling working conditions that reduce administrative overload and increase time for lesson planning and collaboration (Hornido et al., 2024). Scholars consistently argue that teacher

productivity is shaped by a combination of motivational factors, workplace resources, and leadership support, meaning that even highly skilled teachers are less productive when resources are insufficient or school leadership is weak. Consequently, enhancing teacher productivity requires coordinated attention to teacher competence, workplace conditions, and the larger institutional environment.

Principals' leadership capacity, equitable resource distribution, and teacher productivity form a mutually reinforcing system that determines school effectiveness. Principals with strong leadership capacity are better positioned to advocate for and strategically allocate resources in ways that respond to school-level needs (Muhayimana et al., 2023; Grissom et al., 2021). When such allocations are equity-driven, schools become more capable of providing teachers with the tools, materials, and conducive working conditions that enhance productivity (Omoeva et al., 2021). In turn, higher teacher productivity reinforces effective school leadership, as improved instructional outcomes generate the feedback and organisational stability needed for leaders to refine their practices (Hornido et al., 2024). This synergy underscores that sustainable school improvement requires deliberate coordination across leadership development, resource equity, and teacher support systems rather than isolated reforms.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows;

- I. To assess the extent of principal's leadership capacity on equity distribution of resources allocated to schools for teacher's productivity in Kebbi State.
- II. To determine ways in which principal leadership capacity influences teacher's productivity of secondary schools in Kebbi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study;

- I. What is the level of principals' leadership capacity in ensuring equitable distribution of institutional resources for teachers in Kebbi State secondary schools?

- II. In what ways do principals' leadership practices influence teacher productivity in Kebbi State secondary schools?

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 104 principals and 4,272 teachers, from which a sample size of 357 was determined using research Advisor table 2006, respondents were selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using instrument titled Principals' Resource Management Questionnaire (PRMQ), which was validated by experts and achieved a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.73 from a pilot study involving 50 respondents. The questionnaire was administered personally with the assistance of trained research assistants, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS, employing mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

Results

This section will present results of data analysis and interpretations.

A decision rule of 2.5 was adopted as the criterion mean. Items with a mean score of 2.5 and above were considered accepted, showing agreement among respondents, while items with a mean score below the threshold (2.5) were rejected.

RQ1: What is the level of principals' leadership capacity in ensuring equitable distribution of institutional resources for teachers in Kebbi State secondary schools?

Research question one will be answered using table 1 below.

Table 1: Principals' Equitable Distribution of Resources for Teachers Productivity

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Principals' allocation of school budgets is done according to needs-based funding formula.	357	3.43	.574	High
2	The principal distributes school resources without regard for students' demographic and socio-economic background.	357	2.77	1.374	Moderate
3	Principals ensure that equal rewards are awarded to deserving students.	357	3.60	.683	High

4	The principal makes sure that all students have access to curriculum aligned with empowerment and grade-level standards.	357	3.49	.635	High
5	School Principals give more resources to their struggling students in areas where they are lacking.	357	2.79	.893	Moderate
6	Principals make sure that students have equal opportunities to use the library and laboratory in the school.	357	3.49	.599	High
7	Teachers with more experience and credentials are distributed equally among classes within the school.	357	2.84	1.144	Moderate
8	The principal ensure that all the students have equal opportunities to choose their school subjects with the resources devoted for the subjects.	357	3.29	1.101	High
9	Principals give students equal opportunities to borrow resources like textbooks for home work.	357	3.31	.589	High
10	Schools give students equal opportunities to nurture their talents by allowing every student to use the school sporting facilities and the school farm.	357	3.48	.708	High

Grand Mean = 3.25

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that principals demonstrate substantial leadership capacity in ensuring equitable distribution of school resources. Items 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 all recorded mean scores above the decision benchmark of 2.50, suggesting strong agreement that principals allocate budgets using needs-based criteria, provide equitable rewards, and ensure that all students have access to curriculum, library, laboratory, subject choices, sporting facilities, and agricultural resources. However, the table also shows that items 2, 5, and 7 scored only slightly above the decision mean, indicating weaker leadership capacity in several areas. These include limited consideration for struggling learners during resource allocation, inconsistent distribution of instructional resources, and inadequate deployment of teachers across classes. Collectively, the interpretation of Table 1 suggests that while principals exhibit strong capacity in major domains of resource equity, notable gaps remain in addressing the needs of low-performing students, ensuring fair teacher distribution, and strengthening holistic resource responsiveness across classrooms. The grand mean (3.25) shows that principal's equitable distribution of resources for teachers' productivity is highly rated by the respondents indicating a very high level of agreement.

RQ2: In what ways do principals' leadership practices influence teacher productivity in Kebbi State secondary schools?

Research question two will be answered using table 2 below.

Table 2: Principals' Leadership Capacity in Teachers Productivity

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1	The principal ensures that all subjects are being taught by qualified teachers.	357	3.76	.619	High
2	The principal has the ability to attract and retain best teachers in the school.	357	3.84	.536	High
3	The principal usually fosters a more collaborative school culture.	357	2.72	1.035	Moderate
4	The principal infuses relevant staff professional development opportunities to help students.	357	3.11	.867	High
5	Principals usually match experience teachers with less experience teachers in the school.	357	2.79	.913	Moderate
6	The principal develops formal and informal partnerships with other school Principals to keep tract of high-quality or experience teachers.	357	2.64	.985	Moderate
7	Principals ensure that assigning of teachers to classes is based on their area of expertise.	357	3.51	.791	High
8	Principals make provision for ventilation system, toilets, and photocopy machines for a comfortable physical working condition of teachers.	357	2.82	1.344	Moderate
9	Principals employ P.T.A staff in the school based on objective laid down procedure rather than favoritism.	357	2.78	1.121	Moderate
10	Principals always make effort to replace staff in case of leave, transfer, resignation and retirement.	357	3.66	.738	High

Grad Mean = 3.16

The analysis of Table 2 indicates that principals are perceived to be effective in certain specific areas of staff development and training but moderately effective in others. Respondents strongly affirmed the principal's capacity to handle staffing logistics, such as attracting qualified teachers, assigning them to their expertise areas, and permitting professional development. However, principals received only moderate ratings in areas requiring strategic collaboration, mentorship, and improving the physical work environment, suggesting significant room for growth in these domains.

An analysis of respondent feedback on principals' capacity for staff development and training (see Table 2) reveals a bifurcated set of competencies. The findings indicate that principals are perceived as highly effective in several key operational areas. Specifically, respondents strongly affirmed (with mean scores above the decision point of 2.5) the principals' capacity to attract and retain qualified teachers for all subjects, encourage and permit staff professional development, assign teachers based on their expertise, and manage staff replacements due to attrition.

Equally, principals received only moderate affirmation in areas related to fostering a collaborative and supportive school culture. This includes a lesser capacity to pair experienced with less-experienced teachers for mentorship, develop partnerships with other schools to track high-quality teaching talent, provide adequate physical working conditions (e.g., ventilation, toilets, photocopiers), and employ Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A) staff. This pattern suggests that while principals are proficient in direct administrative and logistical functions concerning staff management, their strategic and formative roles in building a collaborative professional community and ensuring a comfortable work environment require further development. The grand mean score of 3.16 indicates that principals' leadership capacity in teachers' productivity is perceived to be high by the respondents.

Findings

- I. Principals generally demonstrate strong leadership capacity in equitably distributing school resources, especially in budgeting, access to facilities, and fair reward systems. However, weaknesses remain in supporting struggling students, distributing teachers evenly, and ensuring balanced allocation of instructional resources.
- II. Principals demonstrate effective administrative capacity for staff management such as recruitment, assignment by expertise, and approving professional development but show limited effectiveness in fostering collaborative mentorship, inter-school partnerships, and ensuring adequate physical working conditions.

Discussion

Findings from research question one revealed that, Principals have the capacity of equitable distribution of resources for teachers productivity with

allocation of school budgets been done according to needs-based funding formula, ensuring that equal rewards are awarded to deserving students, they make sure that all students have access to curriculum aligned with empowerment and grade-level standards, make sure that students have equal opportunities to use the library and laboratory in the school, ensuring that all the students have equal opportunities to choose their school subjects with the resources devoted for the subjects, giving students equal opportunities to borrow resources like textbooks for home work, giving students equal opportunities to nurture their talents by allowing every student to use the school sporting facilities and the school farm scoring highly against distributing school resources without regard for students' demographic and socio-economic background, giving more resources to their struggling students in areas where they are lacking and Teachers with more experience and credentials are distributed equally among classes within the school, scoring moderate.

Findings from research question one is in line with the finding of a study conducted by Packard (2008), on Leadership and Performance in Human Services Organizations. The study found that material resources were effectively distributed. In the same vein, the finding also disagreed with same study as he equally found out that human resources were not equitably distributed in the human service organization. This may be as a result of favoritism and selfishness or the fact that some schools may lobby to have more staff than others while others lag behind for reasons only known to them. The finding also disagreed with the finding of a study carried out by Afolabi, Oyewusi and Ajayi (2008), on Allocation and Management of Resources for the Sustenance of Free Qualitative Secondary Education in Ondo State, Nigeria. Their study found that resources were not equitably distributed across the public secondary schools in Ondo State. This difference may be attributed to difference in time or geographical location.

Furthermore, the finding of research question one is in line with the finding of a study carried out by Clayton and LaBatt (2019), in USA on Balancing the Role of the Principalship: Creating and Sustaining Equity and Excellence. Their study found that these three principals demonstrated democratic ethical leadership practices influenced by their personal and professional experiences.

Findings from research question two revealed that, the respondents significantly agreed to a high extent that; principal have the ability of

ensuring that all subjects are being taught by qualified teachers, they have the ability to attract and retain best teachers in the school, infusing relevant staff professional development opportunities and teachers productivity to help students, ensuring that assigning of teachers to classes is based on their area of expertise, and always make effort to replace staff in case of leave, transfer, resignation and retirement against moderately agreed on whether principal usually foster a more collaborative school culture, usually match experience teachers with less experience teachers in the school, develop formal and informal partnerships with other school Principals to keep tract of high-quality or experience teachers, making provision for ventilation system, toilets, and photocopy machines for a comfortable physical working condition of teachers, and employ P.T.A staff in the school based on objective laid down procedures rather than favoritism.

This finding of research question two is in line with the finding of a study conducted by Perez (2022), on the relationship between a principal's practice in resource allocation and how it promotes a school's collaborative culture in New York City, USA. His study found that significant positive relationships were found in the re-directing of monies for reduction of class size, allocating monies for professional development over the summer, and the solicitation of input from all teachers and staff when planning the school budget. The finding disagreed with the finding of a study carried out by Chidi and Ndidi (2017), on investigation to analyze resource management strategies adopted by principals for secondary schools' improvement in Enugu State, Nigeria. They found out that many material and human resource management strategies have not been adequately adopted by principals for secondary schools improvements in Enugu State and that secondary school principals in Enugu state have not adequately adopted human resource management strategies such as organising in-service training for staff professional development, equipping staff offices, giving prizes to staff for excellent performance, provision of counseling services and sanitary facilities for staff well-being.

The finding of research question two also agreed with the finding of a study carried out by Miltiadis, Ioanna, Georgios, Grigorious and Vassilis (2020), on *The School Principal's Role as a Leader in Teachers' Professional Development: The Case of Public Secondary Education in Athens* to improve the learning process and school quality. The evidence from this study confirmed a direct impact of the school principal's training on teachers' professional development. The finding also agreed with the finding of a study

conducted by Balyera *et al.* (2015), in Istanbul, Turkey on Principals' Roles in Establishing Collaborative Professional Learning Communities at Schools. Results revealed that school principals have significant roles establishing professional learning communities.

Conclusion

Principals in Kebbi State secondary schools demonstrate a divided leadership capacity. They are effectively proficient in administrative and logistical functions related to resource and staff management. However, they exhibit significant limitations in the strategic and formative leadership practices essential for fostering an equitable and collaborative professional environment. This disparity between operational competence and strategic inadequacy ultimately constrains the full potential for enhancing teacher productivity through equitable resource distribution.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- I. The State Ministry of Education should implement mandatory, continuous professional development for principals focused on strategic equity leadership, specifically training them in data-driven resource allocation to support struggling students and in methods for the equitable distribution of experienced teaching staff across classes.
- II. School Principals should proactively develop and implement formal mentorship programs that pair experienced teachers with less-experienced colleagues and establish partnerships with other schools to share best practices and resources.
- III. The state government should allocate specific funds and support for improving the physical working environment for teachers, prioritizing the provision of essential amenities such as functional ventilation, clean toilets, and photocopying facilities to boost morale and productivity.

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