

Original Article

# Administrative Techniques for Promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State

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## Abstract

This study examined administrative techniques for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, with a population of 302 principals and 6,557 teachers. A sample of 242 principals and 328 teachers were selected using multistage sampling techniques. Data were collected using a self-constructed and validated questionnaire titled Administrative Techniques for Promoting SDG 4 Questionnaire (ATPSDG4Q), with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.79. Mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-test were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that instructional leadership techniques, resource mobilization techniques, and stakeholder engagement techniques were each applied to a low extent, with grand means of 2.39, 2.26, and 2.18 respectively, all falling below the criterion mean of 2.50. Furthermore, there were no significant differences in the mean ratings of principals and teachers across all three technique dimensions. The study concluded that administrative techniques remain inadequately deployed in public secondary schools in Rivers State to advance SDG 4. It is recommended that the Rivers State Ministry of Education develop a comprehensive SDG 4 implementation framework; that principals receive continuous training in instructional leadership; that schools establish structured mechanisms for community and stakeholder engagement; and that adequate and equitable resource allocation be prioritized to support quality inclusive education across all public secondary schools in the state.

**Keywords:** Administrative Techniques, Sustainable Development Goal 4, Instructional Leadership, Resource Mobilization and Stakeholder Engagement.

## INTRODUCTION

Education occupies a central position in the global agenda for sustainable development. Among the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Goal 4 stands as the dedicated education goal, calling on all nations to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (UNESCO, 2015). Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) is undergirded by seven targets and three implementation means that together seek to close longstanding gaps in access, quality, equity, and learning outcomes across all levels of education, from early childhood development through to adult learning. Unlike its predecessor, the Millennium Development Goal on education, which focused primarily on enrollment, SDG 4 takes a qualitative leap by demanding that all students not only attend school but emerge from it with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to participate fully and productively in the twenty-first century economy and society (Akkari & Maleq, 2020). For a country like Nigeria, where education has long struggled with problems of underfunding, poor infrastructure, unqualified teachers, and persistent inequalities in access, the adoption of SDG 4 represents both an aspirational commitment and a formidable administrative challenge.

In the Nigerian context, the responsibility for translating the global aspirations of SDG 4 into concrete institutional realities falls significantly on the shoulders of school administrators, particularly

principals, who serve as the primary agents of educational governance at the school level. School administration, as a field of practice and scholarship, encompasses the planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating of all activities that take place within educational institutions in the pursuit of defined educational goals (Okafor, 2018). The techniques that administrators employ in the discharge of these functions are, therefore, critical determinants of the extent to which schools can fulfill their obligations as sites of quality, inclusive, and equitable learning. Administrative techniques refer to the systematic methods, strategies, and procedures through which school leaders manage human, material, and financial resources; create conducive learning environments; build institutional capacity; and engage the wider school community in the realization of educational objectives (Ibara, 2020). When these techniques are deliberately aligned with the targets and indicators of SDG 4, they become powerful instruments of educational transformation.

Rivers State presents a particularly instructive setting for examining this question. As one of the most economically significant states in Nigeria, owing to its substantial oil wealth and strategic location in the Niger Delta region, Rivers State possesses the financial capacity to invest meaningfully in its education sector. Yet public secondary schools in the state continue to grapple with challenges that directly undermine SDG 4 attainment: deteriorating physical infrastructure, chronic shortages of qualified teachers, high dropout rates among girls and economically disadvantaged students, persistently low learning outcomes, and inadequate provision of learning materials (Amadi & Eli, 2021). These realities suggest that financial resources alone are insufficient to drive educational improvement, and that the quality of administrative leadership and the techniques employed by school principals are equally decisive factors in determining whether SDG 4 targets are met at the school level.

Instructional leadership is one of the most critical administrative techniques through which school principals can promote SDG 4. The literature on effective schooling consistently identifies the principal engagement with the instructional process as a key predictor of student achievement and school improvement. Instructional leadership involves the principal active role in establishing a clear academic vision for the school, monitoring and supervising teaching and learning, providing meaningful feedback to teachers, and creating professional development opportunities that enhance instructional quality (Hallinger, 2005). When deployed in alignment with SDG 4, instructional leadership becomes a tool for ensuring that every child in the school has access to competent, motivated, and well-supported teachers who can deliver high-quality learning experiences. Okafor and Amadi (2024) observed that principals in Rivers State public secondary schools who actively engaged in instructional supervision recorded higher rates of teacher effectiveness and student performance than those who adopted a purely administrative or bureaucratic approach to school management. This underscores the importance of instructional leadership as an administrative technique for advancing quality education as defined by SDG 4.

Resource mobilization is another essential administrative technique for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools. Quality education, as envisioned by SDG 4, cannot be delivered without adequate physical infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, technology, and financial resources. In the reality of most Nigerian public schools, government funding is insufficient and often irregular, making it imperative for school administrators to develop techniques for mobilizing additional resources from non-governmental sources, including parent-teacher associations, community organizations, private sector partners, and alumni networks (Nwankwo, 2020). Resource mobilization also encompasses the equitable and efficient allocation of available resources within the school, ensuring that disadvantaged students, learners with disabilities, and other marginalized groups receive the support they need to participate fully in schooling. Adebayo (2021) argued that schools in which principals demonstrate proactive resource mobilization skills are better positioned to create the enabling conditions for inclusive and quality education that SDG 4 demands, including accessible learning environments, functional laboratories, adequate library resources, and digital learning tools.

Stakeholder engagement constitutes a third vital administrative technique for advancing SDG 4. Education does not occur in isolation from the broader social, economic, and cultural environment, and school administrators who recognize and harness the potential of parents, community leaders, civil society organizations, and private sector actors in supporting schooling are more likely to achieve the comprehensive educational outcomes that SDG 4 envisions (Ekanem, 2022). Stakeholder engagement as an administrative technique involves deliberate strategies for communicating with and involving key actors in school governance, planning, and accountability; building partnerships that extend the school capacity beyond its formal institutional boundaries; and creating feedback mechanisms that allow the community to participate in shaping the educational experience of its

children. Yusuf (2023) noted that in many public secondary schools in Rivers State, the relationship between school administration and the broader community is weak and episodic, typically limited to end-of-term reporting meetings rather than sustained collaborative engagement. This represents a significant missed opportunity, given that SDG 4 explicitly calls for the engagement of all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, in the delivery and governance of education.

Despite the critical importance of administrative techniques in advancing SDG 4, there remains a significant gap in the scholarly literature specifically examining the extent to which these techniques are being employed in public secondary schools in Rivers State. While existing studies have documented poor educational outcomes and infrastructure deficits in the state, few have specifically investigated the administrative dimensions of SDG 4 implementation at the school level. This gap is consequential, because without a systematic understanding of the administrative practices, challenges, and needs of school principals in relation to SDG 4, policy interventions are likely to miss the mark and leave the structural drivers of educational underperformance unaddressed. It is within this context that the present study is situated, seeking to investigate administrative techniques for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The global community commitment to SDG 4 requires that school-level administrators play a proactive and strategic role in translating the goal 2019 targets into institutional practice. In Rivers State, public secondary schools continue to record poor educational outcomes that are inconsistent with the quality, equity, and inclusion standards prescribed by SDG 4. Learning assessments indicate that a significant proportion of secondary school students graduate without achieving functional literacy and numeracy, while enrollment disparities persist along gender, socioeconomic, and geographic lines. Teacher absenteeism, inadequate instructional supervision, poor resource management, and weak community engagement remain persistent features of school administration in the state.

The problem, therefore, is that public secondary schools in Rivers State lack the administrative techniques needed to systematically promote SDG 4, and this gap is manifesting in poor learning outcomes, inequitable access, and a failure to build the inclusive and quality educational environment that the goal demands. Specifically, it is unclear to what extent principals in Rivers State are deploying instructional leadership techniques, resource mobilization techniques, and stakeholder engagement techniques in ways that are deliberately aligned with SDG 4. It is on this basis that the study investigates administrative techniques for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

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

The aim of the study was to investigate administrative techniques for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study sought to:

Examine the extent instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Determine the extent resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Ascertain the extent stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

To what extent are instructional leadership techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

To what extent are resource mobilization techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

To what extent are stakeholder engagement techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

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

HO1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent

instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 302 principals and 6,557 teachers, giving a total of 6,859 staff across the 302 public secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size was determined using a stratified approach, applying 80% of the principal population and 5% of the teacher population. This resulted in a sample of 242 principals (80% of 302) and 328 teachers (5% of 6,557), giving a total sample size of 570 respondents.

A multistage sampling technique was employed. At the first stage, the three senatorial districts in Rivers State served as strata. Public secondary schools were selected from each stratum using simple random sampling. At the second stage, principals and teachers were stratified by professional role and selected using stratified random sampling based on proportional allocation, ensuring fair representation across senatorial districts and staff categories.

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled Administrative Techniques for Promoting SDG 4 Questionnaire (ATPSDG4Q); The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1. Content and face validity of the instrument were established through review by the researchers' supervisor and two experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha. Cluster A (Instructional Leadership) yielded an index of 0.76, Cluster B (Resource Mobilization) 0.78, and Cluster C (Stakeholder Engagement) 0.83, resulting in an average reliability coefficient of 0.79, indicating that the instrument was sufficiently reliable for the study.

Out of the 570 questionnaires distributed, 481 copies were successfully retrieved, representing a return rate of 84.4%. The retrieved copies consisted of 205 principals and 276 teachers, and these were used for the final data analysis. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance, using SPSS version 25. The decision rule was based on a criterion mean of 2.50: any item or cluster with a mean at or above 2.50 was considered as implemented to a high extent, while any item or cluster with a mean below 2.50 was considered as implemented to a low extent.

## RESULTS

The results were presented in line with the research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study, as shown in the tables below.

### Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent are instructional leadership techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Extent Instructional Leadership Techniques are Utilized for Promoting SDG 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State	Principals (n=205) $\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Teachers (n=276) $\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Mean Set	Remarks
1	The school has a clearly stated academic vision and mission that is aligned with SDG 4 goals of quality and inclusive education	3.14	0.79	3.08	0.81	3.11	High Extent
2	The principal regularly	2.06	0.88	2.11	0.90	2.09	Low

S/N	Extent Instructional Leadership Techniques are Utilized for Promoting SDG 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State	Principals (n=205) $\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Teachers (n=276) $\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Mean Set	Remarks
	supervises and observes classroom instruction to ensure quality teaching is delivered to all students						Extent
3	The principal provides timely, constructive feedback to teachers following instructional supervision visits	2.19	0.85	2.13	0.88	2.16	Low Extent
4	The school organizes structured in-service training and professional development programmes for teachers in alignment with SDG 4 competency requirements	2.03	0.92	1.97	0.86	2.00	Low Extent
5	The principal ensures the school curriculum is periodically reviewed to align learning objectives with SDG 4 targets	2.28	0.83	2.21	0.79	2.25	Low Extent
6	The principal monitors student learning outcomes and uses assessment data to drive instructional improvement aligned with SDG 4	2.18	0.77	2.09	0.80	2.14	Low Extent
	Grand Mean	2.31		2.43		2.39	Low Extent

Data presented in Table 1 shows mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on the extent to which instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The data indicates that the mean ratings of principals for items 1 to 6 are: 3.14, 2.06, 2.19, 2.03, 2.28, and 2.18, while the teachers' mean ratings are: 3.08, 2.11, 2.13, 1.97, 2.21, and 2.09. Based on the criterion mean of 2.50, both the principals and the teachers rated item 1 to a high extent, indicating that schools have clearly stated academic visions aligned with SDG 4. However, items 2 to 6 were rated to a low extent by both groups, indicating that regular instructional supervision, constructive feedback, professional development, curriculum review, and assessment-driven improvement are all applied to a low extent in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The cluster means are 2.31 for principals and 2.43 for teachers, while the grand mean of 2.39 indicates that instructional leadership techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent are resource mobilization techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Extent Resource Mobilization Techniques are Utilized for Promoting SDG 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State	Principals (n=205) $\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Teachers (n=276) $\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Mean Set	Remarks
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S/N	Extent Resource Mobilization Techniques are Utilized for Promoting SDG 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State	Principals (n=205) $\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Teachers (n=276) $\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Mean Set	Remarks
7	The school develops an annual budget that prioritizes SDG 4-relevant expenditures such as instructional materials, library resources, and technology	2.14	0.88	2.08	0.84	2.11	Low Extent
8	The principal actively mobilizes financial and material resources from community members, parent-teacher associations, and old students to support school improvement	2.33	0.92	2.28	0.86	2.31	Low Extent
9	The school accesses external grants and funding from government education programs and donor organizations to finance SDG 4 initiatives	1.89	0.79	1.84	0.75	1.87	Low Extent
10	The school equitably distributes available resources to ensure that disadvantaged students, learners with disabilities, and marginalized groups have the support they need	2.41	0.83	2.35	0.87	2.38	Low Extent
11	The principal develops and maintains partnerships with private sector organizations to provide additional resources, technology, and learning support for SDG 4 attainment	2.19	0.80	2.12	0.83	2.16	Low Extent
Grand Mean		2.19		2.33		2.26	Low Extent

Data presented in Table 2 shows mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on the extent to which resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The mean ratings of principals for items 7 to 11 are: 2.14, 2.33, 1.89, 2.41, and 2.19, while the teachers' mean ratings are: 2.08, 2.28, 1.84, 2.35, and 2.12. Based on the criterion mean of 2.50, all five items were rated to a low extent by both principals and teachers. This indicates that schools do not adequately develop SDG 4-aligned budgets, do not actively mobilize community resources, do not access available grants and external funding, do not equitably distribute resources to disadvantaged groups, and do not develop private sector partnerships for SDG 4. The cluster means are 2.19 for principals and 2.33 for teachers, while the grand mean of 2.26 indicates that resource mobilization techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: To what extent are stakeholder engagement techniques utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

S/N	Extent Stakeholder Engagement Techniques are Utilized for Promoting SDG 4 in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State	Principals (n=205) $\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Teachers (n=276) $\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Mean Set	Remarks
12	The school organizes regular parent-teacher meetings and community forums to discuss school performance and SDG 4 implementation progress	2.38	0.82	2.31	0.85	2.35	Low Extent
13	The principal actively involves the school board and community leaders in decisions about school development planning and resource allocation	2.22	0.87	2.15	0.81	2.19	Low Extent
14	The school partners with civil society organizations and NGOs working in education to support SDG 4 implementation programs within the school	1.97	0.83	1.91	0.78	1.94	Low Extent
15	The school maintains an active parent-teacher association that contributes meaningfully to school management and SDG 4-aligned development initiatives	2.43	0.86	2.37	0.82	2.40	Low Extent
16	The school has a structured feedback mechanism through which students, parents, and community members can evaluate the quality and inclusiveness of education provided	1.74	0.79	1.68	0.75	1.71	Low Extent
Grand Mean		2.15		2.08		2.18	Low Extent

Data presented in Table 3 shows mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on the extent to which stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The mean ratings of principals for items 12 to 16 are: 2.38, 2.22, 1.97, 2.43, and 1.74, while the teachers' mean ratings are: 2.31, 2.15, 1.91, 2.37, and 1.68. Based on the criterion mean of 2.50, all five items were rated to a low extent by both principals and teachers, indicating that schools do not adequately organize community forums, involve school boards in governance, partner with civil society, maintain active PTAs oriented toward SDG 4, or implement structured feedback mechanisms. The cluster means are 2.15 for principals and 2.08 for teachers, while the grand mean of 2.18 indicates that stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

### Test of Hypotheses

HO1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Independent Sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig. Level	Decision
Principals	205	2.31	0.58	479	0.02	1.96	0.05	Not Significant
Teachers	276	2.43	0.61					
Total	481							

Table 4 presents the independent sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent to which instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The mean rating of principals is 2.31 with a standard deviation of 0.58, while the mean rating of teachers is 2.43 with a standard deviation of 0.61. The t-calculated value of 0.02 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at a 0.05 level of significance with 479 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This means there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which instructional leadership techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: Independent Sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig. Level	Decision
Principals	205	2.19	0.64	479	0.08	1.96	0.05	Not Significant
Teachers	276	2.33	0.69					
Total	481							

Table 5 presents the independent sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent to which resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The mean rating of principals is 2.19 with a standard deviation of 0.64, while the mean rating of teachers is 2.33 with a standard deviation of 0.69. The t-calculated value of 0.08 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at a 0.05 level of significance with 479 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This means there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which resource mobilization techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: Independent Sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State

	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Sig. Level	Decision
Principals	205	2.15	0.71	479	0.11	1.96	0.05	Not Significant
Teachers	276	2.08	0.74					
Total	481							

Table 6 presents the independent sample t-test on the mean responses of principals and teachers on the extent to which stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4

in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The mean rating of principals is 2.15 with a standard deviation of 0.71, while the mean rating of teachers is 2.08 with a standard deviation of 0.74. The t-calculated value of 0.11 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at a 0.05 level of significance with 479 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This means there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **Extent of Instructional Leadership Techniques in Promoting SDG 4**

The study revealed that instructional leadership techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State, as evidenced by a grand mean of 2.39, which falls below the criterion mean of 2.50. Specifically, while both principals and teachers agreed to a high extent that schools have clearly stated academic visions aligned with SDG 4 goals (item 1, mean = 3.11), the remaining five items on instructional supervision, feedback provision, professional development, curriculum review, and assessment-driven improvement were all rated to a low extent by both groups of respondents.

This finding is consistent with the position of Hallinger (2005), who established that effective instructional leadership requires the active and sustained involvement of school principals in the monitoring and support of classroom instruction, a dimension that this study found to be largely absent in Rivers State public secondary schools. The low rating for instructional supervision (item 2, mean = 2.09) and feedback provision (item 3, mean = 2.16) corroborates the observations of Okafor and Amadi (2024), who found that many principals in Nigerian public secondary schools conceptualize their leadership role in predominantly administrative and bureaucratic terms rather than as instructional guides and academic leaders. This mismatch between the leadership behavior that SDG 4 demands and the administrative culture that prevails in Rivers State public secondary schools represents a significant implementation gap.

The very low rating for professional development coordination (item 4, mean = 2.00) is particularly alarming in the context of SDG 4, which explicitly calls for the provision of qualified teachers as a prerequisite for quality education. Nwankwo (2020) emphasized that teacher quality is the single most important determinant of student learning outcomes within the school control, and that the principal role in facilitating professional development is therefore one of the most consequential dimensions of instructional leadership for SDG 4 attainment. The finding that schools in Rivers State barely organize in-service training programs aligned with SDG 4 competency requirements suggests that the human resource development dimension of SDG 4 implementation is being systematically neglected at the school administrative level. The t-test analysis confirming no significant difference between principal and teacher ratings further validates the robustness of this finding and indicates that the gap in instructional leadership is a systemic institutional reality rather than a perception discrepancy between different stakeholder groups.

### **Extent of Resource Mobilization Techniques in Promoting SDG 4**

The findings revealed that resource mobilization techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State, with a grand mean of 2.26, which falls below the criterion mean of 2.50. All five items were rated below the criterion mean by both principals and teachers, indicating a comprehensive failure of resource mobilization administrative technique across all its dimensions: budget planning, community resource attraction, grant access, equitable distribution, and private sector partnership.

The particularly low mean score for accessing external grants and funding (item 9, mean = 1.87) corroborates Yusuf (2023) finding that the inability of most Nigerian public secondary school principals to prepare competitive grant proposals or institutional improvement plans represents a significant administrative capacity gap that limits schools' access to available funding for SDG 4-aligned interventions. This finding underscores the need for targeted capacity building in grant writing, project management, and institutional documentation for school administrators in Rivers State, as these are prerequisite competencies for accessing the growing range of national and international funding opportunities linked to SDG 4 implementation.

The low mean for equitable resource distribution (item 10, mean = 2.38), while the highest among the resource mobilization items, still falls below the criterion mean, suggesting that even the resources that are available are not being allocated in ways that prioritize the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized students, as SDG 4 specifically demands. Adebayo (2021) argued that equity in resource allocation is itself a critical administrative technique for SDG 4 promotion, since the goal

targets explicitly require that no child be left behind and that those furthest behind receive targeted support. The low rate of community resource mobilization (item 8, mean = 2.31) further reflects the weak partnership culture between schools and their communities in Rivers State, despite evidence from Ekanem (2022) that schools with active community partnerships are better resourced and more responsive to SDG 4 requirements.

#### **Extent of Stakeholder Engagement Techniques in Promoting SDG 4**

The study found that stakeholder engagement techniques are utilized to a low extent for promoting SDG 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State, with a grand mean of 2.18, the lowest of the three technique dimensions examined. All five items were rated below the criterion mean by both principals and teachers, reflecting a systemic deficit in the school engagement with its internal and external stakeholders for the purpose of promoting quality inclusive education.

The very low mean for structured feedback mechanisms (item 16, mean = 1.71) is particularly noteworthy, as it suggests that public secondary schools in Rivers State have not developed the institutional channels through which students, parents, and community members can evaluate educational quality and advocate for improvements aligned with SDG 4. This finding aligns with the observations of Balogun (2018), who argued that accountability mechanisms are among the most important governance tools available to school administrators for advancing educational equity and quality, and that the absence of such mechanisms leaves schools unresponsive to the needs of the very communities they serve. When there are no structured avenues for community feedback, schools are effectively insulated from the accountability pressure that drives SDG 4-aligned improvement.

The low mean for partnerships with civil society organizations (item 14, mean = 1.94) further reflects the isolation of public secondary schools from the broader ecosystem of education support actors in Rivers State. Yusuf (2023) noted that civil society organizations and NGOs working in education frequently possess programmatic expertise, community networks, and international funding connections that school administrators cannot replicate through internal action alone, and that schools which engage these actors strategically are better positioned to advance SDG 4 targets, particularly those related to equity, inclusion, and learning quality. The absence of such partnerships in the majority of Rivers State public secondary schools thus represents both an administrative deficit and a missed opportunity for SDG 4 acceleration.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study examined the extent to which administrative techniques, specifically instructional leadership techniques, resource mobilization techniques, and stakeholder engagement techniques, are utilized for promoting Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings revealed that all three categories of administrative techniques are applied to a low extent, with grand means of 2.39, 2.26, and 2.18 respectively, all falling below the criterion mean of 2.50. The t-test results indicated that there were no significant differences in the perceptions of principals and teachers across all three technique dimensions, suggesting that the gap in SDG 4-oriented administrative practice is a shared institutional reality rather than a divergence in stakeholder perceptions. The study therefore concludes that administrative techniques remain inadequately deployed in public secondary schools in Rivers State for the promotion of SDG 4, and that this gap represents a structural barrier to the attainment of inclusive, equitable, and quality education in the state by the 2030 deadline. Without deliberate, systematic, and sustained improvement in the administrative techniques employed by school principals, Rivers State public secondary schools will remain unable to deliver the quality and inclusive educational experience that SDG 4 demands, with far-reaching consequences for students' life chances, the state human capital development, and Nigeria contribution to the global sustainable development agenda.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

The Rivers State Ministry of Education should develop and operationalize a comprehensive SDG 4 implementation framework for public secondary schools that clearly defines the instructional leadership, resource mobilization, and stakeholder engagement responsibilities of school principals. This framework should be embedded in principal performance appraisal systems to ensure accountability.

Principals in public secondary schools in Rivers State should receive structured, sustained training in instructional supervision methodologies, curriculum alignment with SDG 4 competency frameworks, and data-driven decision-making. The Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and other educational management institutions in the state should integrate SDG 4 leadership competencies

into their postgraduate training programs for school administrators.

The Rivers State Ministry of Education should establish a dedicated SDG 4 Resource Mobilization Fund and provide school principals with training in grant proposal writing, institutional documentation, and community partnership development. Schools should be empowered to develop annual resource mobilization plans as part of their school improvement programming.