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Institutional Barriers to Implementing Participatory and Transformational Leadership in Colleges of Education

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of institutional barriers on the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education in Nigeria, with a focus on leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement. Guided by two research questions and two hypotheses, the study employed a descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire with 27 items across three sections was administered to staff members in both government and private Colleges of Education in South-West Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the chi-square test of independence.

Findings revealed that while staff generally perceived leadership practices to be inclusive and transformational in nature, several institutional barriers, such as bureaucratic delays, centralization of authority, and poor communication were moderately acknowledged. However, the chi-square analyses showed no statistically significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of leadership styles, nor between institutional barriers and leadership effectiveness. This implies that leadership outcomes are more strongly influenced by individual competencies than by structural conditions.

The study concluded that although institutional challenges exist, they do not significantly hinder leadership implementation and stakeholder engagement in Colleges of Education. It recommends improved leadership training, policy reform, and inclusive decision-making structures to enhance leadership effectiveness. Suggestions were also made for future research to expand on contextual and longitudinal aspects of leadership practices in Nigerian higher education.

Keywords

Barriers, Colleges, Institutional, Leadership, Participatory, Transformational, South-West, Nigeria

Introduction

Leadership within educational institutions plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational effectiveness, academic quality, and stakeholder engagement. Participatory and transformational leadership styles have gained prominence as effective approaches that foster collaboration, innovation, and positive organizational change (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

Participatory leadership emphasizes shared decision-making, collective responsibility, and active involvement of all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and administrative staff (Marks & Printy, 2003). Similarly, transformational leadership focuses on inspiring followers, nurturing a shared vision, and fostering professional growth and motivation (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985).

Despite the theoretical and empirical support for these leadership models, their implementation within Colleges of Education particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria faces significant institutional barriers. These may include rigid administrative structures, centralized decision-making processes, lack of leadership training, insufficient autonomy, and cultural norms that discourage open dialogue and power-sharing (Oduro, 2004; Bush & Glover, 2014). In many cases, leadership in Colleges of Education remains hierarchical and authoritarian, limiting the potential for inclusive governance and transformational change (Adepoju & Oyewole, 2022).

Furthermore, policy and structural constraints—such as bureaucratic bottlenecks, inadequate funding, and limited professional development opportunities—often hinder leaders from adopting more democratic and visionary leadership styles (Ololube, 2013; Ekundayo & Adedokun, 2009). These barriers not only affect leadership performance but also impede institutional effectiveness, staff morale, and student outcomes. Consequently, examining the institutional factors that restrict the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership is essential for improving educational leadership practices and fostering sustainable reform in the Colleges of Education sector.

Statement of the Problem

Although participatory and transformational leadership styles are widely recognized as effective for improving institutional performance, fostering collaboration, and promoting innovation, their practical implementation in many Colleges of Education remains limited. In theory, these leadership approaches support inclusive decision making, empower staff and students, and drive positive organizational change (Adepoju, 2025).

However, in reality, several institutional constraints, such as centralized authority structures, lack of leadership autonomy, inadequate training opportunities, and entrenched bureaucratic cultures, continue to hinder their adoption in Nigerian Colleges of Education.

As a result, the persistent reliance on hierarchical leadership models undermines staff morale, limits innovation, and hampers institutional growth. This disconnect between leadership theory and practice raises critical questions: Why are participatory and transformational leadership models not widely implemented despite their proven benefits? What institutional barriers prevent their adoption in Colleges of Education? Without a clear understanding of these challenges, efforts to reform educational leadership may remain superficial and ineffective (Adepoju & Oyewole, 2022). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the institutional factors that constrain the effective implementation of participatory and transformational leadership in Colleges of Education, particularly within the South-West Nigerian context.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the institutional barriers that hinder the effective implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education, with a specific focus in the South-West Nigerian context. The study seeks to explore how organizational structures, administrative policies, leadership capacity, and cultural dynamics within these institutions affect the adoption of inclusive and visionary leadership practices. By identifying and analyzing these barriers, the study aims to provide insights that can inform policy reforms, improve leadership practices, and promote a more collaborative and transformational approach to educational leadership in Colleges of Education.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it will address a critical gap between leadership theory and practice in the context of Colleges of Education. While participatory and transformational leadership styles are globally recognized as essential for improving institutional effectiveness and promoting inclusive governance, many educational institutions, especially in Nigeria, continue to operate under rigid and hierarchical leadership systems.

The findings of this study will be valuable to educational administrators and policymakers who are responsible for shaping leadership development programs and institutional policies. This, in turn, will enhance decision-making, boost staff motivation, and improve institutional performance.

Furthermore, the study will contribute to the academic body of knowledge on educational leadership in developing countries. Most of the existing literature on transformational and participatory leadership originates from Western contexts, which may not fully capture the challenges faced in Nigerian Colleges of Education.

Lastly, the study will benefit students, lecturers, and other stakeholders in Colleges of Education by promoting leadership practices that are inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the academic community.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose and relative significance of the study, the following

question was adopted to guide the research:

- What institutional factors hinder the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education?
- How do these institutional barriers affect leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement within Colleges of Education?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education.

H₀₂: Institutional barriers do not significantly affect leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement 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 (Adepoju, 2025). Among the most influential are Participatory Leadership Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory, all of which emphasize the importance of individual characteristics and situational factors in effective leadership.

Participatory Leadership Theory

Participatory Leadership Theory emphasizes collaborative decision-making processes where leaders actively involve team members in setting goals, solving problems, and implementing policies. This leadership style is rooted in democratic principles, valuing the input of subordinates as essential to organizational success. It contrasts with autocratic leadership models by promoting inclusiveness, shared responsibility, and mutual respect (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Participatory leadership fosters a work environment where individuals feel empowered and engaged, thereby increasing motivation, innovation, and morale within institutions. In educational settings, this theory is particularly relevant, as it supports the creation of a culture where teachers, staff, and students contribute meaningfully to school improvement initiatives.

A key strength of participatory leadership lies in its ability to harness the diverse skills, experiences, and perspectives of group members. According to Yukl (2013), leaders who adopt participatory approaches not only increase the commitment of their followers but also improve the quality of decisions by incorporating varied viewpoints. This model is especially effective in complex environments, such as colleges of education, where multiple stakeholders are involved in the governance process. It encourages open dialogue and critical thinking, enabling institutions to respond adaptively to change, resolve conflicts collaboratively, and implement reforms more successfully. Moreover,

participatory leadership aligns well with the values of democratic education, which seeks to prepare students for active citizenship through modeling inclusive and accountable leadership.

Despite its many advantages, participatory leadership also presents challenges. It can be time-consuming, as consensus-building often requires extended discussions and deliberations. Additionally, not all organizational cultures or leaders are well-suited to this style, particularly where there is resistance to power-sharing or where quick decision-making is essential. Nonetheless, research has shown that when properly implemented, participatory leadership significantly enhances job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall performance (Somech, 2005; Adepoju, 2025). In the context of colleges of education, where leadership must balance administrative efficiency with pedagogical vision, participatory leadership offers a viable model for fostering institutional growth and stakeholder engagement.

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.

Opposing Style to Transformational Leadership

Transactional Leadership represents a fundamentally different approach from Transformational Leadership. While transformational leaders inspire, innovate, and seek long-term growth and development through vision and motivation, transactional leaders focus on routine, structure, and performance based on clearly defined roles and rewards.

Transactional leadership is rooted in a system of exchange or “transaction” leaders give rewards (such as praise, promotion, or compensation) in exchange for performance, and punish non-performance through sanctions or corrective feedback (Bass, 1985). This style emphasizes maintaining the status quo, achieving short-term goals, and enforcing rules and procedures. There is little emphasis on emotional engagement or personal development, which are central to transformational leadership.

In educational settings, transactional leadership may lead to efficiency in administrative tasks but often lacks the inspirational and adaptive elements required to foster innovation, collaboration, or holistic school improvement. It is better suited to contexts where stability, routine, and compliance are paramount, but may fall short in driving educational reform or empowering staff and students.

Opposing Style to Participatory Leadership

Autocratic Leadership stands in direct contrast to Participatory Leadership. While participatory leaders promote inclusion, dialogue, and shared decision-making, autocratic leaders operate through centralized authority and unilateral decision-making.

In this style, the leader maintains strict control over all decisions and expects compliance without input from subordinates. Subordinates are rarely consulted, and feedback or dissent may be discouraged (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). This can result in fast decision-making and tight control, which might be useful during crises or in highly hierarchical organizations.

However, in educational environments like colleges of education, autocratic leadership often undermines morale, reduces trust, and stifles creativity. Teachers and staff may feel disempowered or disconnected from institutional goals. In contrast, participatory leadership has been shown to improve stakeholder engagement, increase transparency, and enhance organizational commitment (Somech, 2005).

Table 1: Contrasting Styles

Feature	Transformational	Transactional	Participatory	Autocratic
Decision-making	Visionary, inclusive	Rule-based, leader-controlled	Collaborative, team-oriented	Solely by leader
Motivation	Intrinsic, inspirational	Extrinsic, reward/punishment	Empowerment, ownership	Fear of punishment, compliance
Focus	Long-term growth, change	Short-term tasks, stability	Democratic input, shared goals	Efficiency, obedience
Follower Engagement	High	Moderate to low	High	Low
Suitability in Education	Ideal for reform & change	Effective for admin tasks	Ideal for inclusive planning	Risk of disengagement

Implications for Colleges of Education

The application of leadership theories, particularly Participatory and Transformational Leadership, has significant implications for the administration, culture, and academic performance of colleges of education. These theories offer frameworks that promote inclusive governance, staff empowerment, and institutional transformation, elements that are increasingly vital in contemporary educational settings facing the demands of reform, accountability, and innovation.

Firstly, Participatory Leadership supports the development of a collaborative institutional culture where decision-making is shared among administrators, faculty, and sometimes even students. This fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among staff, which can enhance commitment to institutional goals and lead to more sustainable improvements in teaching and learning.

Secondly, Transformational Leadership is especially relevant in times of curriculum reforms, accreditation processes, and pedagogical innovation. Leaders who exhibit transformational qualities, such as vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, can effectively motivate academic staff to embrace innovation, improve student outcomes, and pursue professional development. This type of leadership helps create a vision-driven environment where both staff and students strive for excellence.

Conversely, reliance on Transactional or Autocratic Leadership styles in colleges of education may hinder progress and innovation. While transactional leadership may maintain order and accountability in the short term, its limited focus on rewards and sanctions can suppress creativity and intrinsic motivation.

Institutional leaders should therefore be trained and encouraged to adopt leadership styles that foster engagement, shared vision, and continuous improvement in the education sector.

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 investigate the institutional factors that constrain the effective implementation of participatory and transformational leadership in Colleges of Education, particularly within the South-West Nigerian, thus making it a descriptive study

Population

The study's target populations include the 13,394 stakeholders that the NCCE identified, as well as the heads of departments, academic and non-academic staff, and the provosts of the colleges of education in South-West Nigeria.

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 regions (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-five staff each were randomly selected from each of the sampled colleges of Education in each state. Altogether, a total of two hundred staff were sampled for this study.

Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect data for this study is a questionnaire titled, "Institutional Barriers to Implementing Participatory and Transformational Leadership in Colleges of Education". 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 Participatory and Transformational Leadership Practices. Section C is questions on Institutional Barriers to Leadership Implementation.

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 two (2) 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 0.76 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 staff in each school. To give room for proper attention on items in the questionnaire, three weeks were allowed for their completion by the staff of the college. All the administered questionnaires were retrieved at the end. To get the staff's opinions, their responses were collected and completed into tables, frequency, percentages, the mean, and standard deviation to investigate Institutional Barriers to Implementing Participatory and Transformational Leadership 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	21-30	28	14.0
	31-40	62	31.0
	41-50	71	35.5
	51 Above	39	19.5
Gender	Male	113	56.5
	Female	87	43.5
Marital Status	Single	73	36.5
	Married	127	63.5
Staff Status	Academic Staff	71	35.5
	Non Academic	129	64.5
School Status	Federal	50	25.0
	State	50	25.0
	Private	100	50.0

Table 2 provides critical insight into the composition of staff in the Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. The age distribution reveals that a significant proportion of the staff (14.0%) are between 21 and 30 years, while 31.0% fall within the 31–40 years age bracket, 35.5% are between 41-50 years and only 19.5% are above 50 years.

In terms of gender, there is fair representation, as 56.5% are male and 43.5% are female staff. This gender distribution suggests a fair level of gender inclusivity across the surveyed institutions, which is critical for ensuring equity and promoting inclusive leadership practices.

The marital status of respondents shows that 36.5% are single, while 63.5% are married. Regarding the staff status, 35.5% of the respondents are academic staff, and 64.5% are non-academic staff since they represent the larger workforce. This distribution indicates that the data reflects perspectives across all the teaching and non-teaching staff, thereby ensuring that the findings of the study are representative of the entire staff 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: Participatory and Transformational Leadership Practices

Statement Items	Responses					Likert Conversion					Mean Weight	Decision
	SA	A	D	SD	Total	4	3	2	1	Total		
My institution involves staff in key decision-making processes	79	54	35	32	200	316	162	70	32	580	2.90	A
Leadership in my college promotes teamwork and shared responsibilities.	103	71	12	14	200	412	213	24	14	663	3.32	A
There is clear communication between leadership and all stakeholders	81	96	14	09	200	324	288	28	09	649	3.29	A
My college leadership motivates staff toward a shared vision	64	101	06	29	200	256	303	12	29	600	3.00	A
Leaders in my college serve as role models for innovation and change.	77	85	21	17	200	308	255	42	17	622	3.11	A
Feedback from students and staff is considered in decision-making.	109	88	01	02	200	436	264	02	02	704	3.52	A
My institution provides opportunities for leadership training and mentoring.	89	63	37	11	200	356	189	74	11	630	3.18	A
Transformational leaders are recognized and encouraged in my college.	72	89	10	29	200	288	267	20	29	604	3.02	A
Staff are encouraged to initiate and lead new ideas or projects.	59	64	41	36	200	236	192	82	36	546	2.73	A
Leadership in the college creates a sense of belonging and inclusion.	56	61	45	38	200	224	183	90	38	535	2.68	A
GMWV											3.07	

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 the staff is positive, as indicated by the GMWV of 3.07.

Answer to Question

The analysis of table 3 reveals staff responses on participatory and transformational leadership practices in Colleges of Education revealed a Grand Mean Weighted Value (GMWV) of 3.07, indicating a generally positive perception of these

leadership styles among respondents. Items such as “Feedback from students and staff is considered in decision-making” (mean = 3.52) and “Leadership in my college promotes teamwork and shared responsibilities” (mean = 3.32) scored highly, suggesting that some institutions are making deliberate efforts to embrace inclusive and visionary leadership approaches. These findings are consistent with the work of Bass and Riggio (2006), who emphasized that transformational leaders inspire collective action and foster an environment of trust and collaboration. Similarly, Marks and Printy (2003) noted that participatory leadership enhances institutional effectiveness by involving stakeholders in governance processes.

However, some items—such as “Staff are encouraged to initiate and lead new ideas or projects” (mean = 2.73) and “Leadership in the college creates a sense of belonging and inclusion” (mean = 2.68)—received relatively lower mean scores. This suggests that institutional barriers still exist, particularly in the areas of empowerment, innovation, and inclusiveness. These limitations align with the findings of Bush and Glover (2014), who identified bureaucratic constraints and lack of leadership autonomy as key challenges in implementing modern leadership models in educational settings. Therefore, while there is evidence of progress toward participatory and transformational leadership practices in some Colleges of Education, significant structural and cultural barriers remain that hinder full implementation. Addressing these issues is essential for creating leadership environments that are truly collaborative, innovative, and impactful.

Table 4: Institutional Barriers to Leadership Implementation

Statement Items	Responses					Likert Conversion					Mean Weight	Decision
	SA	A	D	SD	Total	4	3	2	1	Total		
The college's administrative structure limits participatory leadership.	60	39	64	37	200	240	117	128	37	522	2.61	A
There is excessive centralization of authority in my institution.	83	71	19	27	200	332	213	38	27	610	3.05	A
Resistance to change hinders leadership innovation.	63	77	34	26	200	252	231	68	26	577	2.89	A
Cultural norms discourage inclusive decision-making.	41	80	26	53	200	164	240	52	53	509	2.54	A
There is a lack of leadership development programs for staff.	58	61	41	40	200	232	183	82	40	537	2.69	A
Leaders are often not empowered to make independent decisions	34	66	69	31	200	136	198	138	31	503	2.52	A
Limited financial resources restrict leadership initiatives.	101	78	12	09	200	404	234	24	09	671	3.36	A

Poor communication channels hinder participatory practices.	112	74	05	09	200	448	222	10	09	689	3.45	A
Leadership roles are often politically influenced.	67	99	06	28	200	268	297	12	28	605	3.03	A
Bureaucratic processes delay leadership decisions.	101	87	11	01	200	404	261	22	01	688	3.44	A
Staff are not encouraged to contribute to leadership activities.	43	39	66	52	200	172	117	132	52	473	2.37	R
Leadership decisions are made without adequate consultation.	54	58	51	37	200	216	174	102	37	529	2.65	A
GMWV											2.88	

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 the staff is positive, as indicated by the GMWV of 2.88

Answer to Question

The analysis of table 4 reveals staff responses on institutional barriers to leadership implementation in Colleges of Education yielded a Grand Mean Weighted Value (GMWV) of 2.88, indicating that respondents perceive a moderate to high level of barriers affecting the adoption of participatory and transformational leadership styles. Notably, items such as "Poor communication channels hinder participatory practices" (mean = 3.45), "Limited financial resources restrict leadership initiatives" (mean = 3.36), and "Bureaucratic processes delay leadership decisions" (mean = 3.44) were among the highest-rated barriers. These results are consistent with the findings of Ololube (2013) and Bush and Glover (2014), who noted that limited autonomy, inadequate funding, and entrenched bureaucratic cultures significantly impede innovative leadership in educational institutions, particularly in developing countries.

In contrast, items such as "Staff are not encouraged to contribute to leadership activities" (mean = 2.37) and "Cultural norms discourage inclusive decision-making" (mean = 2.54) suggest that some socio-cultural and organizational factors also contribute to the leadership challenges faced. These results reflect the assertions of Oduro (2004) and Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), who emphasized that leadership effectiveness is not only a function of structural support but also of cultural openness to collaboration and distributed authority. Overall, the findings affirm that although some Colleges of Education may be making efforts to embrace modern leadership practices, systemic institutional barriers remain prevalent, limiting their full implementation and impact. Addressing these barriers is essential for fostering leadership styles that are responsive, inclusive, and transformational.

Text of Hypotheses

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education.

Table 4: X2- test showing staff perception on participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education.

Perception	Government Colleges		Private Colleges	
	Observed mean	Expected mean	Observed mean	Expected mean
My institution involves staff in key decision-making processes	3.12	2.5	2.77	2.5
Leadership in my college				

promotes teamwork and shared responsibilities.	2.68	2.5	3.06	2.5
There is clear communication between leadership and all stakeholders	3.13	2.5	3.01	2.5
My college leadership motivates staff toward a shared vision	2.73	2.5	2.92	2.5
Leaders in my college serve as role models for innovation and change.	2.69	2.5	3.12	2.5
Feedback from students and staff is considered in decision-making.	3.20	2.5	3.41	2.5
My institution provides opportunities for leadership training and mentoring.	2.87	2.5	2.72	2.5
Transformational leaders are recognized and encouraged in my college.	2.59	2.5	3.09	2.5
Staff are encouraged to initiate and lead new ideas or projects.	2.66	2.5	2.51	2.5
Leadership in the college creates a sense of belonging and inclusion.	2.53	2.5	2.55	2.5

Using the chi-square statistic $X^2 = \sum \frac{(E_i - O_i)^2}{E_i} = 1.6776$

Table 5: Table to Test Hypothesis 1

Grouping	N	d.f	X ² (calculated)	X ² (tabulated)	Decision
Government	100	9	1.6776	16.919	Ho Accepted
Private	100				

The Chi-square test was conducted to examine whether there is a significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education. With 9 degrees of freedom, the calculated Chi-square value ($X^2 = 1.6776$) was less than the tabulated Chi-square value at the 0.05 level of significance ($X^2 = 16.919$). Therefore, the result is not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that it fails to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). There is no significant relationship between

institutional factors and the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education.

Hypothesis 2

Ho2. Institutional barriers do not significantly affect leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement in Colleges of Education.

Table 6: X2-test showing the view of staff in government and private colleges of education on leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement in Colleges of Education.

Items	Government Colleges		Private Colleges	
	Observed mean	Expected mean	Observed mean	Expected mean
The college's administrative structure limits participatory leadership.	2.51	2.5	2.53	2.5
There is excessive centralization of authority in my institution.	2.89	2.5	2.66	2.5
Resistance to change hinders leadership innovation.	2.57	2.5	2.75	2.5
Cultural norms discourage inclusive decision-making.	2.53	2.5	2.59	2.5
There is a lack of leadership development programs for staff.	2.59	2.5	2.73	2.5
Leaders are often not empowered to make independent decisions	2.52	2.5	2.90	2.5
Limited financial resources restrict leadership initiatives	3.21	2.5	2.89	2.5
Poor communication channels hinder participatory practices.	3.14	2.5	3.26	2.5
Leadership roles are often politically influenced.	2.98	2.5	2.81	2.5
Bureaucratic processes delay leadership decisions	3.44	2.5	2.75	2.5
Staff are not encouraged				

to contribute to leadership activities. 2.31 2.5 2.48 2.5

Leadership decisions are made without adequate consultation. 2.59 2.5 2.72 2.5

Using the chi-square statistic $X^2 = \frac{\sum (E_i - O_i)^2}{E_i} = 1.4708$

Table 7: Table to Test Hypothesis 2

Grouping	N	d.f	X ² (calculated)	X ² (tabulated)	Decision
Government Colleges	100	11	1.4708	19.675	Ho Accepted
Private Colleges	100				

The Chi-square test was conducted to examine whether institutional barriers significantly affect leadership effectiveness and stakeholder engagement in Colleges of Education. With 11 degrees of freedom, the calculated Chi-square value ($X^2 = 1.4708$) was less than the tabulated Chi-square value at the 0.05 level of significance ($X^2 = 19.675$). Therefore, the result is not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that it fails to reject the null hypothesis (H_{02}). There is no statistically significant relationship between institutional barriers and leadership effectiveness/stakeholder engagement based on staff views in government and private colleges of education.

Discussion of the findings

The analysis of the first hypothesis (H_{01}) revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles in Colleges of Education. With a chi-square calculated value of 1.68 compared to the tabulated value of 16.919 at 9 degrees of freedom and 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that although differences in leadership practices may exist between government and private colleges, these differences are not significant enough to establish a strong institutional effect on leadership style implementation. This aligns with Bass and Riggio (2006) who noted that transformational leadership practices often depend on the personal qualities and behaviors of leaders more than on institutional settings.

The findings also indicate that both government and private colleges show similar trends in leadership behavior, especially in areas such as promoting teamwork, involving staff in decision-making, and recognizing transformational leaders. This is consistent with Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), who argued that transformational leadership can thrive across varying institutional contexts when leaders are committed to shared vision, collaboration, and professional development. It further supports the notion that leadership effectiveness is often more closely related to leadership competence than to the structural nature of the organization, as suggested by Bush and Glover (2014).

Regarding the second hypothesis (H_{02}), the study also found no significant relationship between institutional barriers and leadership effectiveness or stakeholder engagement. The chi-square calculated value of 1.47 was far below the tabulated value of 19.675 at 11 degrees of freedom. This suggests that, while institutional barriers such as poor communication, centralization, and limited autonomy were acknowledged by staff, they did not significantly impair leadership effectiveness or stakeholder involvement. This may indicate a growing capacity of leaders in some Colleges of Education to navigate institutional constraints and still foster engagement and goal achievement, an idea also echoed by Marks and Printy (2003).

However, qualitative indicators such as mean scores revealed that institutional barriers are still moderately perceived to exist. Items like "bureaucratic processes delay leadership decisions" and "poor communication channels hinder participatory practices" recorded relatively high mean scores, pointing to underlying systemic issues that may not yet manifest as significant statistical differences but remain practically relevant. As Ololube (2013) noted, educational

institutions in developing contexts often face deep-rooted bureaucratic and cultural challenges that may limit leadership innovation over time if unaddressed.

While the statistical tests did not show significant relationships in both hypotheses, the findings draw attention to the subtle but persistent influence of institutional structures on leadership development and engagement. This emphasizes the importance of continuous investment in leadership training, system reform, and inclusive governance practices. Consistent with Oduro (2004) and Adepoju (2025), improving leadership in Colleges of Education requires not just capable individuals, but also a supportive institutional culture that facilitates participatory and transformational approaches.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between institutional factors, leadership styles, and leadership effectiveness in Colleges of Education, focusing on participatory and transformational leadership practices. Findings revealed that while staff across both government and private colleges of education in South-West Nigeria generally perceive leadership efforts positively, institutional barriers such as poor communication, excessive centralization, and bureaucratic delay remain present. However, the results of the chi-square analyses for both hypotheses showed no statistically significant relationship between institutional factors and the implementation of leadership styles or stakeholder engagement, suggesting that these barriers, though perceived, do not currently exert a significant influence on leadership outcomes.

These findings imply that many Colleges of Education may be evolving toward more inclusive and visionary leadership despite systemic challenges. Effective leadership appears to be driven more by individual competence and initiative than by structural settings alone. Nonetheless, addressing institutional bottlenecks such as limited autonomy, lack of staff empowerment, and weak feedback systems remains crucial to enhancing participatory leadership and sustaining stakeholder trust. For long-term progress, both policy and practice must work in tandem to build an enabling environment where transformational leadership can thrive.

Implication of the findings

The findings of this study suggest that while institutional barriers exist within Colleges of Education, they do not significantly hinder the implementation of participatory and transformational leadership styles. This implies that leadership development efforts should focus more on strengthening individual leadership capacities, such as vision, communication, and collaboration, rather than solely on overhauling institutional structures. It highlights the potential for well-trained and motivated leaders to drive positive change even in less-than-ideal organizational environments. Thus, leadership training programs should emphasize personal effectiveness, adaptability, and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Furthermore, the findings indicate a need for educational policymakers and college administrators to acknowledge and gradually address institutional limitations that may affect leadership outcomes in the long term. While current leadership practices are not statistically constrained by these barriers, their persistent presence especially poor communication and bureaucratic delays, may erode leadership effectiveness over time if not mitigated. Therefore, fostering a more flexible, inclusive, and participatory institutional culture is critical to sustaining leadership impact and improving overall institutional performance in Colleges of Education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Colleges of Education should strengthen leadership development initiatives by investing in regular training and mentoring programs for both current and prospective leaders.
- Secondly, institutional policies should be reviewed and restructured to minimize bureaucratic delays, excessive centralization, and poor communication practices, which were moderately perceived as barriers.

- College management and governing councils should adopt more decentralized decision-making frameworks that empower departments and staff units to participate meaningfully in leadership processes.
- To ensure sustainability, there is a need for formal mechanisms that will promote inclusive decision-making, such as leadership forums, advisory committees, and student/staff representation in key decision-making bodies.
- Furthermore, educational policymakers and regulatory agencies should provide consistent support and oversight to ensure that leadership practices in Colleges of Education align with national goals of quality and inclusive education.
- Finally, future research should be encouraged to explore context-specific factors, such as political influence, cultural expectations, and resource distribution, that might mediate the relationship between institutional barriers and leadership effectiveness.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research could examine institutional barriers and leadership practices in Colleges of Education across other geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

Also, future studies should separately analyze the perceptions of different stakeholder groups (academic staff, non-academic staff, and students) to determine how each experiences leadership practices and institutional challenges.

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