

## **TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN RIVERS STATE OWNED UNIVERSITIES**

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### **Abstract**

This paper investigated total quality management principles for administrative effectiveness in Rivers State owned Universities. Three research questions and three corresponding null hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted in the study, and the population of the study consisted of 1,1985 lecturers from the universities in Rivers state. This consists of 5,034 male lecturers and 6,951 female lecturers from these universities. The sample for this study was 387 respondents; comprising of 148 male lecturers and 239 female lecturers in public Universities in Rivers State. The Taro Yamene formula was adopted in determining the sample size of the study. The instrument that was used for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled —Total Quality Management Principles for Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (TQMPAEQ). The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha method statistics. The reliability index yielded a result of  $\alpha = 0.75$  which showed that the responses were consistent and the instrument considered reliable and adopted for the study. The researcher administered 387 copies of the instrument to the respondents. 293 representing 75.8% were retrieved and this proportion was used. Data analysis for this study was done using Mean and Standard Deviation Statistics to answer the research questions while t-test inferential statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities. It concluded that the integration of ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking as Total Quality Management (TQM) principles significantly contributes to administrative effectiveness. The study therefore recommend among others that Vice Chancellors should conduct regular workshops and training sessions focused on ethical leadership for university administrators, department heads, and staff and State Government should integrate benchmarking metrics and performance indicators into administrative processes and key performance evaluations.

## **Introduction**

Administrative effectiveness stands as a cornerstone for the successful operation and advancement of academic proceedings particularly in state-owned universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. The pursuit of administrative excellence becomes paramount to ensure not only the smooth functioning of the academic environment but also the fulfilment of institutional goals and societal obligations. In this context, Total Quality Management (TQM) emerges as a pertinent framework, offering principles and methodologies that can significantly enhance administrative efficiency and effectiveness. Total Quality Management, rooted in the philosophy of continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, presents a holistic framework applicable to diverse organizational contexts, including academic administration. Originating from the industrial sector, TQM principles emphasize the involvement of every stakeholder in the pursuit of quality, the systematic analysis of processes, and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

The application of TQM principles in administrative functions of universities encompasses various facets such as strategic planning, resource allocation, communication channels, and service delivery mechanisms. By integrating TQM principles into administrative practices, universities in Rivers State can streamline operations, optimize resource utilization, enhance service quality, and ultimately elevate their overall performance and reputation.

Administration is an important activity because it maintains an organization and directs the activities of staff in their relations towards the accomplishment of the organization's purposes. In the school system, the process is referred to as educational administration or school administration (Peretomode, 2001). School administration in Nigeria is becoming much more issue that the society, the practitioners and all stakeholders discuss with concern, particularly with changing output of the system which some people condemn for reason, not far from retrogressive quality delivery. At its core, administrative effectiveness revolves around the proficient utilization of resources, whether they be financial, human, or technological, to produce desired outcomes (Rainey, 2014). It encompasses various dimensions, including strategic planning, decision-making processes, resource allocation, communication channels, and performance evaluation mechanisms. By optimizing these components, administrations can enhance productivity, streamline operations, and foster innovation within their respective domains. Moreover, administrative effectiveness underscores the importance of fostering a conducive work environment characterized by transparency, collaboration, and ethical conduct (Pineda, 2013). Effective administrations prioritize the establishment of clear objectives, delineation of roles and responsibilities, and dissemination of pertinent information to facilitate informed decision-making at all levels of the organizational hierarchy.

Administrative effectiveness denotes the ability of the administrator to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. An organization cannot operate effectively except unless it is satisfying its objectives. The more objectives the organization can satisfy the more effective the organization is deemed to be. There should therefore be a mutual reinforcement of objectives whereby individuals and organizational objectives are accomplished together. Total Quality Management (TQM) as a system of management practice is based on the principle that every member of staff in an organization must be committed to maintaining standards of work

performance in every aspect of the organizations operations (Abu, Zama and Anjain, 2016). This implies that TQM entails organization wide effort which ensures employee\_s continuous improvement on their competencies to provide on demand, the services that are particularly needed by the customers (Amie-Ogan and Sunday, 2021). In view of the above, TQM could be referred to as a strategy calculated to enhance the school administrator\_s performance through his/her functions of: programme planning and policy formulation; provisions of funds and facilities maintenance, personnel training/development, improvement of instructional programmes and provision of instructional materials, provision of students\_ personnel services and creation of a good school and community relationship. These functions are meant to promote effective work performance thereby achieving delivery of quality education to students in the State-owned Universities in Rivers State.

In Rivers State owned universities, the integration of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles has emerged as a strategic imperative to enhance administrative effectiveness and uphold institutional integrity. The application of TQM principles, specifically ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking, stands as a cornerstone for fostering excellence and accountability as posited by Amie-Ogan (2021). Ethics, as a fundamental component of TQM, underscores the importance of integrity, transparency, and moral responsibility in administrative practices (Aniekwu and Ozochi, 2010). In the context of state owned universities, adherence to ethical standards not only cultivates trust among stakeholders but also ensures equitable treatment, fiscal responsibility, and the ethical stewardship of resources. By embedding ethical considerations into decision-making processes and organizational culture, universities in Rivers State can fortify their commitment to academic excellence and societal welfare.

Teamwork represents another essential tenet of TQM, emphasizing collaborative efforts and synergistic relationships among faculty, staff, administrators, and external stakeholders (Yusuf., and Aspinwall 2019). In the administrative context of public universities, effective teamwork fosters innovation, fosters inclusivity, and harnesses diverse perspectives to address complex challenges. By nurturing a culture of teamwork and shared accountability, in Rivers State can leverage collective expertise and resources to drive sustainable administrative outcomes and foster a sense of belonging and ownership among stakeholders.

Benchmarking, as a TQM principle, offers a systematic framework for evaluating performance, identifying best practices, and setting standards for continuous improvement (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis and Fitsilis, 2010). Benchmarking enables to gauge their administrative processes, policies, and outcomes against industry standards and peer. By leveraging benchmarking data and insights, universities in Rivers State can identify areas of strength, pinpoint opportunities for enhancement, and align administrative practices with emerging trends and global benchmarks. Against the backdrop of increasing scrutiny, resource constraints, and evolving stakeholder expectations, the convergence of ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking as TQM principles holds profound implications for administrative effectiveness in public universities in Rivers State. Through the systematic integration of these principles, can cultivate cultures of integrity, collaboration, and performance excellence, thereby advancing their missions, fostering student success, and contributing to the socio-economic development of the region.

Researchers have explored the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles in state owned universities administration in Rivers State, Nigeria. One study conducted by Pour, and Yeshodhara (2009) investigated the impact of TQM practices on administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities. Their findings suggested a positive correlation between TQM implementation and administrative efficiency, highlighting the significance of TQM principles in enhancing organizational performance. In another study, Koslowski, (2016), examined the role of teamwork in promoting administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities. Their research revealed that fostering a collaborative culture among university staff and administrators contributed to improved communication, problem-solving, and decision-making processes. The study underscored the importance of teamwork as a fundamental component of TQM principles in achieving administrative objectives. Finally Ishikawa, (2015) conducted research focusing on benchmarking practices in Nigerian universities, shedding light on the utilization of benchmarking as a tool for performance improvement and strategic planning. Their findings emphasized the need for universities to benchmark against global standards and best practices to enhance administrative effectiveness and institutional competitiveness.

Despite the valuable insights provided by these empirical works, several gaps persist in the study. Firstly, there is a limited emphasis on the specific application of TQM principles such as ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking in public university administration in Rivers State. While existing studies acknowledge the importance of these principles, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis regarding their implementation and impact in the region. Secondly, the works focused on individual TQM principles in isolation, overlooking the interconnected nature of these principles and their synergistic effects on administrative effectiveness. Furthermore, existing studies often rely on quantitative methodologies, such as surveys and statistical analysis, to assess the relationship between TQM principles and administrative effectiveness, while quantitative research provides valuable insights, there is a need for complementary qualitative research methods, such as interviews and case studies, to capture the nuanced dynamics and contextual factors influencing TQM implementation in public university settings. While other researchers have made significant strides, there remain gaps that warrant further exploration. Addressing these gaps through interdisciplinary research approaches and context-specific investigations which will enrich the audience understanding of how TQM principles can be effectively leveraged to enhance administrative effectiveness and promote organizational excellence in Rivers State owned public Universities.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The administrative effectiveness of public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria, remains a critical concern amidst increasing demands for accountability, efficiency, and quality in higher education. Despite the role of administrative processes in ensuring institutional success, there exists a dearth of comprehensive research addressing how Total Quality Management (TQM) principles, specifically ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking, contribute to administrative effectiveness in these era. The lack of empirical studies specifically focusing on TQM principles in public university administration in the Rivers State context underscores the need for further investigation. While broader studies on TQM exist, they often lack specificity regarding the

challenges and opportunities unique to Rivers State-owned universities. Moreover, the evolving landscape of higher education, characterized by technological advancements, globalization, and shifting stakeholder expectations, necessitates a nuanced understanding of how TQM principles can be effectively harnessed to address administrative challenges and drive institutional excellence.

The problems stemming from administrative inefficiencies in public universities in Rivers State have led to various consequences in the university system. Administrative inefficiencies often result in delays in decision-making processes, sluggish responses to student and faculty needs, and ineffective resource allocation. This bureaucratic environment impedes the university's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and meet evolving demands. Moreover, inefficient administrative practices translate into subpar service delivery to students, faculty, and staff. This can include delays in processing academic records, inadequate support services, and ineffective communication channels, all of which diminish the overall quality of the educational experience. The reputation of a university is closely tied to its administrative effectiveness. Persistent administrative challenges can erode public trust, deter prospective students and faculty, and undermine the university's standing within the academic community and beyond. A tarnished reputation can also impact partnerships, collaborations, and funding opportunities. Ineffective administrative practices may result in the misallocation of financial and human resources. This mismanagement can lead to budget deficits, faculty and staff dissatisfaction, and inadequate infrastructure and facilities, hindering the university's ability to fulfil its educational mission and strategic objectives. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensuring that public universities in Rivers State can effectively serve their stakeholders and remain competitive in the global higher education. Prompted by these gaps and the imperative to enhance administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned universities, the researcher endeavours to investigate TQM principles, including ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking, in the administrative context. By exploring the interplay between these principles and administrative outcomes, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform strategic decision-making, promote organizational resilience, and propel public universities in Rivers State towards greater levels of effectiveness, relevance, and excellence in the dynamic landscape of higher education.

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

The aim of the study was to examine total quality management principles for administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. Specifically, the objectives of the study sought to:

1. examine how ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities.
2. determine how teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities.
3. investigate how benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. How does ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities?
2. How does teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities?
3. How does benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how ethics contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how teamwork contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how benchmarking contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theory that guided this study is the Social System Theory propounded by Getzel and Guba (1957). Social system theory provides a holistic framework for understanding the dynamics in Rivers State owned universities in terms of administrative effectiveness and Total Quality Management (TQM) principles. In essence, this theory views these as complex social entities wherein administrative processes, personnel, stakeholders, and the broader societal context interact and influence outcomes. At its core, social system theory emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of various components within an organization. In public Universities, administrative effectiveness hinges on the seamless integration of departments, faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders. TQM principles, which prioritize continuous improvement, customer focus, and employee involvement, align closely with the tenets of social system theory.

Social system theory acknowledges that public Universities are not just bureaucratic entities but complex social systems comprising interconnected parts. This perspective is vital for comprehending the nuanced interactions among administrative processes, personnel, stakeholders, and the broader societal context within these. Administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities depends on the smooth integration and coordination of various departments, faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders. Social system theory highlights the interdependence of these components, emphasizing that improvements in one area can impact others. For instance, enhancing communication between faculty and administration might positively influence student satisfaction and academic outcomes.

The relevance of this theory to the study is that Social System Theory underscores the significance of collaboration and cooperation among subsystems within an organization. In the context of public universities, fostering collaboration between academic departments, administrative units, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders is essential for achieving common goals, promoting organizational cohesion, and enhancing administrative effectiveness.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Ethics as Total Quality Management Principles**

Ethics, as Total Quality Management (TQM) principles, play a crucial role in enhancing administrative effectiveness within organizations. Total Quality Management emphasizes continuous improvement, customer focus, and employee involvement. Embedding ethical considerations into TQM principles not only ensures compliance with legal and societal norms but also fosters a culture of trust, integrity, and responsibility within administrative processes (Deming, 1986).

Administrative effectiveness, adherence to ethical standards serves as the foundation for building sustainable relationships with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the community at large (Oakland, 2003). By integrating ethics into TQM practices, organizations demonstrate a commitment to fairness, transparency, and accountability, which are essential elements for achieving operational excellence and long-term success (Dale, 2003). Ethical behaviour within administrative functions encompasses various dimensions, such as integrity in decision-making, respect for diversity, and fairness in resource allocation (Goetsch and Davis, 2014). Administrators who uphold ethical standards seek to create an environment where employees feel valued, empowered, and motivated to contribute their best efforts towards organizational goals (Jackson, 2011). Moreover, ethical leadership within administrative roles sets a positive example for employees and fosters a culture of ethical conduct throughout the organization (Ciulla, 2004).

Furthermore, integrating ethics into TQM principles helps mitigate risks associated with unethical behaviour, such as fraud, corruption, and reputational damage (Zandbergen and Stouten, 2015). By promoting a values-driven approach to administrative decision-making, organizations can mitigate conflicts of interest, enhance stakeholder trust, and safeguard their reputation in the marketplace (Kanji, 2002). Ethics serve as integral components of Total Quality Management principles for administrative effectiveness. By aligning administrative practices with ethical standards, organizations can cultivate a culture of integrity, accountability, and continuous improvement, thus maximizing their ability to achieve operational excellence and sustain long-term success in today's competitive business environment.

#### **Team work as Total Quality Management Principles**

Teamwork is a fundamental principle of Total Quality Management (TQM), emphasizing collaboration and collective effort towards organizational objectives (Adebayo et al., 2017). In the context of TQM, teamwork involves the active involvement and coordination of individuals from various departments and levels within an organization to achieve common goals (Obi, 2018). One of the key aspects of teamwork in TQM is the recognition that quality improvement is not the responsibility of a single individual but a collective effort involving all members of the

organization (Adebayo et al., 2017). As Deming (1986) famously stated, "Quality is everyone's responsibility." This philosophy underscores the importance of fostering a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility for quality improvement initiatives.

Effective teamwork in TQM requires clear communication channels and a supportive organizational culture that values participation and feedback (Obi, 2018). Open communication facilitates the sharing of ideas, best practices, and lessons learned, enabling teams to identify areas for improvement and implement solutions collaboratively (Okafor, 2016). Furthermore, teamwork in TQM involves cross-functional collaboration, where employees from different departments work together to address quality issues and enhance processes (Adebayo et al., 2017). By bringing together diverse perspectives and skill sets, cross-functional teams can leverage collective expertise to identify root causes of problems and implement comprehensive solutions (Okafor, 2016). Teamwork is a foundational principle of Total Quality Management, emphasizing collaboration, communication, and cross-functional cooperation to achieve organizational excellence (Adebayo et al., 2017). By fostering a culture of teamwork, organizations can harness the collective talents and insights of their employees to drive continuous improvement and deliver superior products and services (Obi, 2018).

### **Benchmarking as Total Quality Management Principles**

Benchmarking is a crucial Total Quality Management (TQM) principle that facilitates continuous improvement and enhances organizational performance (Ibrahim and Yusof, 2019). In the context of TQM, benchmarking involves the systematic process of comparing organizational processes, products, and performance metrics against industry best practices and standards (Chukwuma and Nwabueze, 2018). One of the primary objectives of benchmarking in TQM is to identify areas for improvement and establish performance targets that align with industry leaders and competitors. By analyzing the practices and performance of top-performing organizations, companies can gain valuable insights into innovative approaches, efficient processes, and best-in-class methodologies that can be adapted and implemented within their own operations.

Benchmarking in TQM encompasses several key steps, including identifying performance metrics, selecting appropriate benchmarking partners, collecting and analyzing data, and implementing improvement initiatives. Through benchmarking, organizations can benchmark not only against competitors but also against internal benchmarks and industry standards to drive performance excellence and achieve strategic objectives. Moreover, benchmarking serves as a powerful tool for fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation within organizations. By encouraging employees to explore external best practices and learn from industry leaders, benchmarking promotes knowledge sharing, creativity, and the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and methodologies to drive organizational improvement.

Benchmarking is a fundamental principle of Total Quality Management that enables organizations to measure performance, identify areas for improvement, and drive continuous enhancement through the adoption of best practices and industry standards. By leveraging benchmarking effectively, companies can enhance competitiveness, achieve operational excellence, and deliver superior products and services to customers.

## **Methodology**

A descriptive survey design was adopted in the study, and the population of the study consisted of the State-owned universities in Rivers State, namely: Rivers State University (RSU) and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). There were a total of 1,198,5 lecturers from the universities in Rivers state. This consists of 5,034 male lecturers and 6,951 female lecturers from these universities. The sample for this study was 387 respondents; comprising of 148 male lecturers and 239 female lecturers in public Universities in Rivers State. The Taro Yamene formula was adopted in determining the sample size of the study. The respondents were stratified into male and female academic staff. The instrument that was used for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled —Total Quality Management Principles for Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (TQMPAEQ). The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha method statistics. Twenty (20) copies of the instrument were administered to 20 respondents outside the sample of the study but were part of the population of the study. The reliability index yielded a result of  $\alpha = 0.75$  which showed that the responses were consistent and the instrument considered reliable and adopted for the study. The researchers administered 387 copies of the instrument to the respondents. 293 representing 75.8% were retrieved and this proportion was used. Data analysis for this study was done using Mean and Standard Deviation Statistics to answer the research questions while t-test inferential statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Research Question 1:** How does ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities?

**Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on how ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities.**

S/N	Items Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Decision
1	Exhibition of high integrity by the management promotes effective administration.	105	184	3	1	3.59	0.57	Agreed
2	Exposing new staff to the workplace policies through orientation promotes good administration.	187	89	9	3	3.57	0.61	Agreed
3	Documentation of ethical practices and making it available to new staff makes workplace administration easy.	106	131	6	1	3.	0.63	Agreed
4	Job performance is improved when administrators set a clear objectives regarding the code of conduct.	86	189	19	1	3.33	0.66	Agreed
5	Administrators who are disciplined helps to maintain the decorum of the workplace thereby making administration easy.	117	166	16	0	3.53	0.61	Agreed
6	Exhibition of trust by administrators makes administration of University institution easy.	106	173	16	0	3.45	0.64	Agreed
7	An organized workplace is a function of ethics which makes administration of University institution easy.	95	190	8	0	3.43	0.59	Agreed
<b>Grand mean</b>						<b>3.47</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Data in Table 1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The table provides data on various items related to ethics and their impact on administrative effectiveness. Item 1. Exhibition of high integrity by the management promotes effective administration (3.59) item 2. Exposing new staff to workplace policies through orientation promotes good administration. (3.57) item3. Documentation of ethical practices and making it available to new staff makes workplace administration easy. (3.) item 4. Job performance is improved when administrators set clear objectives regarding the institution's code of conduct. (3.33) item 5 Administrators who are disciplined help maintain the decorum of the workplace, thereby making administration easy. (3.53), item 6. Exhibition of trust by administrators makes administration of a University institution easy. (3.45) item 7. An organized

workplace is a function of ethics, which makes the administration of a University institution easy. (3.43). The Grand mean is calculated as (3.47), with a standard deviation of 0.43, and it also indicates that the respondents agree that ethical practices, such as integrity, clear objectives, discipline, and trust among administrators, contribute to the effectiveness of administrative processes in Rivers State-owned Universities, So therefore the answer to research question one indicates that ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities.

**Research Question 2:** How does teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities?

**Table 2: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on how teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities**

S/N		SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Decision
8	When administrators delegate part of their jobs, it shows trust among team members.	65	212	16	0	3.25	0.59	Agreed
9	Administrators who prioritize support for their subordinates contributes to the overall functioning of the institution.	56	211	24	2	3.14	0.65	Agreed
10	When an administrator engages in appropriate feedback to subordinates, it ensures that the impact of decisions are discussed.	60	209	26	2	3.15	0.67	Agreed
11	When an administrator engages in a laissez-faire approach towards staff members, he/she will definitely run into crises.	54	211	7	1	3.13	0.64	Agreed
12	When administrators encourages academic staff members to co-author in their publications, it yields better result in institutional growth.	105	162	5	1	3.59	0.57	Agreed
13	When an administrator provides subordinates with available resources, it help team members to succeed.	86	187	9	1	3.33	0.66	Agreed
14	When administrators provides a healthy working environment, goals are easier achieved by the subordinates.	117	164	6	0	3.53	0.61	Agreed
<b>Grand mean</b>						<b>3.30</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Data in Table 2 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. Item 8 the respondents agree that when administrators delegate part of their jobs, it demonstrates trust among team members, Item 9 administrators who prioritize support for their subordinates are believed to contribute to the overall functioning of the institution Item 10 when administrators engage in appropriate feedback to subordinates, it ensures that the impact of decisions is discussed Item 11 A laissez-faire approach by administrators towards staff members, Item 12 administrators who encourage academic staff members to co-author in their publications are believed to contribute to institutional growth, Item 13 when administrators provide subordinates with available resources, it helps team members succeed Item 14 administrators who provide a healthy working environment are believed to make it easier for subordinates to achieve goals. The grand mean of (3.30) suggests an overall positive perception of teamwork's role in enhancing administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned public universities. So therefore the answer to research question 2 states that teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities

**Research Question 3:** How does benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities?

**Table 3: Summary of Descriptive Statistics on how benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities.**

S/N		SA	A	D	SD	X	Std	Decision
15	When administrators compares their mode of admitting students, it helps to create a smooth processes for incoming students.	117	171	5	0	3.53	0.61	<b>Agreed</b>
16	Administrators who seek information from other introduces new method of doing things.	87	188	2	1	3.31	0.70	<b>Agreed</b>
17	Administrators who evaluate the activities of other administrators with a view to serving as a reference point easily achieves institutional goals.	106	178	1	0	3.45	0.64	<b>Agreed</b>
18	Administrator who uses this approach to institutional practice encourages incremental growth in the institution as innovations are bound to spring up all the time.	167	118	7	1	3.13	0.64	<b>Agreed</b>
19	Administrators with high level of experience, can serve as a reference point to other staff members.	85	202	5	1	3.59	0.57	<b>Agreed</b>
20	Administrators who appraise	106	181	6	0	3.45	0.64	<b>Agreed</b>

	themselves before Nigerian University Commission accreditation, discovers areas of lack.							
21	Accreditation in University helps administrators to improve on their benchmark.	95	291	2	0	3.43	0.59	<b>Agreed</b>
<b>Grand mean</b>						<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Data in Table 3 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. Item 15 administrators who compare their mode of admitting students help create smoother processes for incoming students, Item 16 administrators who seek information from other introduce new methods of doing things, Item 17 administrators who evaluate the activities of other administrators with the aim of serving as a reference point easily achieve institutional goals Item 18 administrators who use benchmarking to encourage incremental growth in the institution stimulate innovations over time. Item 19 administrators with a high level of experience can serve as a reference point to other staff members Item 20 administrators who appraise themselves before Nigerian University Commission accreditation discover areas of improvement. Item 21 accreditation in university helps administrators improve their benchmark. The grand mean of 3.41 indicates an overall positive perception that benchmarking enhances administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The answer to research question 3 states that benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities.

### Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how ethics contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.

**Table 4: Independent Sample t-test on how ethics contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Male	207	3.46	0.43	191	291	.849	Retained H01
Female	86	3.49	0.43				

The results from Table 4 shows the summary of independent Sample t-test on how ethics as total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The result shows that there is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how ethics contribute to

administrative effectiveness in Rivers State with a p-value of 0.849, which is greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05 (5%), ( $t=-0.191$ ,  $df=291$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.849$ ). The null hypothesis one was retained at 0.05 level of significant.

2. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how teamwork contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.

**Table 5: Independent Sample t-test on how teamwork contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.**

GENDER	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Decision
Male	207	3.30	0.39	-.193	291	.847	Retained H02
Female	86	3.32	0.49				

The results from Table 2 shows the summary of independent Sample t-test on the difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how teamwork contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State. The result shows that there is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how teamwork contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State with a p-value of 0.847, which is greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05 (5%), ( $t=0-.193$ ,  $df=291$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.847$ ). The null hypothesis two was retained at .05 level of significant.

3. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how benchmarking contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.

**Table 3: Independent Sample t-test on how benchmarking contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State.**

GENDER	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Decision
Male	207	3.40	0.43	-.852	291	.395	Retained H07
Female	86	3.51	0.36				

The results from table 3 shows the summary of independent Sample t-test on the difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how benchmarking contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State. The result shows that there is no significant difference between male and female lecturers of Rivers State-owned Universities in their mean ratings on how benchmarking contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State a p-value of 0. 395, which is greater than the commonly used

significance level of 0.05 (5%), ( $t=-0.852$ ,  $df=291$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.395$ ). The null hypothesis three was retained at .05 level of significant.

### **Discussion of Findings**

#### **How ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities.**

Data in Table 1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The table provides data on various items related to ethics and their impact on administrative effectiveness. Item 1. Exhibition of high integrity by the management promotes effective administration (3.59) item 2. Exposing new staff to workplace policies through orientation promotes good administration. (3.57) item 3. Documentation of ethical practices and making it available to new staff makes workplace administration easy. (3.) item 4. Job performance is improved when administrators set clear objectives regarding the institution's code of conduct. (3.33) item 5 Administrators who are disciplined help maintain the decorum of the workplace, thereby making administration easy. (3.53), item 6. Exhibition of trust by administrators makes administration of a University institution easy. (3.45) item 7. An organized workplace is a function of ethics, which makes the administration of a University institution easy. (3.43). The Grand mean is calculated as (3.47), with a standard deviation of 0.43, and it also indicates that the respondents agree that ethical practices, such as integrity, clear objectives, discipline, and trust among administrators, contribute to the effectiveness of administrative processes in Rivers State-owned Universities, So therefore the answer to research question one indicates that ethics as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities

The study findings are in line with the findings of several empirical studies. This corroborates with Amie-Ogan and Sunday (2021) as they carried out research on Total Quality Management Strategies and School Administrators' Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The study findings revealed that employees' involvement and benchmarking have a significant positive relationship with school administrators' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Similarly, the study findings are in tandem with Chuku (2021) that Total Quality Management in fund management practice and facilities/equipment management practice significantly influences institutional effectiveness of secondary schools in terms of organizational innovations, learning environment and learning outcome. The study findings are in consonance with Adeyemi (2020) which examined the influence of total quality management and university goal achievement in University in Nigeria. The result of the findings included the following; there is a significant relationship between communication flow and goal achievement of universities in Nigeria. There is a significant relationship between team work and goal achievement of universities, there is a significant relationship between time management and goal achievement of universities in Nigeria among others.

**Teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities**

Data in Table 2 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. Item 8 the respondents agree that when administrators delegate part of their jobs, it demonstrates trust among team members, Item 9 administrators who prioritize support for their subordinates are believed to contribute to the overall functioning of the institution Item 10 when administrators engage in appropriate feedback to subordinates, it ensures that the impact of decisions is discussed Item 11 A laissez-faire approach by administrators towards staff members, Item 12 administrators who encourage academic staff members to co-author in their publications are believed to contribute to institutional growth, Item 13 when administrators provide subordinates with available resources, it helps team members succeed Item 14 administrators who provide a healthy working environment are believed to make it easier for subordinates to achieve goals. The grand mean of (3.30) suggests an overall positive perception of teamwork's role in enhancing administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned public universities. So therefore the answer to research question 2 states that teamwork as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The study findings agree with Ejionueme and Oyoyo (2015) as they investigated the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) in secondary school administration in Umuahia Education Zone. Findings of the study revealed that total commitment and teamwork is applied to a high extent in secondary school administration. The findings further showed that effective communication is applied in secondary school administration in Umuahia Education zone. Findings of the study are validated by LongJohn (2008) which investigated application of total quality management in the improvement of the educational standard in University in Rivers State. The study findings revealed that staff training of academic and non-academic staff leads to improvement of the educational standard in State-owned universities in Rivers State.

**Benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State Owned Universities.**

Data in Table 3 presents a summary of descriptive statistics that assess how benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. Item 15 administrators who compare their mode of admitting students help create smoother processes for incoming students, Item 16 administrators who seek information from other introduce new methods of doing things, Item 17 administrators who evaluate the activities of other administrators with the aim of serving as a reference point easily achieve institutional goals Item 18 administrators who use benchmarking to encourage incremental growth in the institution stimulate innovations over time. Item 19 administrators with a high level of experience can serve as a reference point to other staff members Item 20 administrators who appraise themselves before Nigerian University Commission accreditation discover areas of improvement. Item 21 accreditation in university helps administrators improve their benchmark. The grand mean of 3.41 indicates an overall positive perception that benchmarking enhances administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. The answer to research question

3 states that benchmarking as a total quality management principle contribute to administrative effectiveness in Rivers State-owned Universities. This corroborates with Amie-Ogan and Sunday (2021) as they carried out research on Total Quality Management Strategies and School Administrators' Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The study findings revealed that employees' involvement and benchmarking have a significant positive relationship with school administrators' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Similarly, the study findings are in tandem with Chuktu (2021) which investigated the influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices on institutional effectiveness of secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The result of the analysis revealed that Total Quality Management in fund management practice and facilities/equipment management practice significantly influences institutional effectiveness of secondary schools in terms of organizational innovations, learning environment and learning outcome in River State.

### **Conclusion**

In Rivers State-owned Universities, the integration of ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking as Total Quality Management (TQM) principles significantly contributes to administrative effectiveness. Through the lens of TQM, ethics guide decision-making processes, ensuring adherence to moral and legal standards while fostering a culture of integrity and responsibility among administrators. Teamwork promotes collaboration, communication, and mutual support among staff members, leading to enhanced problem-solving abilities and innovation within administrative functions. Benchmarking allows universities to identify best practices, set performance standards, and continuously improve processes, thereby enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in administrative operations. The adoption of ethics, teamwork, and benchmarking as TQM principles in Rivers State-owned Universities underscores a commitment to excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement in administrative practices. By embracing these principles, universities can strengthen their administrative effectiveness, foster a culture of excellence, and ultimately enhance the overall quality of education and services provided to students and stakeholders.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, we put forward the following recommendations:

1. Vice Chancellors should conduct regular workshops and training sessions focused on ethical leadership for university administrators, department heads, and staff. These sessions should emphasize the importance of ethical decision-making, integrity, and accountability in administrative roles, fostering a culture of ethical conduct in schools.
2. Vice Chancellors should create cross-functional task forces composed of administrators, , and staff representatives from various departments to promote teamwork and collaboration in addressing administrative challenges and implementing improvement initiatives. These task forces should encourage diverse perspectives, foster open communication, and leverage collective expertise to drive organizational effectiveness.
3. State Government should integrate benchmarking metrics and performance indicators into administrative processes and key performance evaluations. Establish benchmarking

standards for key administrative functions, such as student services, finance, and human resources, to assess performance against industry benchmarks and identify areas for improvement and innovation.

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