



## IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS: EVIDENCE FROM TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

By

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### Abstract

The study was carried out in order to examine how improving educational management in Nigeria education system for global competitiveness using evidence from tertiary education institutions in Rivers State. The study had four objectives, four research questions and four hypotheses. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 3600 administrators. Data were collected from a representative sample of 360 respondents drawn from universities, polytechnics, colleges, and policymakers using a proportional stratified sampling technique. A 5-point rating scale was used for responses, and instrument validity was ensured through expert review, while reliability was confirmed via Cronbach Alpha. Mean, standard deviation, and the z-test were used for data analysis, with a significance level of 0.05 to test hypotheses. The result of the study showed that improving educational management in Nigeria education system can enhance global competitiveness using evidence from tertiary education institutions in Rivers State. The study recommended that the government and stakeholders should establish consistent funding mechanisms to support infrastructure development, faculty training, and research initiatives, ensuring long-term financial sustainability. Tertiary institutions should prioritize leadership development programs that enhance financial accountability, policy



implementation, and international collaboration to improve global competitiveness. Universities should invest in digital learning tools, e-learning platforms, and AI-driven education to foster academic excellence, increase student engagement, and expand global research collaborations. Institutions should actively engage in accreditation processes and maintain high academic standards to enhance credibility, attract global partnerships, and boost institutional reputation.

**Keywords:** Educational Management, Education system, Global competitiveness, Tertiary institutions

## Introduction

Educational management is a crucial aspect of any academic system, as it ensures the efficient utilization of resources, policy implementation, and institutional development (Bush, 2018). Effective educational management involves strategic planning, leadership, quality assurance, financial sustainability, and technological integration (Olorunsola & Belo, 2020). When properly implemented, it enhances learning experiences, improves staff productivity, and ensures that institutions achieve their educational goals. One of the primary concerns in educational management is funding and resource allocation, as inadequate financial support often leads to poor infrastructure, outdated materials, and limited research opportunities (Adebayo, 2019). In addition, effective leadership and governance structures are necessary for decision-making, policy execution, and institutional growth (Okeke & Nwosu, 2021). Another important component of educational management is the integration of technology. In today's digital age, the use of e-learning platforms, smart classrooms, and ICT-driven administrative processes has significantly improved how education is delivered (Adomi & Kpangban, 2019). Furthermore, quality assurance mechanisms, such as accreditation and faculty development programs, help maintain academic standards and ensure that institutions remain competitive (Salami & Uchenna, 2022). By improving educational management, institutions can enhance their operational efficiency and provide students with a world-class learning experience.

Nigeria's education system is structured into three main levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). While the country has made significant progress in expanding access to education, several challenges continue to hinder its effectiveness (Obasi & Ekezie, 2021). The tertiary education sector, which includes universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education, faces issues such as underfunding, poor governance, inadequate infrastructure, and frequent industrial actions by academic unions (Okebukola, 2018). These challenges have led to a decline in the quality of education, with graduates often struggling to meet the demands of the labor market (Eze & Nwachukwu, 2020). Despite government efforts to improve the sector, inefficiencies in policy implementation and corruption have further weakened the system (Ogunyemi, 2022). Additionally, many institutions lack the necessary facilities to support research and innovation, which are essential for national development (Yusuf &

Olaniyan, 2021). To address these issues, stakeholders must focus on improving funding mechanisms, enhancing governance structures, and embracing technological advancements (Ajayi, 2020). By doing so, Nigeria can build a more effective and sustainable education system that meets the needs of both students and employers.

Global competitiveness in education refers to a country's ability to produce graduates and research outputs that meet international standards (Schleicher, 2019). It is often measured by factors such as the quality of academic programs, research impact, technological innovation, and the employability of graduates (World Bank, 2021). Countries with strong educational systems invest heavily in research, maintain high teaching standards, and adopt global best practices in education management (Altbach, 2020). For Nigeria to be globally competitive, its institutions must align their curricula with international standards, promote faculty development, and invest in research and development (Olanrewaju & Musa, 2021). Additionally, fostering collaborations with foreign universities and research institutions can help Nigerian students and scholars gain exposure to global knowledge and innovations (Emecheta, 2020). Without these improvements, the country risks falling behind in the global knowledge economy, limiting its ability to attract investments and skilled professionals (UNESCO, 2021).

The effectiveness of any educational system is largely determined by its structure and operational efficiency. In the case of tertiary institutions, several key factors influence their sustainability and overall quality. One of the foremost challenges is funding and resource allocation. Many universities and polytechnics struggle with inadequate financial support, leading to deteriorating infrastructure, outdated learning materials, and insufficient research grants (Bamiro, 2020). To address this issue, strengthening government funding is crucial. However, reliance solely on public funding is often insufficient; hence, institutions must explore private sector partnerships and enhance their internally generated revenue (IGR) through innovative means such as consultancy services, alumni donations, and research commercialization. Tilak (2019) argues that adequate funding in higher education promotes academic excellence, research output, and international recognition. Similarly, Marginson (2018) highlights that financial sustainability in universities is positively correlated with global ranking and graduate employability, underscoring the need for consistent funding mechanisms.

Leadership and governance play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of tertiary education institutions. Effective leadership fosters sound decision-making, smooth policy implementation, and institutional growth. However, inefficiencies in leadership, bureaucratic delays, and corruption have significantly hindered progress in the Nigerian education sector (Adepoju & Olatunji, 2022). To improve institutional management, governance structures must be strengthened, and accountability must be prioritized. This can be achieved through transparency in administrative processes, merit-based appointments, and performance-driven leadership approaches. Bush & Glover (2020), who emphasized that strong

institutional leadership fosters an environment conducive to academic excellence and international visibility. Avolio & Bass (2019), also confirm that transformational leadership in tertiary education is associated with improved institutional reputation and student outcomes.

In recent years, technological integration has revolutionized education, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital learning platforms, e-libraries, and ICT-driven administrative systems have become indispensable tools in enhancing teaching, research, and overall institutional management (Adebayo, 2023). The adoption of these technologies ensures that students and faculty have access to vast academic resources, fosters remote learning opportunities, and enhances efficiency in record-keeping and communication. However, to fully realize the benefits of technology in education, institutions must invest in digital infrastructure, provide adequate training for faculty and students, and ensure stable internet connectivity. UNESCO (2021) suggests that universities adopting digital learning technologies experience higher student engagement and global collaborations. Weller (2020) supports this, emphasizing that digitalization fosters international academic exchange and enhances research productivity

Furthermore, maintaining quality assurance and accreditation standards is critical in ensuring that tertiary institutions remain globally competitive. Accreditation processes, faculty development programs, and research advancements are essential components of quality education (Nwosu & Chukwuma, 2022). Regulatory bodies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC) play a crucial role in enforcing compliance with best practices and global educational standards. Strengthening these bodies and ensuring that accreditation processes are rigorous yet transparent will significantly enhance the quality of education offered by tertiary institutions. Ultimately, addressing these fundamental aspects such as funding, leadership, technology, and quality assurance, will contribute to the sustainability and growth of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State. Harvey & Green (2019), who stated that accreditation frameworks ensure credibility and attracts partnership with global institutions. Cheng (2020) affirm that accreditation boosts institutional reputation, enhances research collaboration, and increases student mobility. By adopting strategic reforms, fostering accountability, and embracing innovation, the challenges facing tertiary education can be mitigated, paving the way for a more robust and globally competitive academic environment.

### Statement of Problem

The study "Improving Educational Management in Nigeria's Education System for Global Competitiveness: Evidence from Tertiary Education Institutions in Rivers State" examines key challenges affecting the management of tertiary education and explores strategies for enhancing global competitiveness. The research identifies issues such as poor financial sustainability, weak administrative structures, inadequate integration of technology, insufficient staff development, frequent industrial



actions, and limited industry-academia collaboration as major hindrances to effective educational management.

By analyzing data from universities, polytechnics, and colleges in Rivers State, the study employs statistical methods to assess the extent of these challenges and their impact on institutional performance. It also highlights the role of modern educational management techniques, financial planning, and technology adoption in improving efficiency. Ultimately, the study provides insights into policy reforms and strategic interventions needed to strengthen the management of tertiary institutions, ensuring they can compete globally and contribute effectively to national development.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine how to improve educational management in Nigeria education system for global competitiveness by using evidence from tertiary education institutions in rivers state. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine how improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. Examine how improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.
3. Ascertain how improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.
4. Investigate how improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

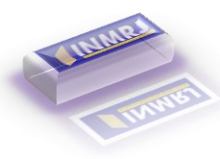
### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. How does improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. How does improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?
4. How does improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:





**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**H02:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**H03:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**H04:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which allows for the collection of data from a representative sample of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State. This design is appropriate as it facilitates an in-depth examination of current educational management practices and their impact on global competitiveness. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which allows for the collection of data from a representative sample of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State. The study was carried out in Rivers State. Rivers State has nine (9) tertiary institutions—comprising 4 universities, 3 polytechnics, 1 college of education, and 1 college of health science and technology—the study population were drawn from these institutions. It targets administrators, academic staff, and policymakers, with a total estimated population of 3,600 education administrators, comprising of 2,103 male and 1,497 female admin. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 360 respondents is determined, ensuring proportional representation across institutions. Universities will have the highest representation (190 respondents), followed by polytechnics (75), the college of education (45), the college of health science and technology (30), and policymakers (20). A proportional stratified sampling technique was adopted to capture diverse perspectives on management challenges and governance.

The study utilized a 5-point rating scale to measure responses, with strongly agree (SA =5), agree (A=4), Moderately agree (MA=3) Disagree (D=2), and strongly disagree (SD=1). To ensure validity, the instrument was reviewed by the researcher's supervisor and two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, who provided feedback based on the statement of the problem, research purpose, questions, and hypotheses. Their corrections were incorporated into the final version. For reliability, the Cronbach Alpha method was used. A pilot test was conducted with 20 respondents from tertiary institutions in Bayelsa



state which was outside the study area and were not part of the main study. The analysis yielded reliability indexes of 0.84, 0.86, 0.76, and 0.82, confirming the instrument's consistency. A total of 360 copies of the questionnaire were administered, while only 220 copies of the retrieved questionnaire were valid and used for data analyses. The study employed mean and standard deviation to analyze research questions, using a criterion mean of 3.00 to determine response levels. Scores below 2.50 indicated a low extent, while those above signified a high extent. The criterion mean was derived by summing the weighted scores (5+4+3+2+1) and dividing by 3, resulting in 3.00. For hypothesis testing, the z-test was used at a 0.05 significance level, with a critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$ . If the calculated z-value exceeded  $\pm 1.96$ , the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative. Conversely, if the calculated z-value was less than  $\pm 1.96$ , the null hypothesis was accepted.

### Result Presentation

**Research Question 1:** How does improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean Responses on How improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item	Male Teachers N=157			Female Teachers N=63			Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD		$\bar{X}$	SD		
1	Adequate financial resources enable the procurement of modern infrastructure and research facilities, enhancing the global competitiveness of tertiary institutions.	3.45	0.59	A	3.39	0.87		A
2	Sustainable funding ensures the recruitment and retention of qualified academic staff, improving the quality of education and research output.	3.50	0.62	A	3.45	0.82		A
3	Increased financial sustainability allows for the expansion of scholarship opportunities, attracting top talent and fostering academic excellence.	3.86	0.94	A	3.78	0.63		A





4	Stable financial management supports the implementation of international collaborations and exchange programs, positioning institutions on a global scale.	3.25	0.72	A	3.18	0.71	A
5	Proper financial planning enhances the provision of digital learning tools and modern libraries, improving learning outcomes and institutional rankings.	3.32	0.55	A	3.23	0.96	A
6	Well-funded tertiary institutions can invest in entrepreneurial and skill-development programs, aligning graduates with global job market demands.	3.10	0.88	A	3.07	0.95	A
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.71</b>		<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.82</b>	

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

The result on the table shows that well-funded tertiary institutions can invest in entrepreneurial and skill-development programs, equipping graduates with skills that align with global job market demands. The grand mean values of 3.41 for male lecturers and 3.35 for female lecturers indicate a strong overall awareness of the positive impact of financial sustainability on tertiary education.

**Research Question 2:** How does improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?

**Table 4.2: Mean Responses on how improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item	Male Teachers N=157			Decision	Female Teachers N=63			Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD			$\bar{X}$	SD		
1	Strong leadership promotes visionary policy implementation, ensuring that institutions align with global educational standards.	3.31	0.61	A		3.14	0.81	A	
2	Effective leadership fosters accountability and transparency in financial management, reducing	3.19	0.41	A		3.16	0.60	A	







misappropriation and enhancing institutional growth.

3	Competent leaders drive strategic partnerships with international universities, facilitating knowledge exchange and research collaborations.	3.21	0.76	A	3.01	0.82	A
4	Leadership that prioritizes academic excellence motivates faculty and students to engage in innovative research and learning.	3.11	0.82	A	3.04	1.08	A
5	Strong governance structures ensure timely decision-making, reducing disruptions caused by industrial actions and administrative bottlenecks.	3.01	0.91	A	3.14	0.72	A
6	Effective leadership encourages inclusivity and diversity, fostering a globally competitive academic environment.	3.03	0.96	A	3.21	0.64	A
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.14</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>A</b>

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

The results from Table 2 indicate that both male and female lecturers are aware of the role of effective leadership in enhancing the global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. With a grand mean of 3.14 for male lecturers and 3.11 for female lecturers, all the listed leadership attributes were rated above 3.0, suggesting a general agreement on their significance. The lowest standard deviations ( $SD = 0.41, 0.60$ ) indicate stronger consensus on financial accountability, while the higher standard deviations ( $SD = 0.91, 1.08$ ) suggest slight variations in opinions on governance structures and academic excellence.

**Research Question 3:** How does improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Mean Responses on how improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item	Male Teachers	Female Teachers
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		<b>N=157</b>		<b>Decisio</b>	<b>N=63</b>		<b>Decisio</b>
		<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>n</b>
1	Integrating digital learning platforms expands access to quality education, allowing students to engage with global academic resources.	3.48	0.53	A	3.40	0.66	A
2	The use of artificial intelligence and big data analytics in education enhances personalized learning and research innovation.	3.30	0.41	A	3.39	0.81	A
3	Digital classrooms and e-libraries improve knowledge dissemination, keeping institutions in line with global technological advancements.	3.45	0.43	A	3.33	0.50	A
4	The adoption of learning management systems (LMS) enhances remote learning opportunities, increasing institutional reach and competitiveness.	3.47	0.47	A	3.34	0.68	A
5	Technological integration fosters collaboration between universities and industries, bridging the gap between academia and market demands.	3.44	0.59	A	3.33	0.51	A
6	Digital assessment tools improve evaluation methods, ensuring that student performance aligns with international academic benchmarks.	3.43	0.63	A	3.48	0.59	A
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.43</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>A</b>

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

The findings in Table 3 reveal that both male and female lecturers recognize the importance of technological integration and digital learning in enhancing the global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. With a grand mean of 3.43 for male lecturers and 3.39 for female lecturers, all item statements were rated above 3.0, indicating strong agreed of the role of technology in education. The results highlight that digital learning platforms, AI-driven personalized education, e-libraries, learning management systems (LMS), and digital assessment tools significantly contribute to improving learning accessibility, research innovation, global competitiveness, and industry-academia collaboration





**Research Question 4:** How does improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria?

**Table 4: Mean Responses on how improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item	Male Teachers N=157			Decision	Female Teachers N=63			Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD			$\bar{X}$	SD		
1	Strengthening accreditation processes ensures that tertiary institutions meet global academic and professional standards.	3.15	0.59	A		3.12	0.87	A	
2	Regular quality assurance assessments drive continuous improvement in curriculum design and instructional methods.	3.10	0.51	A		3.18	0.82	A	
3	Institutions with strong accreditation records attract international students and faculty, enhancing diversity and competitiveness.	3.68	0.85	A		3.10	0.66	A	
4	Quality assurance frameworks promote adherence to ethical research standards, boosting the credibility of academic publications.	3.87	0.77	A		3.29	0.66	A	
5	Accredited programs enhance graduate employability by ensuring that academic qualifications meet international labor market expectations.	3.64	0.89	A		3.10	0.81	A	
6	Strong quality control mechanisms reduce the prevalence of academic malpractice and certificate forgery, enhancing institutional integrity.	3.93	0.36	A		3.12	0.77	A	
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.56</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>A</b>	

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)





The results indicate strong agreement that strengthening accreditation processes ensures adherence to global academic standards, attracts international students and faculty, and improves graduate employability. The grand mean scores (3.56 for male lecturers and 3.15 for female lecturers) affirm the general awareness of the role of quality assurance in improving higher education standards.

### Test of Hypotheses

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

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 5: Z-test Analysis on how improving financial sustainability in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Groups	N	X	SD	Df	$\alpha$	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male lecturers	157	3.35	0.71	218	0.05	1.34	$\pm 1.96$	Null hypothesis accepted
Female lecturers	63	3.24	0.82					

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

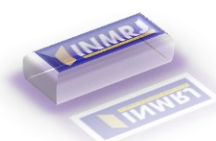
The z-test analysis in Table .5 showed a calculated z-value of 1.34, which is less than the critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$  at a 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female lecturers' awareness and opinions on the impact of financial sustainability on tertiary education competitiveness.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 6: Z-test Analysis on how improving effective leadership in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Groups	N	X	SD	Df	$\alpha$	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male lecturers	157	3.14	0.74	218	0.05	0.25	$\pm 1.96$	Null hypothesis accepted
Female lecturers	63	3.11	0.77					

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)





The z-test analysis in Table 6 showed the calculated z-value of 0.25 is less than the critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$  at a 0.05 significance level, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This implies that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of male and female lecturers regarding the role of effective leadership in enhancing tertiary education competitiveness.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 7: Z-test Analysis on how improving technological integration and digital learning in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Groups	N	X	SD	Df	$\alpha$	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male lecturers	157	2.43	0.51	218	0.05	0.37	$\pm 1.96$	Null hypothesis accepted
Female lecturers	63	3.39	0.63					

Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

The z-test analysis in Table 7 showed a calculated z-value of 0.37, which is less than the critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$  at a 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of male and female lecturers on the role of technological integration and digital learning in enhancing global competitiveness.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of Male and female administrators on how improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 8: Z-test Analysis on how improving quality assurance and accreditation in education system enhance global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria**

Groups	N	X	SD	Df	$\alpha$	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male lecturers	157	3.56	0.66	218	0.05	3.47	$\pm 1.96$	Null hypothesis rejected
Female lecturers	63	3.15	0.76					







Source: Researcher Field Work, (2025)

The z-test analysis in Table 8 showed a calculated z-value of 3.47, which is greater than the critical z-value of  $\pm 1.96$  at a 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference in perceptions between male and female lecturers. Male lecturers perceive quality assurance and accreditation as having a greater impact on global competitiveness than their female counterparts.

## Discussion of Findings

### Financial Sustainability for Global Competitiveness of Tertiary Institutions

The findings indicate that financial sustainability is crucial for enhancing the global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. A well-funded educational system enables investment in skill-development programs, modern infrastructure, faculty development, and research initiatives. This is in alignment with the work of Tilak (2019), who argues that adequate funding in higher education promotes academic excellence, research output, and international recognition.

The results for the corresponding hypothesis one show a ( $z = 1.34$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) confirms that there is no significant difference between male and female administrators' perceptions. Similarly, Marginson (2018) highlights that financial sustainability in universities is positively correlated with global ranking and graduate employability, underscoring the need for consistent funding mechanisms.

### Effective Leadership for Global Competitiveness of Tertiary Institutions

The findings suggest that effective leadership is fundamental to achieving global competitiveness in tertiary education. Leadership attributes such as policy implementation, financial accountability, international collaboration, and governance structures were rated highly, with mean scores of 3.14 for male lecturers and 3.11 for female lecturers. This supports the argument made by Bush & Glover (2020), who emphasize that strong institutional leadership fosters an environment conducive to academic excellence and international visibility.

The result for the corresponding hypothesis two showed the z-test analysis ( $z = 0.25$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) shows no significant difference between male and female administrators' perspectives, reinforcing the idea that leadership effectiveness is universally recognized as critical to tertiary education quality. Empirical studies, such as those by Avolio & Bass (2019), also confirm that transformational leadership in higher education is associated with improved institutional reputation and student outcomes.

### Technological Integration for Global Competitiveness of Tertiary Institutions

The study highlights that technological integration and digital learning significantly enhance the global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions. The mean responses (3.43 for male lecturers and 3.39 for female lecturers) suggest widespread acknowledgment of the role of digital tools, e-learning



platforms, and AI-driven education in improving academic performance and institutional visibility. Empirical evidence from UNESCO (2021) suggests that universities adopting digital learning technologies experience higher student engagement and global collaborations.

The result for the corresponding hypothesis three showed the z-test results ( $z = 0.37$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) indicate no significant difference in perceptions between male and female administrators, demonstrating general agreement on the transformative impact of digital learning. Previous research by Weller (2020) supports this, emphasizing that digitalization fosters international academic exchange and enhances research productivity.

### **Quality Assurance and Accreditation for Global Competitiveness of Tertiary Institutions**

The study reveals that quality assurance and accreditation significantly influence the global competitiveness of tertiary institutions. The grand mean scores (3.56 for male lecturers and 3.15 for female lecturers) indicate strong support for accreditation processes in maintaining academic standards and international recognition. This aligns with the findings of Harvey & Green (2019), who state that accreditation frameworks ensure credibility and attract partnerships with global institutions.

The result for the corresponding hypothesis four showed that the z-test analysis ( $z = 3.47$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) shows a significant difference between male and female lecturers' opinions, with male lecturers perceiving a greater impact of accreditation on global competitiveness. This variation may be due to differences in exposure to accreditation processes. Empirical studies by Cheng (2020) affirm that accreditation boosts institutional reputation, enhances research collaboration, and increases student mobility.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study underscores the pivotal role of financial sustainability, effective leadership, technological integration, and quality assurance in enhancing the global competitiveness of tertiary education institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings highlight the importance of sustained funding, strong institutional leadership, digital learning adoption, and accreditation processes in achieving international recognition. While perceptions between male and female administrators were largely similar across most variables, a significant difference was noted in views on accreditation. These insights reinforce the need for strategic investments and policy reforms to position tertiary institutions for global excellence.



## Recommendation


The study recommended that:

1. The government and stakeholders should establish consistent funding mechanisms to support infrastructure development, faculty training, and research initiatives, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.
2. Tertiary institutions should prioritize leadership development programs that enhance financial accountability, policy implementation, and international collaboration to improve global competitiveness.
3. Universities should invest in digital learning tools, e-learning platforms, and AI-driven education to foster academic excellence, increase student engagement, and expand global research collaborations.
4. Institutions should actively engage in accreditation processes and maintain high academic standards to enhance credibility, attract global partnerships, and boost institutional reputation.

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