MANAGING TEACHER AUTONOMY FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The study focused on managing teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. Four research questions and four corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population of the study was 8, 940 participants consisting of 282 principals and 8, 658 teachers in the 282 public Universal Basic Education schools in Rivers State out of which 533 respondents comprising 163 principals and 370 teachers were sampled for the study. Cochran's minimum sample size determination technique was used to determine the sample size for the study while simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a 20-item questionnaire titled "Managing Teacher Autonomy for the Attainment of Quality Basic Education Questionnaire" (MTAAQBEQ). The instrument was validated by two specialists in the Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha statistics with an index of 0.88. Research questions raised were answered using mean, standard deviation and rank order while the hypotheses were tested using z-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study indicated that teachers perceive their autonomy as an opportunity to contribute to outlined educational goals and objectives. This is however hindered by certain challenges such as lack of qualification and experience among these teachers. It was recommended that teachers should be trained on how to use their autonomy to contribute to the actualization of educational goals and objectives in Rivers State.

Keywords: Teacher, Autonomy, Quality, Basic Education, Rivers State

Introduction
Basic education is important not just for students who are the beneficiaries but also for parents and the society at large who make use of these students later in the future for meeting the developmental goals of the nation at large. This is because this level of education helps to prepare students both numerically, literarily and otherwise for future responsibilities that will contribute to personal and societal growth and development. However, these objectives will appear far from being actualized without the contribution of the teacher who plays diverse roles for the overall development of students in this level of education.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) as captured in the national policy on education, basic education which is free and compulsory is aimed at planting a sense of national consciousness in students for the sustainable development of the nation. The teachers engaged at this level of education must therefore be professional in their service

delivery in order for these objectives to be achieved. This is why basic education teachers need to ensure some level of autonomy in order to contribute to the realization of the educational objectives at this level. This is because these teachers who are frequently with these young minds recognize their strength and weaknesses and know how to assist these students to move towards the attainment of these goals if they are given the freedom to do so.

Lundstrom (2015) pointed out that autonomy is the use of one's discretion to provide judgment which is given or exchanged for specialized expert knowledge that professional practitioners use to promote the welfare of their client in this case which are the students. Similarly, Akbarpour-Tehrani and Mansor (2012) explained that when we talk about autonomy in the teaching profession, we are referring to the freedom given to teachers to decide and select their own teaching methodologies, design their own tasks and evaluate the outcome. This means that a teacher with autonomy has the right to decide and take responsibilities about selecting or designing materials and strategies for classroom use and to evaluate the outcomes and cooperate in finding solutions for the teaching problems in schools. This makes it easy for obstacles to the attainment of the goals of basic education to be quickly identified and resolved before they generate irreparable consequences.

In a related manner, Wiebe and Macdonald as cited in Wright (2018) pointed out that teachers see their autonomy as a line that determines what is important and necessary in the school. This practice is important for ensuring that every student contributes in one way or the other to the development of their immediate society. The National Curriculum Framework as cited in Sehrawat (2014:5) also quipped that "teacher autonomy is essential for ensuring a learning environment that addresses children's diverse needs". As much as the learner requires space, freedom, flexibility, and respect, the teacher also requires the same level of freedom to be able to meet these demands.

The autonomy enjoyed by teachers in basic education schools will make little or no impact if the teacher has no proper perception about the privileges that are provided. Gavrilyuk, Nosova, Susloparova and Lakhno (2015:9) asserted that "autonomy is determined by external factors such as the extent of the provided academic freedom, state structure, educational legislation, funding, characteristics of the learning environment etc. It is also determined by internal factors such as the desire and readiness of teachers and students to act autonomously. Teachers must therefore have the right perception about how they intend to use this freedom for the actualization of the goals and objectives of basic education.

It is important for basic education teachers to recognize that the autonomy given to them is for the purpose of dealing with the individual differences that exists among students at this level of education. In addition, they must see their autonomy as an avenue to promote collaborate learning between the teacher and students under their care. It should also be an avenue for them to bring out the abilities of these students while dealing with their educational weaknesses. If the teacher fails to recognize that their autonomy is for the purpose of promoting talent discovery and developing the abilities of their students, they will make little or no benefit out of this privilege. Furthermore, Pearson and Moomaw as cited in Varatharaj (2018:106) asserted that:

> Autonomous teachers were able to handle their workload
> positively while disseminating the duties well. With the need to
> master the 21stcentury learning skills, quality of teaching is a
> key factor that will determine the educational achievement
> particularly in realizing the new curriculum set by the
> Malaysian education department. The increase in autonomy as

stipulated in the new curriculum will render teachers more freedom and flexibility in carrying out their duties. Greater autonomy given to the teacher means they have greater responsibility and are accountable of their actions

However, management the issue of teacher's autonomy comes with great responsibilities in other to avoid misplacement of educational priorities. Similarly, the professional competence of some of these teachers poses a challenge in providing them with some level of autonomy. This is because the teaching profession is a noble one like every other and requires the presence of professionals with the right qualification. However, some of the teachers lack this qualification and this pose a challenges in providing them with some level of autonomy in dealing with educational issues which may be counterproductive as a result of their qualification and experience.

There are difference strategies that can be adopted in the process of enhancing teacher's autonomy. One of the key strategies is by ensuring all teachers acquire the required qualification and experience which will provide them with the know-how on how to handle educational issues that are brought to their attention. In addition, teachers' autonomy also requires regular training of teachers to keep them abreast with how to utilize their freedom for achieving outlined educational goals and objectives. This is important for the actualization of the goals of basic education and for national growth and development in the long run.

Statement of the Problem
The activities that take place in the classroom under the watch of the teacher are fundamental to the attainment of the goals and objectives of education at any level of education. Teachers in basic education schools in Rivers State appear to lack an understanding of their role as a major stakeholder in the pursuit and attainment of educational goals and objectives in basic education schools. Some of these teachers contribute very little or nothing to the administration of the school and in some cases lack control and ingenuity in handling classroom activities. This is also reflected in their attitude towards care for students, learning resources and the goals of education in general. It therefore seem that these teachers are either uninformed about their roles as teachers or are being deprived the opportunity to carry out their responsibilities professionally by school administrators. This development calls for an urgent intervention to forestall the compromise of educational goals and objectives and hence the need for this study.

Research Questions
The following research questions were raised to guide the study:
(i)   What are the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?
(ii)   What role does teacher autonomy play in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?
(iii) What are the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?
(iv)   What are the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

(i)   There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

(ii)   There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

(iii)   There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

(iv)   There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Methodology

The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population of the study was 8, 940 participants consisting of 282 principals and 8, 658 teachers in the 282 public Universal Basic Education schools in Rivers State. Sample for the study consisted of 533 respondents comprising 163 principals and 370 teachers in the selected schools. The sample size was determined using Cochran's minimum sample size determination technique and the sampling technique adopted was simple random sampling technique. The instrument adopted for collection of data was a 20-item questionnaire tagged "Managing Teacher Autonomy for the Attainment of Quality Basic Education Questionnaire" (MTAAQBEQ). The instrument had two sections namely; Section A used for the collection of demographic data on the respondents and Section B which contained the questionnaire items and was divided into four subheadings with five items each and was responded to on a four point modified Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) with weighted values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face and content validated by two specialists in the Department of Educational Management, University of Ibadan. To determine the reliability of the instrument, 10 copies were administered to 10 participants (five principals and five teachers) who were not part of the sample drawn for the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha statistic with an average index of 0.88. The research questions were answered using mean, standard deviation and rank order while the hypotheses were tested using z-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making was determined by adding up the weighted values 4, 3, 2 and 1 = 10 and divided by 4 which equals 2.50.

Results

Data collected for the study were analyzed and presented in tables below. The four research questions were answered in the study using mean, standard deviation and ranking while the four hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and rank order scores on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Principals n=156 Mean X_1	SD	Teachers n=358 Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	Mean Set $X \bar{X}$	Rank	Decision
1	The concept refers to my freedom from undue control	2.40	0.99	2.79	1.05	2.60	4th	Agreed
2	It is an opportunity given to me to make choice in my area of responsibility	2.38	1.07	2.20	1.16	2.29	5th	Disagreed
3	It is a professional responsibility for me to deliver better services	2.83	0.85	2.96	0.94	2.90	1st	Agreed
4	It refers to my freedom to make pedagogical decision	2.88	0.81	2.56	1.09	2.72	3rd	Agreed
5	It is a duty assigned to me to assist my learners take responsibility for their learning outcomes	2.77	0.91	2.77	1.07	2.77	2nd	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	**2.65**	**0.93**	**2.66**	**1.06**	**2.65**		**Agreed**

In table 1, items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were responded to by the principals with mean scores of 2.40, 2.38, 2.38, 2.83, 2.88 and 2.77. Items 1 and 2 were below the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision and as such implied that the items were disagreed while the other items; 3, 4 and 5 which were above the criterion mean score of 2.50 implied that the items were agreed. On the other hand, the responses of the teachers to the same set of items showed that the items produced mean scores of 2.79, 2.20, 2.96, 2.56 and 2.77. All of the items agreed except for item 2 which was below the criterion mean score and was disagreed. In summary, the grand mean scores of 2.65 and 2.66 showed that the principals and teachers both agreed on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. The grand mean set of 2.65 also buttressed the fact that the respondents both agreed on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What role does teacher autonomy play in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and rank order scores on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Principals n=156		Teachers n=358		Mean Set	Rank	Decision
		Mean X_1	SD	Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	$X\bar{X}$		
6	Students diversity needs are easily satisfied	2.88	0.98	2.97	1.06	2.93	1st	Agreed
7	Collaborative teaching is easily promoted	2.69	0.94	2.86	1.02	2.78	3rd	Agreed
8	Teachers personal and professional competence is enhanced	2.74	0.93	2.67	1.09	2.71	4th	Agreed
9	School curriculum is fully implemented	2.75	0.92	2.58	1.18	2.67	5th	Agreed
10	Virtual learning environment is promoted	2.88	0.79	2.72	0.87	2.80	2nd	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	**2.79**	**0.91**	**2.76**	**1.04**	**2.77**		**Agreed**

In table 2, the responses of the principals to items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 produced mean scores of 2.88, 2.69, 2.74, 2.75 and 2.88. All of these items were above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision and as such suggested that they were all agreed. On the part of the teachers, the same set of items produced mean scores of 2.97, 2.86, 2.67, 2.58 and 2.72. These items were equally above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision and as such implied that they were all agreed. The grand mean scores of 2.79 and 2.76 showed that the principals and the teachers both agreed on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. Similarly, the grand mean of 2.77 showed that the both respondents agreed on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and rank order scores on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Principals n=156		Teachers n=358		Mean Set	Rank	Decision
		Mean X_1	SD	Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	$X\bar{X}$		
11	There is a fear of change in the school community	2.95	0.86	2.72	1.04	2.84	3rd	Agreed
12	Political interference in form of policies and regulations	2.59	1.04	2.98	0.99	2.79	5th	Agreed
13	Teachers personality	2.75	0.93	2.95	0.78	2.85	2nd	Agreed

S/No	Items							
	factor							
14	Unhealthy competition arises among teachers	2.89	0.92	2.92	0.86	2.91	1st	Agreed
15	Educational goals and objectives may be compromised	2.71	0.84	2.90	0.87	2.81	4th	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	**2.78**	**1.02**	**2.89**	**0.91**	**2.84**		**Agreed**

Table 3 indicated that the responses of the principals to items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 produced mean scores of 2.95, 2.59, 2.75, 2.89 and 2.71. These items which were above the criterion mean score were all agreed in response to the items raised. In the same manner, the responses of the teachers to the same set of items produced mean scores of 2.72, 2.98, 2.95, 2.92 and 2.90. These items were equally all agreed since the mean values were all above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision. The grand mean score of 2.78 from the principals and 2.89 from the teachers showed that they both agreed on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. The grand mean set of 2.84 also showed that the respondents of the study agreed on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: What are the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean, standard deviation and rank order scores on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Principals n=156		Teachers n=358		Mean Set		
		Mean $\overline{X}_1$	SD	Mean $\overline{X}_2$	SD	$X \overline{X}$	Rank	Decision
16	Enforcing collaboration and participation	2.87	0.94	2.78	0.83	2.83	4th	Agreed
17	Rotation of roles and responsibilities	2.96	0.76	2.99	0.94	2.98	1st	Agreed
18	Creating self-awareness	2.82	0.81	2.29	1.26	2.56	5th	Agreed
19	Regular training on fundamental areas of responsibilities	2.95	0.74	2.89	0.98	2.92	3rd	Agreed
20	Professional performance among teachers should be rewarded	2.97	0.72	2.98	0.98	2.98	1st	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	**2.91**	**0.79**	**2.79**	**0.99**	**2.85**		**Agreed**

Table 4 revealed that the responses of the principals sampled for the study to items 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 produced mean scores of 2.87, 2.96, 2.82, 2.95 and 2.97. These items were all above the criterion mean score and therefore showed that they were all agreed in response to the items raised. The responses of the teachers to the same set of items revealed mean values of 2.78, 2.99, 2.29, 2.89 and 2.98. All of these items were equally

agreed except for item 18 with mean score of 2.29 which was disagreed for being below the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision. The grand mean score of the principals which was 2.91 and that of the teachers which was 2.79 showed that they both agreed on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. The grand mean set value of 2.85 equally showed that the respondents both agreed on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Table 5: z-test result of the significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Principals	156	2.65	0.93					Fail to reject
				512	0.13	1.96	0.05	
Teachers	358	2.66	1.06					

In table 5, the value of z-cal. of 0.13 was less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 512 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected indicating that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the perceptions of teachers on the concept of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Table 6: z-test result of the significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Principals	156	2.79	0.91					Fail to reject
				512	0.40	1.96	0.05	
Teachers	358	2.76	1.04					

Table 6 showed that at 512 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, the value of z-crit. of 1.96 was more than the value of z-cal. of 0.40. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected and as such implied that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the role teacher autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Table 7: z-test result of the significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Principals	156	2.78	0.92					Fail to reject
				512	1.47	1.96	0.05	
Teachers	358	2.89	0.91					

Table 7 indicated that the value of z-cal was 1.47 while the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 512 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the value of z-cal. of 1.47 was less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected indicating that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the challenges faced in the management of teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Table 8: z-test result of the significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Principals	156	2.91	0.79					Fail to reject
				512	1.85	1.96	0.05	
Teachers	358	2.79	0.99					

In table 8, the value of z-cal. was 1.85 while the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 512 degrees of freedom. Therefore, since the value of z-cal. of 1.85 was less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected revealing that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the strategies for improving teacher autonomy for the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State.

Discussion
The findings of the study revealed that principals and teachers both disagreed that teachers' autonomy was perceived as an opportunity for them to make sure their choice prevails in any educational responsibility. This finding suggests that the teachers are still willing to align their choices with the values of the school. This finding aligns with the position of Tadic (2015) who reported in his study that teachers' have the perception that school climate supports the active involvement of all collective members in decision-making and promotes in them a sense of responsibility. This finding suggests that these teachers do not perceive their autonomy as a means of overriding the programs and policies of the school but rather as an opportunity to use their privileges to support the course of the school.

The respondents of the study both agreed that they perceive their autonomy as an opportunity to make professional suggestions as well as make relevant pedagogical decision. This finding was also supported with the fact that these teachers see their autonomy as an

opportunity to carry out more responsibilities. Farahi (2015) in their study also agreed with this finding as their study suggested that both students and teachers in the study area have positive views about their autonomy as they believe that their privilege in contributing to decision making is an autonomous practice that helps to promote their competence. Teachers in these schools, therefore, have the right perception about their autonomy and this is relevant for the goals and objectives of basic education to be achieved.

The principals and teachers agreed in their responses that the role teachers' autonomy plays in the attainment of quality basic education is that it helps them to meet the educational needs of diversity of students as well as assist them promote collaborative learning which contributes significantly to the goals and objectives of basic education. This is not surprising as study carried out by Alonazi (2017) equally showed in its finding that English language teachers sampled for the study often encouraged autonomous learning in their classrooms as it helps in meeting the diversity of learners needs in the school. The teachers also responded that their autonomy is an opportunity for them to develop their personal educational abilities which is relevant for meeting the goals and objectives of basic education in Rivers State.

Furthermore, the teachers agreed that their autonomy is an opportunity for the implementation of the curriculum of basic education. Ja (2017) agreed with this finding as he pointed out in the finding of his study that their autonomy is an opportunity for them to act properly as facilitator manager, assessor, resource persons, and counselors. All of these responses which the teacher takes up as a result of their autonomy are for the purpose of meeting the goals and objectives of basic education in their school.

There are diversity of challenges that occur in the process of managing teachers' autonomy and the respondents of this study agreed that the fear of change is one of the problems encountered in the process of managing teachers' autonomy. This is not far from the truth as school administrators are sometimes afraid of delegating too must power to their teachers for fear of misappropriation of authority. In addition to this, the study showed that the respondents of the study agreed that political interference as well as teachers' personality factors also pose a challenge to the management of teachers' autonomy in these schools. Marshall (2019) out rightly agreed with this finding as the study carried out by him equally showed that the top-down co-ordination of school activities is a major problem in the management of teachers' autonomy in the study area.

Furthermore, the teachers agreed that unhealthy competition among fellow teachers and other educational stakeholders pose a threat to the management of teachers' autonomy. Educational scholars such as Yasmin and Sohail (2018) pointed out from the outcome of their study that Pakistani learners and teachers believed that their autonomy is hindered by a number of cultural factors. This cultural difference explains why teachers may have different perception on the administration of the school which often leads to unhealthy competition among these teachers. Similarly, Smith (n.d.) reported that the activities which teachers wish to engage in while in school which sometimes differ from the objectives of the school limits the implementation of teacher's autonomy. This development suggests the need for proper regulations for teacher's autonomy to enhance and not limit the goals and objectives of the school.

There are diverse strategies that can be used for promoting teachers' autonomy for the attainment of the goals and objectives of basic education in Rivers State and the principals and teachers sampled for the study showed from their response that these strategies which they agreed are appropriate includes enforcing participatory principles as well as rotating of

jobs among teachers. This measure will serve as a means of check and balances to ensure that the autonomy of the teachers does not compromise the objectives of the school. Wermke, Rick and Salokangas (2018) agreed with this position as they revealed in the findings of their study that engaging in multi tasks through job rotation helps in the control of their autonomy.

Similarly, the responses of the teachers showed that they agreed that regular training as well as reward of performance are potent ways of managing teachers' autonomy to ensure that it contribute to the educational goals and objectives of the school. This is not surprising as da Silva and Molstad (2020) equally pointed out from the findings of their study that putting the right policies in place as well as collective work makes it easy for the autonomy of teachers to be monitored. These strategies will go a long way to ensure the attainment of the goals and objectives of basic education in Rivers State.

Conclusion
The principals and teachers shared the same opinion on how the management of teacher autonomy will contribute to the attainment of quality basic education in Rivers State. Furthermore, teachers in basic education schools in Rivers State have a positive perception of how their autonomy relates to quality education in their schools.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:
(i)   Teachers in basic education schools in Rivers State need to be subjected to regular training where the essence of their job autonomy can be fully exposed as well as how their job autonomy could assist in the attainment of quality education at that level.
(ii)   School administrators should ensure that the roles and responsibilities assigned to teachers are in tandem with the level of autonomy given to them. This will help to ensure that the teachers are efficient and effective in their areas of responsibilities.
(iii)   The government should make adequate laws that will protect the autonomy of teachers from undue interference both from internal and external forces. This will go a long way to contribute to the attainment of the goals and objectives of education in the long and short run.
(iv)   Principals should ensure that teachers participate in the rolling out of their job plan for the school as this will help to ensure that these teachers are designated to their areas of comparative advantage which will contribute significantly to the attainment of the goals and objectives of basic education in Rivers State.

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