

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP, TEACHERS' DEVELOPMENT, AND EFFICIENCY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BORIPE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Distributed leadership has been an effective strategy for managing human capacity in every administrative structures, despite this, a lot of school administrators (principals) continue to use authoritarian methods that exclude teachers from decision-making by not allowing them to partake in leadership roles. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the influence of distributed leadership on the professional development and efficiency of secondary school teachers in the Boriipe Local Government Area of Osun State. The study has 2 specific purposes, research questions, and corresponding hypotheses. Researchers used a descriptive survey research design. The population was 105 public secondary school teachers. The sample size was 105, using the census sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. The instrument has a reliability index of 0.84. Researchers retrieved 84 copies of the questionnaire, making approximately a 20% mortality rate, and statistical analyses were based on the copies retrieved. Mean rating and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, and hypotheses were tested using an independent sample t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that the influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of teachers in public secondary school was of very high extent ($\bar{x}=3.90$; $SD=0.303$) and efficiency of teachers ($\bar{x}=3.74$; $SD=0.315$). Additionally, there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on professional development ($t_{82} = -2.432$; $P = 0.438$, > 0.05) and teachers' efficiency ($t_{82} = -2.628$; $P = 0.854 > 0.05$) of public secondary school teachers. The study concluded that principals or heads of public secondary schools that adopt distributed leadership will benefit from professional development and teachers' efficiency for the betterment and achievement of the school's objectives. The study recommended that distributed leadership practices should be integrated into the secondary school management structure to drive teacher professional development.

Keywords: *Distributed Leadership, Professional Development, Public Secondary School, Teacher's Efficiency,*

Introduction

Traditional top-down styles and structures of leadership in education are presently giving way to more collaborative and participatory strategies in recent years, especially in developed counties. Distributed leadership is one such new paradigm that stresses shared responsibility among school staff in order to increase teacher performance and school success. The increasing understanding that leadership works best when several actors are given the freedom to contribute according to their experience, qualifications, exposure, and proximity to problems is reflected in this paradigm shift.

Distributed leadership presents a promising strategy for boosting teacher professional development and teaching effectiveness in the Nigerian educational system, particularly in states like Osun where regulatory changes are being implemented to strengthen school governance. However, in the context of this study, the attributes or elements of distributed leadership focused on have to do with shared responsibility, collaborative decision-making, interdependence and teamwork, adding to your knowledge of pedagogical activities, training and capacity building, formal and informal leadership roles, situational and contextual leadership emergence, accountability, and feedback (Shabalala, 2024)).

Distributed leadership practice involves several people in a school participating in leadership activities (Zaghmout & Harrison, 2025; Shabalala, 2024). Recognizing each member of the school community's leadership potential and empowering them to actively contribute to school improvement is more important than assigning responsibilities. It has been established by researchers that distributed leadership improves teacher learning, teamwork, and job satisfaction (Harris & Jones, 2019; Bush & Glover, 2016). This, in the mind of the researchers, indicates that it opens doors for participation in professional groups, joint decision-making, and peer mentorship. Ukaobasi and Ezeani (2022) have further discovered that teachers' motivation and ability to advance their careers increased dramatically in Nigerian schools when they were assigned leadership duties. Effective classroom management and lesson delivery are key components of teacher efficiency. Research conducted by Okeke and Onuorah (2021) revealed a strong link between enhanced teacher performance and distributed leadership. Similarly, Afolabi and Adeyanju (2023) found that teachers' levels of innovation and instructional effectiveness increased when they shared leadership responsibilities in a study of public secondary schools. The term "teacher development" describes the ongoing professional development of educators through collaborative efforts, mentoring, reflective practice, and both official and informal learning opportunities. It is essential for raising student achievement, school efficacy, and teacher quality. According to Ukaobasi and Ezeani (2022), collaborative learning settings and participatory leadership had a significant impact on teacher development. Participation in internal professional development activities was higher among teachers who held leadership positions. In the same vein, Olorunsola and Olayemi (2021) submitted that schools with collaborative leadership had better-structured teacher development programmes, including peer coaching, school-based workshops, and curriculum review sessions, which in the long run contribute to teachers' professional development and eventual teachers' efficiency in the discharge of duties.

The term "teacher efficiency" describes a teacher's capacity to accomplish learning objectives through efficient classroom administration, instruction, assessment procedures, and student participation on or before the required time. Time management, student learning outcomes, and the quality of instruction are frequently linked to it (Ololube, 2021). In addition to being influenced by organizational support, leadership style, and professional development opportunities, teacher efficiency is also a result of teacher competency. Further to this, Yusuf and Bello (2022) opined that teachers who had access to in-service training demonstrated better classroom performance and higher instructional quality, variables that may be influenced by teachers' gender.

In education research, gender has long been seen as an important variable. Gender differences may show up in training participation, motivation, performance, leadership roles, and access to professional development opportunities when it comes to teacher efficiency and development. For educational systems to be egalitarian, it is essential to comprehend how gender affects these factors. According to Afolayan and Adegbite (2020), self-perceived competence and willingness to participate in continuous professional development (CPD) were influenced by gender. While female

instructors showed greater participation in collaborative learning sessions, male teachers were more comfortable taking on leadership positions. In all secondary schools in Boriipe Local Government, the gender configuration comprises both male and female.

A mix of public and private secondary schools is found in the semi-urban Boriipe Local Government in Osun State, but this study covered only both male and female public secondary school teachers within the jurisdiction. Building teacher ability and having strong leadership are still essential even in the face of infrastructure issues. In order to influence local education policies and teacher development frameworks, it is pertinent and essential to investigate the effects of distributed leadership on teachers' efficiency in this community.

Statement of the Problem

Although distributed leadership is becoming more and more popular in educational discourse, little is known about how it actually affects teacher efficiency and development in semi-urban areas like Boriipe Local Government. A lot of school administrators continue to use authoritarian methods that exclude teachers from decision-making by not allowing them to partake in leadership roles, perhaps based on their experience, training, field of expertise, exposures, capability, and natural gifts and endowments (Zaghmout & Harrison 2025). This attitude of superiority of heads of schools may lower possibilities for ongoing learning and development of teachers to fully take up leadership roles in the future, lower instructor motivation to act accordingly or take proactive steps when needed, and ultimately lower the quality of instruction. This study explores how distributed leadership techniques can improve teachers' efficiency and development in Boriipe LGA.

Further to the above, in many schools, teachers are not heavily involved in the planning or execution of professional development, which is either sporadic or externally driven. This frequently results in training that isn't relevant and inadequate use of skills in the classroom. Moreover, due to a lack of internal accountability frameworks and inadequate teamwork, instructional gaps continue to exist. Schools with just hierarchical leadership frequently face problems with fragmented communication, inconsistent teaching methods, and delayed curriculum implementation. At the same time, when head teachers retire, or are transferred, or become handicapped, administrative voids result from many schools' poor succession planning, the gap that distributed leadership addresses, especially in ensuring continuity and resilience in school governance while preparing a larger leadership base.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of distributed leadership on the development and efficiency of secondary school teachers, but specifically, the study has two purposes:

1. To examine the extent of influence of distributed leadership on professional development of secondary school teachers;
2. To investigate the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of secondary school teachers.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of secondary school teachers?
2. What is the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of secondary school teachers?

Hypotheses

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of secondary school teachers.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of secondary school teachers.

Methodology

Researchers adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 105 public secondary school teachers in the Boripe Local Government Area of Osun State. The sample size stood at 105. The reason for this was based on the decision of researchers to make use of the censor sampling technique. Since the population is not large, the census sampling technique affords researchers the opportunity to administer questionnaires to all elements that constitute the population. The instrument of data collection was the researchers' self-structured questionnaire, tagged "Distributed Leadership and Professional Development and Efficiency of Secondary School Teachers" (DLPDESST), which contained 14 items. The questionnaire was divided into two sections and was structured based on a 4-point modified Likert-type rating scale: Very High Extent (VHE) 4 points, High Extent (HE) 3 points, Low Extent (LE) 2 points, and Very Low Extent (VLE) 1 point. The instrument was validated by two experts, one in the field of education management and the other in the field of test and measurement. The instrument was pilot tested in selected public secondary schools in the Ogbomosho South Local Government Area of Oyo State. Ogbomosho South Local Government is not within Osun State but shares similarity with Boripe Local Government in Osun State. Respondents under pilot testing were 30, and data collected from pilot testing were subjected to further statistical analysis to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. This was determined through the use of Cronbach Alpha, and a reliability index of 0.84 was obtained. This, to the best knowledge of the researcher, indicated that the instrument was reliable. According to Umoru (2022), a reliability index of +0.75 or greater is considered to indicate good reliability. Two research assistants were engaged to assist the researchers in the distribution, retrieval, and collation of the completed questionnaire. Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, research assistants were familiarized with the objectives, ethics, and procedure of this type of data collection. Researchers were able to retrieve 84 correctly completed copies of the questionnaire, giving approximately an 80% success rate and a 20% mortality rate. Statistical analysis was based on 84 copies of the questionnaire retrieved. Percentage was used to describe demographic data, mean rating, and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while hypotheses were tested using an independent sample t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. Mean scores between 3.25 and 4.00 were considered Very High Extent (VHE), 2.50–3.24 were categorized as High Extent (HE), items with scores between 1.75 and 2.49 were classified as Low Extent (LE), and 1.00–1.74 are labeled as Very Low Extent (VLE). A standard deviation within the range of ± 1.96 is considered as having low variability from the mean value, while the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis was based on the rule that if the P value is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted, or vice versa.

Result

The results of data analysis were presented according to the research questions and hypotheses.

Table 1: Showing the Gender of Respondents

Variable: Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	37	44%

Male	47	56%
Total	84	100%

Table 1 depicts that 37 public secondary school teachers in Boriye Local Government are female, representing 44%, and 47 are male public secondary school teachers, representing 56%. This indicated that there are more male teachers than female teachers in the Boriye Local Government Area of Osun State.

Research Question One: What is the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of secondary school teachers?

Table 2: Responses to Extent of Influence of Distributed Leadership on Professional Development of Public Secondary School Teachers

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	S.D.	Remarks
1	Shared responsibility advances your job knowledge	3.98	.196	VHE
2	Collaborative decision-making adds value to your job performance.	3.96	.205	VHE
3	Interdependence and teamwork add to your knowledge of pedagogical activities	3.93	.232	VHE
4	On-the-job leadership training and capacity building enhance your professional development	3.90	.305	VHE
5	Allocation of formal and informal leadership role propels your deeper understanding of future role expectations.	3.87	.386	VHE
6	Assigning leadership role based on situation and context prepares you for future challenges	3.85	.394	VHE
7	Distributed leadership system enhances your accountability and feedback attributes	3.82	.402	VHE
Grand Weighted Average		3.90	.303	VHE

Table 2 showed that the majority of respondents were unanimous in their answers to the items on the Table, majority of them agreed to a very high extent to all items. This agreement is obvious, as all the mean scores are above the fixed decision value of 3.25. The standard deviation on the table ranged from 0.196 to 0.402, which falls within the region of ± 1.96 ; this indicates that there is low variability to the mean in the respondents' responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.90 and 0.303, respectively, are indicators of the fact that the influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of public secondary school teachers is of a very high extent.

Research Question Two: What is the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of secondary school teachers?

Table 3: Responses to Extent of Influence of Distributed Leadership on Efficiency of Public Secondary School Teachers

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	S.D.	Remarks
8	On the job leadership training and capacity building motivate you to give your best on the job.	3.96	.204	VHE
9	Accountability and feedback attributes of distributed leadership makes you a responsible teacher	3.92	.233	VHE
10	Interdependence and teamwork in effective implementation of school curriculum	3.80	.281	VHE
11	Shared responsibility enhances your job performance	3.71	.316	VHE
12	Allocation of formal and informal leadership role contributes to your level of job satisfaction	3.64	.369	VHE
13	Assigning leadership role based on situation and context advances your commitment to your job	3.60	.394	VHE
14	Collaborative decision making assist you to always complete your job or assigned duties on or before the expiry time	3.53	.410	VHE
Grand Weighted Average		3.74	.315	VHE

Table 3 revealed that the majority of respondents were unanimous in their answers to the items on the Table, majority of them agreed to a very high extent to all items. This agreement is apparent as all the mean scores are above the fixed decision value of 3.25. The standard deviation on the table ranged from 0.204 to 0.410, which falls within the region of ± 1.96 ; this indicates that there is low disparity to the mean in the respondents' responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.74 and 0.315, respectively, are pointers to the fact that the influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of public secondary school teachers is of a very high extent.

Testing of Hypotheses

The two null hypotheses of the study were tested using an independent sample t-test. The null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The summary of the test of hypotheses is presented in Tables 4 and 5.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of secondary school teachers.

Table 3: Showing Independent Samples t-test of Respondents on the Extent of Influence of Distributed Leadership on the Professional Development of Public Secondary School Teachers based on Gender

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	P-value	Decision
Female	37	3.19	0.211	-2.43	117	0.438	H ₀₁ Accepted
Male	47	3.25	0.187				

Independent samples t-test was conducted to assess whether there is significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the influence of distributed leadership on professional development of public secondary school teachers based on gender. Female gender as regards distributed leadership and professional development of public secondary school teachers had a mean of 3.19 (SD = 0.211), whereas male had a slightly higher mean of 3.25 (SD = 0.187). The t-test indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents as regards the influence of distributed leadership on professional development of public secondary school teachers between male and female respondents ($t = -2.432$, $df = 82$, $P = 0.438$). The hypothesis is thereby accepted.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of secondary school teachers.

Table 4: Showing Independent Samples t-test of Respondents on the Extent of Influence of Distributed Leadership on Professional Development of Public Secondary School Teachers Based on Gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	P-value	Decision
Female	37	3.15	0.242	-2.628	117	0.854	H ₀₂ Accepted
Male	47	3.28	0.261				

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of public secondary school teachers based on gender. Female gender rating as regards the distributed

leadership and efficiency of public secondary school teachers had a mean rating of 3.15 (SD = 0.261), whereas male had a slightly lower mean rating of 3.28 (SD = 0.242). The t-test indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the ratings of respondents as regards the influence of distributed leadership on the efficiency of public secondary school teachers between male and female respondents ($t = -2.628$, $df = 82$, $P = 0.854$). The hypothesis is thereby accepted.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on research question one revealed that the extent of influence of distributed leadership on professional development of public secondary schools is very high. In the researchers' view, the very high extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of teachers can be attributed to the inclusive and empowering nature of the leadership model. Distributed leadership decentralizes authority and encourages shared responsibilities among teachers, administrators, and other school stakeholders. This approach naturally fosters collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning, as teachers are not just passive recipients of directives but active participants in decision-making and school improvement processes. In essence, the researchers believe that it is the participatory, collaborative, and capacity-building essence of distributed leadership that makes it highly influential in developing teachers professionally, particularly in environments where traditional top-down leadership structures have failed to bring about meaningful growth. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ma and Marion (2025), who established that distributed leadership is directly linked to higher job satisfaction among teachers and exerts a strong indirect influence through teacher well-being, which emerged as the most powerful pathway. Similarly, Song, Mohd-Tahir, Hassan, and Chen (2025) found that distributed leadership had significant positive effects across all aspects of teachers' leadership, especially in shared decision-making.

Findings on hypothesis one showed that there was no significant relationship between male and female respondents on the extent of influence of distributed leadership on the professional development of public secondary school teachers. From the researcher's perspective, the absence of a significant gender-based difference in the influence of distributed leadership on teacher professional development is not surprising. This is because distributed leadership, by design, promotes equity, inclusiveness, and collaborative engagement, which do not inherently favor any gender. Both male and female teachers are given opportunities to contribute, lead, and learn within a shared leadership framework. Thus, professional development outcomes are shaped more by the extent of participation and institutional support, rather than by gender identity. This finding aligns with the finding of Mensah and Gyasi (2023), who reported in a study of 547 secondary school teachers in Ghana that both male and female teachers equally benefited from shared leadership practices, particularly in areas such as decision-making, mentoring, and collaborative learning opportunities. Likewise, Adeyemi and Oyetola (2022) found that gender differences were statistically insignificant in teachers' access to professional development through shared responsibility structures.

The findings on research question two revealed that distributed leadership exerts a very high level of influence on the efficiency of public secondary school teachers. This strong relationship suggests that when leadership responsibilities are shared among teachers and school leaders, it leads to a more engaged, motivated, and effective teaching workforce. Teachers under distributed leadership are more likely to take initiative, collaborate with peers, and align their practices with institutional goals, all of which enhance teaching efficiency. From the researcher's perspective, the very high extent of influence is rooted in the inclusive and participatory nature of distributed leadership. When teachers are entrusted with leadership roles, such as leading curriculum review teams, mentoring new teachers, or serving on disciplinary committees, it not only enhances their sense of ownership and responsibility but also builds their skills in time management, collaboration, and instructional

delivery. These experiences naturally contribute to improved teaching efficiency. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Hsieh, Wang, and Chen (2024), who found that distributed leadership in Taiwanese secondary schools positively impacted teachers' instructional quality and classroom management efficiency. Their study showed that teachers involved in school leadership structures reported higher levels of goal clarity, motivation, and alignment with school improvement efforts. Similarly, Lin and Lee (2023), in their study involving 520 secondary school teachers across Southeast Asia, confirmed that distributed leadership significantly improved teacher responsiveness, time management, and classroom delivery efficiency, largely because it fostered a culture of shared accountability and peer support. Additionally, Koko and Adebayo (2022) found in Nigerian public schools that distributed leadership significantly influenced teacher efficiency by improving communication flow, task delegation, and the ability of teachers to solve problems collaboratively. Their study emphasized that the decentralization of authority allowed teachers to develop leadership competencies that translated into better classroom performance and instructional delivery.

Finding on hypothesis two showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female public secondary school teachers regarding the extent to which distributed leadership influences teacher efficiency. This finding suggests that distributed leadership impacts both genders equally, affirming the neutrality and inclusiveness of the leadership model in shaping teacher performance and efficiency in public secondary schools. From the researcher's standpoint, the no significant gender difference is a positive indicator of fairness and equity in leadership distribution within schools. It reflects the non-discriminatory nature of distributed leadership, where responsibilities and opportunities for professional influence are based on individual capacity, experience, and willingness, not on gender. This result aligns with the findings of Adeyemi and Oyetola (2022), who conducted a quantitative study among public secondary school teachers in South-West Nigeria. Their analysis revealed that both male and female teachers benefited equally from collaborative responsibility practices such as shared decision-making, peer mentoring, and collaborative planning. Gender was not a significant variable in moderating the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher efficiency. Likewise, Mensah and Antwi (2023), in a cross-sectional study of 600 teachers across Ghanaian public schools, found no significant gender difference in teacher perceptions of how distributed leadership affected their classroom effectiveness, professional conduct, or time management. Their findings support the idea that efficiency gains from distributed leadership are consistent across gender lines, given that leadership responsibilities are assigned based on competence, not on gendered expectations.

Conclusion

The study has the main purpose of investigating the influence that distributed leadership has on the professional development and efficiency of public secondary school teachers in Boriipe. Local Government has two specific purposes, two research questions, and two corresponding research hypotheses, which were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Results were analyzed, and findings were discussed. The study concludes that distributed leadership has a significant and positive influence on the professional development and efficiency of public secondary school teachers. By decentralizing authority and fostering shared responsibility, distributed leadership creates an inclusive environment that encourages teacher collaboration, continuous learning, and active participation in decision-making processes. These dynamics not only enhance individual teacher competencies but also promote a culture of collective accountability and innovation, which ultimately translates into improved teaching efficiency and instructional quality. Furthermore, the study affirms that the benefits of distributed leadership are not restricted by gender, suggesting that both male and female teachers equally gain from its implementation. The study established further that when leadership is shared across various levels within the school, it builds teachers' confidence, increases

their motivation, and enhances their sense of professional identity (key components for sustained development and improved performance). In essence, distributed leadership serves as a vital strategy for transforming public secondary schools into more effective, collaborative, and professional learning communities.

Recommendations

The following were recommended:

1. School leaders and policymakers must deliberately integrate distributed leadership practices into the school management structure to drive teacher professional development and institutional success.
2. Government and other education stakeholders should develop mechanisms to regularly assess the effectiveness of distributed leadership practices in promoting teachers' efficiency and use findings to refine strategies for implementation.

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