



# **Volatile And Uncertain School Environments Management As A Predictor Of Clientele Continuous Patronage Of Senior Secondary Schools In Rivers State**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many complexes serve as threat to students' interest in education in secondary schools. Against this background, this study investigated Volatile and Uncertain School Environments' Management as a Predictor of Clientele Continuous Patronage of Secondary Schools in Rivers State. two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. A correlational research design was adopted. The population of this study comprised 133,497 students in the 302 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. They include 62,839 male and 70,658 female students in the 302 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The total sample was 398 students drawn from the population of the study using Taro Yamane's formula. Simple random sampling technique using balloting method was used to select the required number of students as respondents to the instruments in the 302 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Respondents of the study responded to 2 researcher constructed validated instruments titled: "Volatile School Environments' Management and Uncertain School Environments' Management Scale (VSEMUSEMS) and Clientele Continuous Patronage Scale (CCPS)". Cronbach alpha statistical model was used to obtain the reliability coefficients of 0.72 and 0.88 for VSEMUSEMS and CCPS scales, respectively. The findings of this work revealed that school environments' management significantly predicts clientele continuous patronage in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, implying that a proper management of volatile school and uncertain school environments will increase clientele continuous patronage in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The study concluded that, vision and understanding predicts clientele continuous patronage. The recommendations made include amongst others, that there is need for school principals and educational managers to provide clear vision of the school and build professional competence of IT personnel as a means of improving and increasing clientele continuous patronage.

**Keywords:** VUCA, Volatile school environment, Uncertain school environment, Clientele Continuous patronage.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Change is a ubiquitous and constant phenomenon, perpetually shaping the course of events. Over time, all aspects of life undergo transformations, whether they are deliberate and planned or unforeseen. When change is deliberate, it can be effectively controlled, influenced, and achieved. Conversely, when change occurs unexpectedly, it instigates a sense of urgency and emergency. Unplanned change provides minimal opportunity for preparation, as it emerges suddenly and demands swift adjustments to adapt to its imposed conditions.

In such instances, leaders and managers are compelled to employ strategies that go beyond conventional "business as usual" practices to restore operational normalcy. In the realm of management, various theories and change models have been formulated to address a myriad of anticipated and unforeseen organizational alterations. Nevertheless, when change takes on a capricious, volatile, or sporadic nature, existing management and change theories lose their relevance. These unpredictable and rapidly fluctuating changes have ushered in a new era, referred to as VUCA, which necessitates the development of novel change models and principles tailored to its distinctive characteristics.

The concept of VUCA was originally formulated by the United States War College in the mid-1990s to characterize the evolving global landscape following the end of the Cold War. It served as their framework for articulating the increasing intricacy within their operational domain during that period. However, in contemporary contexts, VUCA has gained recognition as a defining attribute of our present-day environment, characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It delineates a modern setting marked by struggles stemming from technological disruptions, climate shifts, economic fluctuations, and sociocultural transformations.

In his 2009 publication "Leaders Make the Future," Johansen, Bob, associated with the Institute for the Future, undertook a scholarly adaptation of the VUCA framework, specifically tailored for the corporate realm. Johansen applied this framework to depict the tumultuous and inherently unpredictable dynamics of change that could exert their influence upon various organizations. He posited that addressing the four VUCA threats necessitates the cultivation of novel competencies, strategies, and behavioural paradigms.

The VUCA construct, as elucidated by Johansen, encapsulates a collection of multifaceted challenges that confront not only individuals but also teams, managers, and entire enterprises within sectors susceptible to their impact. These challenges, when considered individually, carry substantial significance; however, their collective manifestation can present an imposing and formidable ordeal.

Volatility pertains to the rapid pace of change where the precise outcomes of actions cannot be entirely foreseen. In such circumstances, there is a degree of predictability regarding action outcomes, but not complete certainty. A pertinent illustration of volatility is evident in today's stock markets.

Uncertainty signifies situations where the events are comprehensible, but the appropriate course of action remains uncertain. In military terminology, this is often analogous to the "fog of war."

Complexity revolves around the challenge of making decisions promptly due to the multitude of factors that must be considered before arriving at a conclusion, despite our understanding of the probable outcomes of our actions.

Ambiguity combines our awareness of the existing situation with the predictability of the results of actions or decisions. For instance, this may involve the introduction of an entirely novel product or the adoption of an entirely different technology or operational procedure within a business context.

Present-day challenges such as school security concerns, incidents of kidnapping, the global impact of the Coronavirus epidemic, climate change, and the dynamics of the global economy all epitomize the VUCA conditions that we confront in the contemporary era. VUCA serves as a comprehensive depiction of the prevailing global circumstances, and its enduring, dynamic nature suggests that a novel, innovative form of leadership or management is imperative to navigate this constant flux. This necessitates purpose-driven leadership, where leaders can clearly define their values and concentrate on fundamental aspects to effectively scrutinize the evolving environment for apt planning and action. Such an approach demands adaptability and a steadfast commitment on the part of leadership to keep their network of stakeholders, including students, motivated.

Despite the formidable and demanding nature of the VUCA environment, it presents an opportunity for authentic leadership qualities to develop and facilitates growth, akin to any transformative change (Waller et al., 2019). Viewing a VUCA environment as an opportunity serves as a catalyst for leadership to provide guidance and motivation to their stakeholders, such as students, enabling them to adapt to the VUCA school environment. This, in turn, sustains their interest in academic pursuits and the professional world. Effective management of a VUCA school environment has the potential to foster stakeholder satisfaction, subsequently leading to loyalty and continued support.

Clientele continuous patronage is simply the continuous patronage of clients which hinges on their contentment, primarily rooted in the perceived quality of the goods or services they receive. In the context of a service-oriented organization like a school, the clientele, which consists of the students, can be motivated to either remain enrolled or disengage. This decision holds two key implications. Firstly, a student may opt to leave their current school in favor of another institution that better aligns with their expectations, motivating them to persevere amid the challenges of a volatile and uncertain, complex, and uncertain school environment.

The second interpretation of staying or leaving school revolves around a student's choice to abandon their educational pursuits entirely due to the adverse effects of the volatile and uncertain school environment. These effects may include heightened concerns such as school security issues, the prevalence of kidnapping incidents, the global pandemic's financial impacts on families, and the necessity for technological resources to engage in online education. These factors impose substantial financial and emotional burdens on students, potentially prompting decisions rooted in fear rather than sound judgment regarding the value of education. Maslow's hierarchy of needs aptly illustrates this situation, indicating that in a rapidly changing environment, survival and safety take precedence over educational pursuits.

The latter reason for leaving school undoubtedly leads to educational wastage, where public funds invested in the educational system fail to yield optimal returns due to low student retention and high dropout rates among those who lack proper motivation to navigate the challenging volatile and uncertain school environment. This underscores the critical role of school administrators in sustaining students' interest in school to ensure continuous patronage through effective management strategies tailored to the volatile and uncertain school environment.

In this era, where change is volatile and uncertain, leadership and organizational management demand agility, flexibility, and a forward-thinking approach, placing a substantial responsibility on the shoulders of school administrators. Given that VUCA encapsulates the array of challenges organizations face in staying relevant and competitive in the modern world, school administrators must harness advanced technologies, adapt from traditional business models, grasp the necessity for timely adaptations, and reevaluate performance management processes.

Since a volatile and uncertain environment describes the challenges faced by organizations, in keeping up to the competition it creates, school administrators need to come to terms with the VUCA reality and realize that the school environment is not alien to this global phenomenon. VUCA is the new feature of change and thus requires a new leadership and change management strategies since traditional method of management may not apply, given the incessant speed of change. Since schools are not in isolation from their environment or community, it needs to beef up its activities to align well with VUCA management practices the world over, so as to keep its clientele of students interested in its educational services and at the same time sustain the relevance of education. According to Drozhzhin (2019), the principle of continuous adaptation and permanent learning of organizations is a fundamental feature of all survival practices in the VUCA world.

Given that the VUCA environment encapsulates the challenges faced by organizations in their efforts to remain competitive and relevant, it is imperative for school administrators to confront the reality of VUCA and recognize that educational institutions are not exempt from this global phenomenon. VUCA represents the characteristics of change as it is now, necessitating a fresh approach to leadership and change management strategies, as traditional methods may be insufficient in coping with the relentless pace of change. Schools are deeply intertwined with their surrounding environments and communities, underscoring the need for them to align their practices with global VUCA management principles. This alignment is crucial to maintain the interest of students in educational services and to uphold the significance of education.

According to Drozhzhin (2019), the concept of continuous adaptation and perpetual learning is an essential characteristic of survival practices in the VUCA world. The VUCA environment underscores the importance of school administrators possessing the ability to make timely and effective decisions to gain a competitive edge in performance. Educational administrators or school leaders play a central role in school management. They handle administrative responsibilities such as planning, organization, direction,

and control, and are expected to tactically manage both human and material resources to achieve organizational objectives. This multifaceted role, as noted by Nzeka (2019), positions educational administrators as key contributors to establishing order and stability within an institution.

The educational environment should provide a reassuring atmosphere where school members feel physically, mentally, and emotionally secure, allowing their capabilities and skills to be effectively harnessed for optimal performance. In a VUCA environment, which instills concerns among all stakeholders, effective and uninterrupted transitions are vital for the sustainability of a time-sensitive organization like a school. Inevitably, the repercussions of a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous environment may lead to educational disruptions or ineffective transitions, affecting individuals and organizations as a whole. As indicated by the insights from the Mind Tools Content Team (2021), a VUCA environment gives rise to a range of effects, including:

- 1) Heightened anxiety stemming from disruptions
- 2) Diminished motivation among individuals
- 3) Potential obstacles to career progression
- 4) Ongoing demands for upgrading and retraining
- 5) An increased likelihood of poor decision-making
- 6) Disruptions to the decision-making processes
- 7) Impediments to long-term projects, developments, and innovation initiatives
- 8) Influences on the internal organizational culture

Given these pronounced effects and the associated challenges, organizations, including educational institutions like schools, are compelled to advance their sustainable competitive advantage to maintain their leadership positions in their respective domains. This necessitates a concentrated effort to overcome challenges intrinsic to this unique environment. Effective operational leadership demands the integration of strong analytical thinking skills, a profound level of knowledge, and the adept application of both to address issues and concerns that fall within the purview of leadership.

In the words of Lubitz and Wickramasinghe (2006), this becomes notably challenging within an environment characterized by instability and unpredictability, wherein leaders, in this context, educational administrators, are compelled to make significant decisions with far-reaching consequences in relatively short timeframes. The urgency in decision-making is a direct consequence of the abrupt pace of change encapsulated by the term VUCA, which educational administrators and leaders must adapt to as the new norm.

Given the sporadic and volatile nature of the contemporary paradigm of change, characterized by elements of uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, it becomes imperative for educational leaders and administrators to explore innovative strategies for effectively navigating the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity) environment. This urgency arises from the fact that swift and profound decisions made amidst these abrupt shifts can exert far-reaching impacts on the broader educational landscape, particularly concerning student enrollment, continuity, and institutional patronage. If public senior secondary schools in Rivers State aim to preserve their relevance and competitive edge in the ever-evolving VUCA world, it is incumbent upon school leaders and administrators to wholeheartedly embrace the requisite agility and adaptability demanded by this environment.

In light of these considerations, this study is designed to investigate a volatile and uncertain school environment management as a predictor of clientele continuous patronage in secondary schools in Rivers State. The primary objectives include the identification of challenges posed by the VUCA environment, the assessment of associated risks, and the establishment of comprehensive strategies for adeptly managing the VUCA school environment, thereby ensuring the continuity of client patronage. As proposed by McPheat (2020), a critical initial step in effectively handling a VUCA scenario involves the meticulous identification of the specific VUCA element or aspect under consideration. This is pivotal, as each component of VUCA has distinct causative factors, effects, and consequently, tailored solutions.

This discernment equips educational institutions with the insights needed to tackle and respond proactively to the unique challenges presented by the VUCA paradigm of change.

Numerous VUCA management approaches have been advanced by scholars. For instance, Shahnaz (2019) advocates strategies such as performance management, fostering innovation, promoting diversity, and investing in training and development as effective means to address the challenges posed by the VUCA environment. Broeckx (2015) presents the VACINE acronym (Velocity, Agility, Creativity, Innovation, Network, and Experience) as a comprehensive framework for navigating the VUCA environment. An additional approach is the 'VUCA Prime' leadership model introduced by Bob Johansen. This model leverages the VUCA acronym to formulate tailored responses to each characteristic or component of the VUCA world. The VUCA Prime model underscores the use of specific elements to counteract the VUCA dimensions, including vision to mitigate volatility, understanding to address uncertainty, clarity to tackle complexity, and agility to navigate ambiguity.

This study adopted the VUCA Prime model as proposed by Bob Johansen. According to Milvio (2019), the VUCA Prime model is essentially a behavioral leadership model that offers constructive responses to each of the four facets of VUCA. By applying this multimodal approach to transformative change, organizations are encouraged to adapt, evolve, and thrive in the dynamic conditions of their organizational environment. The VUCA Prime model recommends that leaders employ the following elements in addressing each characteristic of VUCA:

1. Vision
2. Understanding
3. Clarity
4. Agility

This model, as described by Milvio (2019), is a behavioral leadership model designed to provide positive and countering responses to each of the four facets of VUCA. Its objective is to drive organizations to adapt, transform, and evolve within the parameters of their specific organizational environment by implementing a multimodal approach to effecting transformative change.

There is a notable abundance of literature on VUCA management in higher education and various other non-educational organizations. Consequently, this study establishes a framework for managing volatility and uncertainty as represented in the acronym, VUCA, within a secondary school environment, emphasizing the significance of the VUCA Prime model as a decision-making tool for addressing VUCA-related challenges. The goal is to enable schools to sustain their relevance, competitive edge, and appeal to their network of clients, primarily composed of students. This research represents a novel contribution to the field of secondary education and supplements prior studies that predominantly explored individual elements of the VUCA school environment.

### **Management of Volatile School Environment as Predictor of Clientele Continuous Patronage**

Volatile means unpredictable, unstable and changing quickly. In scholarly discourse, "volatility" can be defined as a state of unpredictability, instability, and rapid change (Bennett et al., 2014). This term characterizes situations marked by a lack of stability and predictability, where changes can occur quickly and with varying magnitudes, often without a discernible pattern (Muparuri et al., 2021). Volatility also encompasses the ease and speed with which a situation can transform (Baron et al., 2023). In essence, it signifies a situation characterized by rapid and unpredictable change, reflecting the speed of change in the world (Akinoso, 2015).

Notably, contemporary Nigerian society has grappled with unanticipated volatility, significantly impacting the education sector. These challenges encompass a range of issues, including but not limited to kidnapping, suicide bombings, insurgencies, school-based violence, banditry, religious conflicts, drug-related problems, break-ins, vandalism, flooding, disruptive student behavior, and health crises like Ebola and COVID-19. These factors have resulted in heightened dropout rates, reduced enrollments, diminished teaching quality, and have posed challenges to effective educational planning and sustainable national development, such as the cultivation of a quality labor force and the nurturing of human capital, both

crucial for fostering a sustainable economy (Ajani, 2021). Consequently, ensuring the safety of students within educational institutions has become a pressing concern, requiring immediate attention from all stakeholders in the educational sector to achieve their objectives. The frequent and unpredictable nature of these changes compounds the exposure to risks and hampers decision-making processes (Horney et al., 2010).

In a volatile environment, predictability about the future becomes more uncertain, rendering forecasting extremely challenging and decision-making complex. It's noteworthy that a volatile system can undergo relatively moderate developments for a certain period, only to suddenly experience profound fluctuations in relative value, making estimation a challenging task (Silberzahn, 2017). Volatility encapsulates sudden, extreme, and multi-faceted fluctuations across various domains, including the economy, socio-politics, and geopolitics, indicating the difficulty in identifying and characterizing these changes in a predictable manner, as was once the case in more stable and certain circumstances (Hanine et al., 2022). Consequently, past experiences and established best practices no longer serve as reliable indicators for identifying solutions for the present or the future.

Hence, the educational landscape's volatility denotes a dynamic and profound transformation over time. Amadi (2021) contends that business organizations have grappled with unforeseen and intractable shifts. Consequently, educational institutions, akin to business entities, confront unanticipated challenges arising from drastic alterations in economic, global, technological, and pedagogical spheres, such as the unexpected transition to online education due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Presently, the education system faces disruptions in pedagogy, teaching methods, learning practices, and the quality of academic experiences (Latha et al, 2019). This implies alterations in the curriculum, examination methodologies, grading systems, assessment processes, and more. The volatility factor has engendered diversity within schools, with students responding differently to the evolving educational landscape and its connection to real-world scenarios.

The volatility within the education sector has precipitated transformations and the shift from traditional to contemporary curricula, thereby placing immense pressure on the educational system. This pressure extends to the frequent changes in instructional mediums, curriculum structures, educational models, requisite strategies, learning materials, and administrative involvement (Redelinghuis, 2012). Consequently, the curriculum, instructional objectives, pedagogy, teaching methods, and academic experiences are evolving to align with desired learning outcomes. The educational ecosystem is diversifying further, with students reacting in diverse ways to the disconnect between academic institutions and real-life situations (Srinivasan et al, 2020). The proliferation of online courses, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and application development, lacking a firm foundation in fundamental skills, poses risks to student welfare.

This volatile scenario is characterized by turbulence stemming from a constant and rapid influx of changes. It is inherently unpredictable and in a perpetual state of flux. The abrupt and intense transformations in the educational landscape introduce instability into leadership and management, making it challenging to achieve organizational objectives (Cooke, (2013; Michel, 2016).. In such volatile circumstances, information about conditions and situations can serve as guides for predicting the outcomes of various activities. The primary challenge within this volatile context is the swiftness of change. Therefore, in the presence of volatility, strategies to mitigate the effects of instability within an organization, as identified by Loyd (2015), in Çiçeklioğlu, (2020), encompass the following key principles:

1. Leaders and managers often attribute business challenges to technology, but it is crucial to recognize that a superior business model, effective implementation, execution, and a conducive organizational culture consistently outweigh technological factors.
2. Fostering a collective sense of accomplishment among teams is essential. Encouraging the idea of working together towards a common goal is paramount, especially in high-volatility scenarios.
3. In contexts characterized by high volatility, the quality of relationships among individuals becomes of utmost importance. As interpersonal connections assume critical significance, leaders and managers should prioritize engagement and communication with stakeholders.

4. Given that changes in one facet of a business operation can potentially create opportunities in other areas, organizations must vigilantly monitor developments and adapt accordingly.

The prevailing approach to shield against VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) threats and harness potential opportunities promotes a vision-driven strategy, as advocated by Mangahas (2016). This strategic path, frequently adopted in the educational sector, revolves around clearly defining objectives and a future vision. In the presence of volatility, the imperative is to establish a shared vision that serves as a guiding criterion for all decision-making processes, unifying efforts, investments, resources, and personnel at all levels and across various domains (Cooke, 2013).

In the field of education, volatility is an inevitable facet of the educational system, given the perpetual changes, especially in methodologies, approaches, and subject matter, which are in a constant state of evolution. Learning processes are subject to rapid and unpredictable transformation, necessitating a cultural shift. This entails equipping educators with the necessary teaching materials, allocating sufficient time for effective instruction, and creating conducive learning environments. To foster enriched learning settings, tools and technologies should be developed (Downie et al, 2013).

Furthermore, the twenty-first century has introduced complexities in determining optimal teaching methods. Consequently, educators must strike a balance between their teaching prowess, pedagogical knowledge, individual student needs, and the broader educational objectives. The role of school principals in this context is pivotal. School leaders need a clear vision for their institutions, allowing them to navigate volatile environmental shifts such as economic downturns and technological advancements. This visionary approach enables school administrators to look beyond their specialized domains and make sense of volatility, leading with a purpose. Thus, establishing well-defined objectives by school leaders directs the institution's focus toward its clientele. Additionally, school administrators should exhibit professional competence, as it is indicative of effective school management (Cabigao, 2019).

Thus, school heads have to move away from linearity and closed loop thinking and need to adopt a consulting style of working (Rimita *et al*, 2020). Empowerment allows shared leadership and faster decision – making t take advantage of opportunities emerging in the chaos (Muparuri *et al*, 2021). Trusting the employees to make the right decisions entails sharing the vision, as rigid and complacent thought processes in volatile environments blinds leadership.

Volatility can arise from various factors, including changes in educational policies, shifts in student demographics, and unexpected events like natural disasters or pandemics. Effective management is critical to ensuring the school's stability and success. In the context of managing volatility through vision, leaving clients with a clear vision, building professional competencies, encouraging teamwork among stakeholders, Connecting with School Stakeholders and Ensuring Proper Communication with All School Stakeholders is pivotal (Cooke, 2013; Mangahas,2016; Downie et al, 2013; Cabigao, 2019; Rimita *et al*, 2020; Muparuri *et al*, 2021). The discussion below explores these strategies:

1. Leaving Clients with a Clear Vision of the School
  - a. Visionary Leadership: School managers should provide visionary leadership that leaves clients, including students, parents, teachers, and community members, with a clear understanding of the school's mission and future direction. This involves communicating a compelling vision for the school's goals and aspirations.
  - b. Alignment: Ensure that the school's vision is aligned with the needs and expectations of stakeholders. A well-articulated vision helps everyone understand their role in achieving the school's objectives and provides a sense of purpose and direction, even in turbulent times.
  - c. Transparency: Transparency in leadership is essential. School managers should be open and honest about the challenges and uncertainties the school faces. While presenting a clear vision, they should also acknowledge the potential obstacles and discuss strategies for overcoming them.
2. Concentrating on Building Professional Competence:
  - a. Continuous Professional Development: School managers should prioritize continuous professional development for themselves and their staff. In a volatile environment, staying up-to-date with the latest educational practices and innovations is crucial. Offering training, workshops, and opportunities for skill enhancement can boost competence.

- b. Recruitment and Retention: Ensure that the school hires and retains highly competent staff. Competence goes beyond academic qualifications; it encompasses the ability to adapt to change, collaborate effectively, and innovate. Schools should have robust recruitment and retention strategies in place.
  - c. Benchmarking and Best Practices: School managers should encourage benchmarking against other successful educational institutions and adopting best practices. Regularly evaluating and improving teaching methods, curriculum, and assessment techniques can enhance professional competence.
3. Encouraging Teamwork Among School Stakeholders:
    - a. Collaborative Culture: Foster a collaborative culture among all school stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the community. Collaboration can help distribute responsibilities, share expertise, and build a sense of unity and resilience in the face of volatility.
    - b. Problem-Solving Teams: Create problem-solving teams or committees that bring together representatives from various stakeholder groups. These teams can work collectively to address challenges, share insights, and propose solutions that consider multiple perspectives.
    - c. Inclusivity: Ensure that all voices are heard and valued. In a volatile environment, diverse viewpoints can lead to more innovative solutions and better decision-making. Encourage inclusivity and active participation in school governance and decision-making processes.
  4. Concentrating on Connecting with School Stakeholders:
    - a. Community Engagement: Establish strong connections with the community surrounding the school. This can involve hosting community events, partnering with local organizations, and involving community members in school activities. A strong community bond can provide support and resources during uncertain times.
    - b. Parental Involvement: Actively involve parents in their children's education. Regular communication, parent-teacher conferences, and opportunities for parental participation in school initiatives can create a sense of ownership and commitment.
    - c. Student Engagement: Focus on student engagement by creating a supportive and inclusive school environment. Encourage student leadership, clubs, and extracurricular activities that allow students to connect with their peers and educators.
  5. Ensuring Proper Communication with All School Stakeholders:
    - a. Two-Way Communication: Establish and maintain effective two-way communication channels with all school stakeholders. This includes open lines of communication with students, parents, teachers, support staff, and the wider community. Ensure that feedback mechanisms are in place and that stakeholders feel heard and valued.
    - b. Timely Updates: In a volatile environment, timely communication is crucial. School managers should provide updates on changes, developments, and decisions that may affect stakeholders. Transparency and timely communication build trust and reduce uncertainty.
    - c. Crisis Communication: Develop comprehensive crisis communication plans. In the event of unexpected events or crises, school managers should have clear protocols for disseminating information, ensuring the safety of students and staff, and addressing concerns promptly.

In conclusion, managing a volatile school environment requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses visionary leadership, continuous professional development, teamwork, community engagement, and effective communication (Cooke, 2013; Mangahas, 2016; Downie et al, 2013; Cabigao, 2019; Rimita *et al*, 2020; Muparuri *et al*, 2021). School managers who excel in these areas not only help their institutions navigate volatility effectively but also create an environment where students thrive, parents are engaged, and the school community remains resilient in the face of uncertainty. By addressing the key points outlined in above school managers play a pivotal role in ensuring the stability, adaptability, and success of educational institutions in an ever-changing educational landscape.



**Management of Uncertain School Environment as Predictor of Clientele Continuous Patronage**

Uncertain refers to a situation that is unclear. It exists when there is the lack of adequate information, addressing it simply involves obtaining information. It can also be seen as a person's inability to understand what is happening in reality (Bennett *et al*, 2014). This means that uncertainty is a person's level of confidence to interpret clearly the happenings around him. Uncertainty makes it almost impossible to use the past as a predictor for the future, making predictions is extremely difficult, and decision-making is a challenge (Dima *et al*, 2021). Uncertainty is caused by fear, chaos, the leaders' unpredictable, incoherent decisions or lack of them (Dima *et al*, 2021; Murugan *et al*, 2020). The lack of easily understanding of the past increases the difficulty in making good decisions about the future (Moodie, 2016). This means that lack of clarity to evaluate situation properly in order to identify challenges and opportunities increases difficulty in predicting the future.

Uncertainty indicates lack of knowledge related to the frequency and significance of environmental change (Bennett *et al*, 2014). It refers to the difficulty of predicting the future. Truly uncertain environments are those that do not allow any prediction. According to (Silberzahn, 2017), uncertainty is a lack of objective information about a given environment. Uncertainty results in a fundamental indeterminacy of the future and heterogeneity of the events that can occur, these being neither classifiable nor categorical. According to (Brunet *et al*, 2018), cited in (Hanine *et al*, 2022), uncertainty means being unable to understand the situation objectively, establishing cause and effect relationships, foreseeing the consequences of decisions.

Uncertainty is described the difficulty in predicting the future. Cao (2021) asserts that uncertainty arises when school clients are constantly dealing with the need to adapt to the new ways of learning such as new conferencing tools, and new classroom interaction tools. Jordan *et al*, (2014) define uncertainty as an individual's subjective experience of doubting, being unsure, or wondering about how the future will unfold, what the present means, or how to interpret the past. This means that uncertainty can pertain to one's self, to other individuals, to aspects of the environment, or to the relationship among others.

Uncertainty is used to describe the reduction of predictability levels in decision-making phases of organizations and individuals (Michel, 2016). On the other hand, the concept of uncertainty is a lack of knowledge with vital implications for a specific environment and with unforeseen consequences (Bennett *et al*, 2014). In today's world, with unpredictable results and disruptive features within organizational structures which are experiencing difficulties especially with the lack of clear conditions regarding clients' management.

According to Bauman, (2015), in Çiçeklioğlu, (2020), contemporary and prospective uncertain events, a focus on instigating change, and a diminished tolerance for rapid knowledge acquisition have collectively rendered collaborations, decision-making processes, organizations, and interpersonal relationships increasingly vulnerable. In response, Çiçeklioğlu, (2020), further outlined a set of strategies by Loyd (2015) which is aimed at combatting the state of uncertainty within organizations:

1. Mentoring: Rather than concentrating on established norms, mentoring should be directed toward novel perspectives, particularly those likely to introduce fresh entrants to the sector and industry, emphasizing the importance of experiential learning.
2. Storytelling: The utilization of storytelling and scenario planning serves as a means to mitigate potential uncertainties.
3. External viewpoints: Guarding against organizational myopia necessitates the incorporation of diverse external viewpoints.
4. Environmental scanning: Conscientious environmental scanning is crucial in order to dispel uncertainty.
5. Clarity of desired result: The level of uncertainty diminishes as clarity is achieved in articulating the desired outcomes.

The predominant approach to safeguard against VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) threats and harness potential opportunities revolves around fostering an understanding of uncertainty (Mangahas, 2016). This approach entails school leaders' capacity to perceive and comprehend events by drawing from their functional expertise and holistic understanding of the organizational context. School

leaders are tasked with discerning the root causes of issues and effectively sharing their vision with their followers (Cooke, 2013).

Management of uncertainty refers to the process of engaging behaviours an individual to enable them to act in the face of uncertainty. Stakeholder's feedback is actually the answer to an uncertain situation (Nowacka *et al*, 2022). This means that open communication throughout the organization regardless of the existing organizational structure provide for simple flow of information for quick decision-making. Uncertainty is a regularly occurring experience for humans' environment. Although it is often a difficult experience to manage, it is not inherently an aversive state. Individuals are often motivated to reduce uncertainty through various information-seeking strategies. Cao (2021) asserts that managing uncertainty is not necessarily always desirable or possible and is only one potential action in the face of uncertainty. Today school must have administrators who can stop, look, and listen in every situation, establishing a friendly and comforting environment in the school. Knowing well both sides of the coin will help school executives gauge the real scores behind each challenge under his administration, thus increasing the commitment level of the clients in the school (Cruz, 2021).

In the context of employing understanding as a means for managing uncertainty, several authors emphasize the significance of regular feedback, friendly school environment, Seeking Functional Expertise Before Making Decisions, open communication, and Looking at Every Situation in a Unique Way (Lyod, 2015; Cooke, 2013; Cruz, 2021; Cao, 2021; Nowacka *et al.*, 2022; Mangahas, 2016 These authors have contributed insights and strategies related to the management of uncertainty and VUCA threats in organizations and school administration. Below are the strategies for the management of uncertain environment:

1. Regular Feedback to All School Stakeholders:

Regular feedback serves as a bridge, connecting the school's leadership with students, parents, teachers, and the community. It is through this dialogue that schools can adapt, innovate, and thrive in the face of uncertainty.

- a. **Transparent Communication:** Open and transparent communication is the cornerstone of regular feedback. School managers should ensure that information flows freely in both directions, from the top down and from the bottom up. This transparency builds trust and fosters a sense of shared responsibility within the school community.
- b. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engaging all stakeholders in the feedback process is crucial. Parents, for example, should have the means to provide input on school policies and initiatives, while students' voices should be valued and heard. School managers can employ surveys, meetings, and digital platforms to gather feedback from diverse perspectives.
- c. **Data-Informed Decisions:** Regular feedback provides valuable data that can inform decision-making. School managers can use this information to identify trends, assess the impact of policies, and make informed adjustments. For instance, feedback on the effectiveness of remote learning during a crisis can inform future strategies.

2. Creating a Friendly School Environment for All Stakeholders:

A school's environment sets the tone for learning, growth, and well-being. In times of uncertainty, fostering a friendly and inclusive atmosphere is not just desirable; it is a necessity. School managers play a pivotal role in shaping this environment, ensuring that it accommodates the diverse needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

- a. **Inclusivity and Diversity:** A friendly school environment celebrates diversity and promotes inclusivity. School managers should actively promote policies and practices that ensure all students, teachers, and staff, regardless of their backgrounds, feel valued and included.
- b. **Emotional Well-being:** In uncertain times, addressing the emotional well-being of all stakeholders becomes crucial. School managers should prioritize mental health support, creating spaces where individuals can seek help, guidance, or simply find solace. Programmes such as counseling services and stress management initiatives can play a significant role.
- c. **Conflict Resolution:** An inclusive environment may sometimes give rise to conflicts. School managers should be equipped with conflict resolution skills to ensure that disagreements are

managed constructively. Training in conflict resolution techniques can be beneficial for the entire school community.

### 3. Seeking Functional Expertise Before Making Decisions:

Effective decision-making is the bedrock of managing an uncertain school environment. School managers must recognize that no one person has all the answers. Seeking functional expertise from those with specialized knowledge is a strategic approach to decision-making that can lead to more informed and effective outcomes.

- a. Collaborative Decision-Making: Collaborative decision-making involves seeking input from subject matter experts, teachers, and staff with functional expertise. It promotes a culture where decisions are made collectively, drawing on a diverse pool of knowledge.
- b. Data-Driven Decisions: Decision-making should be rooted in data and research. School managers should encourage a culture where decisions are based on evidence and best practices. This approach ensures that the school remains agile and adaptable in uncertain times.
- c. Professional Development: Investing in the professional development of staff can enhance functional expertise within the school. Workshops, training sessions, and skill-building programmes can empower educators and staff to contribute effectively to decision-making processes.

### 4. Encouraging Open Communication Among All Stakeholders:

- a. Introduction: Open communication is not just a channel for sharing information; it is the lifeblood of effective school management in uncertain times. School managers must establish an environment where all school stakeholders can freely express their ideas, concerns, and feedback.
- b. Effective Channels: School managers should create and maintain effective communication channels, ensuring that stakeholders have accessible means to express themselves. Regular meetings, suggestion boxes, online forums, and anonymous reporting mechanisms can facilitate open dialogue.
- c. Conflict Resolution: In an environment marked by uncertainty, conflicts may arise. School managers should be equipped with conflict resolution skills to ensure that disagreements are managed constructively. Training in conflict resolution techniques can be beneficial for the entire school community.

### 5. Looking at Every Situation in a Unique Way:

The uncertain nature of the school environment demands adaptability and a willingness to approach each situation as unique. One-size-fits-all solutions may not suffice. School managers must empower their team to think critically, creatively, and contextually when faced with ambiguity.

- a. Adaptability: School managers should prioritize adaptability, recognizing that each situation may require a tailored approach. A flexible mindset that accommodates diverse challenges is essential.
- b. Problem-Solving: An individualized approach to each situation fosters effective problem-solving. School managers should empower their team to think critically and creatively, encouraging innovative solutions that align with the unique context of the school.

In conclusion, managing an uncertain school environment necessitates a multifaceted approach that encompasses regular feedback, friendly school environment, Seeking Functional Expertise Before Making Decisions, open communication, and Looking at Every Situation in a Unique Way (Lyod, 2015; Cooke, 2013; Cruz, 2021; Cao, 2021; Nowacka et al., 2022; Mangahas, 2016).. School managers who excel in these areas play a pivotal role in ensuring the stability, adaptability, and success of educational institutions in an ever-changing educational landscape. By addressing the key points outlined above, school managers can lead their schools through uncertainty while fostering resilience and growth within the school community.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the realm of academia, our contemporary world exhibits a dynamic and elusive nature, where the so-called "new normal" is marked by instability, unpredictability, intricacy, and ambiguity. This transition from the past to the present necessitates a corresponding shift from established practices to those that are

presently imperative. This transformation implies a fundamental alteration in the realms of operations, administration, management, and decision-making.

The recent surge in challenges such as school violence, insecurity, disruptions in education, pandemics, economic fluctuations, and widespread unemployment underscores a reality that is defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, which raises significant concerns for the field of education. The perceived relevance and attractiveness of education to its stakeholders, particularly students, will hinge greatly on the adept handling of the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous school environment, often referred to as the VUCA environment. For the students, obtaining a mere certification no longer suffices as a justification for their pursuit of education in this VUCA reality. They are confronted with the harsh truths of a VUCA environment, encompassing the disheartening prospect of acquiring an education without the promise of future employment, the apprehension of safety while in school, and the knowledge of expedited digital pathways to wealth while being ensnared within a protracted educational system. These challenges are just the tip of the iceberg. Nevertheless, it remains imperative for education to maintain its pertinence and allure to its network of students, regardless of these formidable challenges. The key to achieving this lies predominantly in the effective management of the VUCA school environment. Hence, it becomes crucial for educational institutions to identify and confront VUCA-oriented approaches, practices, and well-conceived programs that will augment the pertinence and attractiveness of education for all students, thereby ensuring their continued enrollment and commitment to the educational enterprise. The core objective of this research is to furnish a set of management strategies essential for navigating the complexities of a volatile and uncertain school environment and to explore how these strategies interrelate to secure the ongoing patronage of the student body. In doing so, this study addresses the central question of how the management of volatile and uncertain school environments can predict the continuous patronage of the student clientele to the educational institution.

#### **Aim and Objectives of the study**

The study examined the relationship between Volatile and Uncertain, school environments management and clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the extent to which the management of volatile school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. ascertain the extent to which the management of uncertain school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State

#### **Research Questions**

The under listed research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does the management of volatile school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does the management of uncertain school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State?

#### **Hypotheses**

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

HO<sub>1</sub>; There is no significant prediction of the management of volatile school environments on clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State.

HO<sub>2</sub>; There is no significant prediction of the management of uncertain school environments on clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State.

#### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the research lies in its potential to provide valuable insights and strategies for effectively managing the challenging Volatile and Uncertain school environments and ensuring the continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State. The study's findings hold considerable benefits for a wide array of stakeholders in education, including educational administrators, policy makers, curriculum developers, school governing bodies, students, faculty members, parents, education experts, stakeholders, readers, and researchers. Educational administrators can gain insights into how volatile and uncertain school environments affects the educational system and receive guidance on

mitigating its impact through effective management strategies, which is crucial for retaining the relevance of education and ensuring student satisfaction and continued enrollment. School administrators can also utilize the research to navigate challenges of a volatile and uncertain school environment and equip themselves with the skills needed to maintain patronage, especially from students. Students will benefit by gaining a deeper understanding of the implication of a volatile and uncertain school environment holds in their education and by acquiring the necessary skills and attitudes to thrive in a such school environment. Researchers will find this study a valuable addition to the existing literature, while policy makers and educational planners can use the insights to formulate policies and proactive plans. Curriculum developers can adapt their curricula to address the challenges of a volatile and uncertain environment effectively, ensuring inclusivity and relevance. Ultimately, the research offers a comprehensive approach to managing volatile and uncertain school environments for the continuous patronage of education in Rivers State, benefiting all stakeholders in the process.

**METHODOLOGY**

The design of the study was correlational design, with the population as the 302 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. These schools have 133,497 students from which 398 were selected as sample, using simple random sampling technique. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane minimum standard formula. The study had two sets of instruments. These were the validated 10-item, Volatile School Environments Management and Uncertain School Environments Management Scale (VSEMUSEMS) and the 20-item ‘Clientele Continuous Patronage Scale’ (CCPS) designed by the researcher in the modified 4-point Likert rating scale, of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, Very Low extent (VLE) = 1.for VSEMUSEMS and Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 for CCPS. Cronbach Alpha Statistical Formula was used to obtain the reliability coefficients of the instruments, the expected reliability coefficients (r) for VUCA School environments management Scale (VSEMUSEMS) were 0.82 and 0.88 for volatile school environments’ management and uncertain school environments’ management respectively. The overall reliability index for Volatile School Environments Management and Uncertain School Environments Management Scale (VSEMUSEMS) yielded 0.72 while Clientele Continuous Patronage Scale (CCPS) yielded reliability index of 0.88. The high scores obtained guaranteed the use of the instruments. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were subjected to critical probability value of 0.05 for the purpose of testing.

**RESULTS**

The results of the study came from the answers to the research questions and test of hypotheses. Thus;

**Research Question 1**

*To what extent does the management of volatile school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State?*

**Table 1: Simple Regression on the Extent the Management of Volatile School Environments Predicts Clientele Continuous Patronage of Secondary Schools in Rivers State**

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.787 <sup>a</sup>	.619	.618	.28034

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management\_of\_Volatile\_School

b. Dependent Variable: Continous\_patronage

Table 1 showed the results of a linear regression carried out to investigate the extent the management of volatile school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.78$ ), which showed that, to a high extent, the management of volatile school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The coefficient of determination (R-squared) associated with the linear regression ( $R$ ) of 0.78 was 0.619. This coefficient of determination (R-squared) indicates that, the management of volatile school environments accounted for 61.9% of clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This is an indication that, other factors affect management of volatile school environments and clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State accounted for 38.1%. Therefore, to a high extent, the management of volatile school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2**

*To what extent does the management of uncertain school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State?*

**Table 2: Simple Regression on the Extent the Management of Uncertain School Environments Predicts Clientele Continuous Patronage of Secondary Schools in Rivers State**

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.810 <sup>a</sup>	.656	.655	.26656

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management\_of\_Uncertain\_school

b. Dependent Variable: Continuous\_patronage

Table 2 showed the results of a linear regression carried out to investigate the extent the management of uncertain school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.81$ ), which showed that, to a high extent, the management of uncertain school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State. The coefficient of determination (R-squared) associated with the linear regression ( $R$ ) of 0.81 was 0.656. This coefficient of determination (R-squared) indicates that, the management of uncertain school environments accounted for 65.6% of clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This is an indication that, other factors affect management of uncertain school environments and clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State accounted for 34.4%. Therefore, to a high extent, the management of uncertain school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis**

HO<sub>1</sub>; There is no significant prediction of the management of volatile school environments on clientele continuous patronage of secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Table 3: T-Test Associated with Simple Regression on the Management of Volatile School Environments on Clientele Continuous Patronage of Secondary Schools in Rivers State**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.499	.097		5.124	.000
	Management_of_Volatile_school	.856	.034	.787	25.236	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Continus\_patronage

Table 4.6 showed results of simple regression carried out to investigate whether there is significant prediction of the management of volatile school environments on clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Management of volatile school environments contributed significantly to the model with  $\beta = 0.856$  and the significant value of 0.000 was less than  $p = 0.05$ . The t-

test value 25.236 associated with linear regression was statistically significant at 0.000 when subjected to 0.05 alpha level of significance. By implication, the null hypothesis was rejected and we accepted the alternative hypothesis that, there is a significant prediction of volatile school environment on clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant prediction of the management of uncertain school environments predict clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Table 4.7: T-Test Associated with Simple Regression on the Management of Uncertain School Environments on Clientele Continuous Patronage of Secondary Schools in Rivers State**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.357	.095		3.753	.000
	Management_of_Uncertain_school	.902	.033	.810	27.312	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Continus\_patronage

Table 4.7 showed results of simple regression carried out to investigate whether there is significant prediction of the management of uncertain school environments on clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Management of uncertain school environments contributed significantly to the model with  $\beta = 0.902$  and the significant value of 0.000 was less than  $p =$

0.05. The t-test value 27.312 associated with linear regression was statistically significant at 0.000 when subjected to 0.05 alpha level of significance. By implication, the null hypothesis was rejected and we accepted the alternative hypothesis that, there is a significant prediction of uncertain school environments management on clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDING AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **Extent Management of Volatile School Environments Predicts Clientele Continuous Patronage of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.**

First, the findings of the study revealed that, the management of volatile school environments accounted for 61.9% of clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result showed that, to a high extent, that the management of volatile school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that, to high extent, school managers leave clients with a clear vision of the school, concentrate on building professional competence, encourage team work among school stakeholders, concentrate on connecting with school stakeholders and ensure proper communication with all school stakeholders. This is in line with Thiruchelvan *et al*, (2020), who found that, unity of purpose, collaborative leadership, learning partnership, professional development, and teacher's collaboration contributed in school effectiveness. Also, Mahel (2021), found that, the leadership competency and institutional teaching strategies had the highest overall mean score in the management of volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment. In another finding, Gikonyo *et al*, (2022) revealed that, management of volatile school environments improves clients' attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, management of volatile school environments significantly predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

This suggests that, there was a general acceptability by the respondents that the management of volatile environment is important in ensuring their patronage. A possible explanation for this may be because students are more likely to continue their patronage when they feel their institution can navigate uncertain times without major disruptions. Another reason could be because, effective communication, which is one of the strategies for managing a volatile environment, can help reassure students and foster a sense of community, which can be a strong factor in retaining students. The findings of this study have implications on the need for school leadership to employ vision, professional competence, team work, connection with stakeholders and effective communication as strategies for managing a volatile environment.

### **Extent Management of Uncertain School Environments Predicts Clientele Continuous Patronage of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State.**

The findings of the study revealed that management of uncertain school environments accounted for 65.6% of clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This result showed that to a high extent that management of uncertain school environments predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that to high extent school managers always send feedback to all school stakeholders, establishes a friendly school environment for all school stakeholders, seek knowledge of functional expertise before making decisions, encourage open communication among all school stakeholders and look at every situation in a unique way. This is in line with Rozman, *et al*, (2023) who found that management of uncertain significantly contribute to creating new views in the field of artificial intelligence and adopting important decisions in creating working conditions. Also, Seow *et al*, (2019) found that sharing positive feedback relate to the effectiveness of experiential learning pedagogy to prepare students with future work skills to cope with a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) work environment. Therefore, management of uncertain school environments significantly predicts clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A possible explanation for the trend in the finding may be because the respondents, who make up the clientele, believe that leaders who actively seek feedback from stakeholders, create a sense of inclusivity and engagement, making them feel valued. Another possible



explanation for the finding could be that the respondents view leader's role in seeking knowledge of functional expertise, as a commitment to continuous improvement which can result in the enhancement of academic programmes and services. This implies that understanding is a very vital strategy for handling an uncertain school environment. The researcher believes that open communication and willingness to understand students' concerns build trust. Students are more likely to trust leaders who are transparent and genuinely interested in their well-being. Understanding students; needs and challenges also allows leaders to provide personalized support, which can result in tailored solutions that improve the student experience and increase patronage. The findings of this study have implications on the need for school leadership to employ feedback, fostering of a friendly school environment, seeking knowledge of functional expertise, and open communication as strategies for navigating or managing an uncertain school environment for clientele continuous patronage.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this work reveal that a volatile and uncertain, school environments' management is a strong predictor of clientele continuous patronage of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. In view of these findings, it is concluded that the VUCA-prime school environments' management strategies of Vision and Understanding as regards a volatile and uncertain school environment, have direct bearing on clientele continuous patronage in Rivers state. This implies that employing these strategies in a fast-changing world, that is characterized by Volatility and Uncertainty, would ensure that education holds its relevance and appeal to its clientele network of students. and subsequently, ensure their continuous patronage.

The findings also reveal that trust, customer satisfaction, corporate school image, quality service, high levels of collaboration, positive school-family-community relationships, relevant school curriculum, effective transitions, appropriate behavioral interventions, needs-based approaches for all students, physical and psychological safety, attention to student attendance, encouraging student mobility, providing adequate human resources, providing adequate resources, adequate infrastructure, accessibility of the school for all, an inclusive school environment, and encouraging student voice and engagement are necessary for clientele continuous patronage.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study and conclusion, the following recommendations are offered;

1. School principals and Educational Managers should continue to provide a clear vision of the school and build professional competence of IT personnel as a means of clientele continuous patronage.
2. School principals and Educational Managers should not relent in sending feedback to all school stakeholders and a creating a friendly school environment for all school stakeholders as a means of clientele continuous patronage.

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