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Management Of Social Capital Investment For The Attainment Of Sustainable Development Goal 4 In Public Universities In Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
This study examined management of social capital investment for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state, Nigeria. Three (3) research questions and three (3) hypotheses guided this study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population of this study comprised all the 202 management staff (D.V.Cs, Registrars, Bursars, Librarians, Deans, and H.O.Ds) of the three (3) public universities in Rivers state, Nigeria. A sample size of 96 management staff, representing 48% of the population was drawn using the stratified random sampling technique. A validated likert-modified 4-scale 18 item instrument titled: 'Managing Social Capital Investment for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Public Universities Questionnaire (MSCISDGPUQ)'was used for data collection and its reliability coefficient was established at 0.83 using the Cronbach Alpha Correlation coefficient. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that: university's ability in strengthening real commitment, being actively involved in decision making processes and disseminating information promptly and accurately, are some of the ways social capital investment can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state, Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended amongst others that in order to maintain good relationship and trust in universities, university stakeholders including students, should raise the profile of the university community by collectively strengthening social inclusion aimed at quality assurance and quality education

Keywords: social capital investment, sustainable development goal, public universities.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a great role in the sustainable development of any nation. It is a top priority in the national development agenda of any nation because it (education) aids in the acquisition of appropriate skills for developing mental, physical and social abilities and competences which helps individuals to live and contribute to the society. This implies that education plays a critical role in the life of any society as

no society can enjoy socio-economic development, growth and prosperity without a functional educational system. Thus, education serves as an instrument of modernization and development especially in its role in the empowerment of people with appropriate knowledge and skills. To this, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) posited that education should make optimum contribution to national development through creative innovations as enshrined in the skills acquisition programmes of the educational policy. Generally, education is an empowerment tool that evolves as evolving innovative practices subject to global wants and demands.

Albeit, the Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) recognized the important roles played by education at the three different stages; the primary, secondary and tertiary stages. Nevertheless, Chitiba (2017) opined that of the three stages of education in Nigeria, the tertiary stage which embeds university education is the major source of providing the required knowledge that will help generate and accelerate knowledge flow for modern-based economies. This implies that university education is a pivotal tool in addressing urgent economy related issues of national importance such as unemployment, youth restiveness, economic recession, pandemic outbreak etc. It (university education) is a type a type of 'schooling' offered in a higher learning institution and academic environment, involving a community of scholars being engaged in studying (teaching and learning), research, and community services. Similarly, Sintayehu (2018) described university education, as a type of education that offers professional training to serve society's socio-economic, political, and cultural needs.

Corroborating the above descriptions of university education, Adegbite (2019) asserted that university education is a critical component of human development which provides not only the high-level skills necessary for every labour market but also, the training, essential for teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, humanists, entrepreneurs, scientists, and a myriad of other personnel. Reviewing the foregoing, it can be deduced that as acknowledged by the National Policy on Education (NPE), university education shall indeed make optimum contribution to national development by intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high-level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that as proven by research, achieving the needs of a nation vis-à-vis university education and other higher learning institutions, irrespective of whether it is public or private, is synonymous to the attainment of sustainable development goals of that nation with Nigeria, not an exception.

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) refer to development 'aims' that can meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations. They act as guidelines which the world can follow to maintain world order in all aspects of society. According to Aliwa (2017), sustainable development goals are lasting socioeconomic, political, and technological advancement capable of encouraging qualitative education, gainful employment, and maximum security; free, fair, elections, credible transportation, provision of socio amenities, good governance, the rule of law, and respect for gender equality. In a similar vein, Agih (2016) referred to sustainable development goals in education as the practice of learning how to achieve global and local sustainable communities through the constant provision of desirable educational needs to people of the young generation such that will be meaningful in their future aspirations. Supporting the above statement, Ebuara as cited in Akpan, Okon, and Ebuara (2018), submitted that sustainable development goal is linked to the socioeconomic development of people in meeting their basic human rights needs without compromising environmental conservation and protection so that the earth's resources will be able to meet the needs of the present and future generations. Albeit the foregoing assertions and descriptions of sustainable development goals reveal that they (sustainable development goals) are changes or growth which can be maintained and are conferred either indefinitely or for a given period.

This implies that sustainable development goals involve processes that are dynamic and can only make an impact through actions taken in order to achieve human cantered development. To this vein, in Nigeria, the United Nations (UN) in 2015, set out seventeen (17) sustainable development goals (SDGs) to address the major development challenges faced by people in Nigeria. According to Ofor-Douglas (2023), the

following are the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nigeria vis-à-vis United Nations: (i) No Poverty (ii) Zero Hunger (iii) Good Health and well-being; (iv) Quality Education (v) Gender Equality (vi) Clean Water and Sanitation (vii) Affordable and Clean Energy (viii) Decent Work and Economic Growth (ix) Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (x) Reduced Inequalities (xi) Sustainable cities and Communities (xii) Responsible Consumption and Production (xiii) Climate Action (xiv) Life below Water (xv) Life on Land (xvi) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions and (xvii) Partnerships for the Goals.

Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the reference of this study is on goal no. 4 – quality education where the educational stakeholders in Nigeria manages the education sector including university education such that ensures inclusive append equitable quality education while also promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all geared towards producing recipients who are to serve society's socio-economic, political and cultural needs. This assertion agrees with Aliwa (2017), who postulated that through quality education, the individual citizen is fully equipped to contribute meaningfully to the social and economic development of his nation. Nevertheless, as noted by primary sources, in attaining sustainable development goals in Nigeria vis-à-vis education, United Nations partners with all educational stakeholders in Nigeria; simultaneously, educational stakeholders' partner with one another with university education stakeholders not exempted. This identified existing partnership however denotes the existence of a working network or relationship which can be termed 'social capital'.

Social capital refers to the networks of relationships among people who work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as the sum of potential benefits brought on by communication and relationships within purposeful long-term social networks. In a similar vein, Nelson (2022) in reference to a school setting, described social capital as a form of economic and cultural capital in which social networks are central; school activities are marked by trust and cooperation among school management staff, teachers, or lecturers as the case maybe, students and all other school workers within a school. Generally, as postulated by Anthony (2017), social capital auspices individuals, building relationships with other individuals and keeping the connection until it continuously lasts such that, involved individuals, are able to cooperate thereby gaining a purpose that cannot be done alone. The foregoing implies that individuals, by putting forward a network as a resource, create a connection through some networks which are made via emphasizing the similarity of values or purposes inside the network with other individuals, hence, the network is categorized as social capital.

Nonetheless, viewing social capital in respect of existing relationships in schools, it can be asserted that social capital refers to links, shared values and understandings enabling individuals and groups within the school, trust one another while working together. Nevertheless, Halpern as cited in Nelson (2022), identified three (3) types of social capital: bonding social capital (describes the links between like-minded people or the reinforcement of homogeneity), bridging social capital (referred to as building of connections between heterogeneous groups which are likely to be more fragile but more likely also to foster social inclusion) and linking social capital (reaches out to unlike people in dissimilar situations such as those who are entirely outside members). Albeit, from the afore-descriptions and afore-definitions of social capital, it can be asserted that irrespective of types and where; (i) social capital auspices existing relationships and (ii) there are outcomes associated to all social capital relationships. Emphasizing on the second assertion however, it is noteworthy that the outcomes associated with all social capital relationships, can be referred to as social capital investment.

Social capital investment refers to what individuals can do to invest and build their connections and relationships. It describes the consequences, outcomes or expectations of individuals who relate within a setting. In the opinion of Eboatu and Igboka (2017), social capital investment covers elements including social networks, civic engagement, norms of reciprocity, and generalized trust. Broadly, according to Ghamari (2019), social capital investment defines a collective asset in the form of shared norms, values, beliefs, trust, networks, social relations, and institutions that facilitate cooperation and collective action. Myeong and Seo (2018) revealed that social capital investment is a set of shared values or resources that allows individuals to work together in a group to effectively achieve a common place. Supporting this

assertion, Nikkhah, Zhairinia, Sadeghi, and Fani (2019) described social capital investment as also being thought of as the potential ability to obtain resources, favours, or information from one's personal connections. The afore-described infers that in a setting, with reference to a university school setting, educational stakeholders must possess and contribute via social capital traits their quota and in return, achieve amongst others, quality education. These social capital traits have been identified as social capital or collective investment (Nnabuife, Chukwuemeka, Chinwendu, & Eberendu, 2018).

Reviewing the foregoing, it can be inferred that social capital investment describes shared or collective individual inputs to a network or group, aimed at achieving the relationship goals of that group including being beneficial to the organization where the group(s) exist. However, Mangal and Mangal, (2019) acknowledged that there are several social capital investments including communication, norms, trust, networking and feedback. In a similar vein, Durojaiye, Yusuf, Falusi, and Okoruwa (2018) identified social trust, social support, shared norms, communication and social cohesion as social capital investments in a university setting. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that higher education system with particular reference to university education, through offering specification of goals, planning, educating graduates and educational processes and social capital with its three components of social integration, social trust and social participation via mutual relationship entwine to reach results including empowering for acceptance of different roles in the future life of graduates, preparing a social context and understanding social status, facilitation of social interactions, enabling individuals adaptability with culture and social values, reinforcement and socialization as well as developing of modern communicative networks aim at attaining sustainable development goal 4 of quality education. A general overview of the relationship between social capital and university education however, is such that social capital, supports success and education in the form of the disciplinary and academic climate at schools and the cultural norms and values that motivate students to achieve higher goals bearing in mind, the need for sustainability education – education for sustainable development which allows every human being acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future (Nelson, 2023).

Given the necessity of achieving sustainable development goals, particularly in the context of social capital within public universities in Rivers State - where relationships among university staff are influenced by factors such as cultural diversity, educational background, work and personal experiences, and socioeconomic status - it is crucial to intentionally manage social capital investment. Accordingly, this study explored the management of social capital investment to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Theoretical Framework

The stakeholder theory, propounded by Edward Freeman in 1984, was used as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory asserts that stakeholders are groups and individuals who can both affect and be affected by the achievement of an organization's mission. Each stakeholder group has the right not to be treated merely as a means to an end, and therefore, should and must participate in determining the future direction of the company in which they have a stake. This theory logically supports this study, as managing social capital investment for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities, emphasizes the importance of participation, inclusion, involvement, and partnership among university stakeholders (led by university management staff), government, and all other stakeholders in public universities. This collaborative approach aims to foster healthy relationships to achieve Goal 4 of university education in Rivers State, which is to provide inclusive, high-quality education that enhances the learner's standard of living and the community's future

Statement of the Problem

The role of social capital in achieving sustainable development goals, particularly in ensuring quality education, is undeniable. It functions as a networking process from which all educational stakeholders benefit. However, it is equally clear that as individuals engage in this networking, they consciously invest in social capital to achieve specific goals. Consequently, school management, while overseeing school resources, also inadvertently manages social capital investment. This creates a symbiotic relationship

between social capital and the attainment of sustainable development goals, especially Goal 4 (quality education). Social capital and its investments facilitate the achievement of these goals, which, in turn, strengthens social capital. This suggests that the effective management of social capital investment significantly influences a school's productivity, administrative effectiveness, and ultimately, the quality of education offered in relation to achieving sustainable development goals. In the context of public universities in Rivers State, however, where stakeholders, including university staff, are diverse in terms of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, geographical background, and educational qualifications, there are often conflicting views on how to achieve these goals.

These conflicts may negatively affect the statutory responsibilities of university staff and could, in turn, have adverse consequences on their administrative and teaching performance. This raises important questions for the researcher: Could the administrative effectiveness of public universities be influenced by their ability to manage social capital investment? Can persistent conflicts over how public universities in Rivers State approach the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 be effectively resolved through the management of social capital investment? Thus, the focus of this study is on exploring how social capital investment can be managed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of this study was to examine management of social capital investment for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:

1. Ascertain the ways social trust is managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.
2. Examine the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.
3. Investigate the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study;

1. In what ways is social trust be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?
2. What are the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?
3. What are the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance guided this study.

$H0_1$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the ways social trust is managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

$H0_2$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

$H0_3$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted the descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in public universities in Rivers state, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all the three (3) public universities in Rivers state consisting of 202 management staff one hundred and eighteen (118) male management staff (45

from University of Port Harcourt, 47 from Rivers State university and 26 from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education) and eighty-four (84) female management staff (30 females from University of Port Harcourt, 34 from Rivers State university and 20 from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education) in the three (3) public universities. Sources: **(Personnel Affairs Unit, (University of Port Harcourt, 2023); Establishment Division Department (Rivers State University) and Staff Payroll, 2023 (Ignatius Ajuru University of Education)).** A sample size of 96 management staff (51 males and 45 females; 63 experienced and 33 less experienced) representing 48% of the population was selected using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. An 18 item 4-point Likert type scale researcher-structured questionnaire titled 'Managing Social Capital Investment for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Public Universities Questionnaire (MSCISDGPUQ)' was validated and used for data collection. A reliability index of 0.83 was established using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *In what ways is social trust managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Weighted mean scores and standard deviation of the responses of male and female management staff on the ways social trust is managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

S/N	Ways social trust is managed include by	**Male management staff = 51**		**Female management staff = 45**		**Mean set (x_1x_2)**	**Rank**	**Remarks**
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2			
1	Strengthening social inclusion	2.25	1.01	2.72	0.75	2.49	1st	Agreed
2	Establishing real commitment	2.20	0.98	2.73	0.75	2.47	2nd	Agreed
3	Embodying the ideals and mission statement of the university	2.19	0.98	2.63	0.69	2.41	3rd	Agreed
4	Embracing transparency and accountability	2.13	0.91	2.68	1.40	2.41	4th	Agreed
5	Ensuring university institutions are effective and deliver real benefits to students	2.08	0.84	2.72	0.73	2.40	5th	Agreed
6	Developing future leaders who work for the greater good of the society not for themselves	2.03	0.79	2.73	0.75	2.38	6th	Agreed
		12.88	5.51	10.21	5.07	14.58		
Aggregate Mean		**2.15**	**0.92**	**1.70**	**0.86**	**2.43**		

The data on table 1 above shows that all the items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 with weighted mean scores of 2.49, 2.47, 2.41, 2.41, 2.40 and 2.38 respectively are above the criterion mean of 2.50 hence, were adjudged as the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state. Nevertheless, the aggregate mean score of 2.43 above the criterion mean of 2.50 however showed a high level of acceptance by university management staff as the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

Research Question 2: *What are the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Weighted mean scores and standard deviation of the responses of experienced and less experienced management staff on the ways social support can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

S/N	Strategies for managing social support include by	**Experienced management staff = 63**		**Less experienced management staff = 33**		**Mean set (x_1x_2)**	**Rank**	**Remarks**
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2			
7	Not reaching out to group members and others for help when needed	2.07	0.64	1.46	1.13	1.77	6th	Disagreed
8	Being bold to take social risks by seeking out new people or groups aimed at constant improvements	3.84	1.37	3.46	1.49	3.65	2nd	Agreed
9	Being assertive, specific in making request yet avoiding being overwhelmed	3.70	1.43	3.45	1.29	3.58	4th	Agreed
10	Being actively involved in decision making processes	3.94	1.58	3.43	1.25	3.67	1st	Agreed
11	Avoiding negative relationships	3.89	1.26	2.63	0.85	3.26	5th	Agreed
12	Keeping in touch with groups in which you are a member	3.84	1.37	3.46	1.49	3.65	2nd	Agreed
		14.46	10.08	16.08	6.24	19.56		
Aggregate Mean		**2.41**	**1.68**	**2.68**	**1.04**	**3.26**		

Result from table 2 above shows that items; 10, 8, 12, 9, and 11 have weighted mean scores 3.67, 3.65, 3.65, 3.58, and 3.26 above 2.50 hence, were adjudged as the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State. Item 7 with weighted mean score of 1.77 below the criterion mean indicates that by not reaching out to group members and others for help when needed is not a strategy for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State. Nonetheless, the aggregate mean score of 3.26 is above the criterion mean score of 2.50 indicating that university management staff accepted the above items as strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: *What are the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State?*

Table 3: Weighted mean scores and standard deviation of the responses of male and female management staff on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

S/N	Methods of managing communication include by	**Male management staff = 51**		**Female management staff = 45**		**Mean set (x_1x_2)**	**Rank**	**Remarks**
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2			
13	Disseminating information promptly and accurately	2.59	1.37	2.78	1.48	2.69	1st	Agreed
14	Paying attention to details	2.50	1.54	2.82	1.50	2.66	2nd	Agreed
15	Providing feedback	2.28	1.40	2.92	1.33	2.60	3rd	Agreed
16	Reacting appropriately	2.26	1.35	2.68	1.25	2.47	4th	Agreed
17	Deferring judgment when need be	2.14	1.06	2.60	1.16	2.37	5th	Agreed
18	Helping to generate rapport	1.36	1.17	1.61	1.27	1.49	6th	Disagreed
		13.13	7.89	15.41	7.99	14.28		
Aggregate Mean		**2.18**	**1.32**	**2.57**	**1.33**	**2.38**		

The result on table 3 above reveals that items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 with mean scores 2.69, 2.66, 2.60, 2.47 and 2.37 respectively were accepted by university management staff as the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State. Item 18 with mean score 1.49 was however rejected as a method of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State. The aggregate mean score of 2.38 above the criterion mean score of 2.50 indicates that university management staff accepted that there are methods by which communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 can be managed in public universities in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

$H0_1$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the ways social trust is managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test analysis on the mean ratings of Federal and state universities on the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Category	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Male	51	2.15	0.92				
Female	45	1.70	0.86	94	1.87	1.96	significant

The data on table 4 above reveals that at 0.05 level of significance and 94 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 1.87 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 hence, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female university management staff on the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

$H0_2$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 5: z-test analysis on the mean ratings of Federal and state universities on the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Category	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Experienced	63	2.41	1.68				
Less experienced	33	2.68	1.04	94	-1.08	-1.96	significant

The table 5 above reveals that the calculated z-value of -1.08 is greater than the critical value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced university management staff on the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

$H0_3$ There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State.

Table 6: z-test analysis on the mean ratings of Federal and State universities on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

Category	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Male	51	2.18	1.32				
Female	45	2.57	1.33	94	-2.43	-1.96	significant

Table 6 above showed that with a degree of freedom of 94 and at an alpha significant level of 0.05, the z-calculated value of -2.43 is less than the z-critical value of -1.96. This means that the null hypothesis was accepted. By implications, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female university management staff on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Firstly, it was found that strengthening social inclusion, establishing real commitment, embodying the ideals and mission statement of the university, embracing transparency and accountability, ensuring university institutions are effective and deliver real benefits to students and developing future leaders who work for the greater good of the society not for themselves are the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state. Nevertheless, a corresponding finding from hypothesis one established that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female university management staff on the ways social trust can be managed for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state. The above findings agree with Ebuara (2018) who asserted that social trust enables the deepening of existing relationship in schools as can be seen in university stakeholders' ability to harmonize resources by intimating all in present and future plans. This implies that as proven by the above findings, ways social trust can be managed in public universities in Rivers state, Nigeria, advocates that university management staff adopt ways of deepening existing relationships between them and all other stakeholders.

Secondly, it was revealed that the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state include by being actively involved in decision making processes, keeping in touch with groups in which you are a member, being bold to take social risks by seeking out new people or groups aimed at constant improvements, being assertive, specific in making request yet avoiding being overwhelmed and avoiding negative relationships. Albeit not reaching out to group members and others for help when needed, was rejected as a strategy for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state. Similarly, a corresponding hypothesis finding established a significant difference between the mean

ratings of experienced and less experienced university management staff on the strategies for managing social support for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State. These findings agree with Nnabuife, Chukwuemeka, Chinwendu and Eberendu (2018), who asserted that in managing social support in universities, experienced and less experienced university management staff adopt both a vertical and horizontal positive relationship in providing the needed psychological and material resources for to assist students and members of staff cope with all forms of stress.

Finally, the finding of this study on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state is in consonance with Nikkhah, Zhairinia, Sadeghi and Fani (2019) in their study on social capital and its impact on social participation. It was however found that the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state include disseminating information promptly and accurately, paying attention to details, providing feedback, reacting appropriately, deferring judgment when need be. Similarly, a corroborating finding from hypothesis testing established that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female university staff on the methods of managing communication for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in public universities in Rivers state.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that effectively managing social capital investment is crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. If the vertical and horizontal relationships within these universities are not properly managed, particularly in terms of social trust, social support, and communication, it will hinder progress toward this goal. Therefore, managing social capital investment plays a key role in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, underscoring the importance for university management in Rivers State to prioritize social trust, social support, and communication within their institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. University stakeholders, including students, should work together to enhance the university community by promoting social inclusion, with the goal of ensuring quality assurance and delivering quality education.
2. The government should play an active role in all decision-making processes within universities. This involvement will encourage other stakeholders to be assertive and precise in making the necessary requests to achieve the university's sustainable development goals.
3. All university stakeholders should prioritize clear and frequent communication through appropriate channels.

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