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Research Article

TEACHERS LEADERSHIP STYLE AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EKET LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract

The issue of declining academic performance among secondary school students in Nigeria, including those in Eket Local Government Area, has remained a major concern. This is because the performance of students in recent years has not met expected standards. This persistent trend raises questions about the effectiveness of teaching styles especially at the senior secondary level. This study investigates the influence of teachers' leadership styles on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area. Specific emphasis was on the democratic teachers' leadership style. The study was guided by one research hypothesis tested using Regression Analysis. The study adopted a survey research design and utilized a structured instrument titled: Teachers' Leadership Styles and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (TLSAPQ) for data collection. The TLSAPQ was subjected to face and content validation by two experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Uyo. Reliability of the instrument was established using the test–retest method. The population of the study comprised 1,361 respondents, including teachers of senior secondary students and Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students in nine public secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area as of February, 2026. A sample size of 360 respondents, consisting of 135 teachers and 225 SS2 students, was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. The study was anchored on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) and Carl Rogers' Person-Centred Theory

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(1951). The findings revealed that there is a significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area. Consequently, it was recommended among others that teachers should encourage democratic classroom practices always.

Keywords: Teachers' Leadership Styles; Democratic Leadership Style; Students' Academic Performance; Senior Secondary Schools; Eket Local Government

Introduction

Education is a vital resource for nations because it empowers individuals with knowledge and competences that enable them to participate effectively in society. Secondary education, in particular, prepares students for higher education and the labor market in Nigeria. For this reason, secondary education is a vital milestone in students' academic lives. It requires teachers' effectiveness in teaching and leading in the classroom to achieve the desired outcomes of education. According to Akinyemi (2023) and Morgan (2022), teachers' leadership in the classroom influences students' behaviours, motivation and performance. However, teachers who exercise leadership behaviour in classrooms guide and direct students towards achieving specific educational goals, objectives or targets. Teachers' leadership style therefore, refers to their general pattern of acting or behaving towards students while managing the classroom, interacting with students and engaging in instructional activities. According to Northouse (2021), leadership style is the pattern or type of leadership behavior demonstrated by a leader in influencing his or her followers. In the classroom, leadership style determines the nature of relationships teachers establish with their students.

In education, leadership styles include authoritarian or controlling, permissive (laissez-faire), indulgent, and democratic leadership (participative). Democratic leadership is characterized by cooperation and participation of students in the decision-making process (Evertson &Weinstein, 2023; Ibrahim &Al-Taneiji, 2023). Teachers who adopt this leadership style seek the opinions and inputs of their students towards classroom activities. Generally, democratic leadership encourages students' participation, sharing of ideas and collaboration in achieving classroom goals. As a result, it is likely to promote effective student engagement, increased levels of students' confidence and skills development. Authoritarian or controlling leadership is characterized by imposition of strict rules and regulations on students while setting high expectations for classroom performance (Adeyemi, 2020). The teachers also set the rules for the class while making the decisions themselves. This type of leadership style discourages

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students' active participation and sharing of ideas in classroom activities. When implemented appropriately, it can lead to discipline and good academic performance by students. However, it can be detrimental to creativity and motivation of students hence, poor performance. Permissive or laissez-faire leadership style, on the other hand, is characterized by giving freedom to students to express themselves without enforcing appropriate rules and expectations while indulgent leadership style involves responding to students' needs with minimal requirements or expectations (Mock, 2024; Santrock, 2021)

Students' academic performance is a key indicator of the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process that is commonly assessed using continuous assessments, internal and external examinations such as those conducted by the West African Examination Council and National Examination Council. Over the years, there has been a persistent complaint about poor academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria including the Eket Local Government Area. Reports on students' performance by examination bodies such as the West African Examination Council and National Examination Council indicate that academic performance of secondary school students has been inconsistent and generally poor. The question therefore arises whether there are factors that influence or predict poor academic performance of secondary school students in senior secondary classes.

Poor academic performance of secondary school students can be attributed to various factors including: inadequate instructional materials, over-crowded classrooms, poor study habits and lack of parental support. However, there is an aspect of teachers that influences students' academic performance that is not emphasized, particularly, teacher leadership style. Teachers are key actors in the teaching-learning process and their leadership behaviours influence the interactions that take place in the classroom. In other words, the way teachers manage the classroom, direct and interact with students affects students' learning and consequently, their academic performance. In many secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area, for instance, many teachers adopt either democratic leadership style, authoritarian leadership style, permissive or indulgent leadership style. Teachers who adopt democratic leadership style encourage students' participation in classroom activities while those who adopt authoritarian leadership style discourage students' participation and expect absolute obedience from them. Permissive and Indulgent teachers on the other hand, give students tremendous freedom to express themselves without providing sufficient guidance and direction. These differences in teachers' leadership style have negative effects on students' academic

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performance due to variations in the way students are guided, directed and managed in the classroom. The negative effects of teachers' leadership style on students' academic performance are more evident when the leadership style does not fit students' needs.

The problem here is that, there is no study that specifically examines the effect of teachers' leadership styles on students' academic performance in senior secondary classes in Eket Local Government Area. Most studies have focused on other aspects of academic performance without considering teachers' leadership styles. This makes it difficult to address the issue of poor academic performance of students in senior secondary classes due to ineffective leadership styles of teachers. This study therefore, seeks to investigate the influence of teachers' leadership style on academic performance of students in senior secondary classes in Eket Local Government Area focusing more on how democratic leadership style can contributes to students' academic performance.

2. Statement of the Problem

Several factors have been identified as the causes of poor academic performance of secondary school students including: inadequate instructional materials, over-crowded classrooms, poor study habits and lack of parental support. However, there is an aspect of teachers that influences students' academic performance that is not emphasized, particularly, teacher leadership style. Teachers are key actors in the teaching-learning process and their leadership behaviours influence the interactions that take place in the classroom. In other words, the way teachers manage the classroom, direct and interact with students affects students' learning and consequently, their academic performance. In many secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area, for instance, many teachers adopt either democratic leadership style, authoritarian leadership style, permissive or indulgent leadership style. Teachers who adopt democratic leadership style encourage students' participation in classroom activities while those who adopt authoritarian leadership style discourage students' participation and expect absolute obedience from them. Permissive and Indulgent teachers on the other hand, give students tremendous freedom to express themselves without providing sufficient guidance and direction. These differences in teachers' leadership style have negative effects on students' academic performance due to variations in the way students are guided, directed and managed in the classroom. The negative effects of teachers' leadership style on students' academic performance are more evident when the leadership style does not fit students' needs. For instance, excessive use of authoritarian leadership style discourages participation hence, poor

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performance while permissive leadership style results in poor discipline and poor academic performance. Although democratic leadership style is ideal for effective teaching and learning, it can result in poor academic performance due to inappropriate implementation. In addition, indulgent leadership style can lead both to poor discipline and performance by students.

The problem with these issues is that, there is no study that specifically examines the effect of teachers' leadership styles on students' academic performance in senior secondary classes in Eket Local Government Area. Most studies have focused on other aspects of academic performance without considering teachers' leadership styles. This makes it difficult to address the issue of poor academic performance of students in senior secondary classes due to ineffective leadership styles of teachers. The main focus of this paper is on how democratic leadership style of teachers affects student performance.

One null hypothesis is developed to guide this paper as follows:

1. There is no significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two major theories- Social Cognitive Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory, to explain the relationship between teachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance. These theories are considered most appropriate because they directly address how students learn through interaction, observation, and active participation within the classroom environment- factors that are strongly influenced by teachers' leadership styles.

3.1 Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) Propounded by Albert Bandura, SCT was developed as an advancement of the earlier Social Learning Theory, to integrate behavioural and cognitive perspectives by emphasizing that learning is not merely a product of direct experience but also occurs through observation, imitation, and interaction (Bandura, 2001). It posits that individuals are active agents in their own learning, capable of influencing and being influenced by their environment. At the core of Social Cognitive Theory is the concept of reciprocal determinism, which explains that learning is shaped by the continuous interaction among personal factors (such as attitudes and beliefs), environmental influences (such as teaching methods and classroom climate), and behaviour (such as students' study habits). In an educational setting, this triadic relationship is evident in the classroom where students' beliefs and attitudes (personal factors) interact with teachers' behaviours and classroom

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climate (environment), ultimately influencing students' academic actions and performance (behaviour). This implies that students' academic performance cannot be understood without considering the role of the teacher as a key environmental factor.

A major component of Social Cognitive Theory is observational learning, also known as modeling, which emphasized that individuals learn new behaviours and acquire knowledge by observing others, especially those they perceive as authority figures or role models. In the classroom, teachers serve as primary models whose actions, communication patterns, and leadership styles are constantly observed by students. Another important construct within Social Cognitive Theory is self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks successfully. Students who believe in their capabilities are more likely to engage actively in learning activities, overcome challenges, and achieve higher academic outcomes. Teachers influence students' self-efficacy through their leadership styles by providing encouragement, constructive feedback, and opportunities for success.

SCT provides an explanation of how teachers' leadership styles influence students' academic performance. The leadership styles exercised by teachers, ranging from democratic leadership to authoritarian, permissive, and indulgent leadership, constitute a significant part of the classroom environment that influences students' learning experience. For instance, a democratic leadership style (which involves participation and interaction) provides students with opportunities to observe and participate in collaborative learning behaviours, which ultimately influence their academic performance. Through observation and interaction, students internalize these behaviours, ultimately influencing their academic outcomes. With these, SCT remains highly relevant to educational studies because it highlights the importance of social interaction, modelling, and environmental influences in shaping learning outcomes. Its emphasis on the teacher as a role model underlines the significance of leadership styles in influencing students' academic performance. By understanding how students learn through observation and interaction, educators can adopt and implement democratic style in such a way that promote positive learning behaviours and enhance academic achievement.

Despite its relevance, Social Cognitive Theory presents limitations and, when applied in isolation, fails to explain how learners can construct knowledge. This necessitates the combination with Constructivist Learning Theory, which explains how learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with the environment.

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3.2 Constructivist Learning Theory (CLT) CLT is mainly associated with the works of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky who provided foundational insights into cognitive and social aspects of learning. It emphasizes that learning is an active, dynamic, and student-centred process (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978). The theory assumes that knowledge is not simply transmitted from teacher to student but is constructed by learners based on their prior knowledge, experiences, and interactions. Students interpret new information by relating it to what they already know, thus constructing deeper understanding. Consequently, effective learning takes place when students are actively engaged in the learning process through activities such as discussion, collaboration, and problem-solving.

In relation to the present study, CLT provides an explanation of how teachers' leadership styles influence students' academic performance. The leadership styles exercised by teachers are key determinant of how actively involved the students are in the learning process. For instance, a democratic leadership style (which emphasizes participation and collaboration) aligns closely with constructivist principles because it encourages students to actively engage in constructing knowledge. This is likely to enhance understanding and consequently improve students' academic performance.

CLT is therefore relevant to the present study because it highlights the importance of student-centred learning approaches and active participation in achieving academic success. It sheds light on the significance of leadership styles that promote student-centred learning environments in enhancing students' academic performance. It further emphasizes the importance of active participation, social interaction, and guided learning in achieving academic success. Its combination with SCT will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers can influence students' academic performance through their leadership styles. Summarily, the theory complements the SCT by addressing its limitations. CLT explains how students actively construct knowledge through interaction with the environment, whereas SCT explains how students can learn through observation and imitation of teachers' behaviours. The combination of the two theories offers a more comprehensive understanding of the teaching-learning process.

4. Conceptual Clarification

4.1 The Concept of Leadership in Education Traditionally, leadership within the school system was largely associated with formal administrative roles such as principals and head teachers, but contemporary perspective has recognized that leadership is a shared and

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distributed function in which teachers play a critical role as classroom leaders (Spillane, 2026; Northouse, 2021). Educational leadership involves setting direction, creating a vision for learning, fostering a conducive environment, and motivating both teachers and students to achieve desired outcomes. Within the classroom context, teachers act as frontline leaders who directly influence students' academic experiences. They make decisions regarding instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment methods, and interpersonal interactions. These decisions collectively shape the learning environment and significantly impact students' engagement and achievement (Chisom, 2026).

Furthermore, teachers, as instructional leaders, are responsible for organizing content, effectively delivering lessons, monitoring students' progress, and providing feedback. Effective instructional leadership ensures that learning objectives are clearly defined and that teaching methods are aligned with students' needs and abilities (Hallinger, 2025). In this regard, the teacher's leadership role extends beyond content delivery to include facilitating understanding, encouraging inquiry, and promoting higher-order thinking skills. Another important aspect is classroom leadership, which emphasizes the teacher's role in managing the classroom environment. This includes establishing rules, maintaining discipline, organizing classroom activities, and ensuring that students remain focused on learning tasks. A well-managed classroom creates a safe and supportive atmosphere that enhances students' willingness to participate and learn (Umoh, 2025; Okic, 2022). Furthermore, leadership in education involves motivational and transformational roles. Teachers inspire students to achieve their potential by setting high expectations, recognizing achievements, and encouraging persistence. This approach aligns with modern educational practices that emphasize student-centred learning and active participation (Bass & Riggio, 2020).

The concept of leadership in education is also closely linked to decision-making and problem-solving. Teachers regularly make decisions regarding lesson planning, student assessment, and classroom management. Effective leaders are able to analyze situations, consider alternatives, and implement strategies that enhance learning outcomes (Mande, 2023; Chuks, 2022). Importantly, leadership in education is not a one-size-fits-all concept. Teachers adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation, students' needs, and instructional goals. These styles, such as democratic, authoritarian, permissive, and indulgent, represent different approaches to classroom leadership, each with its own implications for students' academic performance. The effectiveness of any leadership style depends on how well it aligns with the

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learning environment and the needs of students (Adeloye, 2024). Ultimately, leadership in education is a critical determinant of students' academic success. Effective teacher leadership creates a structured, supportive, and engaging learning environment that promotes understanding and achievement.

4.2 Concept of Teachers' Leadership Styles Teachers' leadership styles refer to the consistent patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and strategies that teachers adopt in managing classroom activities, interacting with students, and facilitating the teaching-learning process. As classroom leaders, teachers are responsible not only for delivering subject content but also for shaping the learning environment, maintaining discipline, motivating students, and guiding them towards achieving academic goals. The effectiveness of these responsibilities largely depends on the leadership style employed by the teacher (Northouse, 2021).

In educational settings, leadership style is a crucial determinant of classroom climate and students' learning experiences. It influences how instructions are delivered, how students participate in learning, how discipline is maintained, and how relationships are built within the classroom. A teacher's leadership style can either promote or hinder students' academic engagement, motivation, and performance. Therefore, understanding different leadership styles is essential for improving teaching effectiveness and students' academic outcomes. Teachers' leadership styles are shaped by several factors, including personality traits, professional training, teaching experience, beliefs about learning, and the socio-cultural context of the school. In many cases, teachers may not consciously adopt a particular leadership style; rather, their approach evolves over time based on their interactions with students and classroom challenges (Balamadi, 2026). However, for analytical purposes, leadership styles are often categorized into identifiable types such as democratic, authoritarian, permissive, and indulgent. This study focuses on the democratic leadership style. The democratic leadership style, also known as participative leadership, is characterized by shared decision-making, open communication, and active student involvement in the learning process. Teachers who adopt this style encourage students to express their opinions, ask questions, and contribute to classroom discussions. They create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and respected. This approach enhances students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and self-confidence, thereby improving academic performance (Evertson & Weinstein, 2023; Adeyemi, 2020).

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4.3 Concept of Students' Academic Performance Students' academic performance refers to the extent to which students have achieved the intended learning objectives, acquired knowledge, and developed skills within a specified period of instruction. Academic performance is commonly assessed through measurable outcomes such as test scores, examination results, assignments, and continuous assessments (Goshi, 2020). In contemporary education, academic performance encompasses cognitive achievements (knowledge and understanding), skill acquisition (critical thinking, problem-solving), and behavioural attributes such as participation and engagement in learning activities. Modern perspectives emphasize that students' performance also reflects their ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations and adapt to changing academic demands (Cariaga, 2024). It is often operationalized through standardized and non-standardized assessment methods. Standardized assessments include external examinations conducted by bodies such as the West African Examinations Council and the National Examinations Council, while non-standardized assessments include teacher-made tests, quizzes, assignments, and classroom participation. These evaluation tools provide quantitative and qualitative measures of students' academic progress and achievement (Ali, Goni, & Saleh, 2020).

According to Suleiman, Okunade, & Dada (2024), students' academic performance is a multifaceted outcome shaped by educational, socio-economic, and individual factors, including teaching quality, learning environment, and students' personal characteristics. This implies that academic achievement cannot be attributed to a single factor but rather to the interaction of multiple variables within the educational system. Furthermore, academic performance is often used as a benchmark for evaluating the quality of education provided by schools. High levels of student achievement are typically associated with effective teaching practices, adequate learning resources, and supportive school environments. Conversely, poor academic performance may indicate deficiencies in instructional methods, classroom management, or student support systems. For instance, studies in Nigeria have shown that factors such as teacher quality, instructional strategies, and school conditions significantly influence students' academic outcomes (Adeshina, 2024).

Another important dimension of academic performance is its temporal nature, meaning that it reflects students' learning progress over time. It is not a one-time outcome but a continuous process that evolves through different stages of education (Ismaila & Yahaya, 2025; Cai & Meng, 2025). Technological advancements have also introduced new dimensions to the

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concept of academic performance. With the integration of digital tools and online learning platforms, performance is increasingly analyzed using data-driven approaches such as educational data mining. These methods help identify patterns in students' learning behaviours and predict academic outcomes, thereby enabling more personalized and effective teaching strategies (ScienceDirect, 2024; Danddy, 2025).

5. Empirical Literature

Empirical studies have investigated the relationship between democratic leadership style and students' academic performance in various educational settings.

Holl and Ali (2025) investigated the influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in higher-education institutions. The study sought to examine how participative leadership adopted by lecturers affected students' academic outcomes. A quantitative survey research design was adopted, and the study involved university lecturers and students in Cambodia, whereas a sample of 305 lecturers was selected through stratified random sampling. The study was anchored on Social Cognitive Theory which emphasizes the reciprocal influence of individual behaviour, environmental conditions, and learning experiences. The findings revealed that democratic leadership style had a statistically significant positive effect on students' academic performance ($B = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$). The study concluded that democratic leadership enhances students' performance by encouraging interaction, participation, and motivation.

The study by Holl and Ali (2025) relates to the present study because both examine democratic leadership style as an important factor associated with students' academic performance and both recognize participation and interaction as important features of effective educational leadership. The study is also related theoretically because Social Cognitive Theory is one of the theories adopted in the present study. However, it differs from the present study in terms of geographical location, educational level, and unit of analysis. Holl and Ali studied higher-education institutions in Cambodia and focused on lecturers and university students, whereas the present study focuses on teachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Furthermore, Mohamud and Muiru (2024) investigated the relationship between democratic leadership style and students' academic performance in secondary-school settings in Garissa County. The study aimed to determine whether the use of participatory leadership practices

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was associated with improved student academic achievement. The study employed a correlational research design, and it involved teachers and students as the study population. A sample of 210 respondents was selected using simple random sampling. The study was guided by Transformational Leadership Theory. Findings indicated a strong positive relationship between democratic leadership style and students' academic performance. The researchers concluded that participative decision-making contributes significantly to students' academic achievement because it encourages students to become actively involved in the learning process.

The study of Mohamud and Muiru (2024) is closely related to the present study because both are concerned with democratic leadership style and students' academic performance at the secondary-school level. Both studies also examine leadership within an educational environment where teacher behaviour and classroom interaction can influence learning outcomes. However, the studies differ in geographical context and theoretical orientation. Mohamud and Muiru conducted their study in Garissa County, Kenya, and were guided by Transformational Leadership Theory, whereas the present study is conducted in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, and is guided by Social Cognitive Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory.

Cayanan, Pabustan, Mallari, and Florencondia (2025) examined democratic leadership characteristics and its influence on students' academic performance in tertiary educational institutions. The study sought to determine how democratic leadership characteristics affect students' learning outcomes. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and the study involved university students and lecturers. A sample of 250 students was selected through purposive sampling. The study was anchored on Constructivist Learning Theory, which views learners as active participants who construct knowledge through interaction, experience, and collaboration. The findings indicated that democratic leadership significantly enhances students' academic performance by promoting collaboration, critical thinking, and active engagement in the learning process. The study concluded that inclusive and interactive teaching practices are associated with improved academic outcomes.

Cayanan et al. (2025) relates to the present study in its emphasis on democratic leadership, student participation, collaboration, and academic performance. The study is particularly relevant theoretically because Constructivist Learning Theory is also adopted as one of the theoretical foundations of the present study. However, the study differs from the present study

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in several respects. Cayanan et al. focused on tertiary institutions and selected 250 students through purposive sampling, whereas the present study focuses on senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area. The study also examined democratic leadership characteristics primarily within a tertiary educational setting, whereas the present study investigates teachers' democratic leadership styles and its influence on students' academic performance.

In the Nigerian context, Adeyemi (2020) examined teachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance in secondary-school settings in Ondo State. The study sought to determine the relationship between teachers' leadership styles and students' academic outcomes. An ex-post facto research design was employed, and the study involved a population comprising teachers and students and a sample of 500 respondents selected through stratified sampling technique. The study was anchored on Social Cognitive Theory. The findings revealed that students taught by teachers who employed democratic leadership style performed significantly better than students taught under authoritarian or laissez-faire leadership styles. The study concluded that democratic leadership was more effective in enhancing students' academic performance because of its participatory and interactive characteristics.

Adeyemi's (2020) study is highly relevant to the present study because both studies examine teachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance within the Nigerian secondary-school context. Both also employ Social Cognitive Theory as a theoretical explanation of the relationship between teachers' leadership behaviour and students' learning outcomes. However, the study differs from the present study in geographical coverage and the specific leadership styles examined. Adeyemi conducted the study in Ondo State, whereas the present study is focused specifically on senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Taken together, the empirical studies reviewed demonstrate a generally positive association between democratic leadership style and students' academic performance. Holl and Ali (2025), Mohamud and Muiru (2024), Cayanan et al. (2025), and Adeyemi (2020) all reported positive relationships or effects of democratic leadership on students' academic outcomes although they were conducted in different countries and educational levels. However, differences in geographical location, educational level, research design, theoretical orientation, and leadership variables indicate that the findings cannot automatically be

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generalized to every educational context. The present study therefore fill a contextual and conceptual gap by examining democratic leadership style and students' academic performance specifically in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

6. Methodology

This study adopts a survey research design. This design was adopted because it allows the researcher to collect, analyze and interpret data from a sample to determine the influence of teachers' leadership styles over students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study is one thousand three hundred and sixty-one (1,361), comprising of all the teachers teaching Senior Secondary students and all the Senior secondary two (SS2) students in the nine (9) public secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area, as at February 2026 (SUBEB, 2026). The sample of the study comprised of three hundred and sixty (360) respondents, consisting of one hundred and thirty five (135) teachers and two hundred and twenty five (225) Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students, selected from the population using purposive and simple random sampling techniques.

The primary instrument for data collection is the structured questionnaire titled: "Teachers' Leadership Styles and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (TLSAPQ), structured on 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Uyo. Test-retest reliability technique was adopted and the reliability coefficient result obtained was 0.90 which is acceptable.

7. Findings

One hypothesis was formulated in this study and is tested using Regression Analysis: "There is no significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area

In testing this hypothesis, data obtained from the responses to questions in the questionnaire were used as seen in the table below

Contingency Table for Hypothesis: Democratic leadership style and Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Eket Local Government Area

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Question No.	Responses		(Y-Y)	(X-X)	(X-X) (Y-Y)	$(Y-Y)^2$	$(X-X)^2$
	SA/A (Y)	D/SD (X)					
1	66	-	-11	3.5	38.5	121	12.25
2	32	5	23	-1.5	34.5	529	2.25
3	60	3	-5	0.5	2.5	25	0.25
4	31	8	24	-4.5	108	576	20.25
5	40	2	15	1.5	22.5	225	2.25
All variables	101	3	-46	0.5	23	2116	0.25
	∑Y=330 (94%) Y =55	**∑X=21 (6%) X= 3.5**			**∑= 229**	**∑= 3592**	**∑= 37.5**

Source: Researcher's computation from questionnaire (2026)

Formular =Y. = a + bx + e

First, we obtain "b" from:

$b = \sum (X - X)(Y - Y) = \frac{229}{\sum (X - X)2} = \frac{6.10}{37.5}$

We then obtain "a" from:

a = Y – bx = 55 – 6.10 (3.5) = 33.65

The regression equation of Y. = a + bx + e becomes Y. = 33.65 + 6.10 (x) + e

To test for the significance of the "b" value of a regression equation, we formulate Ho and Hi thus:

Ho: There is no significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area

Hi: There is a significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area

We use the formula

$t = (b\sqrt{(\sum x - \dot{x})2}))/\sigma y$ $t = 6.10 \sqrt{(\ [\![(37.5)]\!]\ ^2)/10}$

= 22.88 (calculated value)

Where: $\delta y = \sqrt{(\ [\![\sum (Y - \bar{Y})]\!]\ ^2)/N} = \sqrt{3592/6} = 10$

Degree of Freedom = N-2 = 6-2 = 4 under 5 (two tailed test)

= 2.45 (table value)

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From the test, the calculated value (22.88) is greater than the table value (2.45), thus the b value of 6.10 is significant. We therefore accept the alternative hypothesis (Hi) and rejected the null hypothesis (Ho). This implies that there is a significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that teachers' leadership styles, especially democratic have significant relationship with students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant influence of democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area. However, democratic leadership provides opportunities for students to become active participants in the teaching and learning process.

It is therefore recommended that teachers should encourage democratic classroom practices always. The teachers should ensure that students have adequate opportunities to participate in class discussions, group works, classroom activities, and appropriate decision-making process. This will encourage active participation and engagement in learning.

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