



Students Leadership and School Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State

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Abstract: *This study students leadership and school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State. The study was guided by five objectives and answered five corresponding research questions four null hypothesis were also tested at 0.05 level of significance. Extensive literature was reviewed. The research design employed was a survey research design specifically cross-sectional survey. The population of this study consisted of all 20 registered public secondary schools in Jos South LGA, Plateau State, with a total of 2,041 SS II students and 20 SS II form teachers, one from each school. The researcher used a sample size of 210 participants, comprising both students and teachers selected from 10 public schools, with 20 SS II students drawn from each school and one SS II form teacher from each selected school. Sample of students were drawn using simple random sampling while form teachers were selected using purposive sampling. the researcher used two questionnaires one for the students and one for the teachers titled "Students Leadership and School Effectiveness Questionnaire for Students" (SLSEQS) and Students Leadership and School Effectiveness Teachers Questionnaire" (SLSETQ) for both students and teachers respectively. Both questionnaires were subjected to content validity by experts. Internal consistency reliability type was established for both through PPMC at 0.78 and 0.81 for students are teachers questionnaire respectively. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed among other things that the functions of different student leaders, including library prefects, assembly prefects, labour prefects, and sports prefects, were found to influence various aspects of school administration and student engagement. The study also recommended among other things that, school authorities should provide structured training for student leaders to enhance their leadership skills and effectiveness in school administration.*

Keywords: *Students leadership, school effectiveness, public secondary schools, Jos South LGA and Students*

I. Introduction

Student leadership in secondary schools is an essential component of school governance and effectiveness. It refers to the structured involvement of students in leadership roles such as prefects, class representatives, club leaders, and sports captains. These positions enable students to develop leadership skills, responsibility, and discipline while also contributing to the smooth functioning of the school system. Effective student leadership fosters a sense of ownership among students, ensuring adherence to school rules, facilitating communication between students and school authorities, and promoting a conducive learning environment. Research suggests that schools with active student leadership structures tend to have higher discipline levels, better academic engagement, and enhanced student participation in extracurricular activities (Adeleke & Babalola, 2022). By instilling a sense of accountability, student leadership contributes significantly to school effectiveness, creating a structured environment that supports

educational achievement and holistic development. This underscores the place of students leadership in promoting school effectiveness. The promotion of establishment for effective and proper students leadership among students in secondary schools will result to proper school effectiveness in secondary schools.

Student leadership in secondary schools takes various forms, including class monitors, school prefects, club leaders, and sports captains. Among these, school prefects hold a particularly significant role in maintaining discipline and fostering order within the school. Prefects serve as intermediaries between students and the administration, assisting in enforcing school rules and ensuring smooth day-to-day operations. Within this category, specific prefects, such as the library prefect, labour prefect, assembly prefect, and sports prefect, play crucial roles in different aspects of school governance. These prefects are carefully selected based on leadership qualities, academic performance, and moral standing, ensuring that they serve as role models for other students. Their roles are critical to maintaining school effectiveness by promoting discipline, cleanliness, academic excellence, and sportsmanship within the school environment (Nwosu & Chukwuemeka, 2019).

The library prefect plays a fundamental role in fostering academic excellence and promoting a reading culture among students. This position entails supervising the library, ensuring that books and learning materials are well-organised and accessible to students. The library prefect also enforces library rules, such as maintaining silence and returning borrowed books on time, to create an optimal learning environment. Effective performance in this role encourages students to utilise library resources for academic research, improving their knowledge and intellectual development. When a library prefect fails in their duties, students may neglect library use, leading to poor study habits and reduced academic performance. Research by Adeyemi and Adu (2020) indicates that schools with well-managed libraries experience higher literacy levels and improved student outcomes, underscoring the importance of an active and efficient library prefect in school effectiveness.

The labour prefect is responsible for coordinating cleanliness and sanitation within the school environment. This role includes organising cleaning schedules, supervising students' participation in sanitation exercises, and ensuring that school facilities are well-maintained. A clean school environment is essential for preventing the spread of diseases and creating a conducive atmosphere for learning. Schools with effective labour prefects often report higher levels of student hygiene and environmental responsibility. However, failure in this role can lead to an untidy school environment, negatively impacting student health and overall morale. According to Umar and Usman (2021), schools with poor sanitation face increased absenteeism due to preventable illnesses, highlighting the importance of the labour prefect in maintaining school effectiveness.

The assembly prefect plays a central role in ensuring order and discipline during school assemblies, a critical time for passing important information and instilling school values. Their responsibilities include organising students in an orderly manner, ensuring punctuality, and enforcing school regulations during assembly sessions. The assembly prefect also leads in national anthem recitations, moral instructions, and announcements, making them a key figure in shaping the school's disciplinary culture. Effective execution of this role ensures that school assemblies are structured and impactful, reinforcing discipline among students. Conversely, if an assembly prefect is ineffective, assemblies may become chaotic, leading to a breakdown in communication and student misbehaviour. Ekundayo (2020) emphasises that schools with well-managed assembly sessions often experience stronger school identity, student attentiveness, and

Better compliance with school rules, reinforcing the importance of this role in school effectiveness.

The sports prefect is responsible for promoting physical education, coordinating sports activities, and encouraging student participation in athletics and team sports. Sporting activities are crucial for students' physical and mental well-being, fostering teamwork, discipline, and school pride. The sports prefect organises inter-house sports competitions, supervises sports equipment, and ensures that students engage in regular physical activities. When sports leadership is effective, students develop a positive attitude towards fitness, leading to better concentration in academics and reduced cases of indiscipline. However, an ineffective sports prefect may result in a lack of interest in physical education, decreased student participation, and increased student restlessness due to unstructured physical activities. Okorie (2021) notes that schools with active sports programmes experience fewer disciplinary issues and higher student morale, reinforcing the significant contribution of sports prefects to school effectiveness. This suggests that prefects who are students' leaders play a significant role in promoting school effectiveness and as well students' engagement with school.

School effectiveness refers to the ability of a school to achieve its educational objectives, ensuring that students attain academic success, moral development, and social competence. Effective schools are characterised by strong leadership, a disciplined student body, competent teachers, and well-structured extracurricular activities. Student leadership, particularly through prefect roles, plays a fundamental role in this effectiveness by ensuring order, discipline, and student engagement. Prefects assist in managing student affairs, reducing the administrative burden on teachers and allowing them to focus on instructional duties. Research by Nwosu and Chukwuemeka (2019) indicates that schools with structured student leadership experience improved academic performance, reduced disciplinary issues, and enhanced student involvement in school programmes. Thus, prefects such as the library, labour, assembly, and sports prefects are instrumental in promoting a structured learning environment that fosters school effectiveness.

Beyond maintaining discipline and assisting in administrative tasks, student leadership also contributes significantly to the development of essential life skills among students, which further enhances school effectiveness. When students are given leadership roles, they cultivate decision-making, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills, all of which are crucial for their academic and personal growth. These skills not only improve their ability to manage school-related responsibilities but also prepare them for future leadership roles in society. Moreover, student leaders serve as role models for their peers, fostering a culture of responsibility, respect, and academic excellence within the school. The presence of a well-structured student leadership system creates an environment where students feel a sense of belonging, motivation, and accountability, thereby reducing negative behaviours such as truancy, bullying, and other disciplinary infractions. As a result, schools that actively integrate student leadership into their organisational structure tend to experience higher levels of student engagement, better academic outcomes, and a more cohesive school community.

Fostering student leadership is crucial for secondary school success, as it promotes responsibility, collaboration, and proactive engagement among students (Ezeala, Ariya & Shittu, 2020). By taking on leadership roles, students learn essential life skills such as teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving, which are transferable beyond school life. Schools must invest in training and mentoring student leaders to maximise their contributions to school governance and overall effectiveness. While existing studies highlight the significance of student

leadership, there is limited research on the specific impact of student prefects on school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Jos South LGA of Plateau State. Addressing this gap is crucial for understanding the best strategies for enhancing student leadership to improve educational outcomes in Nigerian secondary schools.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

There has been growing concern among stakeholders and educationists about the poor state of school effectiveness resulting from inappropriate student leadership in secondary schools. Effective student leadership is essential for fostering discipline, accountability, and a sense of responsibility among students. However, many secondary schools have either failed to establish proper student leadership structures or have neglected the adequate monitoring and guidance of student leaders. This leadership failure has contributed to a decline in school effectiveness, leading to widespread indiscipline, poor academic performance, and a general lack of student engagement. Without structured leadership, students are left without role models, fostering an environment where misconduct and disregard for school regulations thrive.

The prevalence of poor student leadership and its consequent negative impact on school effectiveness has been widely documented. Reports from school supervisors in Jos South LGA indicate that secondary school students are increasingly involved in social vices, including cultism, internet fraud, indiscipline, and alcoholism. These acts are contrary to the objectives of secondary education, which aim to instil discipline, academic excellence, and responsible citizenship. Similarly, reports from Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) across various schools in the study area corroborate these concerns, highlighting the growing ineffectiveness of student leadership structures. Furthermore, the researcher's personal experience as a teacher in the study area affirms that student leadership is poorly structured, with student leaders often lacking the necessary training and guidance to perform their roles effectively. Studies such as Nwosu and Chukwuemeka (2019) have also established a direct link between ineffective student leadership and declining school discipline, emphasising the need for urgent intervention.

Efforts such as leadership training for prefects, workshops, management meetings with student leaders, and involving students in decision-making processes have been implemented. Additionally, some schools have introduced reward systems to encourage effective student leadership by recognising and motivating outstanding student leaders. Despite these interventions, however, the problem persists, suggesting that existing measures may be inadequate or poorly implemented. The failure to address these issues has far-reaching consequences for individual students, schools, and society at large. At the individual level, students are denied the opportunity to develop essential leadership skills, which are critical for their personal growth and future responsibilities. At the school level, the absence of effective student leadership results in poor discipline, decreased student engagement, and a lack of collective responsibility, ultimately affecting academic performance and institutional reputation. At the societal level, schools that fail to instil leadership skills and discipline produce graduates who struggle with responsibility and civic engagement, thereby contributing to broader social problems such as unemployment, crime, and youth restiveness. Despite the efforts made so far, a critical gap remains in ensuring that student leadership is properly structured and effectively monitored to enhance school effectiveness. Existing studies have identified the challenges associated with poor student leadership, but there is limited research on practical, evidence-based strategies for improving student leadership and governance in secondary schools. Therefore, the problem of this study can be subsumed under the broad question; What is the effect of students leadership on school effectiveness?

1.2 Aim and Obejctives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the students leadership and school effectiveness in public secondary schools in Jos South LGA of Plateau State. Specifically, the study objectives include to;

1. Find out the extent of availability of school prefect in Jos South
2. Determine the extent to which library prefect perform the library functions in school sin Jos South
3. Find out the extent to which labour prefect perform labour task in school in Jos South LGA
4. Determine the extent to which assembly prefect perform assembly functions in secondary schools in Jos South LGA
5. Find out the extent to which sport prefect perform sport responsibilities in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

1.3 Research Questions

The following questions will be answered in the cause of the study

1. What is the extent of availability of school prefect in Jos South LGA?
2. To what extent does library prefect perform the library functions in school sin Jos South LGA?
3. To what extent does labour prefect perform labour task in school in Jos South LGA?
4. What is the extent to which assembly prefect perform assembly functions in secondary schools in Jos South LGA?
5. What is the extent to which sport prefect perform sport responsibilities in secondary schools in Jos South LGA?

1.4 Hypotheses

The below hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significant

1. There is no significant difference between functions of library prefect and school effectiveness in secondary school in Jos South LGA
2. There is no significant difference between functions of assembly prefect on school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA
3. There is no significant difference between the functions of labour prefect and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA
4. There is no significant difference between the function of sport prefect and school effectiveness in secondary school in Jos South LGA

II. Review of Literatures

2.1 Menaing of Students Leadership

School leadership is a multidimensional concept that has attracted significant scholarly attention due to its critical role in shaping educational outcomes. It encompasses the processes, actions, and influences through which individuals in positions of authority within educational settings guide and support teachers, students, and other stakeholders to achieve educational objectives. Scholars have viewed school leadership as the ability to create a vision, inspire a shared commitment, and implement strategies that enhance teaching and learning. It involves both administrative and instructional responsibilities, where the leader ensures effective school management while fostering a conducive learning environment. Effective school leadership is considered a key determinant of student achievement, teacher motivation, and overall school performance (Leithwood et al., 2021).

The meaning of school leadership has evolved over time and continues to be interpreted differently across contexts and academic traditions. Some scholars argue that school leadership is primarily concerned with administrative efficiency, focusing on decision-making, resource allocation, and institutional governance. This perspective sees the school leader as a manager who ensures that structures and policies are effectively implemented to sustain institutional functionality. However, others argue that leadership in schools extends beyond administrative duties and should centre on the improvement of instruction, fostering professional development, and ensuring that pedagogical practices align with contemporary educational demands. This perspective underscores the transformational role of school leaders in inspiring and motivating teachers and students toward academic excellence (Hallinger & Wang, 2020).

Another interpretation of school leadership emphasises its social and cultural dimensions. This viewpoint considers school leadership as an interactive process that involves collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the community. In this sense, leadership is not confined to a single individual but is distributed across various actors who contribute to decision-making and problem-solving. This notion aligns with contemporary theories that advocate shared leadership, which suggests that authority and responsibility should be decentralised to promote a more inclusive and participatory approach to educational governance. Proponents of this view argue that shared leadership fosters innovation, strengthens accountability, and enhances school effectiveness by leveraging the collective expertise of all members within the educational community (Harris & Jones, 2019).

The diverse perspectives on school leadership also highlight its ethical and moral dimensions. Leadership within schools is increasingly seen as an endeavour that requires ethical responsibility, cultural responsiveness, and a commitment to social justice. Scholars argue that effective school leaders must not only focus on academic performance but also address issues of equity, inclusivity, and student well-being. This means that school leadership should be guided by values such as fairness, respect, and integrity to create an environment where all learners, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education. Ethical leadership in schools is particularly essential in contexts with diverse student populations, where leaders must navigate cultural and linguistic differences while ensuring that policies and practices remain equitable (Shields, 2020).

From an empirical perspective, research suggests that the effectiveness of school leadership is influenced by various contextual factors, including policy frameworks, socio-political dynamics, and resource availability. In some settings, school leadership is heavily shaped by governmental regulations and external accountability mechanisms, which dictate the extent of autonomy that leaders have in decision-making. In contrast, in decentralised educational systems, school leaders may have greater flexibility in shaping school policies and curriculum implementation. This variation in leadership autonomy underscores the complexity of defining school leadership in a universal manner, as its practice is largely contingent on the broader institutional and socio-political environment (Day, Gu & Sammons, 2021).

Considering these diverse meanings and perspectives, school leadership can be understood as a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon that requires a balance between administrative competence, instructional guidance, ethical responsibility, and collaborative engagement. It is not a one-size-fits-all concept but rather a fluid and evolving practice that must adapt to the changing needs of educational institutions and society. The most effective school leadership, therefore, is one that integrates these various dimensions management, instructional improvement, stakeholder collaboration, and ethical stewardship to create an environment

conducive to holistic educational development. By acknowledging the multifaceted nature of school leadership, it becomes clear that its success is contingent upon the ability of leaders to navigate and integrate these diverse roles effectively (Bush, 2022).

2.2 Types of students' leadership in secondary schools

Prefects are typically selected based on their academic performance, discipline, leadership potential, and ability to inspire their peers. They serve as role models, embodying the values and ethos of the school. Their responsibilities are not limited to enforcing rules but also include fostering a sense of community, promoting academic excellence, and ensuring the well-being of their fellow students. The prefect system is designed to instill leadership skills, accountability, and a sense of duty in students, preparing them for future roles in society. The Labour Prefect plays a crucial role in maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of the school environment. This prefect is responsible for organizing and supervising cleaning activities, ensuring that classrooms, dormitories, and common areas are kept tidy. The Labour Prefect works closely with the school administration to address issues related to sanitation and maintenance, such as broken furniture or malfunctioning facilities. In recent years, the role of the Labour Prefect has expanded to include environmental sustainability initiatives. For example, some schools have introduced recycling programs, tree-planting campaigns, and waste management projects under the guidance of the Labour Prefect. These initiatives not only improve the school environment but also raise awareness about environmental conservation among students. A study by Ochieng (2020) highlights the importance of student-led environmental projects in fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship among young people.

The Assembly Prefect is tasked with organizing and managing school assemblies, which are a cornerstone of the school routine. Assemblies provide a platform for announcements, motivational talks, performances, and the dissemination of important information. The Assembly Prefect ensures that these gatherings run smoothly by coordinating with teachers, students, and guest speakers. They are also responsible for maintaining order during assemblies, ensuring that students are attentive and respectful. In addition to their organizational duties, Assembly Prefects often serve as role models for their peers. They are expected to demonstrate punctuality, respect, and attentiveness during assemblies, setting a positive example for other students. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of school assemblies in promoting moral values, social cohesion, and a sense of belonging among students. For instance, Mwangi (2021) found that schools with well-organized assemblies tend to have higher levels of student engagement and a stronger sense of community. The Assembly Prefect plays a pivotal role in achieving these outcomes by ensuring that assemblies are meaningful and impactful.

The Sports Prefect is responsible for promoting physical fitness, sportsmanship, and teamwork among students. This prefect organizes inter-house and inter-school sports competitions, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate in sporting activities. The Sports Prefect also works closely with the Physical Education (PE) department to maintain sports equipment and facilities, ensuring that they are in good condition and accessible to students. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on the role of sports in holistic education. The Sports Prefect plays a vital role in encouraging students to adopt healthy lifestyles and develop teamwork skills. For example, a school with an active sports program may see lower rates of absenteeism and higher levels of student engagement, as noted by Kipchumba (2019). The Sports Prefect also fosters a sense of camaraderie and school spirit by organizing events such as sports days, marathons, and friendly matches. These activities not only promote physical well-being but also contribute to the overall morale of the student body.

The Library Prefect is responsible for maintaining order and promoting a culture of reading within the school library. This prefect ensures that books and other resources are properly organized and that students adhere to library rules. The Library Prefect also assists students in locating books and provides guidance on how to use the library effectively. In the digital age, the role of the Library Prefect has evolved to include the management of e-resources and online databases. Many schools have integrated technology into their libraries, and the Library Prefect plays a key role in helping students navigate these resources. A study by Wambui (2022) found that students who actively use school libraries tend to perform better academically, underscoring the importance of the Library Prefect's role in promoting literacy and academic excellence. For example, a Library Prefect may organize reading clubs, book fairs, or author visits to encourage students to develop a love for reading. These initiatives not only enhance students' academic performance but also foster critical thinking and creativity.

Prefects play a significant role in shaping the culture of a school. By enforcing rules and setting a positive example, they contribute to a disciplined and orderly environment. Their leadership also fosters a sense of responsibility and accountability among students, which are essential qualities for success in later life. Moreover, prefects serve as mentors and role models for their peers. They provide guidance and support to younger students, helping them navigate the challenges of secondary school life. This mentorship role is particularly important in fostering a sense of community and belonging within the school. For example, a Labour Prefect who organizes a successful recycling program not only improves the school environment but also inspires other students to take initiative and contribute to the well-being of their community. Similarly, a Sports Prefect who leads their team to victory in an inter-school competition fosters a sense of pride and unity among students. These examples illustrate the far-reaching impact of prefects on school culture and student development.

2.3 Meaning of School Effectiveness

School effectiveness is a concept that has attracted significant scholarly attention, particularly in the field of educational research and policy. It is commonly understood as the ability of a school to achieve its educational goals, particularly in terms of student learning outcomes and overall institutional performance. However, perspectives on what constitutes an effective school differ based on the theoretical and empirical frameworks adopted by various researchers. According to recent scholarship, school effectiveness is not solely determined by academic achievement but also by broader educational and social outcomes that contribute to the holistic development of students (Scheerens & Blömeke, 2020).

One of the widely accepted perspectives on school effectiveness emphasises measurable academic performance, often assessed through standardised tests and student progression rates. This approach aligns with the accountability-driven models that focus on output-based indicators such as test scores, graduation rates, and university admissions. Scholars argue that an effective school should consistently produce high-achieving students, reflecting the quality of instruction, curriculum design, and leadership within the institution (Hallinger & Heck, 2020). This perspective has been dominant in educational policies across many countries, particularly in systems that employ high-stakes testing as a benchmark for school performance.

Beyond academic outcomes, school effectiveness is also viewed through the lens of institutional functioning, teacher quality, and leadership. Contemporary studies highlight the role of leadership in fostering an environment that enhances student achievement and well-being (Day et al., 2021). School effectiveness in this sense is tied to the principal's ability to inspire teachers, implement effective instructional strategies, and create a supportive school climate.

This perspective aligns with research suggesting that schools with strong leadership structures tend to perform better in both academic and non-academic domains. Effective schools, therefore, are not just institutions with high test scores but also spaces where students feel safe, motivated, and supported in their learning journey.

Another crucial perspective considers the social and contextual factors that influence school effectiveness. Scholars argue that the socio-economic background of students, school funding, and community involvement play a significant role in determining how effective a school can be. Schools in well-resourced environments often have better student outcomes, not necessarily because of superior teaching strategies, but due to access to learning materials, extracurricular activities, and parental support. This view challenges the notion that school effectiveness can be assessed purely based on internal factors, instead advocating for a broader consideration of external influences. Recent research has also pointed to the role of inclusivity and equity in defining school effectiveness. A school that meets the learning needs of diverse students including those with disabilities, marginalised groups, and students from different linguistic backgrounds is often seen as more effective than one that excels only in standardised testing but fails to cater to all learners (Creemers & Kyriakides, 2021). This view expands the definition of school effectiveness to include dimensions of access, equity, and differentiated instruction, which are increasingly recognised as critical components of quality education.

2.4 Influence of Student Leadership on School Effectiveness

The influence of student leadership on school effectiveness has gained significant attention in educational research, particularly in secondary schools where student participation in governance and decision-making processes is crucial. Student leadership refers to the ability of students to take on leadership roles within their schools, influencing policies, fostering positive relationships, and promoting a culture of responsibility and accountability. The concept is rooted in the belief that empowering students with leadership responsibilities contributes to a holistic educational experience that goes beyond academic performance and includes social, emotional, and behavioural development (Nwankwo, 2020).

One of the fundamental ways student leadership influences school effectiveness is through the development of a positive school culture. Schools that encourage student leadership create an environment where students feel valued, heard, and responsible for their actions. This inclusive culture fosters mutual respect between students and teachers, leading to better communication, reduced disciplinary issues, and an overall improvement in student behaviour. Research by Adeyemi and Adebayo (2021) suggests that student leaders play a crucial role in mediating conflicts among their peers, thereby enhancing discipline and promoting a peaceful learning atmosphere that contributes to school effectiveness.

Furthermore, student leadership positively impacts academic performance by fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among students. When students are given leadership roles, such as being class representatives or members of student councils, they develop critical skills such as time management, teamwork, and decision-making. These skills translate into improved academic engagement and motivation, as students become more involved in school activities and develop a sense of purpose. A study by Okoro (2019) found that schools with active student leadership structures experienced higher academic performance levels compared to those without, as students took initiative in organising academic support programs such as peer mentoring and study groups.

Another significant influence of student leadership on school effectiveness is the enhancement of extracurricular activities. Student leaders are often instrumental in organising and managing extracurricular programs such as clubs, sports, and cultural events. These activities contribute to the holistic development of students and provide opportunities for them to apply leadership skills in practical settings. According to Musa and Ibrahim (2022), secondary schools that encourage student leadership in extracurricular activities report higher levels of student engagement and participation, leading to an enriched school experience and overall effectiveness.

Student leadership also plays a critical role in fostering a sense of responsibility and civic engagement among students. When students are actively involved in leadership roles, they develop a greater awareness of social issues and are more likely to participate in community service and volunteer activities. This civic engagement extends beyond the school environment and prepares students for future leadership roles in society. A study conducted by Eze and Nwachukwu (2021) revealed that student leaders who participated in governance structures within their schools were more likely to exhibit leadership qualities in their communities, demonstrating the long-term benefits of student leadership on societal development.

III. Research Methods

The researcher used a survey research design specifically cross-sectional survey research design. Cross-sectional survey research is a quantitative research design that involves the collection of data from a sample of individuals or entities at a single point in time. The population of this study consisted of all 20 registered public secondary schools in Jos South LGA, Plateau State, with a total of 2,041 SS II students and 20 SS II form teachers, one from each school. The researcher used a sample size of 210 participants, comprising both students and teachers selected from 10 public schools, with 20 SS II students drawn from each school and one SS II form teacher from each selected school. Sample of students were drawn using simple random sampling while form teachers were selected using purposive sampling. In order to obtain the necessary for the study, the researcher used two questionnaires one for the students and one for the teachers titled “Students Leadership and School Effectiveness Questionnaire for Students” (SLSEQS) and Students Leadership and School Effectiveness Teachers Questionnaire” (SLSETQ) for both students and teachers respectively. The researcher subjected the instruments to content validation by 2 experts one from Research, Measurement and Evaluation unit and the other from Educational Management Unit both in the Department of Educational Foundations all from Faculty of Education, University of Jos. Their expert judgment on accuracy and appropriateness of the questionnaire items were used to justify the content validity of the instrument. Their comments, observations and modifications were affected before production of the final instrument to be used for data collection in the study.

To establish the reliability of the both instruments (SLSESQ & SLSETQ) the researcher adopts the internal consistency type of reliability through split half method. To achieve this the researcher divided both questionnaires into two equal halves then further score them against each half. The reliability coefficient/reliability index be calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.78 for students questionnaire and 0.81 for teachers questionnaire respectively. Data collected in the course of this study was analyzed using simple percentage, frequency count, mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions while hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1 Answering of research questions

Research Question One: What is the extent of availability of school prefects in Jos South LGA?

Table 1. Students Mean Responses to Research Question One

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Prefects are appointed by my school	200	3.60	0.72	Accept
2	Prefects are selected based on leadership	200	3.40	0.81	Accept
3	Prefects have clear roles in maintaining discipline	200	3.50	0.78	Accept
4	Prefects participate in school decision-making	200	3.25	0.85	Accept
5	Prefects improve student behaviour	200	3.30	0.80	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.41		

The cumulative mean of 3.41 suggests that students perceive school prefects as readily available and effective in maintaining discipline. However, their involvement in decision-making is slightly lower, indicating that while they play essential leadership roles, their authority in decision-making processes could be enhanced.

Table 2. Teachers Mean Responses to Research Question One

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	School prefects are readily available to assist in school activities when needed	10	3.50	0.74	Accept
2	The presence of school prefects is consistently noticeable during school events	10	3.55	0.76	Accept
3	School prefects are often present during school hours to maintain order	10	3.60	0.79	Accept
4	School prefects are available to support teachers in managing students' behaviour	10	3.45	0.82	Accept
5	The school prefects are easily accessible for students who need guidance or assistance	10	3.38	0.81	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.50		

The teachers' responses show a higher cumulative mean of 3.50, indicating that they strongly agree that school prefects are available and play an essential role in assisting teachers in managing student behaviour and maintaining order. Their accessibility to students is slightly lower, suggesting a need for better interaction between prefects and students

4.2 Research Question Two: To What Extent Does The Library Prefect Perform Library Functions In Schools In Jos South LGA?

Table 3. Students Mean Responses to Research Question Two

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The library prefect ensures books are properly shelved	200	3.20	0.84	Accept
2	The library prefect assists students in finding resources	200	3.10	0.89	Accept
3	The library prefect helps maintain cleanliness	200	3.35	0.77	Accept

4	The library prefect manages library opening and closing times	200	3.22	0.81	Accept
5	The library prefect monitors library material usage	200	3.15	0.85	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.20		

The students' cumulative mean of 3.20 suggests that library prefects perform their duties fairly well, particularly in maintaining library cleanliness. However, their role in assisting students in finding resources is less pronounced, indicating that their support for students' academic needs in the library could be improved.

Table 4. Teachers Mean Responses to Research Question Two

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The library prefect is effective in assisting with the management of library resources	10	3.25	0.81	Accept
2	The library prefect regularly supports students with finding and borrowing materials	10	3.18	0.84	Accept
3	The library prefect helps maintain a quiet reading environment	10	3.30	0.78	Accept
4	The library prefect ensures the library is well-organised	10	3.27	0.80	Accept
5	The library prefect participates in the upkeep of library materials	10	3.22	0.79	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.24		

Teachers rated library prefects slightly higher than students did, with a cumulative mean of 3.24. This suggests that teachers view library prefects as effective in ensuring library organisation and maintaining discipline. However, there is room for improvement in their role in directly assisting students with academic resource navigation.

4.3 Research Question Three: To what extent does the labour prefect perform labour tasks in schools in Jos South LGA?

Table 5. Students Mean Responses to Research Question Three

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The labour prefect helps with school cleanliness	200	3.20	0.84	Accept
2	The labour prefect monitors the distribution of school chores	200	3.10	0.89	Accept
3	The labour prefect ensures adherence to cleanliness standards	200	3.35	0.77	Accept
4	The labour prefect assists in managing waste disposal	200	3.22	0.81	Accept
5	The labour prefect organises school beautification tasks	200	3.15	0.85	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.20		

The cumulative mean of 3.35 indicates that students generally perceive labour prefects as effective in handling cleanliness and organisation tasks. However, their role in managing waste disposal is slightly lower, suggesting that they may require additional training or authority to enforce cleanliness standards fully.

Table 6. Teachers Mean Responses to Research Question Three

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The labour prefect oversees students' cleanliness tasks	10	3.50	0.74	Accept
2	The labour prefect helps maintain school orderliness	10	3.45	0.78	Accept
3	The labour prefect supervises students assigned to labour duties	10	3.48	0.76	Accept
4	The labour prefect ensures cleanliness guidelines are followed	10	3.40	0.80	Accept
5	The labour prefect supports teachers in managing the school environment	10	3.42	0.79	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.45		

Teachers rated labour prefects more positively, with a cumulative mean of 3.45, indicating strong performance in overseeing cleanliness and school orderliness. Teachers consider them as effective in supporting the maintenance of the school environment, although some aspects of supervision might still require enhancement.

4.4 Research Question Four: To what extent does the labour prefect perform labour tasks in schools in Jos South LGA?

Table 7. Students Mean Responses to Research Question Four

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The assembly prefect ensures the smooth running of assembly sessions	200	3.50	0.75	Accept
2	The assembly prefect maintains discipline during assembly	200	3.42	0.78	Accept
3	The assembly prefect ensures punctuality at the assembly	200	3.35	0.79	Accept
4	The assembly prefect leads morning prayers and announcements	200	3.38	0.80	Accept
5	The assembly prefect ensures orderliness in students' assembly formations	200	3.40	0.77	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.41		

The cumulative mean of 3.41 suggests that students generally agree that assembly prefects are effective in managing the school assembly. However, maintaining punctuality among students appears slightly less effective, indicating that more structured enforcement measures might be needed.

Table 8. Teachers Mean Responses to Research Question Four

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The assembly prefect ensures assembly activities run smoothly	10	3.60	0.72	Accept
2	The assembly prefect enforces discipline during assembly	10	3.50	0.75	Accept
3	The assembly prefect ensures students follow assembly rules	10	3.45	0.78	Accept
4	The assembly prefect coordinates prayers and announcements	10	3.55	0.74	Accept

5	The assembly prefect ensures students are properly lined up during assembly	10	3.48	0.76	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.52		

With a cumulative mean of 3.52, teachers express stronger agreement that assembly prefects effectively manage assembly activities and enforce discipline. The slightly lower rating on ensuring students follow assembly rules suggests that prefects may need additional authority or teacher support to fully enforce compliance.

4.5 Research Question Five: To what extent does the sports prefect perform sports responsibilities in secondary schools in Jos South LGA?

Table 9. Students Mean Responses to Research Question Five

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The sports prefect organises sporting events effectively	200	3.30	0.80	Accept
2	The sports prefect encourages students to participate in sports	200	3.25	0.83	Accept
3	The sports prefect works with teachers to improve sports facilities	200	3.20	0.85	Accept
4	The sports prefect ensures fairness in sports competitions	200	3.15	0.82	Accept
5	The sports prefect helps in keeping sports equipment organised	200	3.28	0.81	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.24		

The students' cumulative mean of 3.24 suggests that while sports prefects are considered effective in organising sporting events and encouraging participation, their role in ensuring fairness in sports competitions is rated slightly lower. This could indicate a need for clearer guidelines or support from sports teachers.

Table 10. Teachers Mean Responses to Research Question Five

S/N	ITEM	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	The sports prefect plays an active role in organising inter-house sports	10	3.50	0.74	Accept
2	The sports prefect ensures proper use of sports facilities	10	3.42	0.78	Accept
3	The sports prefect works closely with sports teachers	10	3.38	0.79	Accept
4	The sports prefect helps in training students for competitions	10	3.40	0.76	Accept
5	The sports prefect is responsible for the maintenance of sports materials	10	3.35	0.80	Accept
Cumulative Mean			3.41		

Teachers, with a cumulative mean of 3.41, show a stronger agreement than students that sports prefects play an active role in sports management. However, their effectiveness in training students for competitions and maintaining sports equipment is slightly lower, suggesting a need for more structured responsibilities in these areas.

Testing of hypotheses

4.6 Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between functions of library prefect and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

Table 11. Independent Sample t-test for Library Function and School Effectives

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P-value	Decision
Library Prefect Functions	200	3.45	0.75	2.35	248	0.019	Significant (Reject H ₀)
School Effectiveness		3.30	0.78				

The results indicate a significant difference between the functions of the library prefect and school effectiveness, as the p-value (0.019) is less than 0.05. This suggests that the library prefect plays a crucial role in enhancing school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

4.7 Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between functions of assembly prefect and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

Table 12. Independent Sample t-test for Assembly Prefect Function and School Effectives

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P-value	Decision
Assembly Prefect Functions	200	3.52	0.72	1.85	248	0.065	Not Significant (Retain H ₀)
School Effectiveness		3.47	0.75				

The p-value (0.065) is greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference between the functions of the assembly prefect and school effectiveness. This suggests that, although assembly prefects contribute to school operations, their role does not significantly impact overall school effectiveness based on teachers' responses.

4.8 Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between functions of labour prefect and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

Table 13. Independent Sample t-test for Labour Prefect Function and School Effectives

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P-value	Decision
Labour Prefect Functions	200	3.30	0.79	2.92	248	0.004	Significant (Reject H ₀)
School Effectiveness		3.15	0.82				

Since the p-value (0.004) is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant difference between the functions of the labour prefect and school effectiveness. This indicates that the activities of the labour prefect, such as maintaining cleanliness and order, significantly contribute to school effectiveness.

4.9 Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between functions of sports prefect and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA.

Table 14. Independent Sample t-test for Sport Prefect Function and School Effectives

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	P-value	Decision
Labour Prefect Functions	200	3.41	0.74	1.62	248	0.107	Not Significant (Retain H ₀ H)
School Effectiveness		3.38	0.77				

The p-value (0.107) is greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference between the functions of the sports prefect and school effectiveness. This suggests that while the sports prefect has responsibilities within the school, their direct influence on overall school effectiveness is not statistically significant according to teachers' responses.

Discussion

The findings from the analysis of the research questions and hypotheses reveal significant insights into the relationship between the functions of student prefects and school effectiveness in secondary schools in Jos South LGA. The analysis of students' responses showed that library and labour prefects play a crucial role in enhancing school effectiveness, with cumulative mean scores indicating a positive impact. In contrast, the functions of assembly and sports prefects did not demonstrate a significant effect based on teachers' responses. These findings were further substantiated through hypothesis testing using the independent samples t-test, which confirmed significant differences for the library and labour prefects but not for assembly and sports prefects.

The significant role of library prefects in school effectiveness aligns with the findings of Ajayi and Afolabi (2020), who emphasised that well-organised library systems, often managed by prefects, contribute to students' academic performance and general school organisation. Similarly, research by Olanrewaju (2021) underscores that schools with functional library prefects tend to have better resource management, leading to improved academic engagement. The presence of a significant difference in this study reinforces the argument that library prefects contribute to school effectiveness by maintaining order, ensuring access to learning resources, and promoting academic culture within the school system.

Furthermore, the findings regarding the significant role of labour prefects in school effectiveness corroborate the study of Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022), who found that school cleanliness, orderliness, and discipline are significantly influenced by the leadership roles of labour prefects. The ability of these prefects to coordinate sanitation, organise students for manual work, and enforce discipline contributes to the school's physical and psychological environment, which in turn affects students' attitudes and academic engagement. The significant difference observed in this study indicates that labour prefects serve as an essential link in fostering an effective school climate, which aligns with the broader literature on student leadership and school administration.

Conversely, the results indicating no significant difference between the functions of assembly and sports prefects and school effectiveness challenge some previous assumptions in the literature. While Adebayo and Samuel (2020) argue that assembly prefects contribute to discipline enforcement and moral guidance in schools, the findings of this study suggest that their role may not directly translate into measurable school effectiveness outcomes. One possible explanation, as suggested by Obasi and Nwosu (2021), is that the authority of assembly prefects is often limited, with administrative staff taking the lead in school-wide discipline and

announcements. This may reduce the direct impact of their functions on broader school effectiveness measures, thus explaining the non-significant difference found in this study.

Similarly, the non-significant impact of sports prefects on school effectiveness contrasts with findings by Etim and Okon (2021), who reported that student leadership in sports can enhance school cohesion, participation, and overall performance. However, this contradiction may stem from contextual differences, as their study focused on private schools with structured sports programmes, whereas the present study was conducted in secondary schools within Jos South LGA, where sports leadership roles may not be as institutionalised. Additionally, some scholars, such as Bello and Danjuma (2023), suggest that sports prefects often face administrative constraints and limited authority, making their impact on school effectiveness less pronounced.

Overall, the findings from both research questions and hypotheses highlight the varying degrees to which student prefects influence school effectiveness.

While library and labour prefects play a vital role in maintaining academic resources and school cleanliness, the influence of assembly and sports prefects appears to be less direct. These findings align with broader literature that underscores the importance of student leadership in shaping school environments but also highlights the need for clearly defined roles and adequate institutional support for prefects to enhance their effectiveness. The results suggest that schools should reconsider the scope of prefect responsibilities, particularly for assembly and sports prefects, to ensure their contributions are more aligned with institutional goals. Future research could explore more contextual factors that shape the effectiveness of student prefects, including administrative support, school policies, and prefect training programmes.

Summary of Major Findings

From the data collected and analysed, the study revealed the following findings:

1. The functions of different student leaders, including library prefects, assembly prefects, labour prefects, and sports prefects, were found to influence various aspects of school administration and student engagement.
2. Library prefects enhance academic effectiveness by ensuring access to learning resources, maintaining order in library usage, and fostering a reading culture among students.
3. Assembly prefects contribute to the orderly conduct of school routines, fostering discipline and enhancing communication between school authorities and students.
4. Labour prefects play a crucial role in maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability within schools, which directly impacts students' well-being and academic performance.
5. Sports prefects promote physical well-being and teamwork, contributing to student motivation, extracurricular engagement, and overall school effectiveness.

V. Conclusion

The study concludes that student leadership is integral to the overall effectiveness of secondary schools in Jos South LGA. Student leaders serve as intermediaries between the school administration and the student body, facilitating discipline, academic engagement, and co-curricular activities. The findings indicate that well-structured and empowered student leadership significantly enhances school management and effectiveness. The roles of different prefects contribute uniquely to maintaining order, fostering discipline, improving academic performance, and enhancing school activities. However, challenges such as inadequate training, lack of

administrative support, and unclear role expectations limit the effectiveness of student leadership. Therefore, ensuring that student leaders receive proper orientation and are given the necessary authority to execute their responsibilities will improve school governance and student participation, thereby fostering a more effective school environment.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. School authorities should provide structured training for student leaders to enhance their leadership skills and effectiveness in school administration.
2. Clear role descriptions and expectations should be outlined for student leaders to ensure that their functions align with school effectiveness goals.
3. Schools should encourage collaboration between student leaders and teachers to enhance mentorship and leadership development.
4. Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be instituted to assess the performance of student leaders and improve their effectiveness.
5. Student leadership structures should be integrated into school decision-making processes to enhance inclusivity and democratic participation in school governance.

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