

# Gender Disparity in Principal Officers' Positions in Nigerian Universities: Implications for Educational Planners and Administrators

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study investigates the gender disparities in leadership positions within Nigerian universities, focusing on principal officers such as Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Bursars, and Librarians. Analyzing data from the 2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest. The study employs ANOVA statistics to establish the statistical significance of these disparities and highlights the need for targeted interventions to rectify these imbalances. The research reveals striking imbalances in gender representation across these roles. The findings demonstrate that, despite notable progress in some areas, women remain significantly underrepresented in key leadership positions, with a pronounced gender gap persisting across various types of universities (federal, state, and private). The recommendations offered encompass gender-neutral selection processes, affirmative action policies, leadership development programs, mentorship initiatives, educational campaigns, and regular data collection to promote gender equity. These proposed strategies aim to create a more inclusive academic environment where leadership positions are accessible to all based on qualifications and merit, ultimately fostering diversity and enriching the higher education landscape in Nigeria.*

**KEYWORDS:** gender disparity, principal officers, Nigerian universities, educational planners, administrators.

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## INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality permeates every aspect of human existence, encompassing the societal phenomenon where men and women do not receive equal treatment. These disparities can arise from variations in biological, psychological, or cultural norms within a given society. As stated by Olaogun, Adebayo, and Oluyemo (2015), gender inequality is prevalent across all facets of life in Nigeria, spanning family dynamics, the education system, the labor market, political spheres, and social service institutions. The authors emphasize that discrimination against women in Nigeria is evident both within and outside the confines of the home. The growth of the university system in Nigeria has been remarkable, evolving from a single University College in 1948 to the establishment of five universities between 1960 and 1962 (Okecha, 2008). By 2021, Nigeria boasts a total of 193 universities (NUC, 2021). However, this expansion has not shielded the system from the challenges associated with gender inequality, particularly in staffing positions, including those of principal officers. Gender disparity is pervasive across all sectors of the economy, including education, healthcare, agriculture, defense, and politics. As noted by Nwajiuba (2011), a global gender role distinction exists, contributing to disparities in opportunities between men and women. Nevertheless, the call for gender equality in all sectors remains unwavering. The protests by Nigerian women against the rejection of five gender-related bills by the House of Representatives in the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly during the Buhari led administration exemplify their relentless efforts to promote gender equality in the nation.

The university system in Nigeria relies on various categories of principal officers, including the Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Registrar, Librarian, and Bursar. These officers assume crucial roles within the university system. Chancellors, often traditional monarchs, are appointed by the head of state for federal universities or by the governor of the state for state-owned universities. In private universities, the owner typically assumes the role of Chancellor. They serve as ceremonial heads of public universities and bear responsibilities such as presiding over convocation ceremonies, enhancing the institution's image, and advocating for its development. The Pro-Chancellors chair the Governing Councils of their respective universities and act as deputy Chancellors, reporting to the Chancellors. Vice-Chancellors hold the positions of Chief Executives and Academic Officers within universities, with authority over all university members except the Chancellors and Pro-Chancellors. They oversee university activities and chair the Senate. Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Administration) step into the Vice-Chancellor's role in their absence and possess the authority to exercise all the Vice-Chancellor's powers and functions, representing them in administrative matters. Similarly, Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) assume the Vice-Chancellor's responsibilities in their absence, particularly in academic matters. Registrars serve as the Chief Administrative Officers, managing day-to-day university administration, and functioning as secretaries to various university bodies. Bursars act

as Chief Financial Officers, overseeing financial affairs and reporting to the Vice-Chancellors. University Librarians coordinate library services throughout the university's departments, faculties, institutes, and colleges, with their administration falling under the purview of the Vice-Chancellors.

In various international organizations, the significance of education in achieving gender equality has been underscored. For instance, Article 4 of the World Declaration on higher education for the 21st Century (El-Khawas, 1998) stressed the need to eliminate gender stereotypes in higher education across all disciplines where women are underrepresented. The active participation of women in decision-making roles within higher education has been a global priority. Additionally, at a UNESCO conference, it was recommended that by 2010, university leadership positions, including chairs, professors, and department heads, should be equally filled by both men and women (Watende and Chen, 2019). Despite UNESCO's recommendation over a decade ago, the question arises: are university leadership roles, including chairs, professors, and department heads, truly being filled by men and women in equal numbers?

Over the past three decades in Nigeria, Gender Centers have been established to promote and strengthen gender equality in teaching, research, documentation, and institutionalization within Nigerian universities. However, only a handful of universities in Nigeria have set up Gender Centers or implemented equity policies. Most of these Gender Centers engage in research, teaching, training, advocacy, and policy development programs (Igiebor, 2021). Despite national and institutional gender policies, women remain underrepresented in the academic profession, particularly in leadership roles (Eboiyehi et al., 2016; Muoghalu & Eboiyehi, 2018; Ogbogu, 2011). Gender inequality in Nigeria persists, with patriarchal systems negatively impacting women's advancement in higher education leadership positions. Aina et al. (2015) attribute this gender gap in Nigerian higher education to strong patriarchal cultures that create gender-based power imbalances. Watende and Chen (2019) reported that despite significant educational and workplace gains, women continue to be underrepresented in various sectors, especially in senior leadership positions.

Women's underrepresentation in top academic leadership positions, such as tenured faculty and full professors, limits their opportunities for formal leadership roles in colleges and universities. Consequently, men outnumber women even in newly appointed positions such as deans, provosts, and presidents (Raskin, Edina, Krull, & Minnetonka, 2015). In Tanzania, Lorber (2010) observed gender disparities in senior leadership positions in higher education, aligning with liberal feminist theory's aim to expose and address discrimination in university management. Studies in New Zealand, the United States, and England also reveal low percentages of women in professorial positions, emphasizing the global issue of women's underrepresentation in higher education leadership (Casey, Skibnes, & Pringle, 2011; Guskey, 2009; Samble, 2008; Doherty & Manfredi, 2010). Challenges and limitations persist for women

academics in universities, affecting their chances of promotion and access to administrative roles. Literature highlights the ongoing difficulty for talented women in advancing their careers worldwide (Burke & Major, 2014). In South Africa, despite constituting over 50% of higher education personnel, women's representation in leadership positions remains low (Ogunsanya, 2007).

The situation is even more dire in Nigeria, where women academics faced obstacles such as denial of maternity leave under university law, restrictions on marriage and childbirth, and employment discrimination (Olaogun, Adebayo, & Oluyemo, 2015). Women's representation as full-time academic staff in some African universities is shockingly low, with figures ranging from 9.5% in Ghana to 50% in Jamaica (Olaogun et al., 2015). Overall, studies consistently demonstrate women's underrepresentation in senior leadership positions across Africa. Even though women constitute a significant portion of the higher education workforce, they hold only a small fraction of top leadership positions, including vice chancellors, registrars, and deputy vice chancellors (Madimbo, 2016). In Ghana, only 10% of professors were women, while Kenya had only one female deputy vice chancellor in 2002 (Morley, 2013; Onsongo, 2004). In Nigeria, women's underrepresentation is exacerbated by university policies, cultural values, and management board compositions that favor men (Madueke, Raimi, & Okoye, nd; Bassey, Ojua, Archibong, & Bassey, 2012). Aina (2014) argued that the gender gap becomes more pronounced as women advance in the academic hierarchy. The percentage of women in key leadership positions, including principal officers, governing councils, deans/directors, and professors, remains low. Throughout Nigeria's history, only around 20 female vice-chancellors have been recorded despite the large number of universities (155). Often, women in academic leadership positions are appointed in acting capacities rather than full-time roles (Igiebor & Ogbogu, 2016). Additionally, male dominance persists in discourses surrounding women's underrepresentation in leadership roles within universities.

Gender parity within colleges and schools of the same university is also quite low, with only a small number of women among the heads of colleges (Muhanga, 2016). In most cases, top leadership positions like vice-chancellors, deputy vice-chancellors, and academic leaders are occupied by men (Ishengoma, 2016). This situation contradicts efforts to promote gender equity. Statistics reveal that all female vice-chancellors are from small private universities with fewer than 2,000 students. Among public universities that enroll the majority of higher education students, there is not a single female vice-chancellor, and very few women hold professorial or associate professorial positions. This persistent gender imbalance in academia calls for immediate intervention to address these disparities (Watende and Chen, 2019). Gender disparities in leadership positions affect all sectors of the economy in Nigeria. While the extent and consequences of these disparities within the university system remain unclear, it is evident that they pose challenges to effective management and administration.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the African context, there is a prevailing belief that leadership roles are primarily reserved for men, while women are expected to remain inconspicuous. This belief has deeply entrenched itself in African society, influencing our choices when it comes to selecting leaders and top management teams in most organizations. Particularly in Nigeria, it's a commonly held belief that a woman's place is confined to the kitchen (Omede and Agahiu, 2016). Consequently, many women face discrimination when it comes to holding positions of authority, being perceived as weaker and potentially less capable, even when given the opportunity. However, in spite of these beliefs, numerous women have demonstrated their leadership prowess and have proven to be superior managers compared to their male counterparts. Prominent examples include individuals like Prof. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Prof. Obiageli Ezekwesili, a former Nigerian Minister of Education, the late Prof. Dora Akunyili, former Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Nigeria, and the late Prof. Grace Alele-Williams, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Benin, Nigeria, among many others. The university system, serving as a vital hub for human capital development in the nation, holds a significant position in the social, political, and economic progress of any country. Among the various categories of university staff, principal officers bear the responsibility of managing various facets of the institution. Gender disparities are prevalent in all sectors in Nigeria. In fact, specific professions and roles are often stereotypically associated with either males or females. Consequently, this study aims to address the rates of gender disparity in the appointment of principal officers in Nigerian universities.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) What is the gender discrepancy in Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities?
- 2) What is the gender discrepancy in Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities?
- 3) What is the gender discrepancy in Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions in Nigeria Universities?
- 4) What are the disparity rates in the appointment of male and female principal officers amongst the federal, state and private universities in Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

- 1) Gender discrepancy is not significant in Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities.
- 2) Gender discrepancy is not significant in Deputy Vice-Chancellor's positions in Nigeria Universities.
- 3) Gender discrepancy is not significant in Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions in Nigeria Universities.
- 4) There is no significant difference in the disparity rates in the appointment of principal officers among the federal, state and private universities in Nigeria.

## METHODS

The research conducted in this study employed a survey design to thoroughly examine the allocation of leadership roles in Nigerian universities, specifically focusing on the extent of gender disparity in the appointment of male and female individuals to these pivotal positions. This investigation encompassed the entire spectrum of approved universities in Nigeria, encompassing both federal, state, and private institutions. To compile the primary dataset for this research, the study relied on information sourced from the National Universities Commission's comprehensive document titled the '2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest.' This document served as the foundational source of data, providing essential information regarding the appointment of principal officers within the Nigerian university system. In order to address the research inquiries effectively, various data analysis techniques were employed. Percentage calculations, ratios, and graphical representations were leveraged to offer a comprehensive understanding of the patterns and trends discerned in the data. These statistical tools were pivotal in providing a clear picture of how gender dynamics played out in the distribution of leadership roles. Furthermore, the study went a step further to rigorously test the hypotheses formulated as part of the research process. For this purpose, analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics were employed. ANOVA, a robust statistical technique, was utilized to assess the significance of differences or variations that existed among the data points related to the appointment of male and female principal officers within the Nigerian university system. In sum, the study's approach was methodologically rigorous, encompassing a wide range of universities and utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to shed light on the gender disparities evident in the leadership positions within Nigerian universities

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** What is the gender discrepancy in Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities?

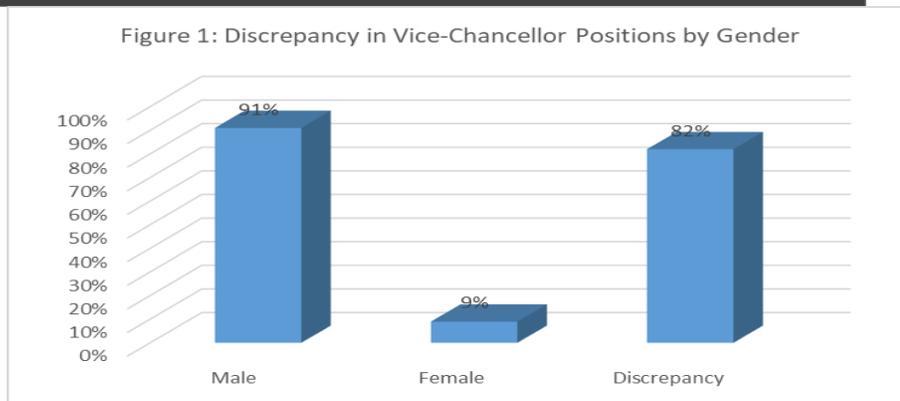
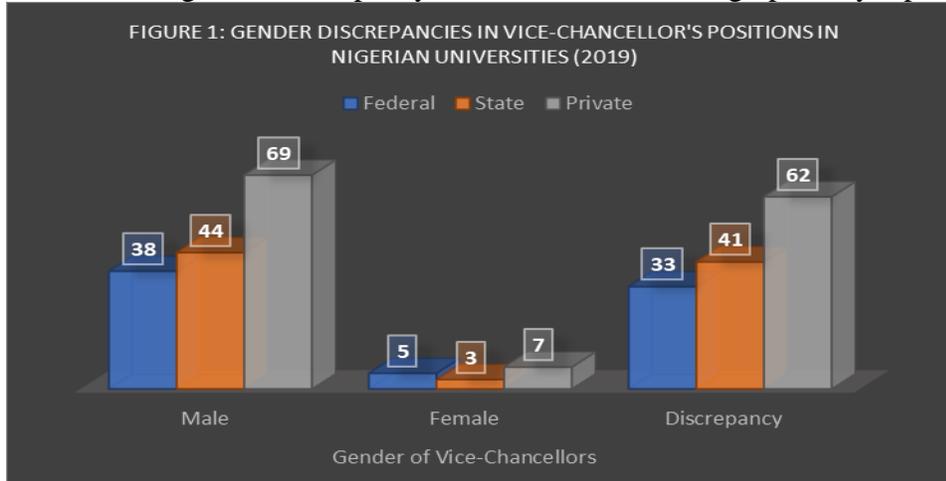
Table 1: Vice-Chancellors' Position by Gender in Nigerian Universities (2019)

Type of University	No. of Universities	Gender of Vice-Chancellors				Discrepancy Rate (%)
		Male	%	Female	%	
Federal	43	38	88.4	5	11.6	76.8
State	47	44	93.6	3	6.4	87.2
Private	76	69	90.8	7	9.2	81.6
Total	166	151	91.0	15	9.0	82.0

Computed from NUC's 2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, pp. 14-17; 56-62.

Table 1 presents the number of Vice-Chancellors by gender in Nigerian universities as at 2019. The table indicates that of the 43 Vice-Chancellors in federal universities, 38 were male while 5

were female. For state universities, 44 out of the 47 VCs were male while 3 were female; and for the private universities, 69 out of the 76 VCs were male while 7 were female. So, from a total of 166 Vice-Chancellors, 151 representing 91.0% were male while 15 representing 9.0% were female. This gives a discrepancy rate of 82.0%. This is graphically represented thus:



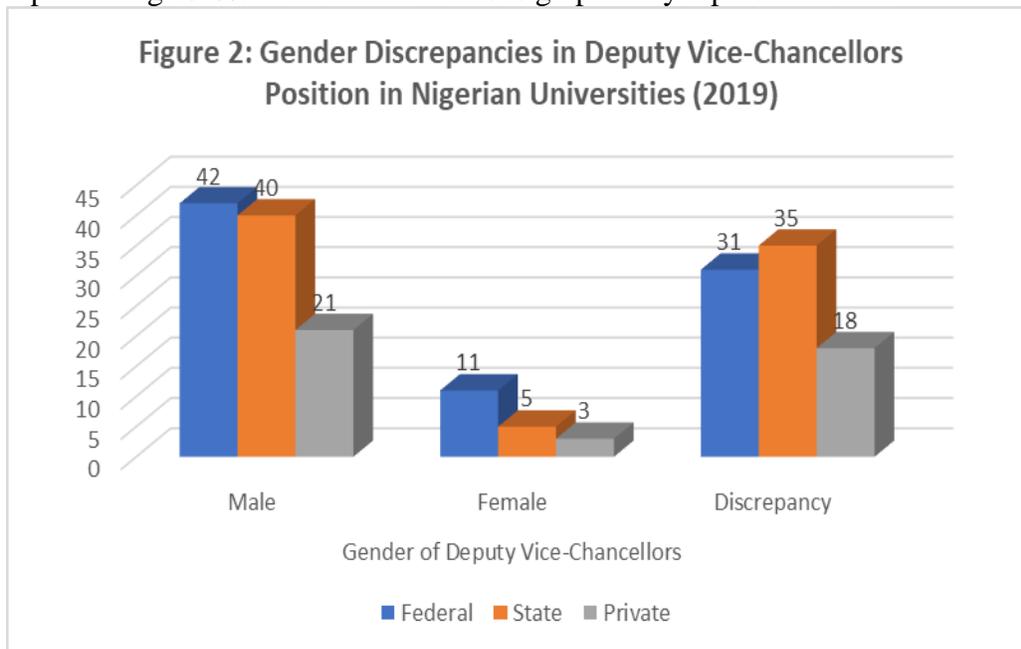
**Research Question 2:** What is the gender discrepancy in Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigerian Universities?

Table 2: Deputy Vice-Chancellors' Position by Gender in Nigerian Universities

Type of Universities	Total No. of Deputy Vice-Chancellors	Gender of Deputy Vice-Chancellors				Discrepancy Rates (%)
		Male	%	Female	%	
Federal	53	42	79.3	11	20.7	58.6
State	45	40	88.9	5	11.1	77.8
Private	24	21	87.5	3	12.5	75
Total	122	103	84.4	19	15.6	68.8

Computed from NUC's 2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, pp. 18-23; 56-62

Table 2 shows the number of Deputy Vice-Chancellors in Nigerian Universities by gender as at the time under review. It indicates that of the 53 in federal universities, 42 representing 79.3% were male while 11 representing 20.7% were female. State universities had 45 out of which 40 representing 88.9% were male, while 5 representing 11.1% were female. For the private universities, 21 out of 24 representing 87.5% were male, while 3 representing 12.5% were female. The table shows that of the 122 total DVCs, 103 representing 84.4% were male and 19 representing 15.6% were female. This is graphically represented thus:



**Research Question 3:** What is the gender discrepancy in Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions in Nigerian Universities?

Table 3: Registrar, Bursar and Librarian’s Positions by Gender in Nigerian Universities

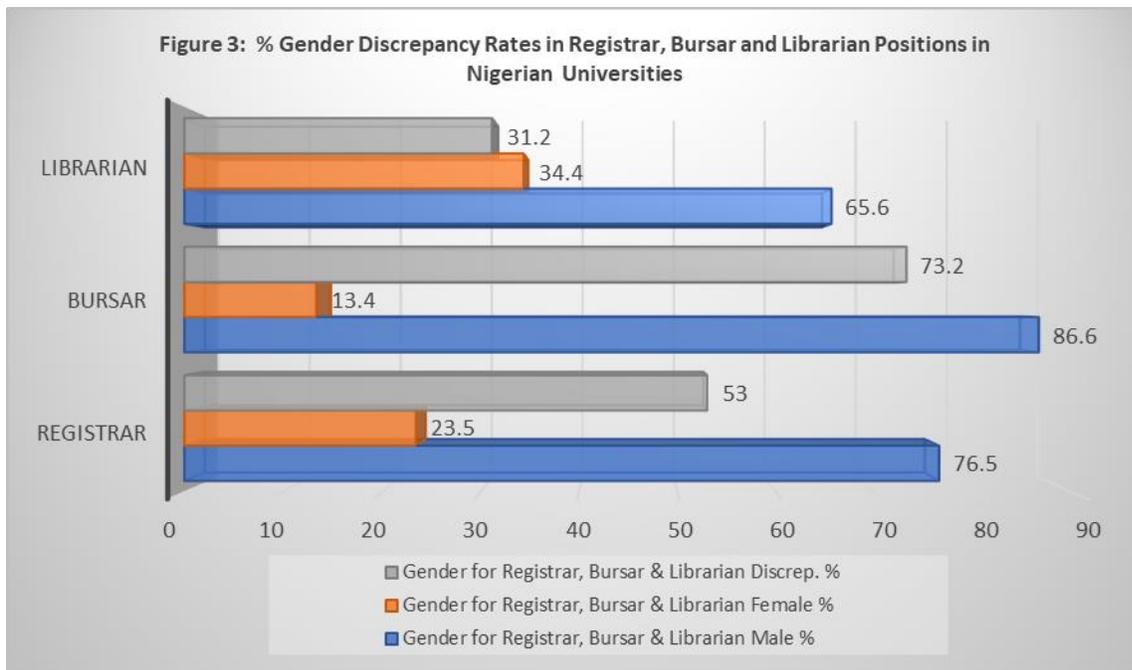
Principal Officers’ Position	Gender for Registrar, Bursar and Librarian			% Male	% Female	Discrepancy Rates (%)
	Male	Female	Total			
Registrar	127	39	166	76.5	23.5	53.0
Bursar	142	22	164	86.6	13.4	73.2
Librarian	107	56	163	65.6	34.4	31.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>76.3</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>52.6</b>

Computed from NUC’s 2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, pp. 24-35; 56-62.

The data as presented in Table 3 shows the gender discrepancy rates in Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions in Nigerian Universities. The table shows that of the total 166 Registrars,

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127 representing 76.5% were male while 39 representing 23.5% were female, giving a discrepancy rate of 53.0%. It also indicates that of the total 164 Bursars, 142 representing 86.6% were male while 22 representing 13.4% were female, giving a discrepancy rate of 73.2%; and for the Librarian position, it shows that of the available total 163 available, 107 representing 65.6% were male while 56 representing 34.4% were female, giving a discrepancy rate of 31.2%. In all the three principal officers' position, the table shows that a discrepancy rate of 52.6% existed between the male and female gender. This is presented graphically thus:



**Research Question 4:** What are the disparity rates in the appointment of male and female principal officers amongst the federal, state and private universities in Nigeria?

Table 4: Principal Officers' Positions by Gender in Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria

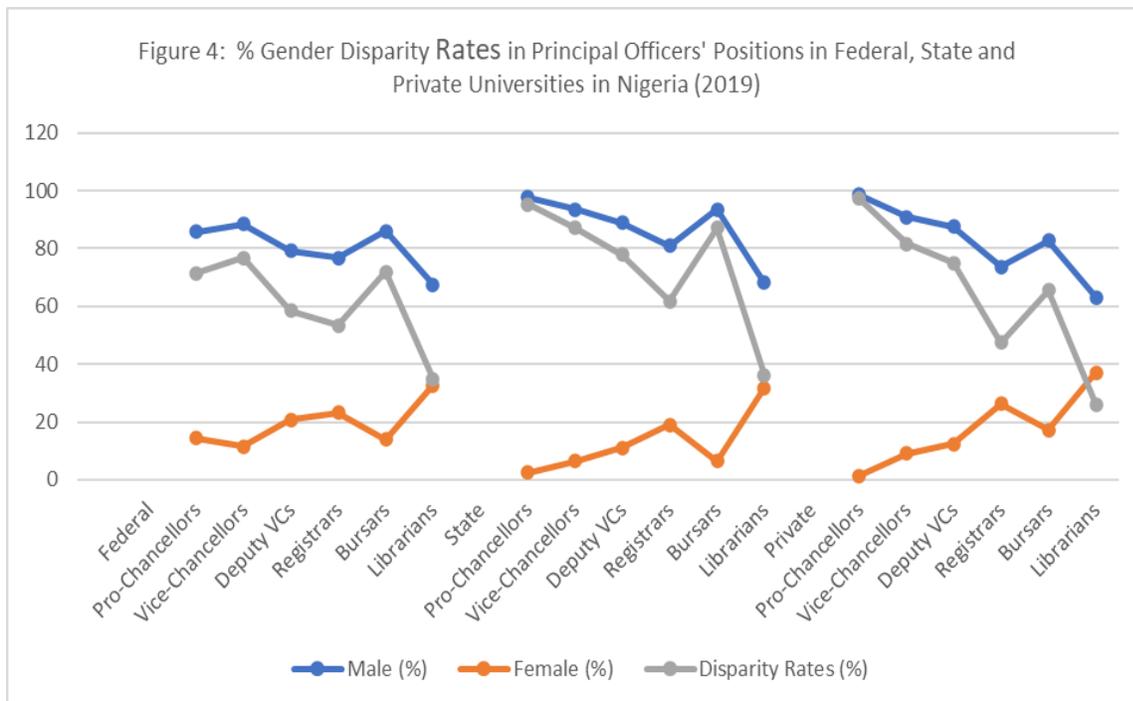
Principal Officers' Positions	Gender			% Male	% Female	Disparity Rates (%)
	Male	Female	Total			
<b>Federal</b>						
Pro-Chancellors	36	6	42	85.7	14.3	71.4
Vice-Chancellors	38	5	43	88.4	11.6	76.8
Deputy VCs	42	11	53	79.2	20.8	58.4
Registrars	33	10	43	76.7	23.3	53.4
Bursars	37	6	43	86.0	14.0	72.0
Librarians	29	14	43	67.4	32.6	34.8
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>61.0</b>
<b>State</b>						
Pro-Chancellors	41	1	42	97.6	2.4	95.2
Vice-Chancellors	44	3	47	93.6	6.4	87.2
Deputy VCs	40	5	45	88.9	11.1	77.8
Registrars	38	9	47	80.9	19.1	61.8
Bursars	44	3	47	93.6	6.4	87.2
Librarians	32	15	47	68.1	31.9	36.2
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>86.9</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>73.8</b>
<b>Private</b>						
Pro-Chancellors	73	1	74	98.6	1.4	97.2
Vice-Chancellors	69	7	76	90.8	9.2	81.6
Deputy VCs	21	3	24	87.5	12.5	75.0
Registrars	56	20	76	73.7	26.3	47.4
Bursars	62	13	75	82.7	17.3	65.4
Librarians	46	27	73	63.0	37.0	26.0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>64.4</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>66.2</b>

Computed from NUC's 2019 Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, pp. 10-35; 56-62.

Table 4 presents the number of principal officers' appointments by gender in the federal, state and private universities in Nigeria. The table indicates that of the 267 principal officers in federal universities as at the period under review, 215 (80.5%) were male while 52 (19.5%) were female, giving a disparity rate of 61%. For the state universities, the table shows the total

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principal officers to be 275, out of which 239 (86.9%) were male while 36 (13.1%) were female giving a disparity rate of 73.8%. At the private universities, total principal officers were 398 out of which 327 (82.2%) were male while 71 (17.8%) were female with a disparity rate of 64.4%. With 32.6%, 31.9% and 37.0% respectively for federal, state and private universities for the female gender, the table further indicates that the Librarian position is the only principal officers' position where the female gender appointment recorded up to 30%. The table is graphically presented thus:



**Hypothesis 1:** Gender discrepancy is not significant in Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities.

**Table 5: ANOVA on Vice-Chancellor position**

	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.877	2	1.939	32.351	.000
Within Groups	9.767	163	.060		
Total	13.645	165			

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference in the Vice-Chancellor position among the various groups under examination (e.g., different types of universities). The substantial F-statistic of 32.351, coupled with an extremely low p-value of practically zero (0.000), provides strong evidence against the null hypothesis, suggesting that these differences are highly unlikely to have occurred by random chance. This implies that there are indeed meaningful distinctions in the distribution of Vice-Chancellor positions among the groups studied, warranting further investigation and potentially post-hoc analyses to discern specific group differentials.

**Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Gender  
Scheffe

(I) Type of Universities	(J) Type of Universities	Mean of Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Federal	State	-.34884*	.05166	.000	-.4765	-.2212
	Private	-.34884*	.04671	.000	-.4642	-.2334
State	Federal	.34884*	.05166	.000	.2212	.4765
	Private	.00000	.04542	1.000	-.1122	.1122
Private	Federal	.34884*	.04671	.000	.2334	.4642
	State	.00000	.04542	1.000	-.1122	.1122

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post-hoc Scheffe analyses reveal that there are statistically significant disparities in gender distribution among Vice-Chancellors across different types of universities. Specifically, Federal Universities exhibit significantly lower gender representation compared to both State and Private Universities, as indicated by negative mean differences and narrow 95% confidence intervals that do not include zero, all at a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ . However, there is no statistically significant gender distribution difference between State and Private Universities, with a mean difference close to zero and a p-value of 1.000. These findings provide a nuanced understanding of the disparities in leadership roles, shedding light on the specific university categories contributing to the overall observed significant differences in Vice-Chancellor gender representation.

**Hypothesis 2:** Gender discrepancy is not significant in Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions in Nigeria Universities.

Table 6: ANOVA on Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.852	2	1.926	18.805	.000
Within Groups	12.189	119	.102		
Total	16.041	121			

The ANOVA results, as presented in Table 6, indicate statistically significant differences in Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions among different groups or categories. The substantial F-statistic of 18.805, combined with a very low p-value of .000, provides strong evidence against the null hypothesis, suggesting that these differences are highly unlikely to have occurred by random chance. This implies that there are meaningful distinctions in the distribution of Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions among the groups examined. Further detailed analyses may be necessary to discern the specific nature and extent of these differences.

### Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Gender

Scheffe

(I) Type of Universities	(J) Type of Universities	Mean of Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Federal	State	-.35849*	.06487	.000	-.5193	-.1977
	Private	-.35849*	.07874	.000	-.5537	-.1633
State	Federal	.35849*	.06487	.000	.1977	.5193
	Private	.00000	.08089	1.000	-.2005	.2005
Private	Federal	.35849*	.07874	.000	.1633	.5537
	State	.00000	.08089	1.000	-.2005	.2005

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Scheffe multiple comparisons analysis underscores significant disparities in the gender distribution of Deputy Vice-Chancellors across various types of universities. Notably, Federal Universities exhibit significantly lower gender representation compared to both State and Private Universities, with substantial negative mean differences and narrow 95% confidence intervals, all with a high level of statistical significance ( $p < 0.001$ ). Conversely, no statistically significant

gender distribution difference emerges between State and Private Universities, as evident from a mean difference close to zero and a p-value of 1.000.

**Hypothesis 3:** Gender discrepancy is not significant in Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions in Nigeria Universities.

**Table 7: ANOVA on Registrar, Bursar and Librarian positions**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	71.380	2	35.690	1445.028	.000
Within Groups	9.213	373	.025		
Total	80.593	375			

The ANOVA results presented in Table 7 reveal highly significant differences among the Registrar, Bursar, and Librarian positions across various groups or categories. The exceptionally large F-statistic of 1445.028, coupled with a negligible p-value of .000, strongly rejects the null hypothesis and underscores that these differences are virtually impossible to attribute to random variation. This signifies substantial disparities in the distribution of these administrative roles among the examined groups. Further detailed analyses are warranted to thoroughly investigate the nature and extent of these pronounced variations, as the statistical evidence points to their significance in the context of Registrar, Bursar, and Librarian positions.

**Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Gender  
Scheffe

(I) Officers' Position	Principal (J) Officers' Position	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Interval Lower Bound	Confidence Upper Bound
Registrar	Bursar	-.92126*	.01919	.000	-.9684	-.8741
	Librarian	-.92126*	.02062	.000	-.9719	-.8706
Bursar	Registrar	.92126*	.01919	.000	.8741	.9684
	Librarian	.00000	.02012	1.000	-.0494	.0494
Librarian	Registrar	.92126*	.02062	.000	.8706	.9719
	Bursar	.00000	.02012	1.000	-.0494	.0494

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Scheffe multiple comparisons analysis underscores significant gender distribution disparities among Principal Officers' positions, including Registrar, Bursar, and Librarian. Both the Registrar and Librarian positions exhibit notably lower gender representation when compared to the Bursar position, as indicated by strong negative mean differences and narrow 95% confidence intervals ( $p < 0.001$ ). In contrast, there is no statistically significant gender distribution difference between the Bursar and Librarian positions, with a mean difference close to zero and a non-significant p-value ( $p = 1.000$ ). These findings provide valuable insights into the specific Principal Officers' roles contributing to the overall observed significant gender disparities, prompting further investigation into the underlying dynamics and implications within these administrative positions.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant difference in the disparity rates in the appointment of principal officers among the federal, state and private universities in Nigeria.

**Table 8: ANOVA on disparity rates in the appointment of principal officers among the federal, state and private universities**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	128.203	5	25.641	6137.721	.000
Within Groups	3.902	934	.004		
Total	132.105	939			

Table 8 presents an ANOVA analysis on the disparity rates in the appointment of principal officers among Federal, State, and Private universities. The results reveal highly significant disparities, as indicated by an exceptionally large F-statistic of 6137.721 and an extremely low p-value of .000. These findings strongly reject the null hypothesis, underscoring that the differences in the appointment of principal officers among the university types are overwhelmingly significant and unlikely to be attributed to random chance. These pronounced variations in appointment disparities among the different university categories highlight a substantial need for further examination and consideration of factors influencing the appointment processes in the context of higher education institutions.

**Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Gender

Scheffe

(I) Principal Officers' Positions	(J) Principal Officers' Positions	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pro-Chancellors	Vice-Chancellors	.00000	.00718	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Deputy VCs	.00000	.00779	1.000	-.0260	.0260
	Registrars	.00000	.00718	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Bursars	.00000	.00719	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Librarians	-.97546*	.00722	.000	-.9995	-.9514
Vice-Chancellors	Pro-Chancellors	.00000	.00718	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Deputy VCs	.00000	.00771	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Registrars	.00000	.00709	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Bursars	.00000	.00711	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Librarians	-.97546*	.00713	.000	-.9992	-.9517
Deputy VCs	Pro-Chancellors	.00000	.00779	1.000	-.0260	.0260
	Vice-Chancellors	.00000	.00771	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Registrars	.00000	.00771	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Bursars	.00000	.00772	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Librarians	-.97546*	.00774	.000	-1.0013	-.9497
Registrars	Pro-Chancellors	.00000	.00718	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Vice-Chancellors	.00000	.00709	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Deputy VCs	.00000	.00771	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Bursars	.00000	.00711	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Librarians	-.97546*	.00713	.000	-.9992	-.9517
Bursars	Pro-Chancellors	.00000	.00719	1.000	-.0240	.0240
	Vice-Chancellors	.00000	.00711	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Deputy VCs	.00000	.00772	1.000	-.0257	.0257
	Registrars	.00000	.00711	1.000	-.0237	.0237
	Librarians	-.97546*	.00714	.000	-.9993	-.9517
Librarians	Pro-Chancellors	.97546*	.00722	.000	.9514	.9995

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Vice-Chancellors	.97546*	.00713	.000	.9517	.9992
Deputy VCs	.97546*	.00774	.000	.9497	1.0013
Registrars	.97546*	.00713	.000	.9517	.9992
Bursars	.97546*	.00714	.000	.9517	.9993

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Scheffe multiple comparisons analysis conducted on Principal Officers' positions reveals interesting findings in terms of gender representation. When comparing different Principal Officer positions, including Pro-Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Bursars, and Librarians, the results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in gender representation among these positions, as indicated by mean differences close to zero and p-values of 1.000. However, a noteworthy exception is the Librarian position, which significantly stands out with a mean difference of -0.97546 and a highly significant p-value of .000. This implies a substantial gender disparity in the appointment of Librarians, with notably lower gender representation compared to other Principal Officer positions. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing gender equity and diversity within the Librarian role, while highlighting relative gender parity among the other Principal Officer positions in higher education institutions.

## DISCUSSION

The ANOVA and multiple comparisons analysis of gender distribution across higher education occupations reveal gender representation differences and commonalities. Main findings show that most Principal Officer Posts, including Pro-Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, and Bursars, have no statistically significant gender disparities. This shows gender parity in administrative posts, which coincides with the increased emphasis on gender diversity in academic leadership. However, the Librarian post has a large gender gap, with lower female representation than other Principal Officer roles.

This discovery aligns with the observations made by Watende and Chen (2019), who noted that despite significant advancements in education and the workplace, women continue to be inadequately represented in various sectors, particularly in senior leadership roles. Lorber (2010) similarly remarked that gender disparities in senior leadership positions persist in Tanzania's higher education sector, aligning with the objectives of liberal feminist theory aimed at uncovering and addressing discrimination in university management. Studies conducted by Casey, Skibnes, and Pringle (2011); Guskey (2009); Samble (2008); Doherty and Manfredi (2010) in New Zealand, the United States, and England also underscored the limited presence of women in professorial positions, highlighting the global nature of the issue concerning women's underrepresentation in higher education leadership. Ogunsanya (2007) found that in South

Africa, despite comprising more than 50% of higher education personnel, women's representation in leadership roles remains notably low. Olaogun et al. (2015) revealed alarmingly low levels of women's representation as full-time academic staff in several African universities, ranging from 9.5% in Ghana to 50% in Jamaica. While Madimbo (2016) acknowledged that women constitute a significant portion of the higher education workforce, they occupy only a minor fraction of top leadership positions, including vice chancellors, registrars, and deputy vice chancellors. Morley (2013) and Onsongo (2004) reported that in Ghana, a mere 10% of professors were women, while Kenya had just one female deputy vice chancellor as of 2002. Furthermore, Igiebor and Ogbogu (2016) discovered that women in academic leadership roles are often appointed in temporary acting capacities rather than in full-time positions.

However, other writers may disagree with the findings. They may use Acker (1990) to argue that library sciences have historically been linked with femininity and fostered gender inequities. This shows deeper structural and cultural adjustments are needed to properly address inequities. Case (2020) challenged the idea that librarianship had a gender gap. Case claimed that the gender difference in librarianship is less than assumed, emphasising the necessity for a sophisticated knowledge of the interactions. This shows that gender disparities may not be as severe as previously thought. Such views include examining the statistics and considering issues that may affect the profession's gender mix. In related news, McCook (2019) presented evidence that the gender gap in librarianship is closing. McCook's findings imply that gender disparities in the area have improved, possibly reflecting gender equity-promoting attitudes, policies, and practises. This shows that diversity and inclusion measures may pay off. Conversely, Long (2018) examined the causes of librarianship's gender leadership gap. Long argued that public libraries, where women are more likely to work, had lower incomes and reputation than academic libraries. This viewpoint emphasises the need to address structural and occupational issues when studying gender differences in the profession.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study provides compelling evidence of significant gender disparities in leadership positions within Nigerian universities, spanning Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Bursar, and Librarian roles, across different types of institutions. These findings underscore the pressing need for concerted efforts to rectify gender imbalances in higher education leadership, as the overwhelming prevalence of male representation highlights systemic issues related to gender equity, stereotypes, and opportunities. Addressing these disparities should be a priority for both individual universities and policymakers, involving initiatives aimed at promoting gender diversity, enhancing inclusivity, and ensuring equal access to leadership roles. Achieving gender parity in higher education leadership not only fosters fairness and social justice but also has the potential to positively impact the overall quality and effectiveness of university governance and administration.

### **Implications for Educational Planners and Administrators**

The significant gender disparities in leadership positions within Nigerian universities have profound implications for educational planners. Firstly, planners need to recognize that these disparities hinder the development of diverse, inclusive, and well-rounded academic institutions. Failing to address this issue can limit the perspectives and experiences brought to decision-making processes, potentially leading to suboptimal educational policies and strategies. Educational planners must prioritize gender equity as a fundamental principle in their strategic planning efforts, setting clear goals and targets for increased female representation in leadership roles. Failure to do so could result in missed opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and the creation of a more dynamic educational environment. Moreover, educational planners should be aware of the broader societal implications of gender disparities within universities. By perpetuating gender imbalances, institutions may inadvertently send negative messages to the broader community about the value of female leadership and expertise. This can further reinforce stereotypes and biases, affecting the aspirations of female students and faculty. To counter this, educational planners should actively promote and support initiatives that create a more level playing field, which can serve as a model for gender equity in society at large.

For educational administrators within Nigerian universities, the gender disparities in leadership positions present both challenges and opportunities. Administrators play a pivotal role in implementing policies and practices that can either perpetuate or rectify these disparities. It is essential for them to recognize that fostering gender diversity at all levels of leadership is not merely a matter of compliance but a strategic imperative for institutional success. Administrators should lead by example, actively advocating for gender-balanced leadership teams and ensuring that recruitment, promotion, and appointment processes are fair and equitable. Administrators also have a unique opportunity to create a more inclusive and supportive work environment. By actively engaging with female faculty and staff, addressing their concerns, and offering mentorship and career development opportunities, administrators can contribute to a positive organizational culture that values diversity. Moreover, administrators should collaborate with educational planners to design and implement gender-sensitive policies and programs that actively encourage female faculty and staff to aspire to leadership positions. By taking these steps, educational administrators can contribute to breaking down barriers and promoting a more equitable and empowering academic landscape within Nigerian universities.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the significant gender disparities in leadership positions within Nigerian universities, some recommendations for addressing and mitigating these disparities were made for Universities management:

1. Gender-Neutral Selection Processes: Ensure gender-neutral leadership selection and appointment processes. Make leadership decisions based purely on credentials, experience, and merit, and be honest.

2. Affirmative Action Policies: Implement quotas or policies to increase women's representation in leadership roles, particularly in historically underrepresented roles.
3. Leadership Development Programmes: Create leadership programmes to mentor and enable female professors and employees to lead. Skills, confidence, and networking should be the core of these programmes.
4. Develop mentoring programmes to connect potential female leaders with experienced mentors in leadership roles. These partnerships may offer advice, support, and leadership insights.
5. Educational Campaigns: Challenge gender preconceptions, prejudices, and discrimination in academia through educational campaigns. Increase awareness of gender diversity in leadership's advantages.
6. Regularly collect and analyse data on gender representation in leadership posts. Reporting this data regularly can track progress and identify problem areas.

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