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## **MANAGEMENT OF BREAK, PREPARATORY, GAMES AND RECREATIONAL ENGAGEMENT TIMES FOR EFFECTIVE GOAL ATTAINMENT IN PRIVATE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the management of break, preparatory, games, and recreational engagement times in private senior secondary schools to enhance effective goal attainment. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The utilization of non-instructional periods plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance, social development, and overall well-being. Data is gathered through surveys. The population consisted of 2,653 principals and 4,255 teachers in private secondary schools across the 23 local government areas of Rivers State, making a total of 6,908 academic staff members. The sample size for this study was 800 academic staff, comprising 80 principals and 720 teachers. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the .05 significance level. The reliability index yielded .861. The study's findings highlighted to a high extent that principals' management of break, preparatory, games and recreational engagement times are effective for goal attainment in private senior secondary schools. The study concluded that when times are well-managed, these periods significantly contribute to the holistic development of students, improving goal attainment both academically and in extracurricular activities. The study recommended that school principals (administrators) the creation of structured schedules that optimize the benefits of break, preparatory, and recreational times in fostering student success.

**Keywords:** Time Management, Goal Attainment, Break Times, Preparatory Sessions, Recreational Activities, Private Senior Secondary Schools, Rivers State.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Effective time management is essential for academic success and overall development of students in private senior secondary schools. The strategic allocation of break periods, preparatory sessions, games, and recreational activities is fundamental to fostering a balanced learning environment that enhances goal attainment. In Rivers State, Nigeria, private senior secondary schools operate in a highly competitive academic environment where achieving excellence requires a well-structured approach to managing students' time. Properly balancing academic activities with breaks and recreational engagements not only improves cognitive abilities but also enhances students' overall well-being (Adeyemo, 2010).

The importance of breaks in an academic setting cannot be overemphasized. Research has shown that periodic breaks contribute significantly to students' concentration, memory retention, and overall academic performance (Pellegrini & Bohn, 2005). Structured break periods allow students to relax and recharge, which subsequently increases their efficiency during study sessions. Additionally, preparatory periods serve as essential times for students to reinforce learning, complete assignments, and revise classwork, thus ensuring continuous academic improvement (Obi, 2018).

Games and recreational activities also play a vital role in the holistic development of students. Studies indicate that engagement in physical activities and games enhances students' social, emotional, and physical well-being (Sallis et al., 2000). Recreational engagements, including sports and extracurricular activities, provide an opportunity for students to develop teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for their future careers (Ntukidem & Ekpenyong, 2017). Furthermore, incorporating recreational activities into the school curriculum has been linked to improved student motivation and reduced academic burnout (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006).

In Rivers State, Nigeria, private senior secondary schools are increasingly recognizing the need for a balanced approach to education that integrates academic rigor with structured leisure activities. Despite this awareness, some schools struggle to implement effective time management strategies that optimize both learning and recreational engagements. Challenges such as rigid academic schedules, lack of adequate recreational facilities, and limited awareness of the benefits of structured breaks hinder the effective attainment of educational goals (Eke, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires deliberate planning and policy implementation by school administrators, teachers, and educational stakeholders.

This study sought to examine the management of break, prep, games, and recreational engagement times in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It aims to explore how well-structured time management strategies contribute to effective goal attainment among students. Analyzing the existing policies, challenges, and best practices will provide insights into optimizing students' academic and personal development through effective time management.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Effective time management in schools is a critical factor in ensuring students' academic success and overall development. In private senior secondary schools, the management of break, preparatory, games, and recreational engagement times significantly influences students' concentration, productivity, and well-being. However, many schools struggle with structuring

these periods efficiently, leading to potential challenges such as inadequate rest, poor academic performance, lack of physical activity, and indiscipline among students.

In spite of the recognized benefits of well-managed break, preparatory, games, and recreational times, there is often a lack of standardized policies guiding their implementation in private senior secondary schools. Some schools allocate insufficient time for breaks, resulting in student fatigue and decreased attention span. Others may not effectively supervise preparatory periods, leading to distractions and unproductive study sessions. Similarly, the lack of structured recreational and game activities can contribute to limited physical exercise, reduced social interaction, and increased stress levels among students.

Furthermore, the absence of a coordinated approach between school principals and teachers in managing these periods can lead to inefficiencies in school operations. While some schools overemphasize academic activities at the expense of physical and mental well-being, others may lack the necessary infrastructure, trained personnel, or effective monitoring strategies to maximize the benefits of these engagement times.

Given these challenges, there is a need to examine the current management practices of break, preparatory, games, and recreational engagement times in private senior secondary schools. Identifying effective strategies for optimizing these periods will contribute to enhanced student performance, holistic development, and overall institutional success. This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating how school authorities can better structure and supervise these essential non-academic periods for improved goal attainment.

### **Aim and objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to investigate the management of break, preparatory, games and recreational engagement times for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Verify the extent break times as available school time is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Establish the extent games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Assess the extent preparatory time supervised by school authority is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the work:

- To what extent do principals and teachers manage break times for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent do principals and teachers manage games and recreational engagement time for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent do principals and teachers manage prep times supervised by school authority for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

## **Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses guided the study

- There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing break times is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing preparatory times supervised by school authority is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Principals and Teachers Management of Break Times for Effective Goal Attainment**

Break times serve multiple functions in a school setting, ranging from providing students with opportunities to relax and rejuvenate to enhancing their social and emotional development. Research has shown that regular breaks improve students' attention spans, memory retention, and overall learning outcomes (Pellegrini & Bohn, 2005). In addition to cognitive benefits, break times allow students to engage in physical activities, which are essential for maintaining good health and reducing stress levels. Without well-structured break periods, students may experience academic fatigue, leading to reduced concentration and lower academic performance.

Principals play a crucial leadership role in determining school policies related to break times. Their responsibilities include setting guidelines on break duration, ensuring a conducive environment for relaxation, and integrating recreational activities that align with the school's academic objectives. Effective principals recognize that break times should not be viewed merely as pauses between lessons but as strategic periods that enhance learning effectiveness.

A well-managed break schedule involves allocating adequate time for students to refresh while maintaining an appropriate balance with instructional periods. Studies have indicated that schools with structured break management policies experience better student engagement and reduced classroom disruptions (Adams, 2017). Principals can also implement innovative approaches such as staggered break times to prevent overcrowding in school playgrounds and cafeterias, thereby promoting safety and organization.

Furthermore, school leadership is responsible for ensuring that break periods incorporate both leisure and productive activities. Encouraging students to participate in supervised extracurricular engagements, such as reading clubs, debate sessions, and light exercises, can significantly contribute to their personal and academic development. Principals must collaborate with teachers to ensure that these activities are inclusive and cater to the diverse interests of students.

Teachers are at the forefront of enforcing break time policies and ensuring that students utilize these periods effectively. One of their primary responsibilities is to supervise students during break times, ensuring discipline and promoting positive social interactions. Unstructured

or unsupervised breaks may lead to behavioral issues such as bullying, vandalism, or excessive distractions that can negatively affect the school environment (Johnson & Ward, 2018).

Teachers also play an important role in guiding students toward productive break-time activities. Encouraging short educational games, mindfulness exercises, or structured peer interactions can enhance students' cognitive skills and emotional intelligence. Additionally, teachers should monitor students' physical and mental well-being during break times, identifying those who may need additional support or counseling.

Another essential aspect of break time management is the transition between break periods and instructional sessions. Teachers should develop strategies to help students smoothly transition back to class without unnecessary delays. Techniques such as countdown signals, calming exercises, or brief recap discussions can assist students in refocusing their attention on academic tasks after breaks (Taylor, 2020).

In spite the advantages of well-structured break times, several challenges hinder effective management. One common issue is the insufficient allocation of break time, where some schools prioritize extended instructional hours at the expense of adequate relaxation periods. Research (e.g., Brown, 2019) suggested that inadequate breaks can lead to student burnout and reduced academic productivity. Additionally, the lack of sufficient recreational facilities poses challenges to effective break time management. In many schools, particularly those with limited resources, students may not have access to playgrounds or recreational equipment, restricting their ability to engage in physical activities. In such cases, principals and teachers must seek innovative ways to provide alternative recreational opportunities within the school premises.

Another challenge is ensuring discipline during break periods. Without proper supervision, students may engage in disruptive behaviors that compromise the safety and well-being of others. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration between school administrators, teachers, and parents to implement policies that balance discipline with the freedom needed for students to benefit from break times.

To optimize break times for goal attainment, schools must adopt a structured approach that integrates the following strategies:

- Schools should allocate sufficient break periods that allow students to rest while maintaining an optimal academic schedule.
- Teachers must oversee break-time activities to ensure a safe and productive environment for students.
- Schools must provide various recreational activities that cater to students' different interests, including sports, reading corners, and group discussions.
- Implementing smooth transition strategies between break times and instructional sessions can help students remain focused and engaged in learning.
- Engaging parents in discussions on break time policies can enhance support for structured break management at home and in school.

The effective management of break times by principals and teachers is essential for promoting student well-being, academic performance, and overall goal attainment. School administrators can create an environment that balances academic rigor with necessary relaxation and recreational activities by recognizing the significance of well-structured break periods. While challenges such as inadequate resources and disciplinary concerns exist, implementing strategic policies and fostering collaboration among educators, students, and parents can significantly

enhance break time management. On the whole, schools that promote structured and purposeful break periods promote a more productive and supportive learning environment, ensuring that students achieve their educational and personal development goals.

### **Principals and Teachers Management of Games and Recreational Engagement Time for Effective Goal Attainment**

Recreational engagement is essential for students' academic and personal development. Research has shown that participation in games and structured physical activities improves students' concentration, memory, and problem-solving skills (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). Games also contribute to students' physical health by promoting fitness and reducing the risks of obesity and related illnesses. Additionally, structured recreational activities provide opportunities for students to develop teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal skills, which are essential for success beyond the classroom (Bailey, 2006).

Moreover, engagement in recreational activities has been linked to stress reduction and emotional well-being. Studies indicate that students who participate in structured recreational activities exhibit lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of motivation toward academic tasks (Mahoney et al., 2005). Thus, effective management of games and recreational time ensures that students experience a balanced education that integrates both academic excellence and personal growth.

Principals play a pivotal role in structuring and overseeing recreational programs within schools. Their responsibilities include setting policies that ensure games and recreation are well-integrated into the school timetable. A well-designed schedule that includes regular physical activities fosters an environment conducive to learning and student well-being. Additionally, principals are responsible for resource allocation to support recreational activities. Ensuring the availability of playgrounds, sports equipment, and trained personnel is crucial for an effective recreational program. In schools where these resources are limited, principals must explore partnerships with local sports organizations or seek sponsorships to improve recreational infrastructure (Howie et al., 2016).

Furthermore, principals must ensure that games and recreational activities align with the school's academic objectives. By encouraging extracurricular clubs and inter-school competitions, principals can promote a culture of active engagement among students. They should also collaborate with teachers to monitor students' participation and performance in these activities to ensure that recreation complements academic achievement rather than disrupts it.

According to Ololube (2013, 2017), teachers play essential role in implementing and supervising recreational activities in schools. They are responsible for ensuring that students participate in games and exercises that suit their abilities and interests. Through structured engagement, teachers can help students develop physical fitness and enhance their social skills. Another important aspect of teachers' involvement is maintaining discipline during recreational periods. Without proper supervision, recreational time can become chaotic and lead to behavioral issues. Teachers must establish rules and provide guidance to ensure that students remain engaged in productive and respectful play.

Teachers also serve as mentors by encouraging students to explore different recreational activities. Some students may struggle with self-confidence in sports, and teachers can provide motivation and support to help them develop new skills. Moreover, integrating physical activities

with lessons, such as incorporating movement-based learning, can further enhance student engagement and academic success (Sibley & Etnier, 2003).

Despite its benefits, managing games and recreational engagement time comes with several challenges. One major issue is the lack of adequate facilities and equipment, particularly in underfunded schools. Without proper spaces for physical activities, students may not have the opportunity to engage fully in recreational programs. Another challenge is the tendency to prioritize academic activities at the expense of recreational time. Many schools emphasize extended study periods, limiting the time allocated for games and physical activities. This imbalance can lead to student burnout and decreased overall academic performance (Singh et al., 2012). Additionally, some schools face difficulties in maintaining discipline during recreational time. Inadequate supervision can lead to injuries, bullying, or misuse of recreational resources. Addressing these issues requires proper planning and sufficient staff to oversee recreational activities effectively.

### **Principals and Teachers Management of Preparatory Times Supervised by School Authority for Effective Goal Attainment**

Preparatory time in schools is an essential period that allows students to engage in self-directed learning, revision, and academic reinforcement. When effectively managed by school authorities, particularly principals and teachers, preparatory periods can significantly contribute to students' academic success, personal development, and overall goal attainment. According to Ololube (2017), proper supervision will ensure that students utilize this time productively, promote discipline, focus, and structured learning environment.

Preparatory time serves as a structured opportunity for students to consolidate knowledge, complete assignments, and engage in independent study. Research indicates that students who regularly engage in well-supervised preparatory sessions demonstrate improved academic performance, critical thinking skills, and self-discipline (Zimmerman, 2002). In addition, preparatory periods allow students to develop time management skills, preparing them for higher education and professional life.

Beyond academic benefits, structured preparatory time fosters a culture of responsibility and accountability among students. It instills a sense of commitment to learning, minimizing distractions that could hinder their academic progress. Moreover, well-organized study periods reduce stress and anxiety by providing students with designated time to review coursework and seek clarification from teachers (Pintrich, 2004).

Principals play a fundamental role in structuring and overseeing preparatory time in schools. Their responsibilities include setting policies and guidelines that define the objectives and duration of preparatory sessions. Effective principals recognize the importance of integrating preparatory periods into the school timetable in a manner that balances academic workload with students' well-being.

One key aspect of a principal's role is ensuring that preparatory time is adequately resourced. This involves providing well-equipped study areas, sufficient learning materials, and a conducive environment free from unnecessary distractions. Additionally, principals must coordinate with teachers to implement monitoring systems that ensure students remain engaged during these sessions (Hattie, 2009). Furthermore, principals must foster a culture of accountability by emphasizing the significance of preparatory periods in academic success. They can achieve this through regular assessments of the effectiveness of study sessions, seeking

feedback from students and teachers, and making necessary adjustments to optimize the impact of preparatory time.

Teachers serve as direct supervisors of preparatory sessions, ensuring that students utilize the time effectively. Their role involves guiding students in setting study goals, providing academic support, and maintaining discipline during study periods. Without proper supervision, preparatory time may become unproductive, with students engaging in non-academic activities or losing focus. A crucial responsibility of teachers is to assist students in developing effective study strategies. This may include teaching them how to organize their study schedules, take meaningful notes, and apply critical thinking in their academic work (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). Teachers should also be available to provide clarification on difficult topics, bridging gaps in students' understanding. Additionally, teachers must ensure that preparatory sessions remain structured and conducive to learning. Implementing a clear set of rules, such as minimizing noise levels and discouraging distractions, helps students maintain focus. Teachers should also monitor students' progress by assessing their engagement levels and providing constructive feedback.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a descriptive research design. The population consisted of 2,653 principals and 4,255 teachers in private secondary schools across the 23 local government areas of Rivers State, making a total of 6,908 academic staff members.

The sample size for this study was 800 academic staff, comprising 80 principals and 720 teachers, who were selected from 80 registered private secondary schools in Rivers State. These 80 schools were chosen from 10 local government areas using a stratified random sampling technique. The process involved writing the names of all private secondary schools on slips of paper and placing them in a basket. The researcher drew one slip at a time, mixed the remaining slips, and continued the process until 80 schools were selected. The sample of 800 academic staff represents 11% of the total population. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed, with 777 retrieved, yielding a response rate of 97%.

The data collection instrument was a self-structured 36-item questionnaire titled "Managing School Time for Effective Goal Attainment in Secondary Schools Questionnaire (MSTTEGASSQ)." The instrument used a four-point modified Likert-type scale, with the following ratings: Very High Extent (VHE) = 4 points, High Extent (HE) = 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point.

The instrument underwent face and content validation by three experts from the Department of Educational Management at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. To establish reliability, the researcher administered the questionnaire to 20 teachers who were not part of the sample. The two sets of data were correlated, yielding a reliability index of .861.

The 800 copies of the instrument were personally distributed by the researchers, with the assistance of two trained research assistants. Respondents who were unable to complete the questionnaires immediately were allowed to take them home for completion. The researcher later returned to collect the completed questionnaires to ensure a high return rate. This process was carried out in the designated sample areas to facilitate efficient data collection and subsequent analysis of the respondents' opinions.

The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics to answer



the research questions. For interpreting the responses, any mean score below 2.50 was considered disagreement, while a mean score of 2.50 and above indicated agreement, with 2.50 serving as the decision threshold. The t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the .05 significance level.

## RESULTS

**Research Question One:** To what extent do principals and teachers manage break times for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of principals and teachers management of break times for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

s/n	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Breaks time allow students to recharge mentally for effective goal attainment	3.2847	1.04347	High Extent
2.	They provide a pause from continuous learning, allowing the brain to rest and reset.	3.0766	1.10407	High Extent
3.	Break time encourage physical movement and activity. Students can stretch, walk around, or engage in recreational activities during break times.	3.0693	1.12099	High Extent
4.	Break time provide an opportunity for students to be active, reducing sedentary behavior.	2.7263	1.26472	High Extent
5.	Students who can use their breaks wisely for relaxation, socialization, and activities tend to develop better time management skills.	3.2573	1.04095	High Extent
6.	Breaks offer time for socializing and building relationships among students.	3.1387	1.13564	High Extent
<b>Grand mean and SD</b>		<b>3.0921</b>	<b>1.11830</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

The results in Table 1 provide an overview of principals' and teachers' management of break times in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State and its role in supporting effective goal attainment. Item 1 “Break times allow students to recharge mentally for effective goal attainment” has (Mean = 3.2847; SD= 1.04347). On average, participants rated this item as having a “High Extent” impact on students' ability to recharge mentally. The relatively low standard deviation (1.04347) indicates that most responses were closely grouped around the mean, suggesting strong agreement across respondents.

Item 2 “They provide a pause from continuous learning, allowing the brain to rest and reset” has (Mean = 3.0766; SD = 1.10407). This statement also received a “High Extent” rating. While the mean is slightly lower than item 1, it still reflects a positive view of break times in facilitating mental rest. The higher standard deviation compared to Item 1 suggests that opinions varied slightly more among the respondents.

Item 3 “Break time encourages physical movement and activity, which means that students can stretch, walk around, or engage in recreational activities during break times” has (Mean = 3.0693; SD = 1.12099). The rating of “High Extent” suggests that break times are seen as important for promoting physical activity. The standard deviation is relatively high, again showing some variability in how strongly respondents agree with this statement.

Item 4 “Break times provide an opportunity for students to be active, reducing sedentary behavior” has (Mean = 2.7263; SD = 1.26472). This item also received a “High Extent” rating,

but its mean is noticeably lower than the others. This might suggest that while break times are seen as contributing to physical activity, it may not be as strongly emphasized as other aspects of break time management. The higher standard deviation implies a wider variation in responses.

Item 5 “Students who can use their breaks wisely for relaxation, socialization, and activities tend to develop better time management skills” has (Mean = 3.2573; SD = 1.04095). Break times are considered important for developing time management skills in students, receiving a “High Extent” rating. The relatively low standard deviation indicates general consensus on the importance of break time in this regard.

Item 6 “Breaks offer time for socializing and building relationships among students” has (Mean = 3.1387; SD = 1.13564). Social interaction during break time is seen as an important factor for effective goal attainment. Again, this received a “High Extent” rating, with a moderate level of agreement as indicated by the standard deviation.

The grand mean of 3.0921, categorized as “High Extent” indicates that on average, participants strongly agree that the management of break times is a critical factor for supporting goal attainment. While the grand standard deviation of 1.11830 suggests that there is a moderate degree of variation in the responses, with some differences in how respondents perceive the importance of break times.

Overall, the results suggest that principals and teachers believe that break times significantly contribute to effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The items related to mental recharging, physical activity, socializing, and time management skills all received high ratings, indicating that break times are viewed as essential for fostering well-rounded student development. However, there is some variability in responses, especially regarding the impact on physical activity (Item 4).

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do principals and teachers manage games and recreational engagement time for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of principals and teachers management of games and recreational engagement time for effective goal attainment

s/n	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
7.	Recreation and games promotes physical fitness and overall health.	3.4836	1.06537	High Extent
8.	Regular physical activity helps prevent health issues, improves stamina, and boosts energy levels.	3.2153	1.08891	High Extent
9.	Recreation and games time offer a break from academic pressures, reducing stress and anxiety levels among students.	3.1989	1.17353	High Extent
10.	Recreation and games encourages teamwork, cooperation, and sportsmanship.	3.1168	1.03726	High Extent
11.	Students learn to collaborate, communicate, and work together towards a common goal.	2.5712	1.27429	High Extent
12.	Engaging in games and recreational activities teaches students to manage their time effectively.	3.0620	1.00446	High Extent
<b>Grand mean and SD</b>		<b>3.1079</b>	<b>1.10730</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

The results in Table 2 provide insights into principals’ and teachers’ management of games and recreational engagement time in relation to effective goal attainment. Item 7 “Recreation and games promote physical fitness and overall health” has (Mean = 3.4836; SD = 1.06537). This

statement received the highest mean rating of 3.4836, indicating strong agreement that games and recreation significantly promote physical fitness and health. The standard deviation (1.06537) is relatively moderate, suggesting that most respondents have a similar view, though some variation exists.

Item 8 “Regular physical activity helps prevent health issues, improves stamina, and boosts energy levels” has (Mean = 3.2153; SD = 1.08891). Respondents rated this item highly as well, which indicates agreement that physical activity through games and recreation helps improve health, stamina, and energy. The standard deviation is slightly higher, suggesting more variability in responses compared to Item 7.

Item 9 “Recreation and games time offer a break from academic pressures, reducing stress and anxiety levels among students” has (Mean = 3.1989; SD = 1.17353). This item received a high rating as well, which highlights the importance of recreation and games in alleviating academic stress. The standard deviation is the highest among the items, showing more varied opinions on how effectively games and recreational activities reduce stress.

Item 10 “Recreation and games encourage teamwork, cooperation, and sportsmanship” has (Mean = 3.1168; SD = 1.03726). The mean rating of 3.1168 suggests that respondents agree to a high extent that games promote important social skills such as teamwork and sportsmanship. The standard deviation (1.03726) is relatively low, suggesting broad consensus on the role of games in fostering teamwork.

Item 11 “Students learn to collaborate, communicate, and work together towards a common goal” has (Mean = 2.5712, SD = 1.27429). This item received the lowest mean rating of 2.5712, indicating a less strong agreement compared to other items. This may suggest that while games promote collaboration, it may not be as strongly perceived as contributing to goal attainment. The higher standard deviation (1.27429) indicates considerable variation in how respondents view this aspect of recreational engagement.

Item 12 “Engaging in games and recreational activities teaches students to manage their time effectively” has (Mean = 3.0620, SD = 1.00446). Respondents agreed to a high extent that games and recreational activities help teach time management skills, as reflected in the mean of 3.0620. The relatively low standard deviation (1.00446) suggests strong consensus among participants.

The grand mean of 3.1079 indicates that, on average, principals and teachers perceive games and recreational engagement time as highly effective for goal attainment. This suggests that games and recreation are considered essential for students' well-being and development. The grand standard deviation (1.10730) shows moderate variability in the responses, which means that while most respondents agreed on the importance of recreational activities, there were some differences in how they viewed specific aspects.

Generally, the results suggest that principals and teachers view games and recreational engagement time as crucial for effective goal attainment. Activities like physical fitness, stress reduction, and teamwork are seen as essential benefits. However, there is less consensus on the extent to which games foster collaboration toward common goals (Item 11), and opinions vary more on how well games reduce stress (Item 9). Despite some variations, the overall view remains that games and recreation play a significant role in supporting students' holistic development and goal achievement.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do principals and teachers manage preparatory times supervised by school authority for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary

schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of principals and teachers management of preparatory times supervised by school authority for effective goal attainment

s/n	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
13.	Prep times allow students to review, consolidate, and prepare for upcoming lessons or assessments.	3.3850	1.04011	High Extent
14.	Allocating specific periods for preparation teaches students the importance of managing their time effectively.	3.3230	.92875	High Extent
15.	It helps them prioritize tasks, plan their studies, and develop essential time management skills that are crucial for achieving academic goals.	3.2774	1.05588	High Extent
16.	Prep times offer an opportunity for students to reflect on their progress and evaluate their understanding of the material.	2.7263	1.26472	High Extent
17.	Having dedicated prep times can reduce stress associated with last-minute cramming or feeling unprepared.	3.2153	1.08891	High Extent
18.	Prep times provide a structured opportunity for students to set academic goals and work towards achieving them.	3.3905	.93913	High Extent
<b>Grand mean and SD</b>		<b>3.2195</b>	<b>1.0529</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

The results in Table 3 provide insights into principals' and teachers' management of preparatory times supervised by school authorities and how they contribute to effective goal attainment. Item 13 “Prep times allow students to review, consolidate, and prepare for upcoming lessons or assessments” has (Mean = 3.3850; SD = 1.04011). This item received a high rating (mean of 3.3850), indicating strong agreement that prep times are important for reviewing and preparing for upcoming lessons or assessments. The standard deviation (1.04011) suggests moderate variability in responses, but overall, respondents seem to be in agreement that prep times are essential for preparation.

Item 14 “Allocating specific periods for preparation teaches students the importance of managing their time effectively” has (Mean = 3.3230; SD = 0.92875). This item also received a high rating (mean of 3.3230), indicating that principals and teachers believe prep times help students develop effective time management skills. The lower standard deviation (0.92875) suggests that there is relatively strong consensus among respondents on this point.

Item 15 “Prep helps students prioritize tasks, plan their studies, and develop essential time management skills that are crucial for achieving academic goals” has (Mean = 3.2774; SD = 1.05588). The mean rating of 3.2774 reflects a high level of agreement that prep times help students prioritize tasks and develop time management skills. The standard deviation (1.05588) indicates a moderate amount of variation in responses, with some differences in how strongly respondents agree with this statement.

Item 16 “Prep times offer an opportunity for students to reflect on their progress and evaluate their understanding of the material” has (Mean = 2.7263; SD = 1.26472). This item received the lowest mean rating (2.7263) among all the items, suggesting that while prep times are considered beneficial, they may not be as strongly perceived as an opportunity for reflection and evaluation of progress. The higher standard deviation (1.26472) indicates greater variation in responses, implying that opinions on the effectiveness of prep times for reflection are more diverse.

Item 17 “Having dedicated prep times can reduce stress associated with last-minute cramming or feeling unprepared” has (Mean = 3.2153; SD = 1.08891). The rating of 3.2153

indicates that principals and teachers generally agree that dedicated prep times help reduce stress related to last-minute cramming and being unprepared. The standard deviation (1.08891) shows moderate variability in responses, suggesting that some respondents may have differing views on this point.

Item 18 “Prep times provide a structured opportunity for students to set academic goals and work towards achieving them” has (Mean = 3.3905; SD = 0.93913). This item received the highest mean rating (3.3905), reflecting strong agreement that prep times provide a structured opportunity for goal-setting and academic progress. The standard deviation (.93913) is relatively low, indicating that respondents generally agree on the importance of prep times for setting and working toward academic goals.

The grand mean of 3.2195 suggests that on average, principals and teachers strongly agree that prep times supervised by school authorities significantly contribute to goal attainment. The grand standard deviation (1.0529) indicates moderate variability in the responses, meaning that while there is general consensus on the importance of prep times, some differences exist in how respondents view specific aspects of their role.

On the whole, the results suggest that principals and teachers believe preparatory times are highly beneficial for students’ academic success and goal attainment. These benefits include providing opportunities for review, prioritization, time management, and stress reduction. However, there is less agreement on whether prep times specifically help students reflect on their progress or evaluate their understanding (Item 16), as indicated by the lower mean and higher standard deviation for that item. Despite this, prep times are generally viewed as crucial for supporting students in managing their academic tasks and achieving their goals.

## Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing break times is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-test analysis of mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing break times is managed for effective goal

Categories	N	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Principals	80	3.2847	73.689	775	.000	Significant
Teachers	720	2.9766				

The results in Table 4 show the t-test analysis comparing the mean ratings of principals and teachers on how break times are managed for effective goal attainment. The mean rating for principals (3.2847) is higher than the mean rating for teachers (2.9766). This indicates that principals, on average, perceive break times to be more effectively managed for goal attainment compared to teachers. The t-value of 73.689 is large, which suggests a substantial difference between the two groups. The large t-value relative to the degrees of freedom indicates that this difference is highly unlikely to be due to random chance. The p-value of .000 is much smaller than the significance level of .05, indicating that the difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers is statistically significant. This means that the observed difference in ratings is likely to be a real difference, not due to random variation.

The analysis reveals that there is a significant difference between how principals and

teachers rate the management of break times for effective goal attainment. Principals rate the management more favorably than teachers do. Given the statistical significance ( $p\text{-value} = .000$ ), we can conclude that this difference is unlikely to be due to chance. Therefore, hypothesis one is rejected.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-test analysis of mean ratings of mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment

Categories	N	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Principals	80	3.0047	65.233	775	.000	Significant
Teachers	720	2.9231				

The results in Table 5 show the t-test analysis comparing the mean ratings of principals and teachers on how games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment. The mean rating for principals (3.0047) is higher than the mean rating for teachers (2.9231). This indicates that principals, on average, perceive games and recreational engagement time to be more effectively managed for goal attainment than teachers do. The t-value of 65.233 is very high, which suggests a substantial difference between the ratings of the two groups. This large t-value relative to the degrees of freedom indicates that the difference is unlikely to be due to random chance. The p-value of .000 is much smaller than the commonly used significance threshold of .05. This means the difference between principals' and teachers' ratings is statistically significant, implying that the difference in how the two groups rate the management of games and recreational engagement time is not due to random variation.

The analysis reveals that there is a significant difference between the ratings of principals and teachers on how games and recreational engagement time is managed for effective goal attainment. Principals rate the management more positively than teachers do. Given the statistical significance ( $p\text{-value} = .000$ ), we can confidently conclude that this difference is not due to chance and reflects a real divergence in how the two groups view the management of games and recreational activities for goal attainment. Therefore, hypothesis two was rejected.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing preparatory times supervised by school authority is managed for effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: t-test analysis of mean ratings of mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent managing preparatory times supervised by school authority is managed for effective goal attainment

Categories	N	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Principals	80	3.2381	64.002	775	.000	Significant
Teachers	720	3.0231				

The results in Table 6 show the t-test analysis comparing the mean ratings of principals and

teachers on how preparatory times supervised by school authorities are managed for effective goal attainment. The mean rating for principals (3.2381) is higher than the mean rating for teachers (3.0231). This suggests that principals, on average, believe preparatory times are more effectively managed for goal attainment compared to how teachers perceive it. The t-value of 64.002 is large, indicating a significant difference between the two groups' ratings. The large t-value relative to the degrees of freedom suggests that this difference is unlikely to be due to chance. The p-value of .000 is much smaller than the commonly used significance threshold of .05. This means the difference between the ratings of principals and teachers is statistically significant, meaning that the difference in ratings is likely to be a true difference, not due to random variation.

The analysis shows that there is a significant difference between the ratings of principals and teachers on how preparatory times are managed for effective goal attainment. Principals tend to rate the management of preparatory times more favorably than teachers. From the statistical significance (p-value = .000), we can confidently conclude that this difference is not due to random variation, and it reflects a real divergence in the perceptions of the two groups regarding the management of preparatory times for goal attainment. Consequently, hypothesis three is rejected.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **How Break Times are Managed for Effective Goal Attainment**

The results in this study suggest that principals and teachers believe that break times significantly contribute to effective goal attainment in private senior secondary schools in Rivers State. This findings are in line with that of Pellegrini and Bohn (2005), Adams (2017) and Johnson & Ward, (2018), who noted that break times serve multiple functions in a school setting, ranging from providing students with opportunities to relax and rejuvenate to enhancing their social and emotional development. Research has shown that regular breaks improve students' attention spans, memory retention, and overall learning outcomes. In addition they found that the cognitive benefits of break times allow students to engage in physical activities, which are essential for maintaining good health and reducing stress levels. Without well-structured break periods, students may experience academic fatigue, leading to reduced concentration and lower academic performance.

They further states that a well-managed break schedule involves allocating adequate time for students to refresh while maintaining an appropriate balance with instructional periods. Their studies have indicated that schools with structured break management policies experience better student engagement and reduced classroom disruptions. Thus, principals can also implement innovative approaches such as staggered break times to prevent overcrowding in school playgrounds and cafeterias, thereby promoting safety and organization.

### **How Games and Recreational Engagement Times are Managed for Effective Goal Attainment**

The results from this study suggest that principals and teachers view games and recreational engagement time as crucial for effective goal attainment. Activities like physical fitness, stress reduction, and teamwork are seen as essential benefits. These findings are in line with the studies



of Pellegrini and Smith (1998), Bailey (2006), Mahoney et al. (2005) and Howie et al. (2016). They noted that recreational engagement is essential for students' academic and personal development. Their research showed that participation in games and structured physical activities improves students' concentration, memory, and problem-solving skills. Games also contribute to students' physical health by promoting fitness and reducing the risks of obesity and related illnesses. Additionally, they observed that structured recreational activities provide opportunities for students to develop teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal skills, which are essential for success beyond the classroom.

They further added that engagement in recreational activities has been linked to stress reduction and emotional well-being. Studies indicate that students who participate in structured recreational activities exhibit lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of motivation toward academic tasks. Thus, effective management of games and recreational time ensures that students experience a balanced education that integrates both academic excellence and personal growth.

They stated that principals play essential role in structuring and overseeing recreational programs within schools. Their responsibilities include setting policies that ensure games and recreation must be well-integrated into the school timetable, and noted that a well-designed schedule that includes regular physical activities fosters an environment conducive to learning and student well-being. Furthermore, principals are responsible for resource allocation to support recreational activities. Ensuring the availability of playgrounds, sports equipment, and trained personnel is crucial for an effective recreational program. Therefore, in schools where these resources are limited, principals must explore partnerships with local sports organizations or seek sponsorships to improve recreational infrastructure.

### **How Preparatory Times Supervised by School Authority is Managed for Effective Goal Attainment**

The results suggest that principals and teachers believe preparatory times are highly beneficial for students' academic success and goal attainment. The benefits include providing opportunities for review, prioritization, time management, and stress reduction. These findings are in line with the studies of Ololube (2017), Zimmerman (2002), Pintrich, (2004) and (Hattie, 2009). They found that preparatory time in schools is an essential period that allows students to engage in self-directed learning, revision, and academic reinforcement. When effectively managed by school authorities, particularly principals and teachers, preparatory periods can significantly contribute to students' academic success, personal development, and overall goal attainment., proper supervision will ensure that students utilize this time productively, promote discipline, focus, and structured learning environment.

Preparatory time according to them, serves as a structured opportunity for students to consolidate knowledge, complete assignments, and engage in independent study. their research indicated that students who regularly engage in well-supervised preparatory sessions demonstrate improved academic performance, critical thinking skills, and self-discipline. In addition, preparatory periods allow students to develop time management skills, preparing them for higher education and professional life.

They further noted that beyond academic benefits, structured preparatory time fosters a culture of responsibility and accountability among students. It instills a sense of commitment to learning, minimizing distractions that could hinder their academic progress, and that a well-



organized study periods reduce stress and anxiety by providing students with designated time to review coursework and seek clarification from teachers.

## CONCLUSION

Effective management of break, preparatory, games, and recreational engagement times in private senior secondary schools are fundamental to goals attainment. These times are not just intervals between academic sessions but essential components that contribute to students' overall development, well-being, and academic success. Properly structured breaks enhance concentration, reduce stress, and foster social interaction among students, leading to a more conducive learning environment.

Preparatory sessions, when well-managed, instill discipline, encourage self-study habits, and reinforce classroom learning. They provide students with the opportunity to review and internalize concepts, ensuring better academic performance. Similarly, games and recreational activities contribute to physical fitness, mental alertness, and teamwork, all of which are necessary for holistic education. These activities also help in character development, leadership skills, and emotional stability, making students well-rounded individuals.

## Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that:

- Principals and teachers must implement structured and balanced schedules that optimize non-classroom periods.
- Schools should ensure that students engage in meaningful activities that enhance both academic and personal growth.
- Schools should ensure that a well-planned approach to managing the times fosters discipline, efficiency.

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