

Analysis of Students Completion Rates Based on School Location in Secondary Schools, Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on Analysis of student's completion rate based on school location in secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. One research question and hypothesis were formulated and tested. The design of the study was ex-post facto. The population consist of 3 cohort of students enrolled in 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic sessions. Census method was adopted in this study. The sample size for this study consists of the entire population used for the study that is, students enrolled in SS 1 in 2010/2011(5502), 2011/2012 (6216) and 2012/2013 (5885) academic session in all the secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone. Data for this study were collected through secondary sources. The instrument that was used for collection of data was a check-list, a self-designed Data Entry Table (DET) with column for completion rate based on location (urban and rural). The result of the research question indicated that the trend of completion for students in urban schools for 2010-2015 in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State ranged from 57%-89% while that of students in rural schools ranged from 62% -86%. The result of the hypothesis also revealed that completion rates of senior secondary school students for the three cohorts and period between 2010 and 2015 did not significantly differ in terms of school location the difference in enrolment for the two setting notwithstanding, it was recommended that boys and girls should be encouraged to attend school without any inhibiting factor culturally or otherwise. Urban and rural schools should be given equal attention by government in terms of human and material resource supply for effective teaching and learning to promote and sustain students' enrolment.

Keywords: Completion Rates, School Location, Dropout Rates and Attrition Rate

Introduction

Secondary education provides the basis for advanced learning and training opportunities and prepares some students for direct entry into the labour market and some to higher level of education which is crucial in a modern society. This is because education is one of the most effective instruments a nation has at its disposal for promoting sustainable

social and economic development (UNESCO, 2013). It is based on these that the National Policy on Education (FGN 2015) stated that education is an important life process that strives to develop an individual into a better being. It is also an essential need especially the kind of education which helps the child to develop knowledge, skills, social, moral values etc.

The issue of non-completion of schooling is a global problem confronting the education industry round the world. As the demand for education increase over the years, low completion rate from secondary schools persisted and has linger on. Odigwe, and Okoi, (2020) stated that although the number of students in secondary school rise every year, a good number of them have been unable to complete secondary education due to distance, facilities in schools, time management, child labor, unsupportive environment, lack of counselling and guidance poor performance and poverty. This study has come at a time when there is high rate of insecurity in the country as a result of criminal activities. Survey by both the print and electronic media tends to indicate that over 85% of the criminal activities perpetuated in Nigeria are done by youths who never completed their school. This development has become a serious concern to all well-meaning Nigerians. These tend to suggest that our educational system is in trouble and thus needs a very serious attention in refocusing and structuring it for the attainment of national goal (Okpa, Okoi, Igbinweka and Udida, 2017).

According to EFA Global monitoring report (2015), the global secondary gross enrolment ratio increased from 72% in 2015 to 82% in 2016. The largest increase was in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of students more than doubled albeit from a low base, reaching 49% in 215. Unfortunately, however, Nigeria was in the category of countries not included in the analysis reported in the 2013/14 EFA Global monitoring report because of data. However, judging by the country's performance at the primary level, it is unlikely that it would achieve a lower secondary education net enrolment target of at least 95% by 2016, Kananu, (2013).

Student who completes an educational level (secondary education) fulfill graduation requirement as a percentage of graduation rate. The rate if calculated in relation to the original cohort is termed as cohort graduation rate which can either be gross or net in nature (UNICEF, 2015). Globally, reasons why students don't complete from school can be categorized into four clusters. These include school related, job related, family related and community related. Study by Agodini and Delce (2004) identified twenty four factors under family cluster, three factors under community cluster and twelve factors under school

clusters. The factors identified under family cluster include low family support for education, low parental education, residential mobility, low social conformity, low acceptance of adult authority, high level of social isolation, disruptive behaviour conducted, being held back in school, poor academic achievement, academic problems in early grades, perception of unfair or harsh disciplines, feeling unsafe in school, having to work or support family, substance use and pregnancy, Idumaage (2015) and Odigwe & Okoi, (2020). In community clusters, the following factors were considered; living in low income neighbourhood, having peers with low educational aspirations and having friends or siblings who are dropouts. Under school related cluster are socio-economic status of school population, high proportion of student enrolled in special education, location in central city, large school district, school safety and disciplinary policies etc.

It must be stressed at this point that variables in each of the clusters are not all conclusive. The reasons why students don't complete the schooling process may vary from country to country, society to society and individual to individual. More specifically in the study area is poor educational background of parents, inability of parents to pay their children school fees, failure in examination, very poor state of facilities in schools, unemployment of graduates, broken homes, parents occupation, teenage pregnancy, ambition for self-business and employment (Okoi, Ogbeche and Caroline, 2023)

Public secondary schools in Cross River State are currently in a phase of profound reform. Among the reform objectives is the desire to ameliorate the efficiency of the system through improvement of internal efficiency, that is, increasing the rates of promotion and completer's rates of students, a reduction in repeaters rates, and a reduction in the gap that exists between urban and rural areas, Cross River State ministry of education report (2016). The appraisal of completion rates in this study is based on the observation that despite the effort made by the government of Cross River State and other stakeholders to retain learners in schools the problem of low completion rate is far from being solved. A recent report of the education sector review showed that completion rate at first and second levels of education (primary and secondary) are of much concern. The Ministry of Education has noted that in the year 2007, the enrolment was 54,000 and those who completed secondary SS3 for the year 2013 were 49000 and 5000 did not complete.

As contained in the National Policy on Education (FGN 2015), the Federal Government at present expects 100 percent completion in any given academic cycle. When completion rates in schools are far below the enrolment rates of students there is wastage and educational wastage which existed in secondary schools could constitute menace to the

educational system and the society. An efficient educational system is one which turns out graduate without wasting any students year, cumulative repetition of students and premature dropout will reduce output. This study focused on two variables. Completion rate by gender and by location. Federal Government of Nigeria's evaluation of the Girls education programme in 2006, revealed gender variations in favour of the girls in both enrolment and completion pattern in the 6 GEP states of northern Nigeria. Completion rates for boys had increased from 17.3% in 2005/06 to 40% in 2006/07 compared with that of 2004/05 session.

Measuring progress of boy's enrolment in secondary schools only tells parts of the story of boys access to education. Getting boys into secondary schools does not ensure that they complete their schooling. In developing countries 87 percent of boys enroll in secondary school, but only 39 percent finish lower secondary. In Sub-Sahara Africa, the drop-off is stated, with 75 percent of boys starting schools but only 22 percent finishing, Burman (2016). According to Dillon (2009) it is no surprise that more students drop out of high school in big cities than rural small town. However, nationwide study shows the magnitude of the gap: the average high school of completion rate in the nation's 50 largest city was 53 percent compared with 71 percent in the suburbs. But that urban suburban gap, which in part is due to hundreds of failing city schools that some researchers call dropout factories, was far wider in some areas.

In Cleveland, for instance, where the gap was only 38 percent of high school, freshmen graduated within four years, compared with 80 percent in the Cleveland suburbs, the report said in Baltimore, which has the nation's second –largest gap, 41 percent of students graduated from city schools, compared with 81 percent in the suburbs, New York also had a large gap, with 54 percent of freshmen completing with four year from schools in the city compared with 83 percent from suburban high schools.

Moreso, Jonathan and Jens (2014) were of the view that the average high school graduation rate in America's biggest urban school districts, which serve large numbers of children from very disadvantaged backgrounds, is only about 50%. In most cities, the figure is even lower for African-American males unfortunately, few strategies have been shown to improve the schooling outcome of disadvantaged children, particularly once they reach adolescence. This has led many people to conclude that the harmful effects of poverty are already so entrenched by adolescence that improving academic learning for low-income teens is not feasible. Many experts have called for focusing instead on vocational education for these youth or just doubling down on early childhood. Few approaches have addressed one of the central challenges facing so many urban schools: the wide variation in student s

academic levels by the time they reach middle and high school. They concluded that what urban school systems need is a “safety net” to catch students who start falling behind and get them back to up to grade level so they can reengage with regular classroom instruction. This safety net must include academic instruction that is both individualized and intensive.

Jeanne (2016) state that completion rates for the Big 5 high need urban-suburban and rural districts have risen over the past three years. While the performance gap between high need and low need district did close slightly between 2011 and 2010 cohorts, only 68.4 percent of students from high need urban-suburban districts graduated on time in 2015, compared to more than 94 percent of students from low need districts. Overall, fewer students are graduating with local diplomas and more student are earning regents diplomas. She also added that the five year graduation rate for the 2010 cohort and the six year gradation rate for the 2009 cohort are 82 percent and 83 percent respectively. While the four year graduation rate for black and Hispanic students in 65 percent, the five and six year graduation rates are higher. For black students, the five year graduation rates for Hispanic students are 71 percent (2010 cohort) and 73 percent (2009 cohort) respectively. For ELLs the five and six year graduation rates are significantly higher than the four year rate of 34 percent (cohort 2011). The five year graduation rate ELLs is 44 percent (2010 cohort) and 50 percent (2009 cohort) respectively.

In another related study Dillon (2009) carried out a study on high school graduation rates across English learner student subgroups in Arizona. The study examined observed and predicted four-year high school graduation rates among native English speakers (students who have never been designated as English learners) and four English subgroups in Arizona: long term English learner students; new English learner students. These student subgroups were determined by the amount of time a student spent as a designated English learner student and when a former English learn student was reclassified as fluent English proficient prior to high school. The observed rate was calculated for each student subgroups as the percentage of students in each student subgroup who graduated within four years of entering grade 9. The predicted four-year high school graduation rate was calculated for each student subgroup using logistic regression, and adjusted for student demographic characteristic and prior achievement.

Results showed that the largest difference in observed graduation rates, between never English learner students and long-term English learner students. When comparing students with similar demographic characteristics only, the differences in predicted graduation rates across the students subgroups were about the same as those in observed graduation rates;

however when comparing students with both similar demographic characteristics and similar prior academic achievements the gaps in graduation rates across the subgroups narrowed to a maximum of 5.5 percentage points. These results suggest that prior academic achievement, rather than demographic characteristics, explained most of the differences in graduation rates across the students subgroups and may have been a key factor driving graduation outcomes to improve high graduation rates for all the students, policy makers and educations might consider differentiating programs and practices for the needs of these English learners subgroups and developing programs that focus on promoting students' academic achievement prior to high school.

McCaw (1988) suggested that rural non-completion rate were more likely to report getting a job or not getting along with the teacher as causes for dropping out and gave lower ratings to school effectiveness and discipline. Using the 2004 America community survey, Strange (2011) said that the rural completion rate (11%) is higher than the suburban rate (9%) but lower than in cities (13%). Strange (2011) also noted that the average freshman graduation rate in rural areas is calculated at 75% which is higher than in cities (65%) but lower than in suburbs or towns (79% and 76%, respectively). The question of whether rural schools are inferior to urban and suburban schools (in terms of students graduation and achievement) has produced conflicting results, sometimes even among studies that used the same dataset. This study is intended that the findings of this study will provide the necessary information that will enhance the quick implementation strategies that will reduce the incidence of drop out and non-completion of educational cycle by student in schools in Ikom education zone. It is against this background that this study aimed at determining an appraisal of completion rate of senior secondary school students in Education Zone of Cross River State from 2010-2015.

Statement of Problem

There is seemingly low output of educational systems in spite of the high amount of money vested on education. Nigerians and stakeholders expect secondary school system to be efficient in a way that a given quantity of output is obtained with minimum input. But observation of secondary schools operation within the area of study in particular showed that there are elements of inefficiency in the system. The system wastage experienced revealed that the objectives of secondary education has not been fully met because student's desire for achievement and transition in tertiary institutions has become very low recently. Student dropping out of the school system because-of death, inability to cope financially, inability to cope academically, transfer of parents from one area and thus not been able to complete the

programed of study, student repeating class because of failure, thus completing the course with additional number of years.

Ideally there should be a progressive flow of students from one grade to another,- The wastage factors earlier specified are elements of inefficiency which are important educational problems worth investigating. It denotes that inefficiency of an educational system constitutes a sort of waste to the system. Therefore, the problem of this study is what are the completion rates of senior secondary students in Ikom Education Zone in Cross River State from 2010-2015?

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine the completion Rate of Senior Secondary School Students in Educational Zone of Cross River State 2010-2015. Specifically, the study aimed at determining:

1. Completion rate by schools location from 2010 -2015

Research Question

The following research question were stated to direct the study.

1. What is the completion rate of students in urban and rural schools from 2010- 2015?

Statement of Hypothesis

The following Hypothesis were stated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the completion rate of students in urban and rural secondary school students from 2010-2015.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was ex-post facto. The population of the study consists of all public senior secondary school students in Educational zone. The population consist of 3 cohort of students enrolled in 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic sessions who are expected to complete schools in 2012/2013, 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 academic session. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in this study. The sample size for this study consists of the entire population used for the study i.e students enrolled in SS 1 in 2010/2011(5502), 2011/2012 (6216) and 2012/2013 (5885) academic session in all the secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone. Data for this study were collected through secondary sources. The instrument that was used for collection of data is a check-list, a self designed Data Entry Table (DET) with column for completion rate based on location (urban and rural).

Research Question One

What is the completion rate of students in urban and rural schools from 2010-2015?

To provide answer to this question, senior secondary school students' enrolment from the Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State for the period according to the three cohorts selected were compared and completion rates in percentages were computed. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Completion rates of senior secondary school students in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State by location of school

LGA	Years/Cohorts	Enrolment		Completion		Completion Rate (%)	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Abi	2010-2013	183	558	104	348	57	62
	2011-2014	117	533	85	333	73	63
	2012-2015	212	516	130	349	61	68
Boki	2010-2013	305	960	235	778	77	81
	2011-2014	279	925	211	695	75	75
	2012-2015	274	1067	190	827	69	78
Etung	2010-2013	107	228	77	170	72	75
	2011-2014	156	229	118	179	75	78
	2012-2015	150	217	125	161	83	74
Obubra	2010-2013	768	466	674	359	88	77
	2011-2014	773	488	679	366	87	75
	2012-2015	960	652	820	439	85	83
Obubra	2010-2013	366	491	288	403	79	82
	2011-2014	352	583	301	421	86	72
	2012-2015	405	702	304	569	75	81
Yakurr	2010-2013	613	731	546	604	89	83
	2011-2014	597	642	420	556	70	87
	2012-2015	561	752	447	649	80	86

Data in Table 1 presents the completion rates of senior secondary school students in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State by location of school. The Table indicated that completion rates for senior secondary school students in urban schools ranged from 57% - 89% (decrease rate between 11%- 43%)while that of senior secondary school students in rural schools ranged from 62% -86% (decrease rate between 14%- 38%). The Table showed that for 2010-2013 cohorts, the completion rate of students in urban schools according to the LGAs was Abi, 57%; Boki, 77%; Etung, 72%; , 88%; Obubra, 79% and Yakurr, 89%. The

completion rate of students in rural schools for the same cohort was Abi, 62%; Boki, 81%; Etung, 75; 77%; Obubra, 82% and Yakurr, 83%.

For 2011-2014 cohorts, the Table showed that the completion rate of student in urban schools was Abi, 73%; Boki, 75%; Etung, 75%; 87%; Obubra, 86% and Yakurr, 70%. The completion rate of students in rural schools on the other hand for the period stood at Abi, 63%; Boki, 75%; Etung, 78; 75%; Obubra, 72% and Yakurr, 87%. The data further revealed the completion rate of students in urban schools in the education zone for 2012-2015 cohorts as Abi, 61%; Boki, 69%; Etung, 83%; , 85%; Obubra, 75% and Yakurr, 80%. The completion rate for students in rural schools for the period was Abi, 68%; Boki, 78%; Etung, 74; 83%; Obubra, 81% and Yakurr, 86%.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the completion rates of senior secondary school students in terms of location of schools.

To test the hypothesis, age of school was categorized into old and new schools and the completion rates of students for the three cohorts from the six (6) local governments that make up the Ikom Education Zone were used. The data was analyzed using independent t-test statistic at .05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent t-test analysis to compare the completion rates of senior secondary school students in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State in terms of school location N=36

Variable/Groups	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-cal	p-value	Remarks	
Rural schools	18	77	7.10		0.18	.002	NS
Urban schools	18	76.5	9.24				

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 34$, $Crit-t = 1.697$

Data in Table 8 presents a p-value .002 which was found to be less than .05 level of significance. In addition, the calculated t-value of 0.18 was also found to be less than the critical t-value of 1.697 at .05 alpha level with 34 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was retained. This means that the completion rates of senior secondary school students in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State for the three cohorts and period

between 2010 and 2015 did not significantly differ in terms of school location the difference in enrolment for the two setting notwithstanding.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the research question indicated that the trend of completion for students in urban schools for 2010-2015 in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State ranged from 57%-89% while that of students in rural schools ranged from 62% -86%. This finding agrees with Fan and Chen (1999) who stated that rural schools do as well as non-metro schools. Jeffrey and Genti (2012) who reported that decrease in completion rates is attributed to family characteristics such as family size, parentage of children; peer context variables such as consumption of drugs and gangs, and geographic context variables such as location of the household.

The result also indicated that completion rate did not differ significantly between students in urban and rural secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State for the period 2010-2015. The finding is in disagreement with the study of Okoi, Ogbeche and Caroline (2023), who reported gaps in completion rates between rural and urban students. The authors attributed such differences to socially desirable outcome such as aptitude, intelligence and aspiration. With particular reference to the study area, a significant difference may not have been recorded because the location of both urban and rural schools are not too far from each other hence, the causes of attrition among these schools are similar evident in the trend of completion in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.

It is the utmost joy of parents/guardians and governments that students enrolled into the school system study hard to obtain certification for the betterment of their society. Regrettably achievement of this goal is often farfetched as a result of gaps in students' enrolment in secondary schools. Government interventional strategies at maintaining school enrolment through friendly school policies have also not helped in this perspective. The analysis of students' enrolment to determine completion rates of senior secondary school students in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State in the perspective school location, school was handled in this study.

Conclusion

It is hoped that if factors responsible for dropout in students' enrolment are addressed by parents and government, their enrolment will be encouraged and sustained thus, guaranteeing students' completion from secondary schooling in Cross River State in general and Ikom Education Zone in particular.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Boys and girls should be encouraged to attend school without any inhibiting factor culturally or otherwise.
2. Rural and rural schools should be given equal attention by government in terms of human and material resource supply for effective teaching and learning to promote and sustain students' enrolment.

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