PRIMARY EDUCATION IN LAGOS STATE: IDENTIFYING THE GAPS IN SERVICE DELIVERY

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KEYWORDS
Service delivery, Primary Education, Collaboration, Local Government

ABSTRACT
Education is a valuable social asset that generates a plethora of externalities that permeate all aspects of society. Consequently, governments must ensure the efficient and effective provision of education as a public service. To achieve this, appropriate structures and management processes must be put in place to meet the educational needs of citizens. This study examines the delivery of primary education in Lagos before and after 1999, utilizing a historical approach to trace the evolution of structures and processes established for primary education delivery. Additionally, quantitative secondary data is employed to evaluate primary education outcomes in the state. While the state has made significant progress, the insufficient collaboration with local government councils and inequitable distribution of primary education facilities have impeded intended outcomes, as evidenced by overcrowded classrooms and a high number of out-of-school children. Delegating some responsibilities to local government councils would promote better collaboration between the state and local governments, and reallocating resources to areas with inadequate educational facilities would enhance educational outcomes.

Introduction

Education is a social good that creates so many externalities which manifests in all spheres of the society. Thus, education is a public service that government must ensure that it is delivered efficiently and effectively. To achieve this, the government must put in place the right structure and management processes geared towards meeting the educational needs of its citizens.

Primary education, according to the National Policy on Education (2013) is the level of education where children aged 6 to 11 plus are taught how to read and write. This is the foundation upon which other levels in the education system build. Once this level in the educational system is faulty or not adequately managed, it creates dysfunctional citizens. Therefore, policymakers and practitioners must ensure the proper functioning of the primary education system.

Lagos state, as the focus of this article, is considered the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria. It has a population of over 21 million, the majority of who are young people. The State government is constantly under pressure to deliver social services to an ever-increasing population; whose expectations centre on equal access to these services. The challenge before the State government is how to plan and

implement programmes that will meet these expectations. For instance, Psacharopoulos (2014) observed that primary education in Nigeria is characterised by low enrolment, repetition of classes and high drop-out rates of pupils in public primary schools. These figures clearly show the inability of the country to meet targets set for education in the Millennium Development Goals. Harma (2013) commenting on the growth of private primary schools in Lagos, noted that parents perceive government schools as failing to meet the educational needs of their children. In terms of funding, Onyekwena et al (2016) observed that from 2012-2014, the federal government contribution to the funding of primary education in Lagos State amounted to 91% of the total expenditure. The Lagos state government contributed 9% of the total expenditure and this was to finance the operations of the Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board. Likewise, the bulk of the funding goes into payment of teachers' salaries while little is left for capital projects. These observations necessitate an investigation of primary education delivery in Lagos state to identify gaps inherent in the process.

The following sections describe in detail the history and development of primary education in Lagos state. This is to understand the context within which primary education is being delivered in the state. This will be done through a historical account of the state of primary education before the return to civilian rule in 1999. The analysis to be drawn from this historical account is how primary education has evolved in the state. This will be followed by a description of primary education from 1999 till date. The essence is to evaluate the performance of the State government in improving the level of primary education in the state. The paper examined issues such as overcrowding of pupils in classrooms, dilapidated structures, inadequate funding and recruitment of qualified teachers. This is to ascertain if these issues have been resolved or are still recurring problems.

Primary Education in Lagos State: Pre-1999 Period

Historically, the education system in Lagos state evolved from Christian missionary activities dating back to the latter part of the 19th century. Before the creation of the state in 1967, there were two different educational systems in place. One was operating under the old federal territory and the other under the colony division of the ancient western region (Adedokun, 2013). These two systems differ in terms of duration and syllabi. While that operated under the old Western Region had a duration of six years, the one run under the federal territory had eight years duration. Consequently, the first primary task of the state government was to bring the two systems into one uniform system that will cater for the primary education of school-age children. The state adopted a uniform school system in 1969 (Adeoti, 2014).

The creation of the state in 1967 began the process of urbanization as other ethnic groups from across the country migrated into the city in search of education and employment opportunities. This incidence of urbanization brought with it new problems for the primary education sector. Adeoti (2014) observed that there was a high rate of drop-out from schools. Part of the reason for this is the unduly high school fees charged by schools in Lagos state. As a result, many parents had to withdraw their children from school. Apart from the high school fees, the academic performance of these pupils was also low. A Lagos state Ministry of Education report (1972, cited by Adeoti, 2014) showed that out of 1,165 children that enrolled in schools in January of 1971, 558 had dropped out by December of the same year. Therefore, the fundamental problem confronting the Lagos state government was how to make accessibility to primary education convenient for the poor and reduce the drop-out rate. Within this context, the federal government introduced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme in 1976.

The UPE scheme was introduced in September 1976 to address the issues of accessibility to primary education as a way of resolving geographical imbalance and making it free of charge to primary school pupils. (Ityavyar, 1986). The UPE scheme was welcomed with great enthusiasm by parents as before this period, an estimated 15,000 school-age children could not gain admission. Consequently, there was an upsurge in the number of children seeking entry into primary schools (See Table 1). However, the UPE brought new challenges for the state government to handle. First was the high turnout of children for the scheme. The state was ill-prepared for the vast enrolment rate that heralded the UPE scheme. As a result, existing facilities could not accommodate the additional number. The state government had to adopt a temporary measure of operating a shift system. Selected schools within the state were

to run on shifts between 7:15 am and 1:15 pm, with each shift being for three and a half hours, thus totalling three in a day. The implication was that pupils could only stay in school for three and a half hours a day. In the same vein, the number of schools in the state rose from 544 in 1975 to 598 in 1976 and 624 in 1977. Similarly, the number of pupils increased from 355,645 in 1975 to 388,429 in 1976 and 411,416 in 1977.

The quality of primary education under the UPE scheme was questioned as many observers noted that there was a lack of teaching aids and materials, a shortage of teachers and a lack of adequate accommodation. The ratio of teachers/students stood at 1:37, and the state government had to maintain the shift system during this period to address the persistent shortage of classrooms. However, this practice eroded the standard of primary education. Adeoti (2014) observed that this system fell short of an acceptable standard and those pupils had to trek many miles to schools in the city as the number of schools in rural Lagos was inadequate. In 1979, a democratically elected government came into power and established a committee to review the education system in the state. According to Shodipe (1997), the committee found out that the schools were not adequately administered, coupled with overcrowded classrooms where pupils had to go through an unripe system of morning, afternoon and evening sessions. The effect was that pupils did not inculcate the requisite knowledge as the mode of instruction was based on recitation than learning. Clearly, the observation of this committee shows that the goal of developing permanent literacy in these children was not achieved. To address the shortage of classrooms, which was considered the main problem confronting primary education in the state, the democratically elected government embarked on building 4,984 classrooms for primary schools by 1980.

Table 1 below shows that the total number of schools increased gradually except for 1973 when there was a decline of schools by one and in 1978 a drop of 19 schools. However, the ratio of one teacher to pupils shows a large number ranging from 30 pupils to one teacher to 37 pupils to one teacher. This could affect learning as pupils may find it challenging to comprehend in an overcrowded class. The design of these classrooms was devoid of elegance or aesthetics. On the contrary, the state government was thinking in terms of functionality which led many critics to call these classrooms "chicken Houses". The policy thrust of the civilian administration did not last long as the government was overthrown through a *Coup d'etate* in December 1984.

The era of military rule from 1984 to 1999 (except for a brief period of civil administration in 1992) witnessed a lot of policy inconsistencies in primary education. The country began to experience an economic downturn that affected government revenue and finance primary education. A World Bank report (1994) observed that the gross enrollment ratio (GER) in primary schools as high as 93% in the 1982/83 session, declined to around 78% in 1990. Similarly, the period witnessed a lot of strikes by primary school teachers as salaries were not paid for several months. This was because the Federal government had withdrawn from financing primary education in 1981 and gave State and Local governments the responsibility of financing the sector. However, most State and Local governments found it difficult to fulfil their financial obligations to the primary education sector.

Table 1: Lagos State: Growth of Primary School Education, 1967-1981

Year	No. of Schools	Annual increase	No. of pupils	% Increase	Pupils	Pupils
					Per School	Per Teacher
1967	442	-----	195,655	---	442.7	30.3
1968	446	4	207,126	5.9	464.4	32.0
1969	450	4	231,560	11.8	514.6	32.4
1970	453	3	237,560	2.6	524.4	32.7

1971	456	3	240,941	1.4	528.4	33.1
1972	472	16	270,533	12.3	573.1	34.1
1973	471	-1	309,455	14.4	657.0	33.6
1974	524	53	318,270	2.9	607.3	30.0
1975	544	20	355,645	11.7	653.8	31.3
1976	598	54	388.429	9.2	649.5	33.9
1977	624	28	411,416	5.6	659.3	36.9
1978	605	-19	434,543	5.6	719.4	37.5
1979	725	120	477,371	9.8	658.4	32.1
1980	812	87	527,649	10.5	649.8	33.9
1981	911	99	583,816	10.7	640.9	36.9

Source: The World Bank, 1989

This compelled the Federal government to intervene by creating the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) to handle primary education in the country regarding management, policy formulation and disbursement of funds.

In Lagos, the State government had to contend with rising the enrolment rate without an increase in the number of classrooms. The option for other States in the country after the Federal government stopped financing primary education was to introduce tuition and levies. However, the Lagos state government did not introduce any levy. Therefore, the state government had to provide funds for the primary education sector. The World Bank (1989) noted that the decline in the financing of primary schools led to a downward spiral in enrolment. This was not because pupils were not offered admission, but because the quality of schools had dropped. This was attributed to the poor state of physical infrastructures- toilets, roofs, fences,

Table 2: Primary School Age Population in Lagos

Year	**Number**
1975	357,750
1982	470,774
1985	529,557

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 3: Primary School Enrolments in Lagos State

Year	**Figure**
1975/76	374,645
1982/83	570,921
1985/86	662,380

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 4: Number of Local government areas, schools and classes in Lagos state

Lagos	No. of LGAs	No. of Schools	No. of Classes
	8	951	17,293

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 5: Number of Teachers in Lagos State 1987

Gender	Male	Female	Total

Figure	5,223	11,421	16,844

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 6: Number of Students in Lagos State 1987

Gender	Male	Female	Total
FIGURE	384,616	387,615	772,299

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 7: Students Per Class, Teacher, LGA and School in1987

Class Ratio	Teacher Ratio	LGA Ratio	School Ratio
45	46	96,537	812

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 8: Number of Schools 1975/76 – 1985/86 in Lagos state

YEAR	1975/76	1982/83	1985/86
FIGURE	244	909	888

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 9: Pupils per school 1975/76 – 1985/86 in Lagos state

Year	1975/76	1982/83	1985/86
Figure	1535	628	746

Source: World Bank, 1989.

Table 10: Class size, Teachers per class and Pupils per Teacher 1982/83 in Lagos state

Enrollments	No. of Class	Average Class Size	Teachers Per Class	Pupils Per Teacher
570,921	14,273	40.0	1.06	38.0

Source: World Bank, 1989.

playgrounds, classrooms- and teachers' salaries which were falling into arrears such that teachers were being retrenched. This indicates the deteriorating situation in the primary education sector in the country.

Lagos State was not immune to this precarious situation as it had to manage overcrowding in the classrooms (Table 2). Available data shows that the number of pupils in the classrooms was above the recommended number of 36 pupils per class. Similarly, the state government could not sustain the financing of primary education. Under the military administration of Col. Olagunsoye Oyinlola, primary school teachers threatened to go on strike after one week's notice if the state government failed to clear several months of unpaid salaries (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, 2006). The state government defaulted in paying primary school teachers' wages due to the inability of the federal government to fulfil its financial obligation of remitting funds for paying teachers' salaries to states under the re-introduced UPE programme.

Another noticeable trend during the period under review was that there was no clear delineation of the management of primary education between the federal, state and local governments.

Primary Education in Lagos State: 1999-2019

The successive challenge administration in Lagos state had in primary education was how to provide enough classrooms for the growing number of pupils and ensure quality in terms of teachers and learning outcomes. The observation in the previous section was that the significant challenge facing the Lagos state government was the funding and administration of primary schools. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched in 1999 by the federal government under the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo. According to Asodike and Ikpitibo (2014), the UBE scheme intends to ensure that learners inculcate functional literacy, ability to communicate and vocational skills. It was structured into a nine-year programme covering six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education.

Similarly, the programme was made compulsory and free for children aged six to twelve. Although the UBE programme was launched in 1999, the Act stipulating the

objectives, responsibilities and functions of each tier of government was enacted in 2004. The Act provided for the establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA). The Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (LSUBEB) was established on the 30th day of December 2005 and inaugurated on the 30th day of January 2006. This shows that though the programme was launched in 1999, it took another six years after the launch for the programme to commence at the state level since the structures were not yet in place.

Before the commencement of the UBE programme, the state government, on return to civil rule in 1999, made efforts in improving the standard of primary education in the state. The major challenge confronting the state government was the overcrowding in the classrooms, teachers' quality, and pupils' performance. In addressing these issues, the state government embarked on the construction of new schools and the renovation of existing ones. Similarly, the state government introduced free education to ensure accessibility to children whose parents could not afford school fees. Under the free primary education policy, all fees and levies were abolished by the state government (Ige, 2015). Consequently, funding of all aspects of the public primary education sector in the state was financed by the state government. An EC-EMCA/NISER (2005) report on the effectiveness of public expenditure in Nigeria observed that Lagos state was one of the states that exhibited a reasonable level of autonomy in financing the public primary education sector. In other words, it was not dependent on the allocation from the federation account. The report also highlighted the effectiveness of the state government's expenditure on primary education vis-à-vis the output generated. In ascertaining the effectiveness of public expenditure, it examined the percentage deviation between the amount budgeted and the actual releases to the sector. A percentage deviation that returns a zero score shows no difference between what was budgeted and the amount released. However, a percentage deviation that returns a negative score shows that the government spent less than what it budgeted, while a positive score shows that the government spent more than what it budgeted. Table 11 below shows the percentage deviation of Lagos state government releases against the budget for the years 1998 to 2003 on primary education.

Table 11: Actual Government Releases to Primary schools compared with facility Reported

Year	Personnel cost % Deviation	Overhead Cost %Deviation	Capital Cost % Deviation
1998	-61.9	-3.5	-99.7
1999	-94.3	-73.8	-99.9
2000	-95.3	-2.5	-99.9
2001	-95.3	-84.9	-99.9
2002	-95.7	-7.5	-99.9
2003	-94.9	-42.1	-99.9
AVG	-52.3	-21.7	-99.9

Source: Compiled from EC-EMCA/NISER, 2005

Table 12: Total enrolment, the number enrolled for final exams and number of students who passed final exams in Lagos state, 1998 – 2003

YEAR	TOTAL ENROLMENT	NO. ENROLLED IN FINAL EXAMS	NO. OF STUDENTS WHO PASSED
1998	133,339	28,958	25,092
1999	131,929	27,406	23.946
2000	127,906	26,955	22,916
2001	120,046	26,967	22,408
2002	116,341	25,003	20,586
2003	108,312	22,347	18,098
MEAN	122,979	26,356	22,174

Source: Compiled from EC-EMCA/NISER, 2005

The table above shows that the state recorded a negative percentage deviation score between the amounts budgeted and the amount released. An indication that the state government was spending less than what it budgeted. Thus, it could be deduced that the budget preparation did not follow a rational process of aligning expenditure with anticipated output. On the contrary, the budget preparation may be more of a routine exercise of itemizing areas government intends to spend funds on without necessarily justifying those expenditures with target goals. The table shows the output recorded in the primary education

sector from 1998 to 2003 in terms of total enrolment, number of students enrolled for the final exams and number of students who passed. The output showed a gradual decline in output for all the variables from 1998 to 2003. This also correlates with the negative percentage recorded in government expenditure within the same period. This is an indication that as the state government was spending less on primary education, the anticipated results were also declining.

In a study done by Tooley, Dixon and Olaniyan (2005), they observed the 'mushrooming' of private unregistered primary schools in Lagos. They attributed this to the poor quality of public schools for the poor. Factors such as teachers not being available during class periods and low commitment levels were more prevalent in government primary schools than in private registered and unregistered primary schools. The authors also found out that the rate of teacher absenteeism at primary 4 was higher than unregistered and registered private schools. The percentage was 8.2 per cent at government schools and 1.1 per cent and 1 per cent at unregistered and registered private schools, respectively. It was also observed that the number of hours teachers gave to teaching was more minor in these government schools than in private schools. This is because a high percentage of the teachers in government schools were engaged in other activities like selling domestic items when they were supposed to be teaching. The observation from these findings is that despite the teachers in public schools earning higher wages than those in private registered and unregistered schools within these poor communities, there was less teaching activity there. This could result from ineffective monitoring and enforcement of standards by the Lagos State Primary Education Board in these schools. Although the Lagos state government made a significant financial contribution to the primary education sector, the outcome recorded did not indicate an effective utilization of these funds (EC-EMCA/NISER, 2005).

In a similar study done by Harma (2013) on the growing number of private schools in Lagos state, her findings revealed not much distinctive change in the state of primary education compared with the year 2006. The number of private registered and unregistered private schools had increased, and more children of school age were enrolled in these schools than public schools. She traced this development to the perception parents residing in Lagos state had of public schools. According to the author, most low-income families choose private schools over public schools because of overcrowding in the classrooms and poor quality of instruction. On the other hand, the private schools offered them closeness to their homes, and smaller classes in size and quality (Harma, 2013). This probably explains why Sixty-Two (62) per cent of school-age children were in private registered and unregistered primary schools compared with only Thirty-Nine (39) per cent in government schools in the 2010-2011 academic sessions. Table 13 below shows the gradual decline in enrollment in government primary schools in the Makoko area, Lagos state.

Table 13: Enrolments at Public Primary Schools serving Makoko, 2008-2011.

Year	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Primary Sch. 1	1,084	877	774
Primary Sch. 2	620	594	438
Primary Sch. 3	697	1,860	1,607
Total	2,401	1,860	1,607

Sources: Lagos Annual Education Sector Performance Report, 2011

Table 14: Number of Public Primary Schools, Pupils and Teachers by Sex: 2004/2005 - 2010/2011 Academic Sessions

Year	No. Of Sch	M	F	Mf	Per Sch	Per Teacher
2004/2005	983	3,095	13,885	16,980	432	25
2005/2006	1,010	2,854	12,942	15,796	443	28
2006/2007	1,030	2,841	13,389	16,230	442	28

2007/2008	1,045	2,808	13,543	16,351	446	29
2008/2009	1,081	2,633	12,570	15,203	443	32
2009/2010	986	2,372	11,397	13,769	393	28
2010/2011	1,001	2,247	11,068	13,315	417	31
2011/2012	1,001	2,213	11,025	13,238	524	40

Source: Lagos State Ministry of Education, 2013

Table 14 above shows a fluctuation in the number of schools within the state, number of pupils (male and female), pupils per school and pupils per teacher. The 2011/2012 session data indicates that the number of pupils per teacher had gone beyond the twenty-seven-standard pupil per teacher. Thus, showing that overcrowding in classrooms is a significant issue for the Lagos state government.

In the Lagos Annual Education Sector Performance Report (2010), the state government evaluated its input against the output generated. The primary input was the amount of funds expended on the education sector in terms of recurrent and capital expenditure. The recurrent expenditure covers salaries, allowances and overheads to cover day-to-day activities. Similarly, the report stated that a sum of N484,671,485 was expended on infrastructure while N103,858,175 was spent on instruction materials/furniture and N103,858,175 was paid on teacher training.

With this expenditure on personal and overheads, the expected output should be seen in the learning achievements outcome, retention rate and transition rates of primary school pupils to junior secondary schools. However, the report measured its output in available classrooms, water and sanitation and pupils per teacher. These factors are intended to create the right environment for the pupils to learn and not indicate what the pupils learnt or the skills acquired. Tables 16 and 17 showed the state of the classrooms across the various LGEA and pupil-teacher ratios. In Table 16, only a few LGEA had pupil-classroom ratios below 30 (Ikeja and Lagos-Island). The two LGEAs also had a more significant percentage of adequate seating for pupils. Most LGEAs had above 50% classrooms with Blackboard. This shows that sufficient attention needs to be paid to overcrowding and more adequate seating.

A critical examination of these figures shows a level of disparity in the distribution among the LGEAs. For instance, Ikeja recorded 28 for the pupil-classroom ratio and 25 per cent of the classroom in need of significant repairs, 64 per cent of the teachers received training. On the other hand, Ajeromi-Ifelodun recorded a 69 pupil-classroom ratio and 46 per cent of classrooms in need of significant repairs, about 25 per cent of the teachers received training. Consequently, these teachers in Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGEA are faced with the challenge of overcrowding in the classrooms, and a small percentage of them received training. The likely implication is that the ability to inculcate into these children life-long skills of numeracy and verbal aptitude is reduced. This is because learning in an overcrowded classroom may be complex and the majority of the teachers have not received additional training to cope with this large number.

Table 15: Recurrent Expenditure by LGEA

LGEA	**Personal**	**Overheads**	**Total**
Agege	935,811,433	14,376,000	950,187,433
Ajeromi Ifelodun	878,290,930	20,040,000	898,330,930
Alimosho	988,952,623	18,600,000	1,007,552,623
Amuwo Odofin	437,511,259	15,144,000	452,655,259
Apapa	411,341,280	10,843,200	422,184,480

Badagry	604,018,467	15,705,600	619,724,067
Epe	575,459,647	21,916,800	597,376,447
Eti-Osa	351,502,182	15,156,000	366,658,182
Ibeju-Lekki	231,416,138	12,868,800	244,284,938
Ifako-Ijaiye	525,910,892	10,603,200	536,514,092
Ikeja	606,722,388	12,883,200	619,605,588
Ikorodu	831,577,208	19,723,200	851,300,408
Kosofe	966,882,578	15,163,200	982,045,778
Lagos Island	488,690,397	13,257,600	501,947,997
Lagos Mainland	687,940,253	17,097,600	705,037,853
Mushin	1,057,472,068	21,312,000	1,078,784,068
Ojo	604,724,343	15,103,200	619,827,543
Oshodi-Isolo	794,233,938	20,433,600	814,667,538
Shomolu	810,367,729	14,078,400	824,446,129
Surulere	812,933,625	21,772,800	834,706,425
Total	13,601,759,379	326,078,400	13,927,837,779

Source: Lagos Annual Education Sector Performance Report, 2010

Table 16: State of Classrooms

LGEA	**Pupil-Classroom ratio**	**Share of the classroom in need of Major repairs**	**Mud/earth floor (%)**	**Classrooms with Adequate Seating (%)**	**Classrooms with Good Blackboard (%)**
Agege	36	24	3	31	75
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	69	46	4	37	56
Alimosho	64	40	17	21	54
Amuwo-Odofin	37	50	15	19	54
Apapa	44	38	0	36	63
Badagry	45	47	9	26	48
Epe	31	36	1	24	50
Eti-Osa	41	21	1	58	57
Ibeju_Lekki	53	47	1	42	62

Ifako-Ijaiye	42	44	6	35	56
Ikeja	28	25	7	59	74
Ikorodu	55	46	0	24	79
Kosofe	44	39	7	51	71
Lagos-Island	29	18	4	71	70
Lagos-Mainland	32	25	2	42	54
Mushin	32	39	0	51	70
Ojo	59	47	5	21	45
Oshodi-Isolo	36	32	5	59	55
Shomolu	30	46	2	31	39
Surulere	38	37	3	50	60
Total (AVG)	42	37	4	39	60

Source: Lagos Annual Education Sector Performance Report, 2010

Table 17: Teachers in Lagos State Schools (Primary)

LGEA	**Pupil-Teacher ratio**	**Pupil-Qualified Teacher ratio**	**Teachers who received Training (%)**
Agege	22	23	51
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	36	37	25
Alimosho	36	37	35
Amuwo-Odofin	33	34	55
Apapa	28	29	40
Badagry	36	38	30
Epe	30	36	32
Eti-Osa	39	42	61
Ibeju_Lekki	46	57	52
Ifako-Ijaiye	22	22	42
Ikeja	18	19	64
Ikorodu	38	39	29
Kosofe	25	25	13
Lagos-Island	21	23	64
Lagos-Mainland	29	30	43
Mushin	21	22	29
Ojo	34	35	37
Oshodi-Isolo	25	25	39
Shomolu	20	21	25
Surulere	22	23	26
Total (AVG)	28	29	37

Source: Lagos State Annual Education Sector Performance Report, 2010

Similarly, this set of figures cast doubt on whether this data or political preferences informed government decisions. This observation is similar to the findings of Oguntade (2005). He observed that rural/agricultural LGAs in Lagos state were at a disadvantage in distributing primary schools and infrastructures. There were more primary schools in urban LGAs than in rural/agriculture LGAs. Thus, prompting some parents to send their children to other communities to obtain education. It appears little has been done over the years to redress this lopsided distribution of primary schools and infrastructure.

The 2011 National Assessment of Learning Achievements in Basic Education stated the mean performance of pupils in the English language from primary 4 to 6 across the country. It noted that Lagos state recorded a mean of 58.04, 69.83 and 68.72 for primary 4, 5 and 6 respectively. These scores were above the national mean score for these classes. Thus, indicating that the state government was making progress in some indicators of learning among pupils. Similarly, the performance of pupils in Mathematics was above the national mean score of 51.03, 50.36 and 52.94 for primary 4, 5 and 6, respectively. The state recorded 54.41 for primary 4, 54.87 for primary 5 and 56.47 for primary 6. In the same vein, the 2014 Quality Assurance report on the performance of the State Basic Education Board observed that the Lagos State Basic Education Board made significant progress in the monitoring of primary schools. However, the report noted that the board needed to do more in the recruitment of qualified teachers and renovation of dilapidated buildings in certain schools. While efforts were made to recruit more teachers for the public primary schools in the state, this appears to be insufficient.

Data from the Lagos state 2018-2019 Annual School Census Report (2019) showed an increase in terms of Pupil-Teacher ratio from 1:36 in year 2017/2018 to 1:57 in year 2018/2019. This ratio is above the recommended ratio of 1:45 for the State as stated in the report and 1:35 as prescribed by the National Policy on Education (Ogunode and Ahaotu, 2020). This data shows that the State government is yet to resolve the issue of overcrowding in its classrooms.

Discussion of Findings

The above historical analysis of primary education in Lagos state reveals some noticeable gaps in delivery. For instance, funding, a major component in delivery is inadequate for capital projects and allocation is skewed against rural and semi-urban areas. This inadequate funding limits the expansion of primary schools which invariably leads to overcrowding of classrooms in some schools. Figures of the number of primary schools in Lagos state was 1001 (see Table 14) and rose to 1015 public primary schools in 2019 (Lagos State Annual School Census Report, 2019). This showed an increase of 14 new public primary schools. This number is inadequate as evidenced by the high Pupil-Teacher ratio in the state. A resultant effect of this shortage of schools and overcrowding of classrooms is the growing demand for private provision of primary education in the state. Furthermore, enrolment in public primary schools dropped from 482,485 in the 2017/2018 session to 467,903 in 2018/2019 session. Thus, lending credence to the claim that parents would prefer to enrol their wards in private unregistered schools than public schools (Harma, 2013). Generally speaking, compared to other levels of the educational system, the government's funding for basic education has been minimal. From 1996 and 2002, 11.5% of the federal government's total education expenditure was allocated to primary education. Distribution to tertiary and secondary levels (federal unity schools) in the same time frame was 68% and 14.5%, respectively (FME, 2005). Since that it falls under its constitutional purview and that it only intervenes in basic education, the federal government must support tertiary education heavily. Given that more money is allocated to the secondary level than the primary level, state governments have not fared any better in this regard. In addition, secondary schools received 67% of the state government's education spending, compared to primary schools, which received 11% (ibid). Similar to the federal government, state governments that run higher institutions spend an average of 34% of their education budget on them, further decreasing funding for primary and secondary education (Hinchcliffe, 2002).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Primary education in Lagos state has evolved from minimal government involvement at inception to full-scale administration of primary

schools. While a lot has been achieved in teachers and infrastructural development, specific areas still need improvement. Efforts still need to be made in reducing the number of children aged six years and above not in primary school in the state. This may require the state government to build more schools and rehabilitate existing ones. Similarly, the state government needs to address the distribution of infrastructure and adequate funding of these schools. Funding is a critical input in the administration of primary education in the state. Therefore, funds must be utilized in a prudent way to achieve specific results. The gaps observed in the delivery of primary education in the state such as overcrowding of pupils in classrooms, dilapidated structures, and recruitment of qualified teachers are due to funding. The bulk of funding for primary education comes from the intervention fund of the federal government and the statutory allocation of Local governments. A large percentage of these funds go into the recurrent expenditure of teachers' salaries and training. A smaller percentage is left for capital expenditure. This limits the expansion of needed infrastructure in public primary schools such as classrooms and additional public primary schools. While the emphasis had been on recruiting and training teachers, not much had been done in expanding public primary schools. Although, private primary schools had stepped in to fill the gap, it has led to inequality as parents with low income could not afford the fees (Unterhalter et al, 2018). To bridge this funding gap, the State government must engage relevant stakeholders particularly the Local government councils on how to ensure better funding of public primary schools. Primary education falls within the jurisdiction of Local governments. However, they lack the financial capacity to expand primary schools in the state. Resolving the funding issue would require the active participation of the Local governments.

Increasing funding for primary education in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach that involves the government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

Here are some recommendations to be taken:

1. Increase government spending: The Nigerian government should prioritize education and increase its funding for primary education. This can be achieved by allocating a larger portion of the national budget to education.

2. Seek international support: The Nigerian government can also seek support from international organizations, such as the World Bank, the United Nations and other donor agencies, to increase funding for primary education.

3. Encourage private sector involvement: The private sector can be encouraged to invest in primary education by offering tax incentives and other benefits for companies that support education initiatives.

4. Enhance accountability and transparency: Measures should be put in place to ensure that funds allocated to primary education are properly utilized and accounted for. This can be achieved through effective monitoring and evaluation systems.

5. Improve the quality of education: Improving the quality of education in Nigeria will attract more funding from both local and international sources. This can be achieved by maintaining and improving investing in teacher training, improving teaching materials and facilities, and enhancing curriculum to meet international best practices.

In conclusion, increasing funding for primary education in Lagos state requires a comprehensive approach that involves the government at all levels, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. By working together in a collaborative framework, the state can improve its primary education system and ensure that every child has access to quality education.

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