

**ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENTIAL DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL SCHOOLS IN IKOM EDUCATION ZONE CROSS
RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study is aimed at determining the analysis of the differential distribution of educational resources between Urban and Rural Areas in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Two sub-variables were used for the study, research questions and a statement of the hypotheses. A survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprised all the eighty-one (81) public secondary schools in Ikom Education zone of Cross River State. The sampling method adopted for this study was census. All the public secondary schools were used for the study as a sample size. A checklist was used for data collection, the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant difference in the distribution of educational resources in terms of the distribution of basic amenities and the posting of teachers. If the government is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students to learn, they should provide Facilities, like electricity, pipe-born water, boreholes, libraries, and laboratories, which should be built in all schools so that students can learn effectively. Posting of teachers should also be provided to all schools to create a balance between urban and rural schools. The government and Ministry of Education should provide decent accommodation, grant study leave with payment of transfer grants, award hard-working rural teachers, provide allowances, and recommend rural teachers for best teacher awards. This will reduce the velocity or tendencies of teachers not willing to be posted to rural schools.

Introduction

It is no longer a dispute that education has a part to play in the development of society. It is strongly understood that most of the societal ills such as crime, delinquency, prostitution, and child abuse, to mention, but a few can be resolved through education. Education not only helps to curtail these vices but enables the citizens to acquire skills, knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for individual and societal development. According to Okoi and Odigwe (2018) educational sector of a nation is a strong criterion that determines the efficiency, productivity, relationship of investment, and investment returns, hence education is a potential force that stimulates the development and progress of any country. This involves reorienting changes in the attitudes and values of the nation to changes in socio-cultural and technological development.

It is against this background that the federal government of Nigeria is interested in educating its citizens. As stated in the second National Development Plan, it is a vowed intention of the government to use education as an instrument par excellence in affecting national development. Why the government is becoming more committed as Ogbeche and Okoi, (2021) have observed because the state is the major beneficiary of an individual's education. Education is necessary for political stability, economic growth, circulation of dominant values, prevention of crimes, promotion of an encouraging attitude towards modernization, and a peaceful social order.

Through education, the government also hopes to achieve the broad national development objectives of a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, and a land bright and full of opportunities for all citizens (FGN 2014). The policy went ahead to state that Nigeria's philosophy of education would, amongst other things, emphasize —equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. To reinforce the issue of equality, both the federal and state governments from the 1970s, completely took over voluntary agency schools from their proprietors. They hoped that with this development, every citizen of the country would be allowed to attend any school of his/her choice. As Olutola (2018) observed, —education began in Nigeria as a free enterprise by Christian missionaries, who were later joined by the government as well as individuals. As disparities grew in the quality of education following the rivalries among the various churches, the contention was brought to life by the people. They believed that the government should assume greater control of schools to effect easy control of the curriculum, teachers, equality, and centralized provision of instructional materials.

One serious issue facing Nigeria's educational system is equality. An equality question asks, are all Nigerians north or south, urban or rural, Moslem or Christian, rich or poor given similar treatment in the distribution of educational resources? Sule and Okoi (2019), looked at this issue from three different perspectives; will education be truly free for all Nigerians or the intellectual elite? Will regions of the nation enjoy equal opportunity? Will rural and remote areas be served? An issue relevant to this study is the regional distribution of resources, including rural remote areas. In the view of Odigwe and Okoi (2021), many cities and urban have a long history and extensive education programs while some remote areas are far from the nearest schools.

They also observe that when small villages lack sufficient population to warrant the funding of a school, the children to attend school in neighbouring town or have them in residential halls of a school that can cater to their needs. The two authors then conclude that when neither of these options is available, it, therefore, means that these children in such circumstances have simply forgotten the opportunity of schooling.

Moreover, Okoi, Okon, and Odock (2023) noted that if schools reinforce the differences among the privileged and disadvantaged groups in society, equality is unattainable within the present framework of school systems. No crystal ball is needed to show that students who attend schools characterized by high-level educational inputs come from higher social class backgrounds and have attitudes conducive to educational achievement. To the extent that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds rarely have the opportunity to attend schools with high-level inputs; a vicious cycle of in-opportunity is created. This study considered two sub-variables, thus, the posting of teachers and the distribution of facilities between urban and rural areas.

Patrick (2021) in his contributions has argued that asking for equal chances for every child is something quite different from seeking the same provisions for all. An unreflecting uniformity of treatment may not only ignore important individual differences but also contribute to the problem of those who may be ill-equipped to take advantage of what is offered. According to Coleman (2019), equality of educational opportunity implies the provision of free universal education, a common curriculum for all children, regardless of background, and a common school system that is open to all without any distinctions. Etor, Ekanem, and Sule (2020) observe that the standard of education in rural areas is much lower than in urban areas or towns because inadequate teachers take jobs in rural areas as a last resort. Even when they reluctantly accept such jobs, they spend less than 75 percent of the required teaching in the schools. The rest of the time for which they are paid is spent in the cities, where life is. It is no secret that for most teachers in rural areas, the school week starts on Tuesday and ends on Thursday to allow them to spend long weekends in town. This is another consequence of the government's neglect of equal distribution of social amenities within the rural community. The teaching aids and other essential materials are usually in short supply. Thus, the inequality between a rural Nigeria and his counterpart is the product of a long chain of rural neglect.

All these inadequacies, in the view of Olutumbosum (2019) are contributing factors in preventing the realization of the rural Nigerian's potential. He reiterated that one major problem of teacher supply in developing countries is geographic orientation. In his opinion, the geographic difficulty will continue to plague many countries even after they achieve a balance in the supply and demand for teachers.

Raymaekers and Bacquelaine (2017) for instance observed that it is primarily the rural population that suffers such deficiencies of low primary school attendance ratios found in rural areas. According to them, it is the child in a rural environment that has little chance of attending school. If he does attend, the odds are that the educational system will weed him out before he even reaches the end of primary school. If he learns to read and write, he will quickly relapse into illiteracy for the lack of practice. The two authors also noted that a greater part of the adult

population is illiterate; especially in the rural areas. This is due to the low ratio of school enrolment, the ratio of those dropping out at the primary school level, and limited access to post-primary education.

In most of Nigerian schools, there is a lack of adequate facilities and equipment, furniture, and sufficient, study conditions which affects students' performance in the study of particular subjects that require the use of these facilities and equipment. It is difficult for a learner in an institution to learn conveniently and comfortably, where there are lack of classroom furniture, inadequate machinery and equipment coupled with storage of textbooks. The problem such as the lack of standard typing pools with, desks, typewriters, computers, tables, chairs, and inadequate textbooks for teaching. Adeyemo (2015) stated that teaching aids open up new fields of interest to the students and make them have a variety of learning activities and weakness in students' educational experience.

Statement of the Problem

The decision by the various states government in Nigeria, to take over schools, was to create the opportunity for each child of the country to develop his/her talents through education. To this end, the State governments are committed to making resources available to schools for teaching and learning. This includes per pupils expenditure, availability of highly trained and well paid teachers, experienced personnel for effective administration, lowering of pupils- teachers ratio, an attractive school environment, and provision of congenial physical facilities. This means that schools, regardless of rural or urban location, will be sufficiently staffed, and other equipment will be equally distributed among them.

Observation has shown that there is so much disparity in provision of basic amenities between urban and rural schools. So many students sit on the ground to receive lessons, mostly in rural areas. Some schools don't even have teachers in some special subjects like mathematics, chemistry, and physics in rural schools. This has called for questions by most parents and stakeholders on the role of the ministry of education in the supply chain and distribution of resources. This study, however, is looking at whether schools in urban areas are more favoured in the allocation of resources than the rural ones or vice versa, which require a more sufficient amount of research. The question of the extent of resource allocation disparities among urban and rural schools has been what has spurred this researcher to further investigate and provide a critical analysis for schools, particularly in Ikom education zone of Cross River State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out whether educational resources have been equally distributed between urban and rural schools in Ikom education zone of Cross River State. The specific objectives of this study include:

1. Whether disparity exists in the governments' commitment to building schools in urban and rural areas.
2. Whether disparity exists in posting teachers to both rural and urban schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used in this study;

1. To what extent is the disparity in government commitment to building schools in urban and rural areas?
2. Is there an equal distribution of teachers between urban and rural schools?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated in this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools.
2. There is no significant difference in the posting of teachers between rural and urban schools.

Methodology

This study adopt survey design. The population of the study comprised of eighty-one (81) public secondary schools in Ikom education zone of Cross River State. The sampling technique adopted for this study was census. The sample size constitute all the public secondary schools in Ikom education zone. A checklist title, analysis of differential distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools, was use for data collection. Though, school principals who were not part of the study were used to collect information as it is believed and assumed that they are the school heads and can provide information suitable for this study.

Result and Discussion

Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference in the distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools.

To test this hypothesis, independent t-test statistics were used to analyze this hypothesis. The result is presented in table 1 below

Table 1: Independent t-test on the difference in the distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools.

Variables	n	x	SD	t-cal
Urban distribution of educational resources	35	47.61	12.61	6.87
Rural distribution of educational resources	46	12.16	8.97	

$p < 0.05$, $df = 80$, critical $t = 1.972$

The result of the above table revealed that at 0.05 level of significance and at 80 degree of freedom, the critical t-value of 1.972 was less than the calculated t-value of 6.87. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result implies that urban distribution of educational resources significantly differ from rural distribution of resources. As such, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference in the posting of teachers between the urban and rural schools. To test this hypothesis, independent t-test statistics were used in analyzing the result of this hypothesis. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Independent t-test on the differences in the posting of teachers between rural and urban schools.

Variables	n	x	SD	t-cal
Posting of teachers in Urban schools	35	48.10	13.02	6.62
Posting of teachers in rural schools	46	37.03	8.97	

$p < 0.05$, $df = 198$, critical $t = 1.972$

The result of this hypothesis revealed that at 0.05 level of significance and at 80 degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of 6.62 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.972. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result of the finding implies that there is a significant difference in the posting of teachers between urban and rural schools.

Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one

The result of this hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference in the distribution of educational resources between the urban and rural schools. The null hypothesis was rejected. The result of this study is in line with the findings of Okoi and Odigwe (2018). They posited that many cities and urban areas have a long history and extensive education programmes, while some remote areas are far from the nearest schools. The findings of Odigwe and Okoi (2018) also posited that there is a significant difference in the provision of basic amenities between urban and rural areas. He further reiterated that in terms of provision of basic amenities, the government tends to equip schools in urban centres more than schools in rural areas. As a result of this, there is much migration of students from rural to urban centres.

The result of this study also revealed that there is a significant difference in the provision of basic amenities between urban and rural schools. The null hypothesis was rejected. The result of this hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference. The result of this hypothesis is in line with the findings of Patrick (2021) who stated that there is a significant difference in the provision of basic amenities between urban and rural schools. He further reiterated that schools in the urban centres are well-equipped with pipe borne water, electricity etc. than schools in the rural areas. Odigwe and Okoi (2016) in support of the above findings posited that the environment of schools in urban centres usually enjoy good basic amenities than schools in the rural areas.

Hypothesis two

The result of this null hypothesis was rejected. The result implies that school enrolment between schools in the urban centres differ significantly from schools in rural centres. The result of these findings is in line with the findings of Raymaekers and Bacquefene (1985) who observes that, it is primarily the rural population that suffers low primary school attendance ration found in rural areas. According to them, it is the child in the rural environment that has little chance of attending school.

In agreement with the above assertion made about the description between education opportunities for the rural and urban students, Olatumbosum (1975) laments that the urban areas over the years have been more forward than the rural ones. Olatumbosum says that —although the 1970-1974 national development plan allocated 13.5 percent of total expenditure on education, no attention was given to redress the imbalance in education between rural and urban cities, instead the government's attention was focused on providing financial assistance to states with low enrolment ratio in order to reduce the existing gaps between the statel.

Conclusion

In line with the results of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. There is a significant difference in the distribution of educational resources between urban and rural schools. There is a significant difference in the posting of teachers between rural and urban schools.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made.

- 1) If the government is committed to providing equal opportunities to all students to learn, they should provide Facilities, like electricity, pipe-born water, boreholes, libraries and laboratories, should be built in all schools so that students can learn effectively.
- 2) Posting of teachers should also be provided to all schools in order to create a balance between urban and rural schools. Government and Ministry of Education should provide a decent accommodation, grant study leave with payment of transfer grants, award hard-working rural teachers, provision of allowances and recommend rural teachers for best teacher awards. This will reduce the velocity or tendencies of teachers not willing to be posted to rural schools.

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