

Analysis of Gender Parity Index in Enrolment into Basic Education in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract. The key objective of the current National Educational Policy in Nigeria, which was adopted in 2004, is the attainment of universal basic education by 2015 regardless of gender of school-age children in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5- gender Equality in education. This declaration serves as a basis for the study, which analysed gender parity index in enrolment into basic education in Kwara State from 2018/19-2022/23 academic session. The researcher adopted ex-post facto for the study. The population of this study comprised all the 3,464 primary and secondary (junior) schools in the 16 Local Government Areas of Kwara State, that is, 2,639 primary schools and 825 junior secondary schools as at 2021/2022 Kwara State annual school census. Descriptive statistics of percentage, ratio and rate were used to analyze the data collected. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), and Gender Parity Index (GPI) were used to determine gender disparity in enrolment into basic education in Kwara state. The findings of the study revealed that: there was an increase in the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023. The result shown that as 100 male pupils enrolled to school, about 85 to 92 female pupils also enrolled to primary level of education and 93 to 97 also enrolled to junior level of education between 2018/19 to 2022/23 academic session. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others

that: Kwara State government should strive towards attaining the Education for All through its slogan of Every-Child Count in state and make it part of its responsibilities to introduce a body that will continue to enlighten parents on the need why they should send their children to school regardless of their sex.

Key words: Gender Equality, Basic Education, Student Enrolment, Gross Enrolment

PUBLIC INTEREST

This study will be of immense benefit to the government and the people of Kwara state. The result of the study will enable the government to implement a gender sensitive policy that will ensure gender is systematically mainstreamed into all components of the education policy, improving equality for girls to reduce the amount of violence and provide security for those who are vulnerable.

INTRODUCTION

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program was introduced in 1999 by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a reform program aimed at providing greater access to, and ensuring quality of basic education throughout Nigeria. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program is an educational program aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. Basic here refers to education that is vital or essential that must be given to a child. It is a form of education where children are prepared for other levels of education and where fundamental skills are acquired for their survival in the society. Without it, nothing may be achieved. It is the root of acquisition of any knowledge (Eddy & Akpan, 2009; Ogunode, Ahmed, Yahaya 2021).

Primary education in Nigeria is for children aged between 6 and 11 years, with six years of compulsory education for every child. Aremu (2014) observed that the revolution witnessed in the education sector in the early 1970s gave rise to enrolment of school-age children between 1970 and 1984; while the period from 1985 to 1990 witnessed unstable decline in enrolment. Thus, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) reduced sharply from 82% in 1985 to 68% in 1990; it rose to 86% in 1993 and slumped to 70% in 1996. According to 2010 Nigeria DHS Ed Data Survey, 61% of children aged six to eleven years attended primary schools.

There are regional disparities in primary school enrolment between the Southern and Northern zones with the north having lower access to primary education than the south. For instance, the enrolment rate in 2010 was as high as 95% in Southern zones and as low as 19.91% in the Northern zones. According to Aremu (2014), in some northern states, such as Jigawa, Kebbi, Katsina, Sokoto and Yobe, primary school enrolment is less than 25%. This is in contrast with what obtains in the southern states such as Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Cross River, Edo, Delta, Imo, Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun and Rivers, where the enrolment is more than 80%. Gender disparities exist and are also similar to the general patterns for enrolment in different regions. Female enrolment is lower than male enrolment in the North, while in the Southeast, female enrolment is generally higher than male

enrolment and is at par with male enrolment in the Southwest (World Bank, 2000).

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in its 2020 report on women and men, ten states were homes to more than half of Nigeria's out-of-school children, Topping the chart was Kano State (989,234), Akwa-Ibom (581,800), Katsina (536,122) and Kaduna states (524,670)

Kwara State Annual School Census reports (2012), about 354,000 children were enrolled in primary schools and 140,000 in secondary schools in Kwara State during 2004/2005. Fifty-five percent of all primary school students are classified as living in rural areas. Total enrolments of girls and boys at primary schools both increase by around 75% between 2001 and 2005, which has had a major impact on access and the quality of education in Kwara State. CWIQ survey data for 2006 indicates that 16% of female and 12% of male aged 15-19 have never attend school while the corresponding figures for the 20-24 age group are 27% and 11% respectively. 10% of female and 23% of male aged 15-19 did not complete primary education while the equivalent figures for the 20-24 age groups are 2.2% for female and 5.6% for male. Only about 11% female and 9% male completed their primary education and the corresponding figures for age bracket 20-24 were 11% for female and 8% for male.

Also, there are disparities between rural and urban environments in enrolment and performance patterns. There are higher attendance rates and more overcrowding of classes due to space shortages in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Statistics from international agencies on access to primary education appear worrisome. According to UNESCO's most recent Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2012) one in five Nigerian children is out of school, giving it the largest population of out-of-school children in the world at 10.5 million in 2010, a figure that has risen almost three million since 1999. Indeed, the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at the primary level (number of primary age children enrolled in school as a percentage of the total primary-age population) has fallen since 1999 from 61% to 58% (2010). Over the same period, the regional average increased from 58% to 76%. Of recent, some states in the South West have recorded large enrolments of pupils occasioned by their educational policies.

In Kwara State junior secondary category, about 21% and 20% did not complete the level for ages 15-19 and 4% female and 5% male also dropped out for ages 20-24. Only 10% female and 10% male completed junior secondary school for age bracket 15-19 and 3% and 6% completed the same level for ages 20-24. In 2014, there were 3142 basic school (primary and junior secondary schools) enrolling 412,544 of population estimated to be 633,465 and 505 senior secondary schools enrolling a total of 97,494 students of population estimated to be 223,234 (Kwara State Annual School Census, 2014).

Gender Parity Index

Gender Parity Index is the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at primary level of education to the number of male students at that level. To standardize the effects of the population structure of the appropriate age groups, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for each level of education is used.

Formula:

$$GPI_i^t = \frac{F_i^t}{M_i^t}$$

Where:

GPI_i^t = Gender Parity Index of a given indicator i in year t

F_i^t = Female value of a given indicator i in year t

M_i^t = Male value of some indicator i in year t

The current wave of globalization has greatly improved the lives of women worldwide, particularly the lives of women in the developing world. Nevertheless, women remain disadvantaged in many areas of life, including education, employment, health, and civil rights. According to the U.S. Agency for International Development and the World Bank, 57 percent of the 72 million primary school aged children who do not attend school are females. Additionally, girls are four percent less likely than boys to complete primary schools (Gender statistics, 2010).

While many gains have been made with regards to overall level of education worldwide and more children than ever are now attending primary school (King, 2013); Ogunode (2020a) and Ogunode & Ahmed (2021), there is still not world-wide gender parity in education. In every income bracket, there are more female children than male children who are not attending school. Generally, girls in the poorest 20 percent of household have the lowest chance of getting an education (Jensen, 2010). This inequality does not necessarily change in adulthood.

King (2013) and Ogunode & Salman (2022) is convinced that the total benefits of education to the society are multiplied when basic education is extended to girls. Females who participate in basic education do not only aspire to further their education; but also have smaller families, fewer of their children die in infancy, and their children are healthier and better educated than women who have never had access to, or who have limited exposure to, basic education.

The 2006 educational statistic data from the Federal Ministry of Education shows that only 14.1million out of 21 million school-age children are enrolled in primary and junior secondary school, and an increase in the rate of school-age drops out rate. Girls were at greater disadvantage in getting access to education at the primary and secondary school-age (Habibu, 2011; Ogunode, (2020) and Ogunode, Lawan & Yusuf 2021).

According to UNESCO (2014), girls' and boys' enrolment in primary schooling has increased markedly worldwide since the start of the millennium, from 84% in 1999 to 91% in 2011. The number of out-of-school children has almost halved. Enrolment increases have been most pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa (+19%) and South and West Asia (+16%). Many countries have achieved even greater increases. By 2011, 60% countries had achieved gender parity in primary education with a further 10% expected to reach parity by 2015 (UNESCO, 2014)

More girls are enrolled in primary school today than ever before. Yet the majority of children still out of school are girls. Of the 31 million girls out of school in 2011, 55% are expected never to enroll. In eleven Sub-Saharan African countries 50% or more young people aged 15-24 have fewer than four years' education. In Nigeria, double the number of women to men has less than four years' education - 30% compared to 14% .

Gender disparities in education are compounded by additional deep-rooted forms of inequality based on wealth, ethnicity, residence and disability. Wealth disparities are striking in many countries. Children from the poorest households are much less likely to ever enroll in school. Living in a rural area where long distances to school are compounded by poverty and traditional practices increases the risk. UNESCO suggests that in ‘Sub-Saharan Africa, if recent trends continue, the richest boys will achieve universal primary completion in 2021, but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086’ (UNESCO, 2014).

EMIS suggests a starker picture of lower female participation in primary school. These data show a difference of seven percentage points (boys 107 percent and girls 98 percent) in gross enrolment rates, and an especially substantial (almost twenty percentage points) lower net enrolment rate for females: only 66 percent for girls in primary school compared to 82.3 percent for boys. This combination of gross and net rates suggests that fewer girls go to primary school and when they do they start later than boys (ENDORIN, 2014).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the United Nations interest in promoting gender equality in education across the globe, the problem of gender discrimination in education still persists in sub-Saharan Africa based on wealth, ethnicity, residence and disability. To this end, a lot of efforts have been made by government to ensure that all Nigerian citizens at least have full access to basic education regardless of their gender. In view of the gap identified in the literatures, the researcher embarked on this study to analyze gender parity index in enrolment into basic education in Kwara state.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is aimed at examining the analysis of gender parity index of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023. The specific objectives include to:

1. find out the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023
2. determine the gender parity index of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara state from 2019-2023
2. What is the gender parity index of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted ex-post facto designs which attempts to determine the factors that are associated with certain occurrences, outcomes, conditions or types of behaviour by examining and tracing back of already existing conditions for information and available data, as the case in the present study which is aimed to analyze gender parity index of primary and junior secondary

education in Kwara State.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all the 3,464 primary and junior secondary schools in the 16 Local Government Areas of Kwara State, that is, 2,639 primary schools and 825 junior secondary schools as at 2021/2022 Kwara State annual school census

Instrument for data Collection

The instrument used for this study was researcher's designed Checklists titled "Students' Enrolment Checklist" (SEC) administered to resource personnel in Kwara State Ministry of Education to obtain students' enrolment figures of male and female from 2019-2023 in both primary and junior secondary schools in the State,

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher personally visited Kwara State Ministry of Education to obtain students' enrolment figures from 2017-2021 with the use of SEC

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentage, ratio and rate to determine the disparity between male and female enrolled in both primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023.

Table 1: What is the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023;

Session	Enrolment					
	Primary			Junior		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2018/19	166900	142711	319611	70388	67451	137839
2019/20	170572	156071	326643	72937	67935	140872
2020/21	174324	159884	333831	73522	70452	143974
2021/2022	178220	163456	341338	74365	72033	147298
2022/2023	181654	166054	347394	76017	73365	151382

Table 1 shows the analysis of the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2018/2019- 2022/2023 session. The enrolment of primary schools was 319611 in 2018/2019 session which increased to 326643 in 2019/2020, increased from 326643 in 2019/2020 to 333831 in 2020/2021, increased from 333831 in 2020/2021 to 341338 in 2021/2022 and increased from 341338 in 2021/2022 to 347394 in 2022/2023 academic session. Likewise, the enrolment of junior secondary school in 2018/2019 was 137839 which increased to 140872 in 2019/2020,

increased from 140872 in 2019/2020 to 143974 in 2020/2021, increased from 143974 in 2020/2021 to 147298 in 2021/2022 and increased from 147298 in 2021/2022 to 151382 in 2022/2023 academic session. From the analysis, it was discovered that there has been an increase in the enrolment of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019/2023.

Figure 1: Enrolment of Primary Schools in Kwara State

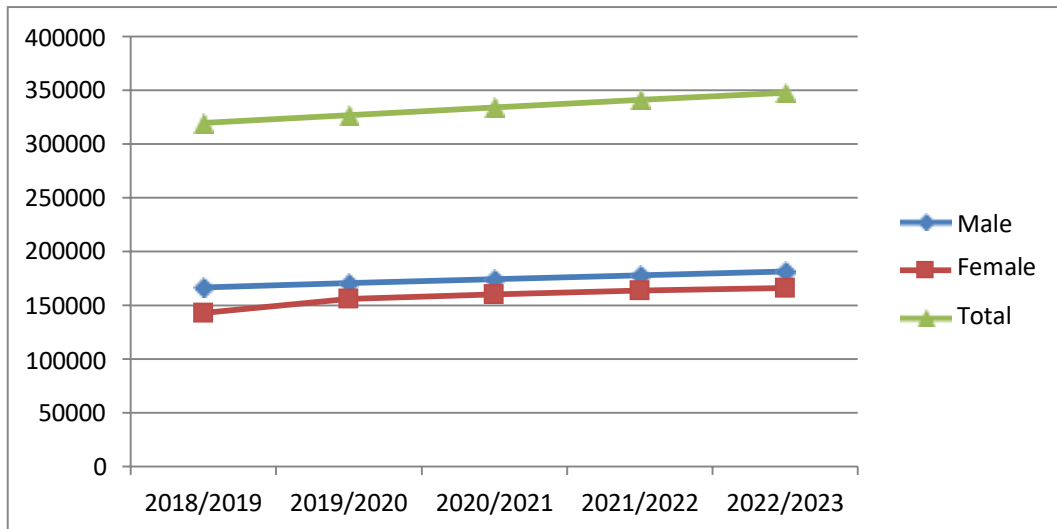


Figure 2: Enrolment of Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State

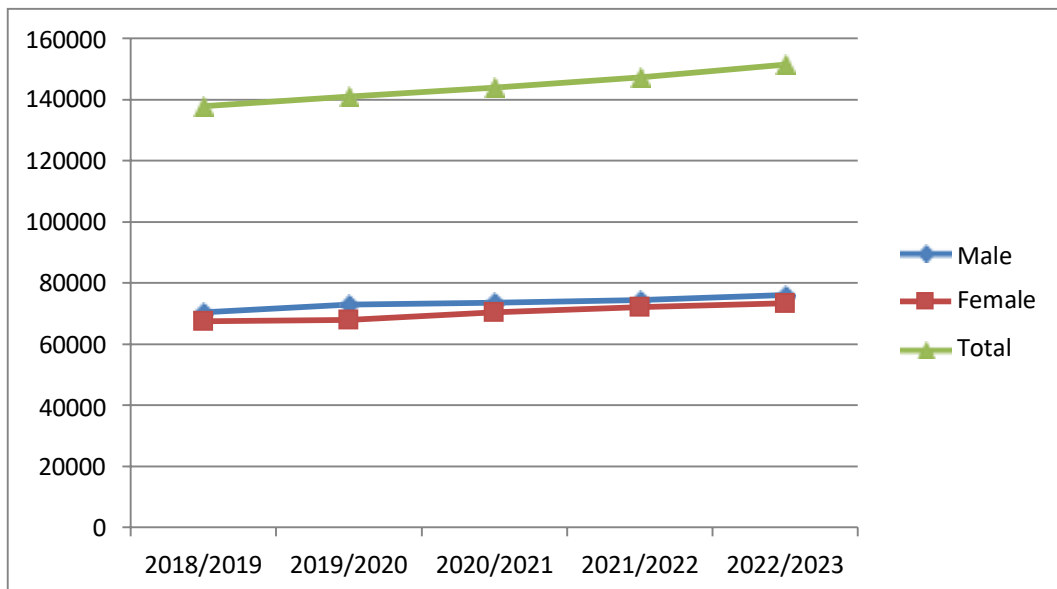


Table 2: What is the gender parity index of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2019-2023?

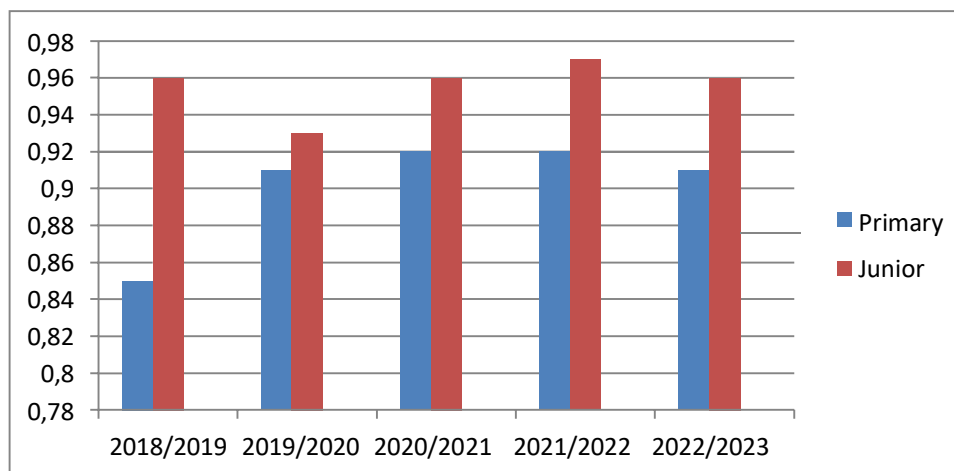
Session	Primary	Junior
	GPI	GPI
2018/2019	0.85	0.96
2019/2020	0.91	0.93
2020/2021	0.92	0.96
2021/2022	0.92	0.97
2022/2023	0.91	0.96

Key: **GPI**= Gender Parity Index

Table 2 reveals the GPIs of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State from 2018/2019-2022/2023 academic session. The GPIs of primary schools in 2018/2019 was 0.85, increase to 0.91 in 2019/2020, and again increase to 0.92 in 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and also in 2022/2023 was 0.91. From GPIs' measure, the enrolment of male is more than that of female in primary level throughout the years in consideration, though close. For example in 2018/2019, as 100 male students enrolled, 85 female students also enrolled to school, the implication of this is that there is a distribution of educational opportunities in Kwara State in favour of male sex in the primary school enrolment.

GPI of junior secondary school in 2018/2019 was 0.96, and decreased to 0.93 in 2019/2020, increase again to 0.96 in 2020/2021, and increased to 0.97 in 2021/2022 and decreased to 0.96 in 2022/2023. The result indicated that, there are more female children than male children who are not attending school. The female gender is still lacking behind in the junior secondary education and this has much implication in the social-economic status of the females in Kwara state.

Figure 3: Gender Parity Index of Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State



Discussions

Table1. From the analysis, it was discovered that there has been an increase in the population of primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State. While table 2 revealed that there was a close gap between the enrolment of male and female in primary and junior secondary school level in Kwara

State between 2018/2019 to 2022/23 session. The result revealed that as 100 male pupils enrolled to school, about 85 to 92 female pupils also enrolled to primary level of education and 93 to 97 female also enrolled to junior level of education between 2018/19 to 2022/23 session. This result is in consonant with the World Bank (2010) report that female enrolment is lower than male enrolment in the North (Kwara State inclusive-North Central), high in the Southeast and at par in the Southwest.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that the result obtained on gender parity indicated that Kwara State is making a lot of efforts to eliminate gender disparities in primary and junior secondary school in the state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strong and effective actions by all actors are needed in both the public and private sectors in Kwara state to remove the remaining persistent obstacles to gender equality in education and to measure and monitor the progress in achieving this goal together.
2. The state government and other stake holders should ensure that boys and girls have equal access to good quality education, equal right and opportunities to successfully complete schooling and in making educational choices.
3. Reviewing and where necessary adopting school and early childhood education curricular, teaching and school practices in the state to eliminate gender discrimination and stereotyping.
4. Campaigning and raising awareness among young men and women, parents, teachers and employers about gender stereotypical attitudes toward academic performance.

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