

Gender Distribution of Teachers Supply in Primary Schools in Bayelsa State: Implication for the Primary School Child Education

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Abstract

The paper investigated the gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Available statistics revealed that, there were more male teachers in the employment of the state government. The t-test result at 0.05 significance level also revealed that, there was a significant difference among the male and female groups in the distribution of teachers in primary schools in Bayelsa State in favour of male teachers. The implication for the primary school child education was that, the society was likely to produce children who may not have affection for one another since the motherly affection required at this developmental stage shall be lacked. It was recommended that, government should motivate the girl child to go to colleges of education and the universities through special scholarship schemes and legislation on the need to abolish early child marriages in order to mitigate the un-equal distribution of teachers in primary schools.

Keywords: Gender distribution, teachers supply, implications, education, primary school

1. Introduction

Primary Education is the education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 plus (NPE, 2004). The success or failure of the whole education system depends on it because it provides the foundation upon which the rest of the education system is built. Therefore, any education policy formulation that does not pay special attention to primary education means the destruction of the whole education system (Asaya, 1996). In this regard, education at the primary level occupies a strategic place in any nation's educational development. In the same way, the primary school teacher also occupies a central position in the Nigeria education system. It is through the primary school teacher that the objectives of the National Policy in Education could be translated into reality at these levels (Abenga, 1995); and it is also at this level that basic manpower needs of every nation is cultivated (Mkpa, 1999). Therefore, adequate supply of teachers at the primary education level should be a deliberate government policy.

Furthermore, the distribution of teachers in primary schools should not be tilted in favour of any particular gender group. Both male and female should have equal representation in the distribution of teachers in primary schools. This is because the male and female groups constitutes about equal percentage of the population of any nation. Any discrimination in gender groups could have a far reaching implication for the building of an egalitarian nation. Therefore, education should be the birth right and privilege of every citizen of any nation since it is an effective instrument of development; a strategic tool for liberating the masses of a people from ignorance, disease and poverty (Ereze, 1983). It is in realization of this fact that, this study tries to find out whether there is any significant difference in gender distribution of teachers in primary schools using Bayelsa State of Nigeria for the study.

The specific objectives of the study is to examine the gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State; and whether there will be any significance difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in the primary schools. Based on objectives of the study, the following research questions shall be answered:

1. What is the gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?
2. Will there be any significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

The following null hypotheses were postulated for the study based on the objectives of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in each of the local governments in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State

as a whole.

2. Methodology

The population of the study comprised all the male and female teachers in the 438 primary schools owned and funded by the government of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This population also constitutes the study sample. Data shall be analyzed using percentages to establish the degree of gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools; while the t-test for two independent group means shall be used to test whether there is any significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

3. Results

The result of gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State based on the research question is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State

Sn	Local government	No. of schools	Male teachers		Female teachers		Total	Remark
			No.	%	No.	%		
1	Brass	29	77	52	71	48	148	More males
2	Ekeremor	71	229	72	95	29	324	More males
3	Kolokuma/Opokuma	17	93	54	78	46	171	More males
4	Nembe	46	131	75	43	25	174	More males
5	Ogbia	54	375	58	264	41	639	More males
6	Sagbama	48	213	67	106	33	319	More males
7	Southern Ijaw	117	498	81	121	20	619	More males
8	Yenagoa	16	438	61	276	39	714	More males
Total		436	2055	66	1054	34	3,109	More males

Source: Bayelsa State Ministry of Education, Yenagoa, 2008

The data in Table 1 showed that, there were 2,055 male teachers representing 66 % employed by Bayelsa State government in the primary schools as against 1,054 female teachers representing 34% in the 436 government primary schools with a margin of 1001 teachers representing 32%.

In addition, there was a significant difference in the gender distribution of teachers in primary schools in Bayelsa State in the local governments in favour of the male gender group as indicated in Table 2. The t-test result revealed that, the calculated t- values were greater than the t-critical values in each of the local governments among the gender groups. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 % significance level for a two-tailed test.

Table 2: Test of significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in the local governments of Bayelsa State

Sn	Local government	No. of schools	Gender group	No. of teachers	Mean X	SD	t-Critical	t-calculated
1	Brass	29	Male	77	3.10	0.57	1.67	6.40 significant
			Female	71	2.55	0.47		
2	Ekeremor	71	Male	229	3.23	0.38	1.65	63.00 significant
			Female	95	1.34	0.16		
3	Kolokuma/Opokuma	17	Male	93	5.47	1.33	1.65	25.14 significant
			Female	78	4.59	1.11		
4	Nembe	46	Male	131	2.85	0.42	1.65	45.48 significant
			Female	43	0.94	0.14		
5	Ogbia	54	Male	375	6.94	0.94	1.65	32.54 significant
			Female	264	4.89	0.66		
6	Sagbama	48	Male	213	4.44	0.63	1.65	42.08 significant
			Female	106	2.21	0.32		

7	Southern Ijaw	117	Male	498	4.26	0.39	1.65	161.50 significant
			Female	121	1.03	0.10		
8	Yenagoa	54	Male	438	8.11	1.06	1.65	42.89 significant
			Female	276	5.11	0.69		

Further, there was also a significant difference in the gender distribution of teachers in primary schools in the whole of Bayelsa State skewed in favour of male teachers as revealed in Table 3.

Table 3: Test of significant difference in gender distribution of teachers supply in primary schools in Bayelsa State

Gender group	Average no. of primary schools in Bayelsa State	Average no. of teachers in Bayelsa State	Mean X	SD	t-Critical	t-Calculated
Male	95	257	4.69	2.62	1.65	13.80 significant
Female		132	2.4	0.32		

The t-test result in Table 3 revealed that, the calculated t-value of 13.80 was greater than the critical value of 1.65, and hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

4. Discussion

The results of the findings indicated that more male primary school teachers are in the employment of the Bayelsa State government. Many factors could contribute to the distribution of teachers supply in favour of the male teachers. The most important one is that female children are not sent to schools like their male counterparts due to some cultural practices where most Nigerian parents believe that sending the girl child to school may interfere with their marriage, which they consider to constitute the primary mission of the female child (Nwideduh, 1995). However, for gender imbalance in the distribution of teachers supply in primary schools to be reduced, which have always been in favour of the male gender, Olarenwaju (2005) observed that, education has been recognized to be the only viable instrument for correcting any imbalance in any society.

In addition, male child education was given preference because of the patrilineal system, which confers right of inheritance on boys (Nwideduh, 1994; Maduebum, 1994; and Nwanna, 1987). For this reason, the education of most girl child stops at the primary and secondary education level. Therefore, the girl child may not be afforded further education at the tertiary education level which would have qualified such girl child to teach in the primary schools. For this reason, equal educational opportunities should normally be given to everybody, irrespective of whether you a male or female child, at least the National Policy on Education (2004) laid emphasis on this (Duru, 1997).

5. Implication for the Primary School Child Education

The study found that, the distribution of primary school teachers supply in Bayelsa State favoured the male teachers. This disparity has implications for the primary school child education in Bayelsa State in particular and Nigeria generally. This is because women who are mothers are better placed by nature and societal training to be tender and provide motherly care and attention to our children unlike their male counterparts. Where men dominate the teaching profession, the motherly care and attention a child requires may be absent; and the society is likely going to produce children who do not have affection for one another. The result is the breeding of deviant children, and this is not what the objectives of the National Policy on Education want to achieve.

It is in this vein that many women organizations such as the National Council for Women Societies (NCWS), Women in Nigeria (WIN) as well as the Development Action Programme (DAP) and the Pathways Initiatives have advocated on the need to deliberately provide education for the female child. In this regard Aluko (2013) opined that, the girl child deserves education and not marriage

6. Conclusion/Recommendations

There was gender imbalance in primary school teachers supply skewed in favour of male teachers in Bayelsa State. This means, children of primary schools to a large extent would have been deprived of the attributes of the female teachers that would have been beneficial to the child's development. Where there is imbalance of this nature, there is problem,

and the state is challenged to find solutions to the problem if the state wants an egalitarian society. The only solution is for the government of Bayelsa State to make concerted effort by motivating more girls to go colleges of education and universities from where trained female teachers could be supplied to the primary school system through special scholarships and legislating against early girl child marriages.

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