



A SURVEY STUDY ON EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS IN GOMBE STATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS: IMPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND POLICY

Olubunmi Adedunke Ayoola

Department of Training and Research
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration,
Ondo, Ondo State
Email: bunmade34@gmail.com

Samson Olumuyiwa Oyeromi

Department of Training and Research
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration,
Ondo, Ondo State
Email: iamforchrist2014@gmail.com

Adenjolaoluwa Adedotun Babatunde

Department of Training and Research
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration,
Ondo, Ondo State
Email: adenjolaoluwagmail.com

Ifeoma Veronica Ozoekwe

Department of Training and Research
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration,
Ondo, Ondo State
Email: ivyozokwe@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the educational indicators (repetition, completion, retention rates & out of school children) in Gombe state public schools and implication for planning and policy. Four research questions were raised and answered in this study. This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population consisted of 100 headteachers, 100 principals of public schools and 100 EMIS Staff in Gombe state, totaling 300 respondents. Multistage and simple random sampling technique were used in selecting headteachers and principals across all the local government in each of the schools sampled. A Checklist was designed by the researchers to gathered data and Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages was used to analyzed the data collected. The study found among others that repetition rate is high at schools, the completion rate of pupils/ students in public schools. The completion rate is high at primary, increased at junior schools but falls from year 2020 to 2021. Similarly, the completion rate at senior secondary shows improvement, and increased in out of school children. Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made that government should develop policy guidelines on inclusive education, focusing on how best to integrate learners with special needs, indigenous language minorities and religious minorities. The guidelines could serve as the point of reference for all interventions in the school system, government should develop, disseminate and enforce a policy on repetition and progression in all public basic schools, and free and compulsory education should be enforced and expanded throughout the nation.

Keywords: Repetition, completion, retention rates & out of school children, planning and policy

Introduction

Education is the acquisition and application of knowledge in various fields for the effective performance of one's task. Education is the process of facilitating learning, acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and habits through methods such as teaching, training, discussion, and research. It is a critical driver for personal and societal development, fostering economic growth, social cohesion, and personal well-being (UNESCO, 2021). Education, particularly at early stages, shapes cognitive abilities and social skills that are essential for individuals to succeed in life and actively contribute to society. Furthermore, access to quality education is closely linked with improved health outcomes and increased employment opportunities, which contribute to sustainable development (OECD, 2022). Recent studies highlight the transformative role of education in reducing poverty and inequality, with an emphasis on inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all as outlined in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNICEF, 2023). These studies also suggest that beyond traditional classroom learning, education must evolve to include digital literacy and critical thinking skills to prepare students for the challenges of a rapidly changing world (World Bank, 2023) in respect of pleasure and pain which leads to hate and love what love ought to have and love is called education.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) in the National Policy on Education, primary education is defined as the education given to institutions for children between age 6 to 11. It is the foundation upon which the rest of education system is built.

Similarly, the objectives of secondary school education typically aim to provide a well-rounded development of students in preparation for further education, work, and life. Common goals and objectives include:

1. To provide students with a broad knowledge base in subjects like mathematics, science, languages, social sciences, and the arts. To develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills.
2. To foster moral and ethical values, including honesty, integrity, respect, and responsibility. To promote self-confidence, self-discipline,

and emotional intelligence.

3. To equip students with the foundational knowledge and skills required for higher education or vocational training.
4. To develop work readiness skills, such as teamwork, communication, and time management.
5. To teach students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens, promoting participation in community and national development.
6. To instill an understanding of diversity, inclusivity, and respect for others in society.
7. To promote physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle through physical education and sports to support mental health awareness and well-being.
8. To ensure students are proficient in using technology and navigating the digital world.

Education is a fundamental human right, a critical driver for economic advancement and a powerful tool for poverty reduction. Hence, no child of school age should be denied access to quality and equitable education, and an opportunity to acquire skills that guarantee future employability and long-term earning. In 2015, all United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which outlines a blueprint to address global challenges across a broad range of themes including poverty, health, education, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

The Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, otherwise referred to as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Unfortunately, an approximated 263 million children remain out of school around the world. This number includes children who never started formal schooling and children who started school but later dropped out (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2016). Reducing the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) is a key priority for countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria. This is because more than half of children globally that have not enrolled in school live in Sub-Saharan Africa, and more than 85% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa are not learning (UNESCO Institute of Statistics,

2018). In the Nigerian context, OOSC are prevalent in both rural and urban settings, but rural areas, and isolated or deprived areas in general, consistently show higher number of out-of-school children (World Bank, 2019). These children are spread across the country in varying proportions. This situation is of concern to the Federal Government of Nigeria as noted in the Nigeria Education Ministerial Plan (2018-2022) which outlines several strategies targeted at bringing children back to school. In spite of these strategies, the number of OOSC remains significantly high.

In spite of various policy initiatives and institutional frameworks, a good number of school-age children roam the streets of Nigeria. Nigeria unduly tops the rank in the total number of out-of-school children in the global scene. Now, about 16 million Out-Of-School Children (OOSC) live in Nigeria, and this means that about one out of five OOSC in the world relate to Nigeria. The number has increased from 8.7 million in 2014 to 13.2 million and 16 million in 2015/2019, respectively. But this number reduced to 6.95 million in 2020. The breakdown of people in the out-of-school set includes children with disabilities; nomadic groups, comprising of pastoralists and migrants fishing groups; Almajiri students and displaced people due to violent conflicts, mostly in the Northern states of Nigeria like Gombe, Adamawa, Yobe and Borno. These schools are bedecked with series of schools which have been closed, and they amount to roughly 802, out of which classrooms of about 497 were practically sabotaged, while another 1,392 were entirely damaged. It is absolutely patent that the unadulterated surge in the hiking number of out-of-school children in Nigeria is traceable to the reinforced cases of insecurity, feeble institutional and policy structure, norms and traditions of the people, poverty, and total excommunication of children with disabilities in consideration of policies. This unearthed the OOSC fragments and the plausible instigation of the growing occupants in Nigeria.

The dropout rate in education refers to the percentage of students who discontinue their studies before completing the required level of education, typically high school or higher education. It is an important metric for understanding the challenges within educational

systems, particularly in terms of accessibility, retention, and equity. Recent studies have highlighted a range of factors contributing to dropout rates, including socioeconomic status, family background, and school-related factors such as teacher-student relationships, school infrastructure, and the quality of education (Reeve & Lee, 2023). Additionally, disruptions caused by global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have exacerbated dropout rates in many regions, especially among vulnerable populations (UNESCO, 2022). Efforts to reduce dropout rates include targeted interventions such as scholarships, mentoring programs, and reforms aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning environments (Smith & Johnson, 2023). These interventions, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, are critical for improving educational outcomes and promoting sustainable development.

The cost of dropping out of primary school can have a profound effect on a young person's life. Ecological achievement, during planting and farming season, pupils from the populous farming and fishing areas are drawn out from schools to help in these activities. Still speaking on economics, young girls who are unfortunate to come from a poor background drop out of school due to the inability of their parents to afford school fees, and are forced into hawking simply to make ends meet. Both boys and girls drop out of school to take up a nanny job either in their homes or outside their homes. At home to save the cost of employing a well-trained mature nanny who will be suited for the job, outside the home to get paid for and provide for the family's needs. They are sobering statistics when contrasted with the reality of a workplace that continues to require skills and the ability to embark on careers that require an increase in literacy. More education enhanced technical skills and the ability to embark on careers that require lifelong learning without the skills and training that schooling provides. Completion and retention rates in education are critical indicators of the effectiveness of educational systems. Completion rate refers to the percentage of students who finish a particular level of education, such as primary or secondary school, within the prescribed time frame. Retention rate indicates the percentage of students who remain in school from one grade to

the next without dropping out. Completion and retention rates are influenced by various factors, including socio-economic status, school infrastructure, quality of teaching, and family support.

Recent studies emphasize that in low and middle-income countries, economic barriers and inadequate school facilities significantly impact both completion and retention rates. For example, children from low-income families are more likely to drop out of school due to financial constraints or the need to work (UNESCO, 2023). Moreover, retention rates tend to be lower in rural areas, where access to quality education is often limited (World Bank, 2022). Efforts to improve these rates include targeted interventions such as providing financial incentives, improving school infrastructure, and enhancing teacher training. Research shows that conditional cash transfer programs have successfully increased retention and completion rates by alleviating the economic burden on families (Evans & Mendez Acosta, 2022).

The repetition rate refers to the percentage of students who repeat a grade or school level instead of advancing to the next. It is a critical indicator of education system inefficiencies, often associated with factors like poor school performance, socio-economic disparities, and inadequate learning environments. Repetition can lead to higher dropout rates and increased costs for both households and the education system (UNESCO, 2023). Recent studies emphasize that repetition rates are higher in low-income regions, where access to quality education resources is limited. For instance, UNESCO (2021) reported that Sub-Saharan Africa still experiences the highest repetition rates globally, partly due to a lack of qualified teachers and insufficient infrastructure. Efforts to reduce repetition rates focus on improving early childhood education, teacher training, and curricular reforms that address diverse learning needs (World Bank, 2022). In Nigeria, the repetition rate remains a challenge in rural areas, where many children face barriers such as poverty, malnutrition, and limited access to learning materials. According to UNICEF (2022), addressing these underlying causes through targeted interventions can significantly improve retention and progression in schools.

Chadzuka (2008) cited in Oyeromi et al. (2023) views children who disengage from school as those learners who leave school before the final year of the educational cycle in which they are enrolled, which could be primary, ordinary or advanced level or even college or university levels. Dropout most commonly refers to a learner leaving school before the official exit-grade level, Tsomo (2012). According to Tsomo (2012), a child who disengages from school can be defined as a learner who exits the education system before completing the programme for which he or she was registered. This definition could embrace students at all levels of the education system whether primary, secondary or tertiary. However, a classification difficulty arises when learners leave one institution and move to another location. From a historical standpoint, research has shown a one-sided view as to why pupils drop out of primary school.

According to Whelage (2006) cited in Reeve & Lee (2023: p...), it is the characteristics of students along with their families and cultural background that are responsible for their dropping out. Whelage (2006) cited in Reeve & Lee (2023: p...), further added that a more complex and balanced picture addressing the cause of dropping out of school has been identified. There is strong evidence that subject failure and school disciplinary problems in combination with chaotic personal, social and family background conditions contribute to dropping out (Oyeromi et al. 2023). The argument by Tsomo (2012) is that, if a learner soon continues his or her education elsewhere, he or she cannot be reasonably classified as a child who disengages from school. If a learner exits the formal education system at a particular level without completing the programme designed for that level, he or she can be classified as a dropout. School dropout is preceded by indicators of withdrawal or unsuccessful school experiences that often begin in primary school (The Ministry of Education and Training, 2008 cited in Mduma, & Mkulu, 2021). Overt indicators of disengagement are generally accompanied by feelings of alienation, a poor sense of belonging and a general dislike of school. Those children at risk can be identified by the following characteristics:

They are usually two years older than their

age group.

They have poor attendance at school.

They read below their mental age.

They resist the educator's and principal's authority.

They have little or no interest in schoolwork.

They do not follow what other learners do.

They benefit from the automatic promotion (The Ministry of Education and Training, 2008 cited in Mduma, & Mkulu, 2021).

Some learners attend school with no desire of their own. They may have been forcibly sent to school by their parents or guardians against their will. Subsequently, the results of compulsory attendance include passive attitudes (meaning these children are at school physically but without actively responding), active resentment (these children hate schooling), and hostility towards the school environment (meaning that they dislike the school environment) (Lekhesa 2007 cited in Reeve & Lee, 2023: pg, 11).

The curriculum structure demands an attraction of interest to the learners. An irrelevant curriculum may result in frustration for some learners or the curriculum can be linked to school standards and long-term goals beyond the comprehension and ability of the learners. Some may not see the subjects or course as having any significance for their personal development, or they may see it as forcing them into a pattern which has no relevance to their preferred lifestyle. Frustration is fertile ground for deviance and aggressive attitudes in school (Ministry of Education and Training, 2007) cited in Mduma, & Mkulu, 2021). Peer group pressure can trigger a negative attitude towards schoolwork, which can lead to dropping out (Lekhanya, 2008 cited in Reeve & Lee, 2023).

Personal problems such as health, social and economic stressors can cause resentment and difficulty coping with the demands of schooling (Ministry of Education and Training, 2007 cited in Mduma, & Mkulu, 2021). Lack of interest in a subject and poor lesson preparations can easily be noticed by learners. This weakens confidence in the educator and will trigger deviant behaviour which in turn may lead to expulsion or dropout (Lekhesa, 2007 cited in Reeve & Lee, 2023).

Economic depression can lead to economic and educational problems, unemployment, and mass retrenchment which gave rise to parents'

inability to cater for their children's basic and educational needs making the children engage in economic activities (child labour) at the expense of schooling. All these are capable of affecting the attitudes of children and parents towards learning, such that if the government lacks the financial resources to take care of them, the parents too are affected so they engage the children in economic activities.

Furthermore, UNESCO (2021) stated that some schools are so far away that the twice-daily routine is uncertain, difficult and tiring for disabled learners to complete their primary schooling in Nigeria. Working conditions too are hardly ideal for teaching and learning; classes are overcrowded and the equipment and staff are inadequate. Practices such as early marriages violate their rights and make them more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infection and also tend to interrupt their access to education. School dropouts are increasing as more and more parents die as a result of HIV/AIDS. When this happens, learners are left to fend for themselves and the older ones take on the responsibility of caring for the young ones. Learners in these situations become overwhelmed with the new roles and duties. Finally, they quit school because they cannot deal with the conflict of acting as a learner and a housekeeper or manager at the same time (Lepheane, Thamae, Mokone & Maphohoane, 2011).

Poverty and Unemployment is one of the reasons for learners not attending school despite the removal of barriers to schooling are as comprehensive as they are complex. There is no doubt that there are increasing socio-economic pressures that include growing poverty and unemployment. There were reports of herd boys still being denied access to education despite the removal of fees and girls being hired as domestic workers due to poverty in the households. Due to the high rate of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria, most learners quit school to maintain their families. This was corroborated by Okoye, (2018) when he observed that poor parents find it difficult to maintain their children in school and that the condition of poverty tends to keep children out of classes.

Pridmore (2007) cited in Basilio (2021) explains the negative effects of the health and nutritional status of younger learners and their

implications for school enrolment, dropout and school achievement on learners. He further explained that school-aged learners who suffer from protein deficiency, malnutrition, and hunger or who lack certain micronutrients in their diet, do not have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished learners. These learners attend school less frequently, are more likely to repeat grades, drop out early and fail to learn adequately due to poor levels of attention. They also have low motivation and poor cognitive function.

According to UNESCO (2021), another factor perpetuating high rates of school dropouts includes a lack of parental support. Rejection by one of the parents or both is yet another serious form of neglect as the learner is made to feel excluded and rejected. Possible reasons may be that the mother was not ready and willing to assume responsibility for parenthood. A foster child or adopted child not bound by blood ties may sometimes also be rejected by caregivers or relatives. Such a disturbance in relations poses a threat in the form of anxiety to the learner and stunts his psychological development. UNESCO (2021), further stated that it is the parent's responsibility to care for their learners and guide them in their school work. If not, learners are likely to lose their love for school. Coming straight to the issue of HIV/AIDS orphans, they are not prone to stigmatization and discrimination but also lack the resources needed to meet their educational costs. Without the care, support and guidance of parents, learners who venture into education end up dropping out of school. Many parents choose to take their learners, especially boys, out of school to herd animals and attend initiation school. Girls are then taken out of school to cook for the initiates (UNESCO, 2011) cited in (Basilio, 2021).

Poor Quality Education: According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Report (2007) cited in Basilio (2021: p...), argues that the poor quality of primary education in Nigeria is a matter of concern and has multiple causes. The unfavorable learning environment is strongly related to severe overcrowding, especially in the lower primary standards. This situation is, in turn, caused by severe shortages of educators, classrooms and high repetition rates. Based on above causes or factors responsible for students'

dropout from the school and huge amount of money government spent on education, there is need to investigate the education indicators in public schools in Gombe state in order to plan well in reducing out of school children.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the educational indicators (repetition, completion, retention rates and out of school children) in Gombe State public schools and implication for planning and policy

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study

1. What is the level of repetition rate of pupils/students in Gombe State public schools?
2. What is the level of completion rate of pupils/students in public schools?
3. What is the level of retention rate of pupils/students in public schools?
4. What is the number of out-of-school children in Gombe State public schools?

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design.

Population

The target population consists of 100 headteachers, 100 principals of public schools and 100 Education Management Information System (EMIS) Staff in Gombe state., The total population was 300 respondents.

Sample and Sampling Techniques:

Multistage and simple random sampling technique were used in selecting 100 headteachers and 100 principals across all the 10 local government and purposive sampling was used to select 100 Education Management Information System (EMIS) officers in each of the local government sampled. At the first stage, the local Government Areas in the state were stratified into urban and rural, at the second stage, 5 rural and 5 urban LGAs were randomly selected. At the third stage, 10 primary and 10 senior secondary schools were selected from each of the LGAs in which 10 head teachers, 10 principals

and 10 EMIS officers were sampled, totaling 300 respondents in all across the state.

Research Instruments

A Checklist was designed by the researchers. It has 4 sections A B, C, D. Section A on repetition rate, Section B on Retention rate. Section C on completion rate and section D on Out -of -school children. The instrument has a sound psychometric property of 0.78, 0.68, 0.72, and 0.82 respectively with-test reliability coefficient of 0.80.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher employed 11 research assistants

and trained them of the relevance of the instruments. The researcher and research assistants started with a scooping/inception meeting with education stakeholders. and team of EMIS officers, education planners/managers, and other stakeholders. The EMIS Officers visited each school in each local government in Gombe state and administered the checklist, two days after the checklist were collected back.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages was used to analyzed the data collected.

Results

Research Question One: What is the level of repetition rate of pupils/students in Gombe State public schools?

Table 1: Repetition Rate of Pupils/Students in Public Schools

Level	Year	Repetition Rate		
		Male	Female	Total
Basic 1 – 6	2018/19	711 (53%)	639 (47%)	1350 (100%)
	2019/20	468 (49%)	496 (51%)	964 (100%)
	2020 /21	442 (53%)	400 (47%)	842 (100%)
Basic 7 – 9	2018/19	298 (58%)	217 (42%)	515 (100%)
	2019/20	226 (55%)	188 (45%)	414 (100%)
	2020 /21	68(62%)	48(38%)	109 (100%)
SSS	2018/19	623 (63%)	361 (37%)	984 (100%)
	2019/20	605 (65%)	320 (35%)	925 (100%)
	2020 /21	358 (65%)	192 (35%)	550 (100%)

Source: *Source: ASC 2018/2019 to 2020/2021 Report*

Table 1 found that the repetition rate was reducing from 53% in 2018/19, 49% in the year 2020 and 53% in the year 2021 at the primary level but increase at junior secondary school in the year 2018/19 but reduced 2019/2020 and 2020/21 respectively. So also, at secondary level of education. The implication is that many students drop out of school. The implication is that, Pupils/

students who repeat a class may experience stress, a sense of failure, loss of self-esteem, and disengagement from school which can lead to behavioural issues and high out of school children. The implication on the part of the Government is wastages, causing the Government to spend more money.

Research Question Two: What is the level of completion rate of pupils/students in public schools?

Table 2: Completion Rate of Pupils/Students in Public Schools

Level	Year	Completion Rate		
		Male	Female	Total
Basic 1 – 6	2018/19	30,128 (59%)	21,147 (41%)	51,275 (100%)
	2019/20	31,567 (59%)	22,147 (41%)	53,714 (100%)
	2020 /21	33,048 (58%)	23,574 (42%)	56,622 (100%)
Basic 7 – 9	2018/19	23,458 (53%)	20,888 (47%)	44,346 (100%)
	2019/20	27,531 (58%)	20,093 (42%)	47,624 (100%)
	2020 /21	20,101 (56%)	15,693 (44%)	35,794 (100%)
SSS	2018/19	14,826 (79%)	3,839 (21%)	18,665 (100%)
	2019/20	11,357 (68%)	5,277 (32%)	16,634 (100%)
	2020 /21	15,074 (52%)	13,659 (48%)	28,733 (100%)

Source: Source: ASC 2018/2019 to 2020/2021 Report

Table 2 shows the completion rate of pupils/students in public schools. The completion rate is high at primary, increased at junior schools but falls from year 2020 to 2021. Similarly, the

completion rate at senior secondary shows improvement. From year 2020 to 2021. The implication of the table is that, there is improvement in terms of completion rate.

Research Question Three: What is the level of retention rate of pupils/students in public school?

Table 3: Retention Rate of Pupils/Students in Public Schools

Level	Year	Retention Rate		
		Male	Female	Total
Basic 1 – 6	2018/19	34,979 (54%)	29,892 (46%)	64,871 (100%)
	2019/20	31,913 (54%)	26,757 (46%)	58,670 (100%)
	2020 /21	35,472 (54%)	29,887 (46%)	65,359 (100%)
Basic 7 -9	2018/19	15,928 (56%)	12,592 (44%)	28,520 (100%)
	2019/20	17,469 (56%)	13,504 (44%)	30,973 (100%)
	2020 /21	18,141 (56%)	14,093 (44%)	32,234 (100%)
SSS	2018/19	9,792 (58%)	7,059 (42%)	16,851 (100%)
	2019/20	9,542 (57%)	7,198 (43%)	16,740 (100%)
	2020 /21	12,988 (59%)	9,023 (41%)	22,011 (100%)

Source: Source: ASC 2018/2019 to 2020/2021 Report

The retention figure at basic 1-6 level increased in year 2018/19 and fell in 2019/20 but in 2020/21, the retention figure increases, this indicated a reduction in the retention rate as a result of high repetition or out of school children. In 2020/21, the retention rate increases, indicating the effort of

the government in ensuring that out of school children is reduced. At Basic 7-9, there was increase in retention figure but the rate is constant indicating the effort of the government in ensuring that No Child is Left Out. At Senior Secondary School level, retention rate increases,

indicating the efforts of the Government in level to another.
ensuring smooth transition of the school from one

Research Question four: What is the level of number of Out-of-School Children?

Table 4: Number of Out-of-School Children

Level	Year	OOSC		
		Male	Female	Total
Basic 1 - 6	2018/19	153,955	167,108	321,063
	2019/20	155,291	164,864	320,155
	2020/21	155,323	165,057	320,380
Basic 7 - 9	2018/19	74,512	77,982	152,494
	2019/20	78,833	82,686	161,519
	2020/21	87,269	90,303	177,572
	2021/22	-	-	-
	2022/23	-	-	-
SSS	2018/19	77,952	79,940	157,892
	2019/20	76,003	79,383	155,386
	2020/21	78,214	81,965	160,179
	2021/22	-	-	-
	2022/23	-	-	-

ASC 2018/2019 – 2020/2021, NPoC (Projected 2006 Census)

The data in Table 4 revealed that there was an upward trend in the number of OOSC from 2018/19 to 2020/21. At the primary school level, the OOSC was 262,588 in 2018/19; 279,009 in 2019/20 and 461,236 in 2020/21. At the JSS and SSS levels, the number of OOSC ranged between 34,021 in 2018/19 and 45,457 in 2019/20. 23,731 in 2020/21. The table shows increased in out of school children, which implies that large numbers of pupils/students were not enrolled or do not have access to basic education, this might be as a result of insurgency, poverty or insufficient educational infrastructure, lack of inclusive policies and poor school funding.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 found that the repetition rate was reducing from 53% in 2018/19, 49% in the year 2020 and 53% in the year 2021 at the primary level but increase at junior secondary school in the year 2018/19 but reduced 2019/2020 and 2020/21 respectively. This study was line with the study

conducted by Oyeromi et al (2023) that students dropped out of school as a result of repeating classes policy. Similarly, UNESCO (2021) found that the rate of dropout from school is high.

Table 2 shows the completion rate of pupils/students in public schools. The completion rate is high at primary, increased at junior schools but falls from year 2020 to 2021. The finding of this is in line with study conducted by (Lepheane, Thamae, Mokone & Maphohoane, 2011), that found that completion rate at first and second level of education are of much concern. National policy on education, (2014) expect 100% completion in any given academic cycle.

Recommendations

1. Develop more inclusive policy and practices within school
2. Introducing community engagement
3. Implementing poverty reduction strategies to alleviate economic barriers for families
4. Government should provide adequate

funding for education

Implication for Planning and Policy

Educational planners need to take in to consideration the following

Develop Policy Guidelines on Inclusive Education: The government should develop policy guidelines on inclusive education, focusing on how best to integrate learners with special needs, indigenous language minorities and religious minorities. The guidelines could serve as the point of reference for all interventions in the school system.

Development of Policy on Repetition and Progression: Considering the opportunity costs that are borne by the government resulting from the high repetition rates, the government should develop, disseminate and enforce a policy on repetition and progression in all public basic schools. The issues that should be addressed should include the designing of approaches to improving the transition rate from lower to upper basic education.

Free and Compulsory Quality Basic Education on Equitable Basis: Free and compulsory education should be enforced and expanded throughout the nation. This will help to cater for children from motherless homes and those whose parents are not financially strong to train in school.

Construct Additional Classrooms/Schools: For the Government to meet the quantitative challenges of school dropout, it should provide resources for the construction of more basic schools and the expansion of classrooms in already existing schools. Furthermore, the government should renovate existing classrooms in existing schools with priority being given to remote areas and densely populated districts. In addition, special attention should be given to the construction of schools for children with special needs. A policy framework should be developed for a unified and continuous basic education system that provides opportunities for learners with special needs and otherwise disadvantaged learners.

Community Campaigns on Education for All (EFA): The government should continue to

popularize primary and Secondary education through advocacy for free and compulsory primary education through the medium of public campaigns and publications. Through the community and campaigns, the government hopes to enlist the vulnerable community and civil society's involvement in advocacy for basic education by encouraging parents to permit their children to take advantage of educational opportunities opened for them.

Make Education Attractive: Most of the respondents concur that education has to be enticing to the learners. The latter have to want to attend school without being forced to do so. They suggest that learners need to be sensitized to the importance of education and that an environment has to be created to enable them to share their views. Many stakeholders agree that the creation of child-friendly schools should be the ultimate goal in enticing children to come to school and to remain there until they complete their primary education.

Provision of Learning Materials: The government should provide additional resources to meet the expanding demand for relevant teaching and learning materials to secure quality basic education. The involvement of other stakeholders in education services providers should be sought.

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