

## **Trend of Educational Wastage Rate in Ekiti State Public Primary Schools in Nigeria [2000-2006]**

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**Abstract:** This work examined the trend of educational wastage rate in Ekiti State public primary schools between 2000 and 2006. Three general questions were raised. A descriptive research design of the survey type and ex-post facto design were employed in the study. The sample consisted of 80 headmasters selected from 731 public primary schools in the 16 local government education authorities. Multi-stage and simple random techniques were used for the study. A self-designed inventory proforma was used to collect data for the study. Data collected was analysed using frequency counts, simple percentage score and line graphs. The study revealed that there was a declining trend in the wastage, repetition and drop-out rates in the public primary schools between 2000 and 2006 academic years. It was therefore recommended that educational agencies and school authorities should endeavour to sustain the present declining trend in the educational wastage rate in order to improve the internal efficiency of primary educational in the state.

**Key words:** Trend • Educational wastage rate • Public primary schools

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is an indispensable tool for the continued existence and growth of any nation. As stated in Federal Government of Nigeria [1], primary education is the education given in an institution for children aged normally 6 to 11<sup>+</sup> and the rest of the education system is built upon it. It is the formative stage and the bedrock of any educational system in a country. In view of the importance of this primary level of education, the Federal Government of Nigeria [2] decided that primary education be made free, compulsory and accessible to every Nigerian child of primary school going-age. It also provided that appropriate sanctions will be imposed on parents/guardians who fail to make their children available for school.

One major problem confronting primary education in Nigeria is that the total number of pupils enrolled in primary one for the academic session does not usually graduate from the primary school at the specified period. Casual observation shows that there are cases of frequent absenteeism, withdrawal and repetition of classes by primary school pupils. People regard Ekiti State as the fountain of knowledge which should be at the forefront in education but it appears that there are still a good number of primary school age children engaged in petty trading, street hawking, farming and baby sitting during school hours. It seems the parents of these children prefer to engage them in economic activities that will generate immediate finance for the upkeep of the family.

Experience shows that some of these children repeat classes because of poor academic performance arising from long absence from school while some of these children eventually drop-out of school. Commenting on this, Ajayi and Adeosun

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[3] stated that the huge public expenditure on pupils who do not attend school regularly and those who drop-out from school system affect the internal efficiency of primary education.

According to Federal Government of Nigeria [4], the drop-out rate in primary school is 9.3%. This implies that within an academic year, some pupils drop out of school for various reasons. According to Education Sector Analysis [5], drop-out/completion rate is one out of the five indicators with which the education system tries to actualise the philosophy of Nigeria education. Pupils who withdraw prematurely from primary school before completion and those who repeat the same class, while their mates proceed to higher classes in the next academic year are considered as wastage. This wastage threatens the internal efficiency of the education system. It is a stumbling block to the realisation of the nation's aims and objectives of primary education and basic education in general. It appears that parents engage their children in income generating activities because of poor socio-economic status of the family. The money realized may be used to meet the daily financial needs of the family. Some parents seem to engage their children in income generating activities in order to finance the education of their children. Experience showed that some of these children mingle with touts and criminals who influence their behaviour in the process of hawking and petty trading. Some of the children may be exposed to money making ventures very early in life and thereby lose interest in schooling.

Salami [6] defined wastage as the degree to which human and material resources developed and made available are grossly under-utilised or neglected. Similarly, Bruner and Paul [7] described wastage as the degree to which the actual output fails to correspond with stated goals of education within a given period. The problem of wastage in education arises in many developing nations as a result of high percentage of pupils who repeat classes and those who drop out of school. Todaro [8] maintained that the major reason wastage in education occurs is because the formal primary system is a direct transplant of the system in most developed countries.

Ayodele [9] stated that wastage rates are higher in lower classes of primary schools than what obtained in upper classes. There is an indication that wastage arising from repetition and drop-out occur in primary schools. According to Fonkeng [10], the phenomenon of high repetition is experienced in many third world countries and is an indicator of inefficiency of the educational system. Fonkeng [10] stated that primary school repetition in Cameroon is as 40% indicating inefficiency in terms of cost and constitutes wastage particularly to the State, parents and the individual victims. Fonkeng [10] maintained that repeating a class increases private and public cost of education shouldered by parents and the states and in addition leads to large classes with attendant problems of assessment and supervision of pupils, more facilities needed, training and recruiting more teachers and provision of additional didactic materials. Repetition of classes may have negative effect on pupils and parents. Therefore, the development of every child has to be directed towards the ability of the child-bearing in mind the needs of the immediate society. Abilities and capabilities of pupils are not the same in every subject; therefore, teachers must endeavour to develop each child alongside his/her abilities and capabilities. This may drastically reduce repetition and its associated frustration that might eventually degenerate to drop-out of pupils from the school system.

According to Nwangwu [11], the trend of drop-out, although observable all over Nigeria has become a syndrome in certain states of the federation. Bruner and Paul [7] identified the inadequacy of the educational system to prevent pupils from dropping out of school before completion of the educational level as one out of the five major components of wastage in educational system. The Federal Government has positioned Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to discourage the incidence of drop-out at the primary level of education. According to Federal Government of Nigeria [2], reducing drastically the incident of drop-out from the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency is the major objective of Universal Basic Education (UBE). Also, Obanya [12] stated that access to basic education is not all, remaining in school for the successful completion of quality education cycle is the ultimate goal of UBE. Primary education is in fact the cornerstone of this formal school system which is the main target of the UBE. The Federal Government is aware of the importance of this pillar and this is evident in its implementation programmes which started with primary schools all over the country. Ajayi and Ayodele [13] emphasised that the primary level of education is the

key to success or otherwise of the whole educational system. The FGN [4] maintained that UBE as a reform programme in consistent with the national policy on education and relevant laws are aimed at reducing school drop-out and improving relevance, quality and efficiency, etc.

Primary education being the centre-point of the UBE is highly favoured in the FGN [4], criteria for accessing and utilizing UBE matching grant of the Federal Government as approved by the Executive Council in June 2005 as follows:

1. Expenditure by components of UBE programme:

- a. Pre-primary education 5%
- b. Primary education 60%
- c. Junior secondary school 35%

2. Expenditure by activities in each of the components of UBE programme:

- a. Infrastructural development 70%
- b. Textbooks and work materials 15%
- c. Teacher professional development 15%

**Total 100%**

Internal efficiency could be measured to determine the ability and effectiveness of the school system in meeting its set standard. Primary education may be considered to be efficient if it turns out graduates without having repeaters and drop-outs. The need for efficiency arises from the growing awareness of the importance of using education to develop the necessary manpower and personnel needed for social and economic development of the country. According to Ayodele [14], the analysis of efficiency in education is necessary in ensuring optimal use of the meagre resources allocated to education in order to eliminate or minimise wastage. The study of efficiency appears to be useful in determining the rate of educational wastage. Here, the researcher views the number of years, finance and other resources used on the pupils who drop out of the school system as part of wastage in education. The additional number of years spent by the repeaters in the course of repeating classes is also viewed as wastage. Wastage arising from drop-out and repetition of classes by primary school pupils is a threat to the internal efficiency of primary education. It is considered as waste of the scarce/limited resources that could have been employed in other areas of pressing needs. Wastage arising from drop-out and repetition is a sign of inefficiency in the education system. Optimum use of the scarce resources allocated to education could help to reduce or eliminate repetition and drop-out from the school system.

As contained in Federal Government Nigeria [1], the Federal Government at present, expects 100% transition from primary to junior secondary school in any given academic cycle. When transition is less than 100%, there is wastage. Educational wastage which existed in primary schools could constitute menace to the education system. It is therefore necessary to trace the trend of the educational wastage and proffer probable solutions to minimise or eradicate educational wastage in primary education.

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study was to find out the trend of educational wastage rate in public primary schools in Ekiti State between 2000 and 2006. The study was also designed to identify the trends of repetition of pupils in public primary schools in Ekiti State. The study was in addition designed to investigate the trend of drop-out of pupils in public primary schools in Ekiti State.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study made use of descriptive research design of the survey type and ex-post facto design. The population for the study consisted of all the public primary schools in Ekiti State. The sample consisted of 80 headmasters selected from 80 public primary schools. Multi-stage, simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the sample. Frequency counts, percentage scores and line graphs were used in data analysis.

## RESULTS

**Descriptive Analysis:** Table 1 shows a declining trend in wastage rate from 11.2% to 9.7%. There was a slight increase to 10.0% in 2004/2005 academic year which again declined to 8.9% in 2005/2006 academic year. Generally, the table shows a declining trend in the wastage rate of public primary schools between 2000 and 2006 academic year (Fig. 1).

Table 2 shows a declining trend in repetition rate from 9.0% to 7.7% in 2003/2004 academic year. The rate increase to 8.1% in 2004/2005 academic year. The table further shows a decline to 7.4% in 2005/2006 academic year. Generally, there is a declining trend of repetition rate in public primary schools between 2000 and 2006 academic year (Fig. 2).

Table 1: Trend of Educational Wastage Rate in Ekiti State Public Primary Schools [2000-2006]

Year	Wastage rate (%)
2000/2001	11.2
2001/2002	11.2
2002/2003	10.9
2003/2004	9.7
2004/2005	10.0
2005/2006	8.9

Table 2: Trend of Repetition Rate in Ekiti State Public Primary Schools [2000-2006]

Year	Repetition rate (%)
2000/2001	9.0
2001/2002	8.8
2002/2003	8.7
2003/2004	7.7
2004/2005	8.1
2005/2006	7.4

Table 3: Trend of Drop-Rate in Ekiti State Public Primary Schools [2000-2006]

Year	Repetition rate (%)
2000/2001	2.1
2001/2002	2.3
2002/2003	2.2
2003/2004	2.0
2004/2005	2.0
2005/2006	1.5

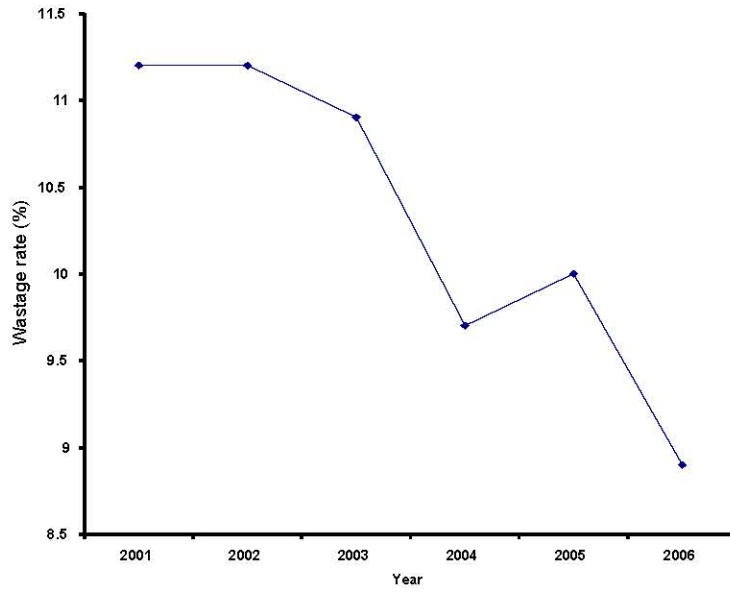


Fig. 1: Graph showing wastage rate of the primary school pupils between 2000 and 2006

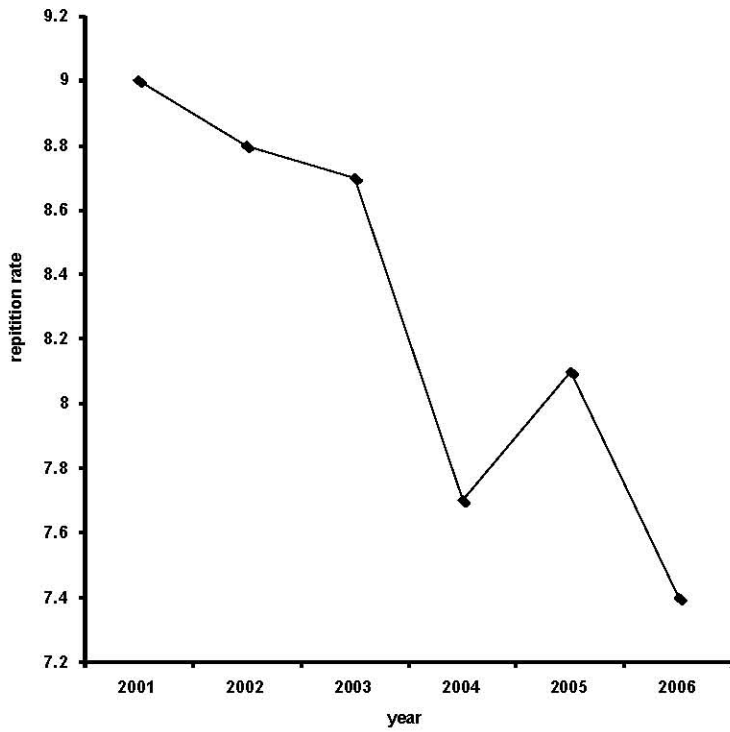


Fig. 2: Graph showing repetition rate of the primary between 2000 and 2006

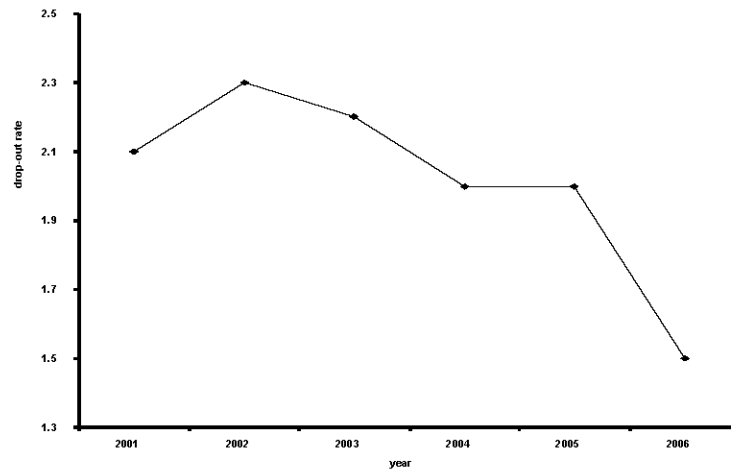


Fig. 3: Graph showing drop-out of the primary school pupils between 2000 and 2006

Table 3 shows an initial increase in drop out rate from 2.1% to 2.3% in 2001/2002 academic year. The table also shows a declining trend from 2.2% to 1.5% between 2002/2003 and 2005/2006. Generally, the table shows a declining trend of drop-out rate in public primary schools between 2000 and 2006 academic year (Fig. 3).

## DISCUSSION

The study revealed that there was educational wastage in public primary schools in Ekiti State due to drop-out and repetition of classes by primary school pupils. As the pupils move from one class to another higher class, some dropped on the way while some added extra year(s) through repetition. Data collected on enrolment, promotion, repetition and drop-out revealed that wastage occurred at different levels.

The trend of educational wastage rate indicated a declining trend from 11.2 to 8.9% between 2000 and 2006. The implication of this result is that internal efficiency of primary education increased as the wastage rate declined. The reason for this declining trend could be attributed to the Federal Government's renewed efforts to achieve maximum efficiency in basic education by eradicating repetition and drop-out of pupils in public schools in the country as stated in Federal Government of Nigeria [1].

The trend of repetition also shows a declining trend from 9.1 to 7.4% within the period under study. The average score for repetition rates between 2000 and 2006 was 8.3%. This is not too high. There is need to sustain the present declining trend in order to further improve the internal efficiency of primary education.

The trend of drop-out rate shows a declining trend from 2.1 to 1.4% within the period under study. The average score for between 2000 and 2006 was 2% drop-out rates. This is a commendable development because it is far below the national drop-out rate of 9.3% as stated in Federal Government of Nigeria [4].

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There was reduction in the educational wastage rate of pupils in Ekiti State public primary schools between 2000 and 2006. It was therefore recommended that educational agencies and school authorities should endeavour to sustain the present declining trend in the educational wastage rate in order to further improve the internal efficiency of primary

education. School authorities and teachers should tackle the problem of repetition through the use of individualised instructions in order to identify the abilities of the pupils and develop them accordingly so as to make learning more meaningful to the learners. Educational agencies and school authorities should set up effective guidance and counselling services in public primary schools in order to identify “drop-out at risk pupils” early enough and guide them appropriately.

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