



IMPACT OF LEAVE-NO-CHILD-BEHIND POLICY ON PUBLIC PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the Impact of Leave-No-Child Behind Policy on Public Preschool and Primary School (PPPS) Enrolment in Lagos State. It examines the Pupils' Enrolment in Pre-school and Primary School before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State, and also gender Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State. The study adopted an ex post factor design and made use of secondary data collected using the Pro forma as the research instrument eliciting enrolment data of the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State. The data were analysed using the Descriptive Statistics (Frequency, Bar Chart and Percentage) and Inferential Statistics (Paired Sample t-test). The result showed the frequency and the percentage of gender enrolment in Pre Leave -No-Child-Behind Enrolment (PLNCBE) of 2018/2019 with male at 199,456(49.52%) and female: 203,314 (50.48%), and the Leave -No-Child-Behind Enrolment (LNCBE) in 2022/2023 with male 223,778 (50.76%) and female 217,110 (49.24%). The frequency also showed that Pre Leave -No-Child-Behind Enrolment PLNCBE of 2018/2019 had enrolment at 402,770, and the Leave -No-Child-Behind Enrolment (LNCBE) of 2022/2023 had enrolment at 440,888. The study established that there is an increase in PPPS Enrolment as a result of Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State aimed at reducing the effect of poverty on Enrolment.

Keywords:

Leave-No-Child-Behind, Enrolment, Enrolment Rate, Pre-school, Primary School, Poverty.

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Introduction

Nigeria as a nation has had its fair quota of the inequality among the comity of nations. The poverty level is increasing year-in year-out, paving way for a more aggravating and relatively unbearable spiral slope of standard of living in Nigeria, a country with an estimated population of over 222.18 (Sasu, 2023). This places Nigeria on the front row with the highest population living in extreme poverty rate in Africa at 11.9% (Galal, 2023). Lagos State on its own absolutely has a higher per Capita income as compared to Nigeria, yet the rate of individuals on the poverty line is way too high comparatively with other states in the country because of the obvious reality- it's over 21 million population size (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). This high population struggles with sending their wards to schools, primary, secondary and higher institutions. In a world where basic education becomes a necessity, the cheapest means of educating children from the middle and lower rung of the society call for a fast intervention.

The Lagos State Government deems it fit to create an interventionist strategy to deal with the burgeoning over 2 million out-of-school children, despite its 96.5 literacy rate, second highest in the whole federation, according to National Bureau of Statistics as reported by Vanguard News (2022). This policy was introduced at the last quarter of 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the teaching and learning engagements in the state. The policy was introduced to improve access to education for all children, and aimed to provide free education to children in Lagos. Nigeria and indeed most states of the federation were not ready for such a devastating period as the COVID-19 period to move away from the conventional schooling system to the tele-schooling system which remained pertinent during the pandemic. Simon and Hans (2020) agreed that the COVID-19 lockdown of education institutions, including primary school, led to enormous disruption of learning and assessment including necessary activities in schools, and laid bare the negativity of the global pandemic on education (Prayat, 2020). This period also witnessed to the economic downturn of most businesses and households, with an aftermath effect on schooling rate- especially private schooling.

The introduction of the EKO Excellence in Child Education and Learning (EKOEXCEL) programme incorporated the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy. This policy sets rolling certain objectives to deliver unique qualities of the policy which are in form of leveraging technology for teaching and learning, providing qualitative and free education for all, and driving teacher-pupils interaction to foster out-of-class learning continuity in a community that promotes mutual collaborations. Ogundare (2020) affirms that the programme's aim was to accelerate teachers' capacity and the use of ICT tool to promote the teaching and learning engagements. The EKOEXCEL programme fashioned a more creative model of making teaching and learning more appealing to pupils in and out of the classroom while giving teachers open access to subject mastery and hands-on pedagogy to promote critical thinking with a global perspective (Olujuwon, *et. al.*, 2021). This initiative brought a more Evidence-based Practice (EBP) model and Technology-assisted Instruction (TAI) to the classroom. It is appreciable to note that this programme was setup to remove children from the streets and place them in a school to set them on the path to becoming a useful tool to them and to the nation in the future through unhindered and free access to basic education. Regardless of the parents' socioeconomic status, Lagos State Government made it a duty to promote distributive justice to alienate the inequality that exists in human society which may be concretized by education through the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy hence, this will ensure high school enrolment.

School Enrolment is influenced by varieties of factors depending on the ethnographic experiences of people. Sometimes it is a built-up interest offer over time, informed by the environment. This enrolment is the process or an act of attending or signing up for academic, schooling or co-curricular activities in a formal or informal schooling system. It may also mean the total number of students attending a course or institution. Enrolment takes several conditions to be met before admission into the school is considered. This study recognizes two different main theoretical approaches which are the Social Capital Theory and the Human Capital Theories of the influences of



Enrolment into schools. This research study leans more on the Human Capital Theory as a contributing factor that propels enrolment in the light of government policy of LNCB. This study will explore both theories to present a balanced view of perspective of the research discourse.

Social Capital Theory and School Enrolment

The Social Theory of School Enrolment believes that, school enrolment is triggered by parents or guardians' decisions, especially that of the mother or female guardian who contributes more than that of the father. Esters (2007) reported that parents or guardians as a family structure in which a child is a member influences the enrolment into school. The researcher went on further to indicate that the father has little or no effort in selecting the schools to enrol the children. Soria and Stebleton (2012), in agreement with Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) believed that, the school, as an element promotes the role of education, or that the school plays a vital role in reducing disparities in social capital through enlightenment and information made possible by education. A study by Wightman (2003) found that students from families with higher social capital were more likely to attend school. The study also found that students with supportive relationships between teachers, parents, and peers have greater potential of enrolment in schools and even till the highest level of education. Teachers have access and provide pupils with academic support in form of tutoring, extra help sessions, and feedback in form of Counseling for even the parents (Borman, & Overman, 2004; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). Teachers equally have a way with creating an emotionally supportive environment for pupils in and out of the formal classroom filled with respect and understanding to help students to cope with stress and challenges (Soria & Stebleton, 2012).

Peers can have a significant influence on pupils' enrolment by providing academic support, information and guidance, emotional support, and serving as role models. Schools can support the positive influence of peers by creating opportunities for students to interact with one another in positive and productive ways. Peers can also influence school enrolment in such a way that friends who value education and are enrolled in school are more likely to enrol and stay in school themselves. Peers have significant influence on pupils' enrolment by providing academic support, information and guidance, emotional support, and role modelling for others (Xu & Lee, 2019; Crosnoe, 2004). The communities also contribute to School Enrolment by providing resources, projecting social values for education and creating strong social support networks which are more likely to bring about high school enrolment rates. Community organizations can provide students with access to educational resources and opportunities, such as tutoring, mentoring, and scholarships (National Mentoring Partnership, 2021; National Centre for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2019; American Psychological Association, 2017).

Human Capital Theory and School Enrolment

School Enrolment supports human capital development and accumulation of human resources as result of measurable educational attainment over time (Osei and Agyapong, 2022). These authors believed that this achievement is more prevalent in female than in male. Chakrabarti and Deb (2023), in their ethnographic study opined that school enrolment has positively increased the earnings and reduced poverty level more in females than in males. School Enrolment equally succeeds in promoting social mobility with greater emphasis on girls than for boys (Kinyanjui and Otieno, 2022). This goes on further to impact health and well-being which is measured by infant mortality, life expectancy, and chronic disease levels. This claim is supported by another report on school enrolment that it resulted in a magnitude of educational successes in cognitive development and labour productivity and output (World Bank, 2021; Hoxby and Son, 2021, Li and Chen, 2023). However, Olowokere and Adeyemi (2023) researched into School Enrolment and Human Capital Approach in Nigeria discovered that enrolment into elementary school has no significant role to play in human capital development rather the post- primary school and tertiary school play more vital role in this regard. In contrary to this, Glewwe *et al.*, (2023) discovered that Early



Childhood Education (ECE) has contributed immensely to the human capital development within its determining indexes. Their expedition led them to uncover the covert role of study ECE in supporting the successes enjoyed by children from disadvantaged backgrounds and lower rung of socioeconomic ladders (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2022). Their study brings to the fore the positive essence of government funding in education.

According to Banerjee and Duflo (2022), societies have enjoyed the contributions of education through school enrolment by alleviating poverty and eliminating the elements of inequality as a result of ignorance. This, in itself, is an element of economic growth and progress in human society necessitated by education (African Development Bank, 2021). In this regard, Governments and policymakers from this approach are then saddled with the responsibility of prioritizing programmes and policies that support School Enrolment of all and vulnerable children in the societies which would help to develop and promote productive Human Capital while invariably promoting prosperous societies, leading to higher earnings and economic growth. Human capital theory is a theory that views an individual's ability, education, and experience as a form of capital that can be invested in and accumulated over time (Becker, 1994). This investment in human capital can lead to higher productivity and earnings, both for the individual and for the economy as a whole.

Stiglitz (1998, 2000) reaffirmed the role of education in economic growth, sustainability and development. His argument rests on the rationale that education is not just a tool of development but also with a broader notional duty of expanding the human capital in connection with growth (Fine and Rose 2001). This then crystalizes the responsibility of the government to create an interventionist strategy like a policy that makes education free or serve the purpose of empowering the populace especially in a society ridden by poverty and low standard of living. This policy can take the following structures:

1. Free or Subsidized Education (from basic education to tertiary institutions) to make education more affordable and accessible for families, especially those with low incomes.
2. School Feeding Programmes to provide meals to students at school, which can improve their nutrition and attendance rates.
3. School Transportation to help students get to and from school, especially those living in remote areas.
4. School Uniforms to reduce the cost of education for families and create a sense of community among students.
5. Conditional cash transfer programmes to provide cash transfers to families on the condition that their children attend school.

Therefore, the Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) policy was introduced by the government of Lagos State to ensure equal access to qualitative education for all children. It focuses on improving enrolment and retention rates in public pre-schools and primary schools, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups. The policy is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable education for all. The Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) policy has been implemented in many countries like the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia (Levesque, 2017). But its impact on enrolment in Public Pre-Schools and Primary Schools in Lagos State has not been extensively studied. Previous studies have examined the impact of education policies on enrolment in developing countries, but there is limited research on the specific impact of the LNCB policy on enrolment in Lagos State. This study aimed to fill the knowledge gap by investigating the impact of the LNCB policy on public pre-school and primary school enrolment in Lagos State.



Research Objectives

The objectives of this study included to examine:

- i. Pupils' Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in the 20 Local Government Areas of Lagos State.
- ii. gender Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in the 20 Local Government Areas of Lagos State.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

- i. There is no significant difference in Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State.
- ii. There is no significant difference in male and female Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State.

Methodology

The study adopted the Quantitative Research Method using a secondary data, collected using the Pro forma as the research instrument obtaining Enrolment data of the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State. The study is of Ex Post Facto Research Design using the Descriptive Statistics (Frequency, Bar Chart and Percentage) and Inferential Statistics (Paired Sample t-test) to analyse collected data.

The study obtained data of both Preschool and Primary School Enrolment (PSE) of two different academic sessions, which are divided into sets:

1. Pre-Leave-No-Child-Behind Enrolment (PLNCBE) 2018/2019 (Before)
2. Leave-No-Child-Behind Enrolment (LNCBE) 2022/2023 (After)

The two data sets showed enrolments of different academic sessions. The data were grouped based on 20 Local Government Areas in Lagos State, and it was ranked. Descriptive Statistics were used to measure the mean and standard deviation levels of the data. Multiple Bar Charts were used to present the Male and Female enrolment for the PLNCBE 2018/2019 and LNCBE 2022/2023. Inferential Statistics of Paired Sample t-test was used to test the stated hypotheses.

Results

Research Objective One: examine Pupils' Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



Table 1: Pupils' Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.

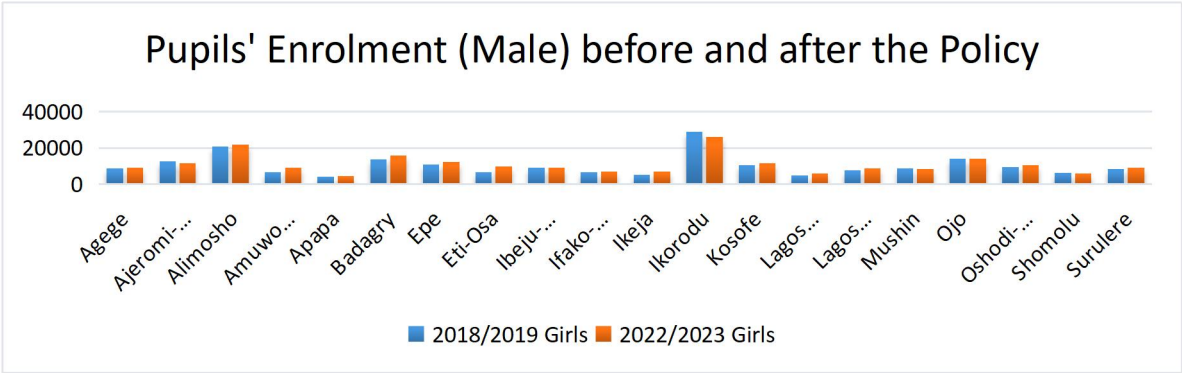
	2018/2019(PLNCBE) Before			2022/2023 (LNCBE) After				
LGEA	Boys	Girls	Total Number of Pupils	Boys	Girls	Total Number of Pupils	Difference in Enrolment	% difference
Agege	8258	8703	16961	9374	9059	18433	1472	8.68
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	12336	12530	24866	11948	11476	23424	-1442	-5.8
Alimosho	21235	20627	41862	23072	21713	44785	2923	6.98
Amuwo Odofin	5801	6516	12317	8719	8992	17711	5394	43.8
Apapa	4121	4208	8329	4679	4490	9169	840	10.1
Badagry	14276	13553	27829	17435	15704	33139	5310	19.1
Epe	11026	10738	21764	13232	12332	25564	3800	17.5
Eti-Osa	5985	6474	12459	9621	9737	19358	6899	55.4
Ibeju-Lekki	8879	9008	17887	9549	8974	18523	636	3.56
Ifako-Ijaye	6585	6501	13086	7330	7135	14465	1379	10.5
Ikeja	4981	5151	10132	6380	6847	13227	3095	30.5
Ikorodu	28786	29007	57793	27849	26209	54058	-3735	-6.5
Kosofe	9958	10528	20486	11109	11574	22683	2197	10.7
Lagos Island	4323	4864	9187	5547	5866	11413	2226	24.2
Lagos Mainland	7569	7659	15228	8863	8826	17689	2461	16.2
Mushin	8183	8807	16990	8475	8346	16821	-169	-1
Ojo	14465	14169	28634	15738	14161	29899	1265	4.42
Oshodi-Isolo	8821	9494	18315	9875	10418	20293	1978	10.8
Shomolu	6176	6425	12601	5897	6005	11902	-699	-5.5
Surulere	7692	8352	16044	9086	9246	18332	2288	14.3
Total	199456	203314	402770	223778	217110	440888	38118	9.46

Table 1 Source: Lagos State Pro forma and Annual School Census Report (2019)



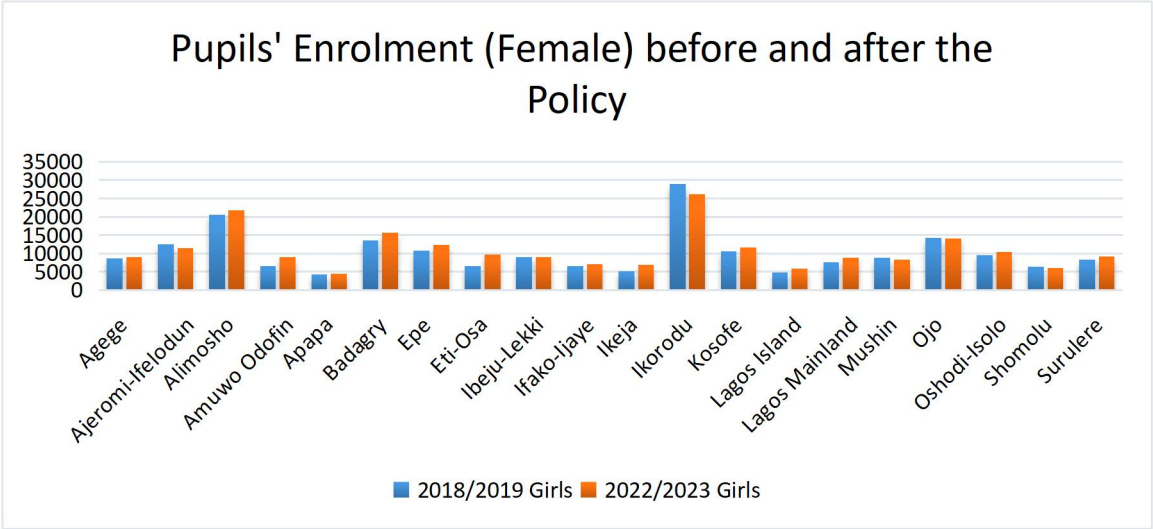
Table 1 shows the number of pupils enrolled in each of the 20 LGEAs in Lagos before the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy with PLNCBE 2018/2019 Enrolment at 40,2770 (Male- 199,456 and Female- 203314) and LNCBE 2022/2023 Enrolment at 440,888 (Male- 223,778 and Female- 217,110)

Chart 1: Male Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



Bar Chart 1
This chart shows the enrolment distribution of Male Pupils across all the 20 LGEAs before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy for the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions.

Chart 2: Female Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



Bar Chart 2
This chart shows the enrolment distribution of Female Pupils across all the 20 LGEAs before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy for the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions.

Research Objective Two: examine gender Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



	2018/2019 (PLNCBE) Before		2022/2023 (LNCBE) After			
LGEA	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Difference in Enrolment	% difference
Agege	8258	8703	9374	9059	1472	8.68
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	12336	12530	11948	11476	-1442	-5.8
Alimosho	21235	20627	23072	21713	2923	6.98
Amuwo Odofin	5801	6516	8719	8992	5394	43.8
Apapa	4121	4208	4679	4490	840	10.1
Badagry	14276	13553	17435	15704	5310	19.1
Epe	11026	10738	13232	12332	3800	17.5
Eti-Osa	5985	6474	9621	9737	6899	55.4
Ibeju-Lekki	8879	9008	9549	8974	636	3.56
Ifako-Ijaye	6585	6501	7330	7135	1379	10.5
Ikeja	4981	5151	6380	6847	3095	30.5
Ikorodu	28786	29007	27849	26209	-3735	-6.5
Kosofe	9958	10528	11109	11574	2197	10.7
Lagos Island	4323	4864	5547	5866	2226	24.2
Lagos Mainland	7569	7659	8863	8826	2461	16.2
Mushin	8183	8807	8475	8346	-169	-1
Ojo	14465	14169	15738	14161	1265	4.42
Oshodi-Isolo	8821	9494	9875	10418	1978	10.8
Shomolu	6176	6425	5897	6005	-699	-5.5
Surulere	7692	8352	9086	9246	2288	14.3
Total	199456	203314	223778	217110	38118	9.46

Table 2 shows that there is an increase in Female pupils' enrolment before (PLNCBE) than the Male pupils' enrolment, while the Male pupils' enrolment is higher after (LNCBE) than the Female pupils' enrolment.

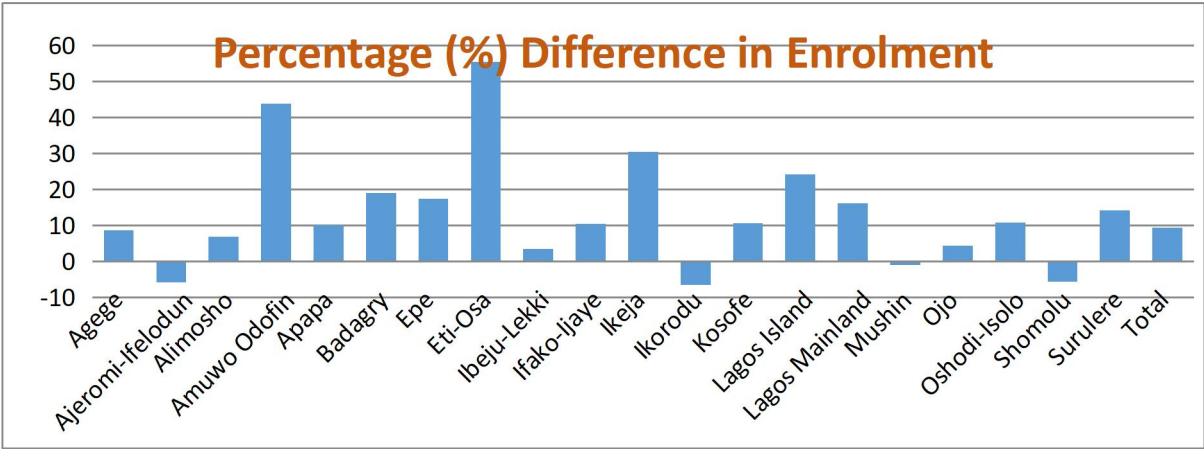
Chart 3: The percentage difference in enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



Bar Chart 3

This chart shows percentage difference in enrolment distribution across the 20 LGEAs before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy for the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions which is at 9.46% increase.

Chart 4: The difference in Enrolment in PPPS before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy throughout the 20 Local Governments in Lagos State.



Bar Chart 4

This chart shows the differences in enrolment distribution across the 20 LGEAs before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy for the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions with 38118 increase.

Research Hypotheses

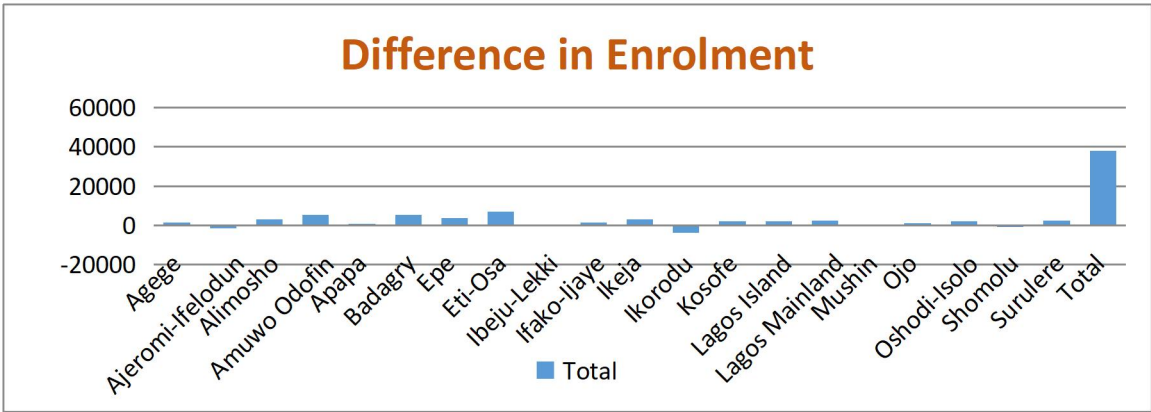
Testing the Null Hypotheses

H₁ : There is no significance difference in Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State.

Table

3: Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind in Lagos State Primary in the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions.

and





Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Before	20138.5000	20	11924.57707	2666.41649	-3.493	19	.002
	After	22044.4000	20	11175.38195	2498.89137			

Table 3

Table 3 shows the p-value of 0.002, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This means that we can reject the null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the means of the pupils' enrolment before and after the PLNCB.

In other words, the table shows that the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind (PLNCB) had a significant effect on Pupils' Enrolment, resulting in an increase in the mean value of the variable from 20138.5000 to 22044.4000.

H₂: There is no significant difference in male and female Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy in Lagos State.

Table 4: Male Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind in Lagos State in the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions.

Paired Samples Statistics (Male)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Before	9972.8000	20	6052.81004	1353.44947	-4.717	19	.000
	After	11188.9000	20	5880.06468	1314.82243			

Table 4

Table 4 shows the p-value of 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a statistically significant difference in the means of male pupils' enrolment before and after.

Table 5: Female pupils' enrolment before and after the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind in Lagos State in the 2018/2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions.

Paired Samples Statistics (Female)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Female Before	10165.7000	20	5877.94096	1314.34755	-2.322	19	.031
	Female After	10855.5000	20	5304.77737	1186.18428			

Table 5

Table 5 shows the p-value of 0.031, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a statistically significant difference in the means of female pupils' enrolment before and after the PLNCB.



In other words, the table shows that the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind (PLNCB) had a significant effect on female pupils' enrolment distribution in the two sessions, resulting in an increase in the mean value of the variables from 10165.7000 to 10855.5000.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis of this research, it can be concluded that the Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) Policy contributed to the increase in Public Pre-School and Primary School Enrolment in Lagos State by assessing the 20 Local Government Areas of the state in the 2018/ 2019 and 2022/2023 academic sessions. Also, in the study, it was observed that some local government areas had a drop in their enrolment for both male and female in the LNCBE 2022/2023 compared to the PLNCBE 2018/2019 in spite of the adoption of the Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) Policy in such local government areas which simplified the admission process. However, it was observed that female enrolment reduced after the policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) compared to their counterpart. Therefore, the policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind (LNCB) had a significant effect on male pupils' enrolment more than the female enrolment.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a significant positive change in Pupils' Enrolment before and after the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind in Lagos State Primary was created; and a significant positive change in male and female Enrolment after the Policy of Leave-No-Child-Behind in Lagos State.

Recommendations

1. Implications for Public Pre-schools and Primary Schools

The findings of this study have important implications for public pre-schools and primary schools in Lagos State which suggests that government needs to continue to invest in improving infrastructure, teacher training, and support systems to accommodate the increased enrolment resulting from the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy.

2. Implications for Policy Makers and Government

The study's findings provide valuable insights for policy makers and the government in Lagos State on the need for targeted interventions and resources to address the specific challenges faced by vulnerable and marginalized groups.

3. Recommendations for Improving the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to enhance the impact of the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy. These include strengthening public-private partnerships, expanding early childhood education programmes, and implementing targeted interventions to address barriers faced by disadvantaged children. Additionally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the policy's implementation will facilitate evidence-based policy development and ensure continuous improvement of the education system in Lagos State.

4. The National Orientation Agency

Based on the findings of this study, the National Orientation Agency should ensure that reorientation of the general populace is done to ensure that the girl-child goes to school through the mobilisation of resources that support parents involvement in the girl-child education and empowerment through education or schooling.



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