

A Systems of Provision Analysis of Private and Non-State Sector Engagements in
Nigerian Primary Education, 1945-2023: Forming and Reforming Region, Religion and
Gender

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Declaration

I, Lynsey Robinson, confirm that the work presented in my thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

The thesis examines the history of private and non-state sector engagements in the Nigerian primary education system from 1945 to 2023, focusing on three states in different regions of Nigeria with varying levels of private school enrolments. It draws on the Systems of Provision (SoP) approach to show that decisions around education are highly context-specific, shaped by cultures that emerge in conjunction with structures, processes, agents, agencies, and relations. Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, a large body of academic and policy research in Education and International Development (EID) has examined the role and impact of private and non-state sector actors in education, including research on private schools catering to low-income households, drawing attention to gender and other forms of inequalities associated with these engagements in education. Nigeria has been the site for many empirical studies investigating private schooling in primary education. However, this research was conducted out of concern that studies of private and non-state sector engagements in education systems paid little attention to gender or provided limited insight into historical factors. Taking a case study approach, incorporating historical documentary analysis and in-depth semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the education system in Nigeria, the thesis illuminates the historical contestations around the role of the private and non-state sectors in the primary education system over nearly a century. It has shown how the narratives underpinning these engagements have changed, from being linked to religious processes to concerns with access and enrolments in any form of school, shaped by the relationships between agents structured by political, economic and social configurations. Shifts in the primary education SoP that lead to greater or lesser roles for the private and non-state sectors are not gender neutral, and *who* provides education matters for how gender (in)equality is conceptualised and engaged with by those in positions of power. Private schools may provide increased access to schooling for *some* girls in *some* locations. From a systems perspective, it is possible to see that increasing access alone is not enough to transform gender structures and relations for greater equality.

Impact Statement

Over the past two decades, there has been significant debate around the involvement of the private and non-state sectors in education. The 2021/2 Global Education Monitoring Report, for example, focused on non-state actors in education, noting the "passionate debate" around this topic (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2021) and the complexity of issues surrounding the role of the private sector in education. Existing legal human rights frameworks, including the Abidjan Principles on the human rights obligations of States to provide public education and regulate private involvement in education, developed in 2019 by academic and advocacy experts, highlight that states are responsible for providing public education and regulating the private sector. In Nigeria, specifically, international agencies such as the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office have been supporting partnerships with private and non-state sector agencies in education via interventions including the DEEPEN and PLANE programmes.

Gender inequality in education is also a key concern at the international level. SDG 4, for example, aims to "eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations." Nigeria has one of the largest out-of-school rates in the world, with gender a significant factor, which UNICEF has identified as a key issue and essential for achieving SDG 4.

This research, conducted in collaboration with ActionAid UK and supported by ActionAid Nigeria, examines the impact of the private and non-state sectors on the primary education system in Nigeria, with a specific focus on gender inequalities. The thesis develops the Systems of Provision approach to critically analyse the role of the private and non-state sectors in education systems with the aim of achieving more equitable and inclusive education. The framework engages explicitly with gendered structures, relations and processes.

It is envisaged that the research will impact international development policy and practice, as the framework can be adapted to assess education systems and how interventions fit within existing systems within particular country contexts and histories. It is also envisaged that the framework will be adapted for advocacy work for CSOs and NGOs, such as ActionAid, to support their work around women's rights and gender equality. Specifically, the research will support ActionAid Nigeria's work on gender in this country context through the publication of a policy brief (under negotiation) highlighting private sector engagement in the Nigerian primary education system and how this affects gender and other inequalities. A dissemination event or other output with ActionAid UK is

also under negotiation. This workshop will serve as a platform through which to share the research findings and to discuss potential solutions and future actions

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Abbreviations

ACN	Action Congress of Nigeria
AD	Alliance for Democracy
ADFT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
AFED	Association of Formidable Education Development
AG	Action Group
ALC	Assumed Local Contribution
ANC	All Nigeria Congress
APC	All Progressives Congress
APEN	Association of Private Educators in Nigeria
APGA	All Progressive Grand Alliance
APP	All Peoples Party
APPS	Association of Private Proprietors of Schools
ASER	Annual Status of Education Reports
BREDA	UNESCO Region Office in Dakar
Bridge	Bridge International Academies
CAO	Compliance Advisor Ombudsman
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEID	Centre for Education and International Development
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CNC	Congress for National Consensus
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
CSEA	Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEEPEN	Developing Effective Private Education in Nigeria
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DPA	Distributable Pools Account
DPN	Democratic Party of Nigeria
EdoBest	Edo Basic Education Sector Transformation
EDOREN	Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria
EFA	Education for All
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
EI	Education International
EID	Education and International Development
EQUIPPPS	Equalities in Public Private Partnerships
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council

ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
EU	European Union
FAAC	Federation Account Allocation Committee
FCDO	Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FESSUD	Financialisation, Economy, Society, and Sustainable Development
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GAPS	graded assessments of private schools
GDM	Grassroots Democratic Movement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Global Education Monitoring Report
GNPP	Great Nigerian People's Party
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Initiative Nigeria
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGR	Internally Generated Revenue
IHDS-II	India Human Development Survey
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOE	Institute of Education
JAC	Joint Account Committee
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
LA	Local Authorities
LEAP	Liberian Education Advancement Programme
LEAPS	Learning and Achievement in Punjab Schools
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEC	Local Education Committee
LFPS	Low Fee Private School
LGA	Local Government Authority
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
LPM	Linear Probability Model
MC	Material Culture
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MoE	Ministry of Education

NA	Native Authority/Administration
NAPPS	National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools
NAPST	National Association of Private School Teachers
NAR	Net Attendance Ratio
NCNC	National Council of Nigeria Citizens / National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons
NCPN	National Centre Party of Nigeria
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NEDS	Nigeria Education Data Survey
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NEPU	Northern Elements Progressive Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP	National Gender Policy
NLC	Nigerian Labour Congress
NNDP	Nigerian National Democratic Party
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPE	National Policy on Education
NPEC	National Primary Education Commission
NPEF	National Primary Education Fund
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NPP	Nigerian People's Party
NRC	National Republican Convention
NUT	Nigeria Union of Teachers
NYM	Nigeria Youth Movement
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
ORF	Oral Reading Fluency
PAL	People's Action for Learning
PDM	Peoples Democratic Movement
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PEIP	Primary Education Improvement Project
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLANE	Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRIMR	Primary Math and Reading Initiative
PRP	People's Redemption Party
PSSoP	Public Sector Systems of Provision
PTA	Parent-Teacher Associations
PTF	Presidential Task Force

RA	Research Assistant
RAS	Revenue Allocation Scheme
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
RISE	Research on Improving Systems of Education
SABER	Systems Approach to Better Education Results
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SBMC	School-Based Management Committee
SD	Standard Deviation
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SoP	Systems of Provision
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
UBE-IF	Universal Basic Education Intervention Fund
UCL	University College London
UGPA	United Grand Progressive Alliance
UK	United Kingdom
UNCP	United Nigeria Congress Party
UNECA	United National Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPN	Unity Party of Nigeria
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VA	Voluntary Agency
WMS	Wesleyan Missionary Society

Currencies

N/NGN	Nigerian Naira
£	British Pound
\$	United States Dollar

Chapter 1. Introduction

The thesis is a detailed historical study of the Nigerian primary education system and the role of the private and non-state sectors within it, covering the period from 1945 to 2023, and aims to contribute to research on the role and impact of these sectors in education systems in low- and middle-income countries. The study explores the interplay of political, economic, social, and cultural factors shaping the education system and the involvement of the private and non-state sectors, including an analysis of how education is provided and accessed across various dimensions, such as gender, location, and religion.

The role and impact of the private sector in education in low- and middle-income countries became a key focus of research and policy in Education and International Development (EID) in the 2000s and 2010s (Verger et al., 2019). Private schools targeting children from low-income households, known as low-fee private schools (LFPS),¹ offering a significantly lower fee structure than high-fee and elite private schools, have been a particularly contentious topic, resulting in extensive public debate (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2021). Several studies in contexts such as India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan show that an expanded role of the private sector in education is associated with increased social stratification and gender inequalities (Asadullah, Chakrabarti and Chaudhury, 2012; Alcott and Rose, 2015; Narwana, 2019; Srivastava, 2006). However, these studies do not consider how the private and non-state sectors affect the education system more broadly, how they became features of education systems, or the contestations around the meanings associated with education and the cultures surrounding it.

Nigeria was selected as the focus of this study due to the high rates of private and non-state sector engagement in primary education in some states, alongside gender and regional inequalities in access. Data from UNESCO shows that Nigeria has the largest population of out-of-school children of primary school age in the world, with the majority of these children from the poorest households living in rural areas (GEM Report, 2022; Oyekan, Ayorinde and Adenuga, 2023). This number increased between 2000 and 2020, from 6.4 million in 2000 to 9.6 million in 2020 (UNESCO, 2022).

The role of the private and non-state sectors in expanding access to primary education has been a focus of international agencies, such as the UK government's development aid agency, the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO). The Developing Effective Private Education in Nigeria (DEEPEN) programme (2013-2019) supported private school markets in some parts of Nigeria

¹ Low cost and affordable private schools are also used to describe this type of school (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2021, p. 40).

and provided a UK£3.45 million grant to a for-profit private school chain (Unterhalter and Robinson, 2020). A more recent intervention is the 2019 Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (PLANE) – worth £170 million to be spent over nine years (2019-2028) – which has also emphasised supporting and working through non-state and private schools, as seen in the following extract from the PLANE Business Case (FCDO, 2020, p. 12):

Surveys show that non-state schools, including low-cost private schools, have produced higher learning outcomes for children than public schools, even when teachers are similarly qualified and where children have similarly poor backgrounds – demonstrating the potential for non-state providers to contribute to addressing Nigeria’s learning crisis.

Nigeria has also been a key setting for influential studies on private schooling for low- and middle-income households (Dixon, Humble and Tooley, 2017; Härmä, 2013a, 2016a; Rolleston and Adefeso-Olateju, 2014; Rose and Adelabu, 2007; Tooley, Dixon and Olaniyan, 2005). A substantial focus of this literature on private schooling in Nigeria centres on states such as Lagos, which have very high enrolment rates in private primary schools (Härmä, 2013a; Tooley, Dixon and Olaniyan, 2005; Tooley and Dixon, 2006). Comparatively, less attention has been given to understanding how this phenomenon may impact the broader education system in other states. While one study of private schooling in Lagos from the World Bank's Systems Approach to Better Education Results (SABER) does take a systems perspective on private schooling (Baum et al., 2017), the study's scope is limited to Lagos and offers limited insights into the national education system. Further, studies of private schooling in Nigeria do not tend to situate data on private school enrolments within a historical context. This lack of engagement with systemic and historical processes, combined with the absence of analysis of gender as structure, process, and relation in education, has prompted the inquiry in this thesis.

The PhD received funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in collaboration with ActionAid UK, an NGO that has been at the forefront of work on the right to education, including research and advocacy around financing (ActionAid International, 2023), as well as at the school level, for example, through the "Promoting Rights in Schools" framework (ActionAid International, 2021). ActionAid Nigeria has been operating in the country since the 2000s, focusing on gender justice and human rights, including education (ActionAid Nigeria, no date). ActionAid's work on the right to education and its emphasis on creating inclusive education systems further influenced the study's focus on the Nigerian education system and attention to how private sector engagements affect gender.

The study draws on the Systems of Provision (SoP) approach formulated by Bayliss and Fine (2020). The SoP approach is a political economy framework that maps the processes, structures, agents and agencies, material cultures, and relations involved in providing a good or service. The approach was initially developed by Fine and Leopold (1993) in the early 1990s and further developed throughout the 2000s and 2010s (Bayliss and Fine, 2020). The analytic framing of the SoP approach is used in this study to better understand private and non-state sector engagements in the Nigerian primary education system. Drawing on this framing, I understand education systems as reflecting social, economic, and political structures and processes. Therefore, a highly stratified education system may indicate that broader society is also highly stratified, with significant disparities in wealth and inequalities related to gender, ethnicity, and religion (Reay, 2012). Chapter 3 discusses the SoP approach and how it has been applied to education in further depth, alongside contrasting it with three other understandings of education systems (SABER, RISE, and complex systems) developed by other writers on this theme.

A central concern of this thesis is around who provides education, i.e., whether it is solely the state, solely private providers, solely non-state providers or a combination. A national education system will still form a system, whether completely devoid of private and non-state providers or solely reliant on private and non-state providers. However, who provides education changes the provisioning system, including its cultures. These shifts impact relationships within the system, such as those between parents and teachers, and pupils and teachers. The impact of these changes becomes particularly notable when there are direct costs associated with education, including the charging of fees, whether by the state or private providers (and once again, how fees are charged and by whom matters for the cultures surrounding education). Gender, ethnicity, religion and other markers of difference shape these interactions and relationships within the system.

Specific forms of education provision may be associated with a specific gender, ethnicity, or religion. For instance, in some cultures, specific education programmes may be closely associated with masculinity, such as engineering and computing, whereas "personal services and training for office work" may be more closely associated with femininity (Pearse and Connell, 2016, p. 35). Similarly, private schools may be associated with boys from elite backgrounds in certain regions, such as Britain (Kuriloff and Reichert, 2003; Reeves et al., 2017). In contrast, public schools may be linked with working-class boys and girls, reflecting (and reinforcing) inequalities within wider society. Further, in some contexts, such as Britain and Canada, women teachers may have secure employment in state schools but encounter obstacles when seeking advancement into managerial positions, connected to ideas of masculinity and femininity (Kelleher De et al., 2011; Skelton, 2002). In systems with little legislation protecting teachers, privatisation processes may lead to more

insecure and poorly paid forms of employment (de Saxe, Bucknovitz and Mahoney-Mosedale, 2020; Stromquist, 2018).

Relationships are central to the functioning of an education system, encompassing economic, political, social, emotional, cognitive, and pedagogical relations, including those within the classroom involving interactions between teachers and pupils, and between parents and teachers. These relations involve interpersonal and socio-emotional connections that may be rooted in love, characterised by hooks (2013, p. 159) as "a combination of care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust." However, these relationships can also include those built on fear, competition, power, authority, and domination (hooks, 2013). These interactions are shaped by markers of difference (gender, ethnicity, religion), which can be reinforced and challenged within the classroom. Forms of discrimination can manifest in explicit ways, such as denying certain groups, notably girls, access to further education or specific courses. Relationships or interactions are not free-floating but are constrained by the structural forms of an education system, such as patterns of ownership and delivery. Additionally, they are influenced by various processes that directly or indirectly impact education, including commodification, decentralisation, and religion.

My interest in this topic developed during my master's in Education, Gender, and International Development at the IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society in London in 2016. Having previously worked as a teacher in a private school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, I became interested in the role of the private and non-state sectors in education systems in low- and middle-income countries. The master's programme allowed me to explore the literature on this, particularly around girls' education projects. After completing my master's, I began working for the ESRC-funded Equalities in Public Private Partnerships (EQUIPPPS) project in 2017, which investigated Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and inequalities in the UK, India, and South Africa. While working on this project, it became evident that there was a research gap on privatisation processes from a systems perspective, particularly within specific national contexts, such as Nigeria, as well as a lack of attention to gender (Gideon and Unterhalter, 2020).

During my involvement in the EQUIPPPS project, I began to work on a research project commissioned by Education International (EI), a global federation of teachers' unions, comparing quality and equalities in public schools, LFPS, and an international private school chain in Lagos, Nigeria (Unterhalter, Robinson and Ibrahim, 2018; Unterhalter and Robinson, 2020). Further, in 2019/20, I was part of a study commissioned by ActionAid, examining the private sector's compliance with the *Abidjan Principles on the Human Rights Obligations of States in providing public education and regulating private involvement in education* in Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, and

Tanzania (Unterhalter et al., 2020). This research alerted me to the highly contentious nature of debates surrounding private sector engagements in education and how these debates sometimes resulted in research lacking depth and attention to historical processes and contextual specificities. This type of analysis would provide valuable insights into the effects of private sector engagements in education systems and their impact on inequalities within the system.

Definitional framing and categorisation of private education

This thesis focuses on forms of private and non-state education catering to children from lower-income households in Nigeria, such as LFPS. However, while researching private education, it became clear that the terms "private" and "non-state" are often used interchangeably or imprecisely within the field of EID.

In this thesis, "non-state" encompasses agents and agencies that are typically not profit-driven, although they may charge fees, and operate with a degree of independence from the state. This category includes Christian mission schools established during the colonial period (Kallaway, 2009, 2020; Swartz and Kallaway, 2018); Islamic schools, such as *Tsangaya* and *Ilmi* schools, which focus on *Qur'ānic* and Islamic studies (Bano, 2017; Kurfi, 2022); and community schools managed and funded by local communities (Kitaev, 1999). Other forms of non-state engagement in the education system can include community contributions through School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), which may provide in-kind contributions or direct financial support to schools (Gersberg et al., 2016).

The "private sector" in education in this thesis describes market-oriented (often for-profit) forms of education provision that rely on user fees to cover some or all of their expenses, maintaining a degree of financial independence from the state (Aslam, Rawal and Saeed, 2018). This definition includes low, medium, and high-fee private schools. It also encompasses private supplementary tutoring, often termed "shadow education" (Bray, 2021; Bray and Kwo, 2013). These different types of private and non-state sector engagements in the Nigerian education system are discussed later in this chapter.

The definitions of the private and non-state sectors in education used in this thesis also include a range of financing and management modalities. Srivastava (2020, p. 14) provides a comprehensive overview of ownership, financing, and contracting relationships between state and non-state agents and agencies in a background paper for the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) 2021/22 (see Table 1). The overview distinguishes between schools that are wholly financed and owned independently of the state and those that are owned by the private and non-state sectors but

receive state financing, with or without a contract. These schools may operate as for-profit or not-for-profit entities (Srivastava, 2020, p. 14).

Table 1 School Typology by Ownership, Financing, and Contracting Relationship

School Type	Description	Ownership	Contract with State	Financing
Independent, non-state	Owned by non-state actors and financed typically through fees or costs raised by non-state actors via philanthropic donations (can be for profit, not-for-profit).	Non-state	No	Non-state
Non-state-owned, state-funded	It is owned and managed by a non-state actor but receives state funding. However, the funding is not outlined in a contract on a per-student basis.	Non-state	No	State
Non-state contracted	Owned and managed by non-state actors (e.g. NGOs, charities, civil society groups, commercial entities) with funding from the government based	Non-state	Yes	State

	on a contract with funding depending on certain conditions.			
Non-state management	State-owned but non-state-operated and managed.	State	Yes	State
Market contracted	Public schools, private contracted schools or private management schools are implicitly contracted by the student such that the funding follows the student to the school of their choice (e.g. vouchers).	State and non-state (mixed)	Not necessarily. The 'contract' is implicit with the students, i.e. funding follows the student through flows attached to student choice.	State

Source: Adapted from Srivastava (2020, p. 14).

Some private and non-state schools are situated within arrangements of PPPs (Table 1). Broadly defined, PPPs are partnerships between the public and non-state and private sectors, encompassing a range of financing and management arrangements. An illustrative example of an education PPP is the Liberian Education Advancement Programme (LEAP), in which the Liberian Ministry of Education contracted with eight private and non-state education providers to manage 93 public schools in 2016 (Romero and Sandefur, 2019). In this arrangement, the state covered the costs associated with educating pupils in the schools, including teachers' salaries, while the non-state and private providers assumed the management of the schools (Romero and Sandefur, 2019). Table 2 demonstrates that PPPs in education can be conceptualised from low to high levels of non-state and private sector involvement and low levels of state involvement (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaqueta, 2009, p. 17). In "low PPP" environments, the state fully funds and manages schools,

followed by situations in which private schools are permitted to operate but do not receive additional funding from the state (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaqueta, 2009, p. 17). At the other extreme, in a "high PPP" environment, private providers assume complete management of the schools, and funding is tied to student enrolment; schools receive funding only when parents choose to send their children there (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaqueta, 2009, pp. 17–18).

Table 2 Education PPP Environments from Low to High

Low PPP					High PPP
Lacks	Nascent	Emerging	Moderate	Engaged	Integral
Strictly public systems (regulation, finance, provision)	Private schools exist	Subsidies to inputs in private schools	Contracts with private schools to provide a portion of education	Private management of public schools	Vouchers: Funding follows students

Source: Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaqueta (2009, p. 16).

The thesis explores how the nature of non-state and private sector engagement, including the range of forms of PPPs, in the Nigerian primary education system has shifted between 1945 and 2023. Until the late 1960s, primary education in southern Nigeria was primarily provided by Voluntary Agencies (VAs), a term used by the British colonial regime. This category included schools established by Christian missions, as well as some private institutions founded by companies and individuals. In the northern region, *Qur'ānic* and Islamic schools dominated the education landscape in this period. *Tsangaya* (*Almajirai* or *Qur'ānic*) schools focused on memorising the *Qur'ān* and *Ilmi* schools were for young adults studying Islamic texts under senior scholars (Bano, 2017; Kurfi, 2022). *Almajiri*, a term used in Hausa, refers to *Qur'ānic* school students under the care of a mallam, with communities expected to provide support through donations (Kurfi, 2022). Some of these Islamic schools began to be integrated into the formal education system from the 1950s. These forms of education provision fall within the non-state sector category.

In the 1970s, both private schools owned and operated by individuals and Christian mission schools faced greater government intervention and takeover, with a large reduction in private and non-state schools at the end of the 1970s. By the middle of the 1980s, private schools, owned by individuals and wholly dependent on fees with a profit-orientation began to emerge in greater numbers in urban centres, catering to middle-class families and offering an alternative to the government-

provided education system. Since the middle of the 1990s in Nigeria, LFPS have become an important feature of the education landscape, particularly in urban areas and southern states. These forms of education provision fall within the private sector category.

Across Africa, LFPS became a feature of the education landscape in the 1980s and 1990s, in both urban and rural areas, sometimes termed "street schools" or "bush schools" in this early period (Kitaev, 1999). Some of these schools catered to nomadic children and were also established in regions like the Copperbelt in Zambia (Kitaev, 1999). Several studies have highlighted the complexity of categorising LFPS (Srivastava, 2013; Zuilkowski, Piper and Ong'ele, 2020). Srivastava (2013, p. 15) suggests that an LFPS could be defined as such if the monthly fee is equivalent to one day's labour of a daily wage labourer (the lowest-paid worker group). Some studies categorise LFPS as such when fees are less than 10 percent of the household income of a family living on the poverty line (\$2 per day) (Tooley and Longfield, 2016). However, it is important to note the debate around the definition of poverty lines, whether it is set at \$1 or \$2 or other thresholds, within academic and policy circles (Ravallion, 2016). Such definitions are highly arbitrary and may not be "adequately anchored in any specification of the real requirements of human beings" (Reddy and Pogge, 2010, p. 43). A similar point applies to the classification of LFPS based on poverty lines as a criterion for determining their affordability for poor households. This approach overlooks the multifaceted and wide range of factors that can impede individuals' access to a private school or their participation in education, extending beyond affordability.

Other forms of private and non-state sector engagements form part of the Nigerian primary education system but are not the focus of this thesis. This includes medium-and-high-fee private schools and forms of supplementary tutoring. In Nigeria, high-fee private schools in Lagos have been defined as schools charging over 85,605 NGN (\$238) per year for tuition and registration fees, costs of exams/tests, report cards, and building development/maintenance (EDOREN, 2018a). A study of private secondary schools in Lagos categorised high-fee private schools as 'mid-range' (\$2000-\$4000 per year), 'upper-range' (\$4000-\$9000 per year), and 'elite' (over \$9000 per year), including boarding and tuition fees (Cheung Judge, 2023) - highlighting the wide range of fee categories. These schools can also include international private schools. Studies of elite and high-fee private schools in Lagos highlight their elite and highly selective nature (Ayling, 2024; Cheung Judge, 2023). Medium-fee private schools fall between high-and- low-fee private schools, charging between 42,802 NGN and 85,605 NGN (\$120-\$238) per year in Lagos (EDOREN, 2018a). Given the thesis' focus on systems-level issues and expanding access to education for all children, especially those from low-income households, these schools, which remain out of reach for the vast majority of the population, are not included in the analysis.

The private sector in education also encompasses private supplementary tutoring (Bray, 2021). Bray (2021, p. 6) uses the metaphor "shadow education" because of how this tutoring "mimics" the formal school curriculum. It may be provided by teachers working as part-time tutors or by tutorial companies, and can be delivered "one-to-one, in small groups, in large lecture theatres, or over the internet" (Bray, 2021, p. viii). While most research on shadow education has been conducted in East and South Asia, with some studies in Europe and North America, there is considerably less research in Africa, including Nigeria (Akinrinmade, 2023; Bray, 2021). Akinrinmade's (2023) thesis, which includes both binary logistic regression analysis of LEARNigeria's national household survey data (2017/18) and thematic analysis of interviews with 15 parents from Lagos, Kano, and Abia states, is one of the few studies exploring private tutoring in Nigeria. Of the household survey sample, the majority (76.3 percent) were enrolled in public primary schools, with only 1.9 percent receiving "assistance from private tutors" (Akinrinmade, 2023, p. 105). As the focus of this thesis is on the entire primary education system and access to education for all children, particularly those from lower-income households, private supplementary tutoring is not included in the analysis.

While these various forms of private and non-state sector engagement are part of the education landscape in Nigeria, this thesis focuses specifically on LFPS and other forms of non-state engagement that cater to children from lower-income households. This focus aligns with both national and international commitments to ensuring access to quality primary education for all children. Within this context, LFPS have gained attention in both national and international policy circles, as well as within EID, for their role in contributing to these goals (Tooley, 2013). Thus, the thesis focuses on forms of private and non-state engagement that align with these objectives and are viewed as expanding access to education for the majority of the population, in line with its systems perspective on primary education.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis begins in Chapter 2, reviewing English-language literature on private sector and non-state actors' involvement in education in low- and middle-income countries, focusing on gender and inequalities. Chapter 3 identifies four approaches to education systems in EID and discusses how each approach deals with the private sector and inequalities. The SoP approach is discussed in full in Chapter 3. The methodological approach taken in the study is discussed in Chapter 4, followed by an overview of historical and contextual information on Nigeria relevant to the study in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 applies the SoP framework to the Nigerian education system between 1945 and 1960, the period immediately preceding independence, followed by Chapter 7, which covers the 1960s and 1970s, Chapter 8 analyses the primary education SoP in the 1980s and 1990s, and Chapter 9 focuses on the period from 1999 until 2023. The thesis concludes in Chapter 10.

Chapter 2. Inequalities and Private and Non-State Schooling in Low- and-Middle-Income Contexts

This chapter reviews the literature on education privatisation in low- and middle-income contexts, identifying three key themes: access, choice, and quality; access, choice, and inequality; and governance of the private sector. The review considers literature published between 1999 and 2023, a period marked by increasing attention to private and non-state actors in providing education, coinciding with global commitments to achieving Education for All (EFA) and expanding access to primary schooling. The review primarily focuses on private schooling in these contexts, given the thesis' concern with LFPS, but it also considers other forms of non-state sector provision aimed at expanding access to primary education. Literature on this topic has expanded since the mid-2000s, as noted in Verger et al.'s (2019) study, which employed bibliometric and social network analysis techniques to examine academic and development agency literature on PPPs and education privatisation.

An important point is the geographical focus and language constraints on the review, which predominantly centres on global majority contexts where English is a primary or official language, notably contexts that were former British colonies, including India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. Literature in French, Arabic, Swahili, Hausa, and other languages widely spoken in Africa have not been included in this review, which may have provided alternative perspectives and knowledge. Another connected issue is that the literature covered in this chapter primarily originates from academic journals, books, and chapters published in the global North, underscoring the persistent influence of colonial structures within academia (Asare, Mitchell and Rose, 2021). However, the chapter does provide a review of the dominant forms of knowledge in the academic literature within the field of EID on private schooling and privatisation processes.

Choice, Access, and Quality

In the early 2000s, studies on private and non-state schools in low- and-middle-income contexts were conducted against the backdrop of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the push to expand access to primary and secondary education (Phillipson, 2008; Rose, 2006). This period witnessed a questioning of the state's ability to provide EFA in these contexts.

Some researchers began to describe the expansion of the private sector, notably the establishment of LFPS, as "de facto privatisation" (Grant, 2017; Rolleston and Adefeso-Olateju, 2014; Tooley and Dixon, 2006). This term describes shifting responsibility for education away from the state and onto the private sector "through the rapid growth of private schools" (Tooley and Dixon, 2006, p. 444); a

shift that was not driven by changes to legislation or policy but rather "a bottom-up process of 'parents voting with their feet'" (Rolleston and Adefeso-Olateju, 2014, p. 26). In some of this literature, privatisation was viewed as a natural response to "the failures of government provision" (Tooley and Dixon, 2006, p. 445). In this way, the increase in private schools in low- and middle-income contexts was portrayed as stemming from parental demand against the backdrop of national and international commitments to primary education for all.

Although some studies hint at the complex dynamics surrounding private sector growth, parental demand for schooling, and public financing, this aspect is left underdeveloped in the analysis and conclusions made in these studies, which tends to position low-income families as choosing private schools and private providers as filling this gap (Härmä, 2016b; Oketch et al., 2010; Rose, 2005). For example, Rose's (2005) study on decentralisation and privatisation in Malawi argues that expanding primary education through the Free Primary Education programme in 1994 created a surge in demand for secondary schooling, which the public sector failed to meet. In Nairobi, Kenya, the increase in private sector provision has also been attributed to a shortage of public schools in rapidly growing urban areas and demand for shorter travel distances to school (Oketch et al., 2010). Härmä's (2016b) study of the private schooling market in Maputo, Mozambique, aimed to document government and non-government schools in selected poor neighbourhoods of Maputo. The study found that while there was limited demand for non-state primary schools, there was some demand for non-state pre-primary and secondary schools. Concerning secondary schooling, Härmä (2016b, p. 525) argued that "the demand for community and church-owned schools highlights a strong desire for high-quality education, which the government sector appears to be failing to provide." Similarly, at the pre-primary level, the proliferation of private providers is considered by Härmä (2016b) as a response to the lack of government provision and parental demand for this level of education. However, the study does not critically engage with the origins of the education market, such as why education is treated as a "market" in the first place, with the government being just one provider among many.

Choice and Access

Choice is a key element in the literature on private schooling provision in low- and middle-income contexts. For example, several studies aim to understand why parents and caregivers opt for specific schools, whether public or private (Ahmed et al., 2013; Härmä, 2013a). One example of this research is a household survey conducted in 2012 in Lagos, Nigeria, for the UK's then Department for International Development (DFID).² This survey included interviews with decision-makers responsible

² DFID became the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in 2020.

for education choices within 1,001 households across 101 Census Enumeration Areas (Tooley and Yngstrom, 2014). Using qualitative methods and a comparative case study of three densely populated areas in Lagos, the research team interviewed parents to gain a deeper understanding of household decisions regarding school choice (Yngstrom, 2014). This survey revealed that the key factors influencing parents' school choices included the quality of the school and its teachers, as well as proximity to their homes (Tooley and Yngstrom, 2014; Yngstrom, 2014) – with proximity a key factor found in other studies conducted in parts of India (Kumar and Choudhury, 2021; Srivastava, 2006) but not in some contexts such as Kenya (Zuilkowski et al., 2017). Qualitative interviews with 38 households in the three areas of Lagos further highlighted that parents often chose private schools for younger children due to large class sizes and teacher shortages in government schools (Yngstrom, 2014). Moreover, the survey indicated that 95 percent of caregivers, spanning various income levels, believed that children in private schools received better care than in government schools (Tooley and Yngstrom, 2014, p. 17).

While emphasising the element of choice in studies of private schooling, some research is explicitly hostile toward state provision (Tooley, 2013; Tooley and Dixon, 2005). Tooley's work, for example, significantly influenced policy circles within EID, drawing attention to the phenomenon of LFPS and advocating for their expansion (Wilby, 2013). An example is Tooley's (2013, first published 2009) account of his travels across China, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, where he "discovered" LFPS and subsequently began to view them as a credible alternative to state schooling. The following extract highlights this position (Tooley, 2013, pp. 26–27):

The more I read of this evidence, the more it appeared that development experts were missing an obvious conclusion: If we wish to reach the 'education for all' target of universal quality primary education by 2015, as agreed to by governments and non-governmental organisations in 2000, surely we should be looking to the private sector to play a significant role, given the clear importance of its role already?

Tooley's position on LFPS was influenced by EG West's theory regarding private and non-state involvement in education in 19th-century England, which challenged the state's role in education provisioning (Tooley, 2008). For Tooley (Tooley and Dixon, 2006), the existence of LFPS provided evidence that the state was not a necessary component in the management of education and only minimally in the financing, such as through vouchers for the poorest households. Tooley's perspective argued that private schools catering to children from low-income families should be recognised as valuable contributors to achieving the goal of universal quality primary education and promoting parents' choices in education (Tooley, 2013).

An underlying assumption in some of this research is that greater choice encourages competition among schools, leading to better learning outcomes (Levin, 1991a, 1991b). Choice has been regarded as "one of the major tenets of both a market economy and a democratic society [...] considered to be something inherently good and a crucial indicator of the freedom of a people" (Levin, 1991b, p. 137). An illustrative example of this approach is the voucher model, initially proposed by Friedman (1962) in his book "Capitalism and Freedom," which advocated denationalising public schools and providing vouchers to those unable to afford private school fees. A key concern was fostering diversity, as he believed the public school system encouraged excessive conformity (Friedman, 1962, p. 97). This work was grounded in the belief that a market-based system could enhance the quality of education (Adnett and Davies, 2002, p. 9). Central to this argument was the idea that dissatisfied parents could choose to leave a particular school, which would encourage schools to either improve due to the loss of students and revenue or face closure (Friedman, 1962).

One of the issues, however, with the literature reviewed in this section is a lack of critical engagement with concepts associated with markets, including choice and competition in education. This lack of critical engagement frequently masks an underlying ideological commitment to markets and capitalist forms of development, associating it with democracy (Levin, 1991b). Further, there is a lack of engagement in this literature around how these concepts came to be accepted within research and policy circles in EID.

Choice and Quality

The literature on learning outcomes and private and non-state school provision represents a highly influential strand of research in this field, focusing on comparing learning outcomes across various types of schools (Alcott and Rose, 2015; EDOREN, 2018a; Gruijters, Alcott and Rose, 2021). An important argument supporting school choice is that it leads to competition between providers incentivised to improve education quality as they compete for customers (Tooley and Dixon, 2006). However, Day Ashley et al.'s (2014, p. 15) rigorous review of evidence on private schools in developing countries highlighted the challenges associated with accounting for the social background of students when comparing learning outcomes across school types.

Some studies do find a "private school premium"; for instance, Bold et al. (2011) conducted a study comparing learning outcomes in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam between public and private primary schools. Without controlling for any variables, they discovered a raw achievement gap ranging from 14.7 percent to 22.2 percent between 1998 and 2005 (Bold et al., 2011, p. 3). To further investigate, the authors employed regression analysis using the average

scores across public and private schools as the dependent variable, considering factors such as gender, district, and year. Their findings revealed a significant gap between public and private schools, with a "causal exam performance premium of one standard deviation delivered by private schools" (Bold et al., 2011, p. 11). Similarly, Baum and Riley (2019) employed propensity score matching and a Heckman selection model in Kenya. Analysing the test results of 4,433 sixth-grade students from 2007, they compared test results in public and private schools and found that students in "private schools outperform public schools by 77 points (.83 SD) in math and 76 points (.76 SD) in reading" (Baum and Riley, 2019, p. 119). When controlling for the socio-economic background of students in their statistical model, they found that this "advantage" reduces to 41.8 points (.45 SD) in math and 38.2 points (.38 SD) in reading (Baum and Riley, 2019).

In some studies, comparing learning outcomes, however, the differences between public and private schools are negligible. Zuilkowski, Piper and Ong'ele (2020) compared "learning gains" in LFPS (termed low-cost private schools in the study) and public schools in Kenya. The study analysed residual gain scores in English and Kiswahili literacy and mathematics test scores of 326 children in the first and second grades across 47 LFPS and public schools in 12 zones within Nairobi County, Kenya, over two academic years. Some of these LFPS and public schools were part of the USAID and DFID-funded Primary Mathematics and Reading Initiative (PRIMR), "a high-quality, structured literacy and mathematics intervention" (Zuilkowski, Piper and Ong'ele, 2020, p. 16); this meant there were four groups of schools (control public, control LFPS, PRIMR public, and PRIMR LFPS) (Zuilkowski, Piper and Ong'ele, 2020, p. 11). The study revealed no statistically significant increase in students' scores over time in control LFPS compared to control public schools (Zuilkowski, Piper and Ong'ele, 2020, p. 13). However, when comparing LFPS and public schools participating in PRIMR, the study found that LFPS produced a statistically significant increase in learning outcomes compared to public schools.

Studies, including those by Alcott and Rose (2015, 20156) and Gruijters, Alcott and Rose (2021), have incorporated socio-economic factors into their statistical models, revealing a significant narrowing of the learning gains observed in private schools. Gruijters, Alcott and Rose (2021) compared learning outcomes in public and private schools across Kenya, Uganda, rural Pakistan, and rural India. This analysis drew on household survey data from the 2013-18 People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network, which assessed numeracy, English, and local language literacy.³ The study focused on primary school Grades Two to Six. The authors employed "household fixed-effect estimates" in their

³ PAL Network encompasses "citizen-led assessments to evaluate basic literacy and numeracy competencies" in ASER India, ASER Pakistan, Uwezo Kenya, and Uwezo Uganda (Gruijters et al., 2021, pp. 647–648).

analysis, and compared them to a "simple ordinary least squares (OLS) regression" that excluded controls for family background (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 649). Specifically, they estimated "the difference between children in the same household, where one attends a private school and the other a state school" (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 648), which applied to 4.6 percent of sampled children in Kenya, 12.1 percent in Uganda, 3.8 percent in rural Pakistan, and 12.1 percent in rural India (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021). A key argument made in the study is that "the private school effect observed in a household fixed-effect should be interpreted as an upper bound on the causal effect of private schooling" due to factors like "peer effects," "selection ability of some private schools," and "within-household selection" (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 649): factors that may result in higher-ability children attending private schools. Regarding their findings on learning outcomes, after using household fixed-effect models to control for household and community-level characteristics, the authors compared "these estimates to OLS regression estimates without any controls for family background" (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 652). The study revealed that "before controlling for family background, private school children had a 10-percentage-point higher probability of being able to read in Pakistan, increasing to 22 percentage points in Kenya" (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 653). However, after controlling for family background, Grujters, Alcott and Rose (2021, p. 653) found that this advantage dropped to eight percentage points in Kenya and became "nonsignificant" in rural Pakistan.

In the same study, Grujters, Alcott and Rose (2021, p. 654) also examined whether the observed "private school advantage" in "the household fixed-effect models differed by family background." They conducted separate analyses for households in different wealth quintiles, specifically, the bottom two quintiles, the second and third quintiles, and the top quintiles (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 654). Their findings indicated "no major differences in the effect of private schooling for poorer and wealthier children" (Grujters, Alcott and Rose, 2021, p. 654). These findings highlight the importance of accounting for pupils' socio-economic background in comparative studies of private and public schools.

While studies of this nature caution against broad generalisations regarding whether public or private forms of education result in better learning outcomes, an over-reliance on quantitative methods tends to reduce complex and historically constituted economic, political, social, and cultural dynamics to numerical data. This limitation halts a more comprehensive exploration of the underlying mechanisms contributing to the disparities revealed in statistical comparisons of learning outcomes.

This reductionism is also found in studies of PPPs and education outcomes. One of the conclusions drawn from a systematic review and meta-analysis of empirical studies of PPPs conducted between 2008 and 2020 and limited to those measuring student learning outcomes using experimental or quasi-experimental research designs, is the importance of understanding context and the need to exercise caution when concluding whether the state or the private sector can provide better learning outcomes (Crawford, Hares and Todd, 2023). This research was built upon earlier reviews of PPPs (Aslam, Rawal and Saeed, 2018; LaRocque, 2008; Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaqueta, 2009). The review encompassed 12 studies with 22 results, consisting of four Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) – studies that randomly assigned vouchers for private school attendance – and eight "value-added" model studies that utilised longitudinal student data to control for prior achievement (Crawford, Hares and Todd, 2023, p. 3). Geographically, seven studies were conducted in India, with the remainder in Pakistan, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Peru (Crawford, Hares and Todd, 2023, p. 4). An important conclusion drawn from this review is the significant heterogeneity in operators and the design of PPPs, making it difficult to compare outcomes across various contexts and providers. Similarly, Aslam, Rawal and Saeed's (2018) review of the evidence on PPPs in education found insufficient evidence to support the claim that they improve learning outcomes.

Examining the evidence for one particular provider, Bridge International Academies (Bridge), underscores the importance of understanding the political, economic, and social context in which learning occurs. In 2022, results were published from an RCT comparing the learning outcomes of children enrolled in Bridge (which has a "highly standardised approach to education") with children in government and other private schools in Kenya (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022). Data for the study included scholarship application information for pupils from 2015, providing background and demographic information for pupils and families, as well as end-of-term test results. Phone surveys with parents were conducted in 2016, 2017, and 2019, along with in-person surveys and interviews with parents and pupils on household education spending, "missed classes, parental engagement in pupil education, satisfaction with the school, and other outcomes" (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022, p. 21). Pupils were asked about their performance in math, Kiswahili, English, science, social studies, cognitive and non-cognitive skills, school experiences, teacher behaviour, and school facilities (2017/18). The study found higher learning outcomes in Bridge schools, indicating that attending a Bridge school increased "the average test score for those pupils who take the KCPE by 16.3 points" (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022, p. 42). However, class sizes in Bridge schools were much smaller than in public schools, with 20 fewer pupils in Bridge schools than in public schools, although the authors argue that this would have a minimal impact on test scores, stating that "increasing class sizes by 20 pupils would reduce test scores by 0.14 standard deviations" (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022, p. 38).

Similarly, a study conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, comparing Bridge schools, similarly priced private schools, and public schools also found that reading scores were slightly better in Bridge schools, although not in mathematics (EDOREN, 2018a).

An earlier RCT that began in 2017 of the Liberia Education Advancement Programme (LEAP) PPP measured learning outcomes (test scores) in 93 randomly selected public schools outsourced to eight different private providers, including Bridge (Romero and Sandefur, 2022; Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020). It assessed learning outcomes in the form of test scores in outsourced and non-outsourced schools, teacher time use, teaching strategies, management practices, and child safety, particularly regarding sexual abuse (Romero and Sandefur, 2019). The study found that in the case of Bridge, after three years, the provider was spending at least three times more than the government target of \$50 per pupil (Romero and Sandefur, 2022, p. 1615).⁴ And further that Bridge "removed pupils after taking control of schools with large class sizes and removed 74 percent of incumbent teachers from its schools" (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020, pp. 366–367).

The RCTs discussed in this section draw attention to some of the issues with this methodology. During the 2010s, RCTs were viewed as the "gold standard" for investigating causal relationships and the effectiveness of development interventions (Webber and Prouse, 2018).⁵ However, a large body of critical work on RCTs highlights the limitations of this methodology in understanding complex social phenomena (Bédécarrats, Guérin and Roubaud, 2019; Kabeer, 2020; Kvangraven, 2020). As Kvangraven (2020) argues, RCT findings are presented as value-free, neutral, and objective. However, she claims that even the choice of interventions to proceed with is inherently political (Kvangraven, 2020, p. 322). Like the ones conducted on Bridge, RCTs focus on aspects of education that "can be easily measured" (Kvangraven, 2020). RCTs provide limited insights into the overall impact of privatisation processes and their broader implications for the entire education system. They also overlook the power dynamics among key stakeholders in the education system, including states, international organisations, non-state providers, teachers, parents, and students, which significantly influence how education is delivered, funded, and governed. For example, the Gray-

⁴ The partner organisations received an additional \$50 per student, unavailable to public schools and provided by donors (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020, p. 370). While Bridge did not receive this specific funding, it relied solely on direct grants from donors (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020, p. 370). All providers could also 'top-up' the funds received from the government and grants through their channels. Bridge's ex-post per-pupil expenditure "submitted to the evaluation team at the end of the school year (on top of the Ministry's costs)" was \$663, and Bridge's ex-ante budget per pupil costs were \$1,052 (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020).

⁵ Esther Duflo, Abhijit Banerjee, and Michael Kremer (a co-investigator on the Bridge Kenya RCT) were awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics⁵ "for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty" (Kvangraven, 2020; The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, 2019).

Lobe et al. (2022) RCT focused on learning outcomes alone and did not investigate other complaints against this provider in the same context. While the RCT was ongoing, the World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC) Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) investigated the IFC's investments in Bridge (Office of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO), 2023). During this inquiry, the CAO discovered allegations of child sexual abuse concerning Bridge students and staff, along with child safeguarding and protection risks (Office of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (Office of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO), 2020). In the Liberia RCT, serious allegations of sexual abuse were made against two providers during the experiment. In the case of More than Me, a staff member was found guilty of raping pupils in one of their schools (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020). Although this took place before the programme's launch, as the researchers involved in the RCT note, "at a minimum it shows that private providers are far from an obvious solution to sexual violence issues in public schools" (Romero, Sandefur and Sandholtz, 2020, p. 367). Only after the media reported allegations of sexual abuse did the researchers add a "sexual violence module to the student survey" at the end line (Romero and Sandefur, 2022, p. 1604). If the researchers had considered sexual violence beyond the scope of the RCT, as was the case at the baseline and in the Kenya RCT, their evaluation of the providers would have been very different.

In summary, a gap in the literature lies in the need for a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the impact of private education and privatisation processes in low- and middle-income countries, both from a historical and systems perspective. There is a need to go beyond narrow RCTs and statistical analysis of learning outcomes in the form of test scores to explore the broader effects, power dynamics, and socio-economic factors that shape the educational landscape in these contexts. This approach would provide a more nuanced and accurate assessment of the role private and non-state schools may or may not play in improving educational quality and addressing inequalities.

Access, Choice, and Inequalities

Other studies on private and non-state schools in low- and middle-income contexts shed light on the challenges associated with parental choice and school decision-making. These studies document how this can reinforce gender and other forms of inequality.

In South Asian countries, several studies show that more boys than girls tend to attend private schools (Aslam, 2009; Malouf Bous and Farr, 2019; Narwana, 2019; Srivastava, 2006). In an update to an earlier study by Kingdon (2005), Azam and Kingdon (2013) investigate household spending patterns and enrolment rates in education in India, controlling for gender. Their analysis is based on data from the 2005 India Human Development Survey (IHDS-II), which initially covered 41,554

households but was narrowed down to 30,351. This narrowing focused on households with at least one member between the ages of 5-19, with 19,931 in rural areas and 10,420 in urban areas. Concerning private school enrolments and gender, they found that boys aged 5-9 years are significantly more likely to attend private schools in five states (Azam and Kingdon, 2013, p. 155). This finding is supported by the Linear Probability Model (LPM) of school choice on enrolled children. In the age groups 5-9 and 10-14, boys are found to be five percentage points more likely to be enrolled in private schools than girls. This bias becomes more pronounced when household fixed effects are considered (to control for unobserved parental fertility preferences), strengthening the conclusion that boys are more likely to attend private schools. The study finds that within household spending on girls' education is lower than that of boys (Azam and Kingdon, 2013, p. 156). De Talancéa's (2020) study investigated parents' decisions to send their children to private rather than public schools and how this relates to actual or perceived school quality. The study draws on data from the Learning and Achievement in Punjab Schools (LEAPS) project. It uses econometric modelling to find that "being a girl decreases the probability of attending a private school by six percentage points" (De Talancéa, 2020, p. 128). These studies highlight that parental choices regarding their children's education may perpetuate gender inequalities in education. Specifically, studies highlight that in some South Asian contexts, parents enrol boys in fee-paying private schools and daughters in public schools, thus investing more in their sons' education.

In the context of Africa, the evidence is more mixed. A study by Nishimura and Yamano (2013) on the determinants of school choice in rural Kenya, drawing on panel data from rural household and community surveys between 2004 and 2007, found that "girls have a 3.6% point lower probability of attending private schools than boys do" (Nishimura and Yamano, 2013, p. 273). In Northern Nigeria, Antoninis (2014) found that boys are 12 percent more likely to attend secular schools than girls. However, Dixon and Humble's (2017) study of school choice in Sierra Leone, using regression analysis, found that parents were twice as likely to send girls to an NGO school rather than a government school as they were perceived to be safer. Similarly, Humble and Dixon (2017) found that in Monrovia, Liberia, parents who stated a preference for girls' safety were more likely to enrol their daughters in community schools.

Studies that take religion into account draw attention to this as an important factor in parental school choices and how it links with gender (Antoninis, 2014; Asadullah and Maliki, 2018). Asadullah and Maliki (2018), drawing on data from a nationally representative survey of Indonesian households and villages, use multinomial logit estimates to explore school choice and religious schooling. They find that parents are more likely to send their daughters to madrasas in both urban and rural settings but that most children enrolled in madrasas are from low-income households,

living in rural settings, and have less educated parents. They find that the opposite is true for private schools, which have a higher enrolment of boys. Further, a report by Asadullah, Chakrabarti and Chaudhury (2012), using data from a household survey on school choice for secondary-aged children in rural Bangladesh, found that as parental income increases, enrolment in madrasas fall. However, overall, there is a higher likelihood of girls being enrolled in madrasas.

Studies comparing private, public and religious school enrolments highlight the connections between gender, religion and school type. Alcott and Rose (2015) compare enrolments in private schools, government schools, and madrasas, including whether the child has left or never attended school, in rural India and Pakistan, accounting for gender and income level. The study analysed household survey data from 2012, specifically the Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER), focusing on children aged 10 to 12 years living in rural areas across all states and regions in both countries. The sample size was 147,651 children for India and 54,066 for Pakistan. Descriptive analysis of the data showed that across both contexts, the type of school attended was highly dependent on income level, with children from the wealthiest families three times more likely to attend private schools in rural India and four times more likely in rural Pakistan (Alcott and Rose, 2015, p. 354). Additionally, more boys than girls attended private schools (Alcott and Rose, 2015, p. 351). Using inferential analytical methods, including multinomial logistic regression and controlling for other variables, the study also found that poor girls in rural India were 43 percent less likely to attend private schools than poor boys (Alcott and Rose, 2015, p. 353). Similarly, poor girls in rural Pakistan were 31 percent less likely to be enrolled in private schools than poor boys. The study also found that rich girls were 29 percent less likely to be enrolled in private schools than rich boys in rural India, whereas, in Pakistan, this was eight percent (Alcott and Rose, 2015, p. 353).

In Jind, Haryana, a study by Narwana (2019) sheds light on how school choice contributes to the emergence of new inequalities and hierarchies. The research reveals that parents often send their sons to private schools while opting for public schools for their daughters (Narwana, 2019). Additionally, the study observes that increased school choice, which includes Hindi medium public schools, English medium public schools, and private schools, is giving rise to "new hierarchies of access" within the community (Narwana, 2019, p. 198). Lower-performing students and girls are more likely to be enrolled in Hindi medium schools, whereas boys are more likely to attend either English medium or private schools (Narwana, 2019). Enrolment patterns further underscore the intersection of inequalities, with higher-caste boys from wealthier backgrounds more likely to attend private schools. At the same time, lower-caste girls from poorer families are more likely to attend Hindi-medium schools. The study highlights the importance of understanding and engaging with

local political economies and how gender, caste, and class inequalities are formed through education processes.

These studies highlight the influence of social, economic, and cultural factors in shaping schooling decisions, often reinforcing gender inequalities. For example, certain schools may be deemed more suitable for girls, while others for boys. When households spend more on boys' education than girls', it assigns greater value to boys' education, perpetuating gender inequalities across social, economic, and political spheres. Both wealthy and poor families make decisions that exacerbate these divisions, such as sending girls to madrasahs or NGO schools and boys to private schools.

However, these studies often overlook the historical context of how these cultural norms around education have emerged. It's not just about why parents choose certain schools for their children based on gender, class, religion, and ethnicity, but also how these preferences have been shaped over time. For example, a special issue of the *Journal of Religion in Africa* explores the establishment of Christian and Muslim schools across Africa since the 1980s (Dilger & Schulz, 2013, p. 366). The special issue draws attention to the long history of religious schooling, from the central role of Christian missionaries in the mid-19th century to the longer history of Islamic education. These historical trajectories have shaped current political, economic, social, and cultural formations influencing education provision and, increasingly, religious providers have come to be embedded in education markets (Dilger, 2013; Dilger & Schulz, 2013, p. 367; Schulz, 2013; Skinner, 2013). Primarily, however, the literature within EID has tended to treat religious schools as just one actor amongst many in an education market.

Access and Inequalities

Several studies find that LFPS remain financially out of reach for the poorest children (Akaguri, 2014; Day Ashley et al., 2014). A rigorous review of the evidence on private schools in developing countries found ambiguous evidence about whether private schools geographically reach the poor (Day Ashley et al., 2014). Importantly, the study found that when poor households send their children to private schools, they are forced to make welfare sacrifices to afford fees (Day Ashley et al., 2014, p. 3). In three rural communities in Ghana, Akaguri's (2014) study comparing fee-free public schools and LFPS found that LFPS fees were too high for poor households, and parents had to divert finances from other vital areas such as health or take out loans to cover the cost. In the context of Maputo, Mozambique, Härmä (2016b, p. 522) found that private schooling was only affordable for the middle class (civil servants and highly qualified private employees).

Other studies find that even when poor parents enrol their children in private schools, they often struggle to pay fees on time or at all (Härmä, 2016a, 2016b; Härmä and Siddhu, 2017). In a study for

a UK-funded aid programme, Härmä and Siddhu (2017) examined late fee payments and defaults in 179 schools with low, medium, and high fees in Alimosho, a local government area of Lagos, Nigeria. This study revealed that parents' inability to pay fees on time or at all was a particular issue in LFPS, impacting the longevity and viability of these schools (Härmä and Siddhu, 2017). In other words, relying entirely on poor parents to cover all costs associated with schooling left school providers in a vulnerable position. There is also an important ethical dimension to this, precisely the expectation that resource-constrained parents will need to make welfare sacrifices in cases where public school access is lacking.

Some studies also draw attention to the inequities of private schooling concerning urban-rural divisions (Härmä, 2016a; Woodhead, Frost and James, 2013). The reliance on market forces in these areas leaves large segments of the population underserved (Härmä, 2016a; Woodhead, Frost and James, 2013). Drawing on National Sample Survey Data for India, Kingdon (2020) finds that private schooling is much more widespread in urban areas and that almost 48.9 percent of pupils aged 6-10 years attend private schools compared with 20.8 percent in rural areas. Such disparities are also apparent between states. For example, 64 percent of 6-10-year-olds attend private schools in Telangana compared with just 8.7 percent in Assam (Kingdon, 2020, p. 4).

Qualitative research by two Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on World Bank-supported PPPs in Punjab, Pakistan, and Uganda also supports findings that PPPs (with private schools) re-entrench and exacerbate inequalities (Malouf Bous and Farr, 2019). The Uganda and Punjab study found that schools involved in the PPP programme charged additional fees, making them unaffordable to the poorest (Malouf Bous and Farr, 2019). In Punjab, there was no evidence that PPP schools provided access to previously out-of-school children (Malouf Bous and Farr, 2019). These findings contrast with a quantitative study on the Punjab PPP programme that combined administrative data on schools with district-level socio-economic information from households, which were then used to test whether PPP schools targeted districts with high proportions of out-of-school children (Ansari, 2020). This research found that pupils attending PPP schools were poorer than those attending public and non-PPP private schools, that PPP schools prioritised districts with low enrolment rates, and that there was no evidence of cream-skimming (Ansari, 2020). The divergent findings in the two studies on the same PPP are a result of different methodologies and the framing of inequalities. These findings, which highlight the 'epistemic battle' within the PPP and privatisation debate, also underscore the limitations of current approaches. Quantitative approaches that focus on aggregates may overlook exclusionary practices and relations hidden in large-scale surveys. In contrast, more qualitative approaches, while providing a nuanced understanding, may miss trends in how enrolment changes over time.

While these studies highlight unequal enrolment patterns across different types of schooling, they do not interrogate how norms and ideas around different school types have formed, including perceptions of quality and the normalisation of markets in education systems. For example, Kingdon's (2020) study draws attention to how the definition of quality may carry different meanings and cultural connotations in various contexts. In her research, Kingdon (2020) identifies a "public school exodus" in India, increasing the number of "small" government schools. For instance, the percentage of government schools with 20 to 50 pupils increased from 30 percent in 2010/11 to 40 percent in 2016/17. Concurrently, pupil-teacher ratios improved across all government schools (Kingdon, 2020, pp. 8–9). However, Kingdon (2020) found no evidence of parents returning to public schools despite the reduced class sizes.

Governance and the Private and Non-State Sectors

An additional lens through which the private and non-state sector is studied in the literature relates to government regulatory capacity. In numerous contexts, studies argue that the lack of government regulatory capacity has led to the emergence of private schools operating without proper oversight and often in violation of regulations (Baum, Cooper and Lusk-Stover, 2018; Härmä, 2019; Rose, 2006). Studies of private schools in Malawi and Nigeria have found that many LFPS were operating illegally and could not fulfil the registration guidelines set by the state (Rose, 2006). In Pakistan, registration guidelines mainly focus on school facilities and equipment. In Lagos, regulations included land ownership and a purpose-built school building, which Rose (2006, p. 223) argued was "prohibitive for small-scale providers serving low-income groups." However, Rose (2006) also found that organisations representing private school providers, in some contexts, lobbied the government on behalf of their members. For example, in Lagos, the lobbying of the Association of Private Proprietors of Schools (APPS) and the Association of Formidable Education Development (AFED) resulted in stopping the government's closure of member schools in some instances (Rose, 2006).

Studies find that owners of LFPS find it challenging to meet stringent regulatory requirements, which are considered overly strict and impractical, particularly in urban contexts (Baum, Cooper and Lusk-Stover, 2018). Baum, Cooper and Lusk-Stover's (2018) comparative analysis, encompassing twenty sub-Saharan African countries, argues that regulatory efforts often fail due to weakened government capacity and rent-seeking behaviour. Similar conclusions emerge in Härmä's (2019) qualitative study on private school regulation in Abuja, Accra, and Kampala. She suggests a shift towards self-regulation by private providers "with government acting as a third-party assessor" (Härmä, 2019, p. 145) while advocating for increased resources directed towards public school inspections.

Another critical issue that has emerged in the research on regulation relates to teachers. A systematic review of the effectiveness of private schools in developing countries found that concerning PPPs, any reduction in the cost of providing education is "typically driven almost entirely by lower teacher salaries" (Crawford, Hares and Todd, 2023, p. 21). Unlike teachers employed by the government, studies find that private school teachers' wages tend not to be protected (other than by minimum wage standards set in many countries) but are "determined by the demand and supply of educated persons in the labour market" (Kingdon, 2020, p. 18). An international school chain in the low-middle fee charging category, for example, in Kenya, has been found to pay teachers around five times less, on average, per month than public school primary teachers (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022). They are also expected to work longer hours and have no pension or health "benefits" (Gray-Lobe et al., 2022). Falkensjö and Olsson's (2022) qualitative study that included interviews with over 30 LFPS and public-school teachers in Kenya on their teaching experience found that LFPS teachers are paid low salaries compared with public school teachers, and their work is precarious. A study by Tooley and Dixon (2005, pp. 37–39) found that teachers' average monthly salaries in private unregistered schools in Lagos, Nigeria, and Ga, Ghana, were just 27 percent and 28 percent of salaries in government schools.

Other studies show that many private school teachers are women and have lower qualifications than government teachers (Afridi, 2017; Jimenez, Lockheed and Paqueo, 1991; Kingdon, 1996, 2020). In Lagos, Nigeria Härmä's (2011) survey for the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) found that almost 70 percent of teachers sampled were women (63 percent qualified and 37 percent unqualified). These studies highlight another under-researched issue concerning labour rights and employment conditions in LFPS, particularly in contexts with little to no social security and safety net in times of unemployment and ill health.

Covid-19

Government regulation and intervention in LFPS became apparent during the COVID-19 crisis, which began in early 2020. Governments worldwide directed both public and private schools to close to curb the spread of the virus, affecting around 1.5 billion students (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021). The learning losses associated with school closures have been a focus of much policy and research, revealing that many children in both public schools and LFPS lacked access to online or other forms of remote learning, including in Nigeria (Azubuike, Adegboye and Quadri, 2021; Carvalho and Hares, 2020; Robinson and Hussain, 2021; Stewart, 2021; TEP Centre and NESG, 2020).

A survey conducted across 52 countries in Africa, including Nigeria, found that many low-income households, particularly in rural areas, did not have access to sustained electricity, internet data, or

devices required for e-learning (EdTech Hub and eLearning Africa, 2020). Further, the home environment for many low-income children was not conducive to learning, with the report noting, "There is unlikely to be a quiet room, or other space for study" (EdTech Hub and eLearning Africa, 2020, p. 28). Pupils from high-income households, including those attending medium- and high-fee private schools, were more likely to have continued access to learning during this period, with some schools distributing smartphones (EdTech Hub and eLearning Africa, 2020, p. 26).

Additionally, while schools were closed, LFPS owners could not collect fees. A survey conducted in seven countries in October 2020 found that 88 percent of LFPS were collecting less than 20 percent of their usual school fees (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021, p. 5). These schools tend to have low profit margins and are dependent on fees (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021). In some countries, such as India and Pakistan, private schools were not included in COVID-19 government education funds (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021). In other countries, such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Rwanda, where government funds or loans were made available, LFPS owners and teachers struggled to access these funds due to strict eligibility criteria (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021).

Unlike teachers in government schools, LFPS owners, who often employ teachers on flexible terms, were not under any obligation to continue paying teachers during the closures (Datzberger and Parkes, 2021), and may not have been able to do so in the majority of cases given they were not collecting fees. In Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia, teacher pay was cut by 20 to 50 percent (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021). In Kenya, most private school teachers were put on unpaid leave, and in countries such as Cameroon, DR Congo, Gambia, India, Jordan, Liberia, Niger, Senegal, and Vietnam, private school teachers reported not being paid at all (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021).

Other evidence points to the continued effects of the COVID-19 lockdowns and the associated economic crisis on the ability of parents to continue paying school fees. In countries like India, Mexico, and Pakistan, where economic recessions occurred, there was an estimated 20 to 30 percent decrease in enrolments in private schools (Andaleeb and Tiwari, 2021).

This body of literature frequently underscores governmental and private providers' shortcomings and the considerable gap between policy intent concerning regulation and implementation in many contexts. However, there is also a need to move beyond a narrative of insufficiency and understand the processes and events that have shaped private sector actors to hold such influence in specific contexts.

Conclusion

The literature on private and non-state schooling in low- and middle-income contexts shows that while they have increased access to education for some children, they have also deepened

inequalities. As discussed in this chapter, most research is dominated by quantitative studies comparing learning outcomes between public and private schools, along with surveys on parental choice. Fewer studies focus on the historical shifts in private and non-state sector involvement, particularly in specific country contexts. This gap in historical understanding is significant, as it leaves cultural and contextual nuances, including the evolution of various forms of provision, insufficiently explored. Additionally, the literature pays limited attention to processes of privatisation within education systems and their impact on inequalities. A more critical approach would involve examining the concept of markets in education, including the commodification of education, the evolution of these markets, and how these processes have shaped and reshaped gender, ethnicity, religion, and so on, in and through education. The next chapter explores different conceptualisations of education systems in EID, and fleshes out what an analysis of private education that takes a systems perspective would look like, paying close attention to historical and contextual specificities.

Chapter 3. Four Approaches to Education Systems in Education and International Development

Throughout the 2010s, there has been a growing emphasis on systemic aspects of education provision in low- and middle-income countries within research and policy circles (Magrath, Aslam and Johnson, 2019). This chapter identifies four ways to analyse or conceptualise an education system, highlighting the following themes: efficiency, accountability, complexity, and critical perspectives.

A first approach emphasises "efficiency" and the alignment of actors within the system. This is exemplified by the World Bank's Systems Approach to Better Education Results (SABER), which began in 2011 and was developed with the World Bank's Education Strategy 2020, titled *Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development* (Klees et al., 2020; World Bank, 2020a, 2013, 2011). This approach to education systems places significant emphasis on relationships of accountability to ensure an efficient education system geared toward learning outcomes, with minimal analytical attention to context or history.

A second approach is found in the Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) programme, launched in 2015 as a six-year research initiative focusing on education systems in Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Vietnam. Led by Lant Pritchett, a development economist who previously worked at the World Bank, RISE secured funding from the UK's FCDO (£36.8 million), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (ADFT) (A\$9.85 million), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (US\$1.7 million). This approach emphasises accountability mechanisms and the alignment of actors in the system toward learning (Pritchett, 2015). While it considers historical changes in education provision, including political and economic shifts, changes to an education system over time and across different contexts are primarily attributed to the actions of individuals or groups who are viewed as acting rationally and in their self-interest (Pritchett, 2015).

A third approach emphasises the complexity of education systems and their connections to other systems or regimes. It incorporates some historical analysis, notably through the lens of path dependence, with attention to inequalities (Tikly, 2019).

A fourth approach is found in the SoP, which takes a more critical view of education. It closely examines how education is provided, by whom, and for whom. This approach views education systems as contextually and temporally specific (Bayliss and Fine, 2020). It draws attention to historical processes, cultures and norms, and relationships between structures, processes, agents and agencies (Bayliss and Fine, 2020).

This chapter explores the core ideas of each approach, how they conceptualise education systems (and why), and the implications these perspectives have for private and non-state sector engagements and inequalities. It does not offer a comprehensive account of all approaches to education systems within EID, but rather focuses on the perspectives and approaches that have been particularly influential within the field.

SABER and RISE

Over the 2010s, data began to show that although more children globally were enrolled in school, learning outcomes remained low (World Bank, 2011). For instance, a 2013 UNESCO report estimated that "200 million young people leave school without the skills they need to thrive" (UNESCO, 2013, p. 2), and Pritchett (2013) captured the issue with the phrase, "Schoolin' ain't learnin'." This situation became known as the "global learning crisis," which Sriprakash, Tikly and Walker (2019, p. 676) argue became the "the prevailing discourse of contemporary educational development." The emphasis on learning outcomes was a critical factor in the emergence of SABER and RISE, both of which focus on improving educational results (World Bank, 2019, p. 2).

Education Systems for Efficiency: SABER

A first approach to education systems discussed in this Chapter is taken from the World Bank's Education Strategy 2020, Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development (World Bank, 2011), and operationalised through the SABER programme. The SABER/World Bank approach assumes education systems share common characteristics across country contexts consisting of the following (World Bank, 2011, p. 29):

[A]ll parties who participate in the provision, financing, regulation, and use of learning services. Thus, in addition to national and local governments, participants include students and their families, communities, private providers, and non-state organisations.

These encompass both the state and non-state sectors, formal and informal education institutions, as well as all beneficiaries and stakeholders (students, their families, community, and employers) and all policy domains (laws, rules, regulations, fiscal resources, etc.) (Rogers and Demas, 2013). Accountability relationships connect these entities, as the World Bank report states, "relationships of accountability are the key levers that make a system work" (World Bank, 2011, p. 33). Note that this includes both state, private and non-state actors involved in providing education, as one SABER report on engaging the private sector explains: "The traditional view of the education system, which sees the government as the sole provider and funder of education services, is incomplete" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 9). The report further argues that the government should "provide stewardship for the

whole system" but need not "be the direct provider and financier of all education services" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 9).

The function of SABER is to provide education stakeholders, particularly policymakers, with a detailed analysis of how well their country's education system is oriented towards delivering effective learning outcomes (World Bank, 2013). It is then expected that policymakers will use this information to make informed decisions to improve education systems, measured through learning outcomes (World Bank, 2013, p. 9). These measures allow for comparisons (and rankings) of education systems across country contexts (World Bank, 2013, p. 5).

In the SABER, the education system is categorised into 13 policy domains or topics, which include Early Childhood Development, Education Management Information Systems, Education Resilience, Engaging the Private Sector, Equity and Inclusion, Information and Communication Technologies, School Autonomy and Accountability, School Finance, School Health and School Feeding, Student Assessment, Teachers, Tertiary Education, Workforce Development (World Bank, 2023a).

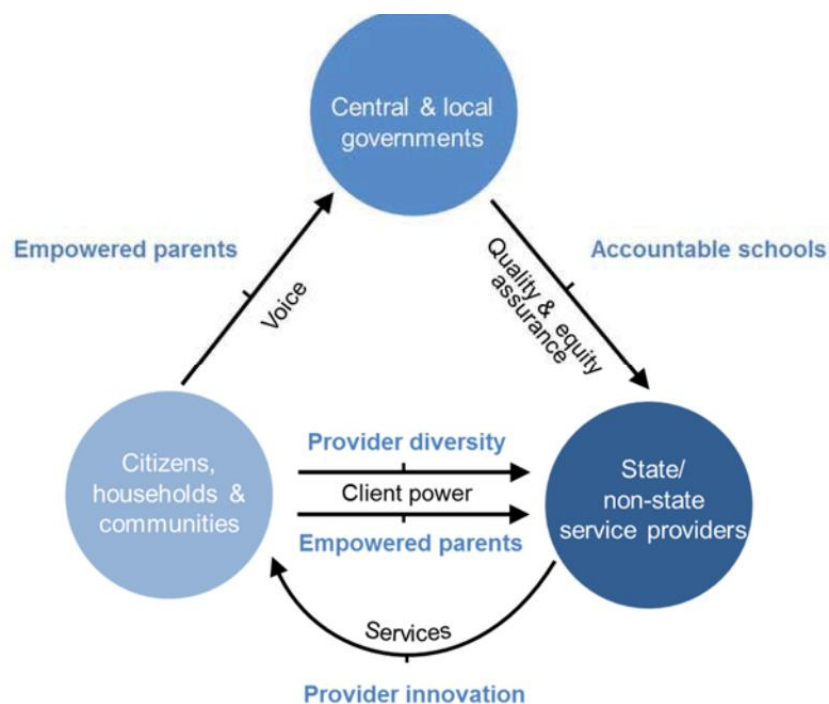
Additionally, the SABER has created "five pillars to achieve systemic impact", which include ensuring that learners are prepared and motivated to learn, effective and valued teachers are available at all levels, learning resources are tailored to each student's appropriate level, safe and inclusive school environments are created, and education systems are well-managed (SABER, 2021, p. 7).

For each of the domains or topics, a "What Matters Most" framework paper, a questionnaire and a rubric have been developed (World Bank, 2023a). The "What Matters Most" framework paper "reviews and evaluates research relevant to the domain to determine best policies and practices" (Klees et al., 2020, p. 47). The SABER team then develops the rubric, including "dozens of policies, system characteristics, or practices called indicators" (Klees et al., 2020, p. 47). This rubric is created to support stakeholders in evaluating and monitoring progress (World Bank, 2023a). Similar to the World Bank categorisation of PPP environments (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio and Guaquet, 2009), countries are assigned a "score [...] on each applicable indicator" based on the latent to advanced scale, using data collected by a consultant or World Bank staff, analysed by the SABER team with some input from national stakeholders (Klees et al., 2020). Klees et al. (2020, p. 51) argue that this rating represents a "one-size-fits-all" approach to education policy change, prioritising "universality" over context-specificity.

A key feature of SABER's work on systems, which draws on the World Bank's approach to service delivery found in the World Development Report 2004 (World Bank, 2003), is that entities within the system connect through accountability relationships (World Bank, 2011, p. 33). The World Bank's accountability triangle for effective service delivery (found in the 2004 World Development Report

[World Bank, 2003]) has been adapted by Baum et al. (2014) for education (Figure 1). Two routes to accountability are shown in Figure 1: the long and short routes. In the long route, "empowered parents" (citizens, households, and communities) use their "voice" to hold central and local governments accountable for education commitments. Central and local governments, in turn, regulate state and non-state education providers to ensure the provision of quality and equitable education. In the short route to accountability, "empowered parents" can choose the education they want for their children from a marketplace of providers, both state and non-state. The key to this is provider diversity (choice), which enables parents to "vote with their feet" by leaving schools they are dissatisfied with or pushing for change (Baum et al., 2014, p. 13). In essence, when education providers answer directly to citizens, it creates a short route to accountability, particularly in the presence of market competition and accessible information about the providers (World Bank, 2011, p. 10; Baum et al., 2014). Competition between providers, whether state or non-state, is expected to lead to innovations in the education system that will enhance the quality of education (Baum et al., 2014; World Bank, 2011, p. 32).

Figure 1 World Bank SABER Policy Goals for Improving Relationships of Accountability



Source: Baum et al. (2014, p. 13) (adapted from World Bank, 2003)

Strengthening these relationships of accountability through the mechanisms outlined in Figure 1 is the key to improving a system and enhancing learning outcomes. Essentially, the key actors within an education system are expected to act similarly across time and space.

There are significant issues with how accountability and empowerment are framed. Klees et al. (2020, p. 56) argue that SABER conceives accountability in very narrow terms, reducing it to "accountability-as-information," i.e., the more information gathered on the education system, the stronger the accountability relationships. The empowered parent is conceptualised as a parent with information about the education system, able to use this information to choose from a range of providers and hold providers to account for educational commitments (Baum et al., 2014). However, empowerment is a broad and contested term (Cornwall and Rivas, 2015; Unterhalter, 2019). According to Stromquist (2015a, 2015b), empowerment is about altering the social relations of gender. Her conceptualisation involves four interconnected dimensions of empowerment: cognitive/knowledge, psychological, political, and economic, encompassing individual transformation and collective action for change. The cognitive/knowledge dimension for empowerment involves understanding conditions of subordination and their causes and is instrumental in creating a different understanding of gender relations and destroying old understandings (Stromquist, 1995, pp. 14–15). Additionally, Unterhalter's (2019, p. 80) history of the meanings of empowerment, going back to the 17th century, highlights "how the word has long been a site of contestation in which aspects of education, participation, institutional norms, gender, and women's rights feature". Unterhalter (2019, p. 82) shows how, in the 1960s, empowerment came to be linked with human agency used by black civil rights activists and "that one can make a different institutional order that is responsive to those who have been excluded, subordinated, or subjected to inequality" (Unterhalter, 2019, p. 83). These understandings of empowerment, that draw attention to the gendered and racialised dimensions of a school system, are much thicker than the thin version in SABER that reduces empowerment to parents using their voice to hold providers of education to account, with the more "efficient" system conceptualised as one that bypasses the state and goes straight to the private provider.

The framework paper titled "What Matters Most for Engaging the Private Sector in Basic Education" by Baum et al. (2014) provides deeper insights into how the private and public sectors in education are conceptualised. In this paper, the private sector encompasses all non-state actors, including for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, religious providers, and community schools (Baum et al., 2014).⁶ Baum et al. (2014) emphasise that the government's key role is to guarantee school quality, equity, and access, irrespective of who provides the education service, and public funding is

⁶ The paper states that SABER "assesses how well a country's policies are oriented toward ensuring that the services of non-state providers promote learning for all" and sets out to identify the "most effective policies for governments that choose to involve non-state providers in delivering basic education services" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 10).

intended to correct market failures in providing adequate educational resources (Baum et al., 2014, pp. 6 & 10). Four policy goals are outlined:

1. Encouraging innovation by providers.
2. Holding schools accountable.
3. Empowering parents, students, and communities.
4. Promoting diversity of supply.

The diagnostic tool incorporates teacher standards, appointment and deployment, teacher salaries, teacher dismissal, curriculum, and classroom resourcing (Baum et al., 2014, p. 37). Government policies and approaches to private schools are assessed from latent (one point) to advanced (four points). This assessment evaluates the degree to which the central government has authority in areas such as teacher appointment and deployment, assigning greater powers to the private sector as it moves from latent to advanced stages (Baum et al., 2014, p. 37). For instance, a latent development level concerning teacher salaries indicates that "Central government has the legal authority to appoint and deploy teachers", while an advanced level score signifies that "[t]he school has the legal authority to determine teacher salary levels without review by central authorities" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 37). The diagnostic tool assigns higher scores to states that grant more autonomy to the private sector in education (Baum et al., 2014, p. 37).

As of 2023, SABER had assessed private sector engagement in several countries, including Mauritania, Ghana, Nepal, Bangladesh, Senegal, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia, and Lagos, Nigeria. The SABER team analyses of the effectiveness of policies for engaging the private sector in primary and secondary education in these country contexts includes scoring each of the four policy goals, outlined above. Under the policy goal, "[e]ncouraging innovation by providers", there are seven indicators:

1. Teacher qualification standards are set at the school level.
2. Appointment and deployment of teachers are decided at the school level.
3. Teacher salary levels are set at the school level.
4. Teachers' dismissals are decided at the school level.
5. How the curriculum is delivered is decided at the school level.
6. Class-size decisions are made at the school level.
7. Management of operating budgets is conducted at the school level.

For the indicator, "[m]anagement of operating budgets is conducted at the school level" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 18), the report notes, "a lack of rigorous research into the effects of autonomy over

school budgets on student achievement" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 19). Despite this lack of evidence, the report argues that giving schools more autonomy frees the state to invest more in "oversight, regulation, and quality assurance" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 18), citing one World Bank report on PPPs in education. Concerning teacher credentials, the report states, "[t]he substantial literature on effective teachers generally does not find that standard measures of teacher credentials [...] are associated with better student learning achievements" (Baum et al., 2014, p. 18). However, the references cited to support this claim do not provide conclusive support.⁷ For example, the empirical study by Dobbie and Fryer (2011), cited in the report, which examined education outcomes in the Harlem Children's Zone in the US, says very little about teacher credentials, emphasising instead the importance of "high-quality teachers" along with various other factors. Similarly, Goldhaber and Brewer (2000, p. 141), also cited in the report, find "evidence that teachers with subject-specific training [...] outperform those without subject-matter preparation." These studies do not conclusively support the claim that standard measures of teachers' credentials are not linked to improvements in learning outcomes. There is also a disregard for evidence suggesting that teacher qualifications and professionalism are crucial for education quality (Avalos, 2013), as well as the importance of understanding local contexts, including local political economies in which teachers work, along with "gender norms, relations, and identities" that "structure" teachers' lives and their working conditions (Tao, 2019, p. 915).

It becomes evident that SABER adheres to a systems framework that regards the state as the regulator of an education market and corrector of market failures, operating on the premise that the market can efficiently deliver education services (Klees et al., 2020). Other studies have shown that in World Bank reports on education, there are calls for greater "decentralisation of management of public education [and] the expansion of the private sector" (Stromquist, 2012, p. 136). Stromquist's (2012, p. 137) analysis of the World Bank's Education Strategy 2020 highlights that the report "strongly proposes private schooling because it will reduce public expenditures". However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the literature on private schooling in EID is far from conclusive regarding learning outcomes and so on, with a large swathe of the literature drawing attention to increased stratification and exacerbation of inequalities.

Education Systems for Accountability: RISE

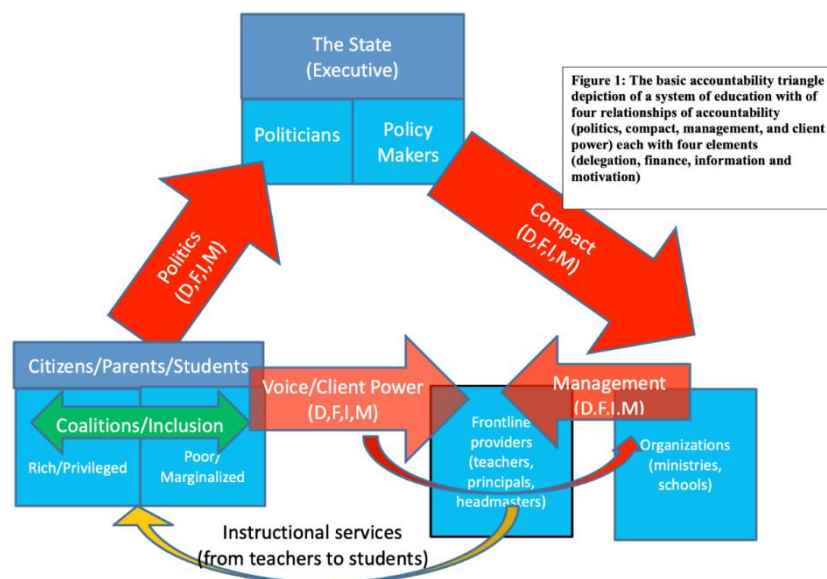
RISE was launched in 2015 and builds on the SABER framework (Pritchett, 2018). Like SABER, RISE emerged as a response to the global learning crisis, is funded by donors based in the global North,

⁷ The paper cites studies by Goldhaber and Brewer (2000), Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hedges et al. (1994), Hanushek (1997), and Dobbie and Fryer (2011).

and primarily focuses on aligning education systems toward achieving improved learning outcomes (RISE, no date.). However, while SABER was explicitly concerned with de jure (or formal policies) in place, RISE has sought to investigate the "actual practices" occurring in education systems (Pritchett, 2018). This distinction arises from Pritchett's (2018) observation in a think piece published on the RISE website that "the gap between de jure and de facto actual practices is a major feature of developing countries."

Central to the RISE approach is Pritchett's (2015, p. 43) four-by-four education system diagnostic, which consists of four accountability relationships (politics, compact, management, and client power) and four design elements (delegation, finance, information, and motivation, depicted as DFIM in Figure 2). Additionally, the approach introduces the concept of system coherence with three elements. Figure 2 illustrates this basic accountability triangle.

Figure 2 RISE Basic Accountability Triangle



Source: Pritchett (2015, p. 17)

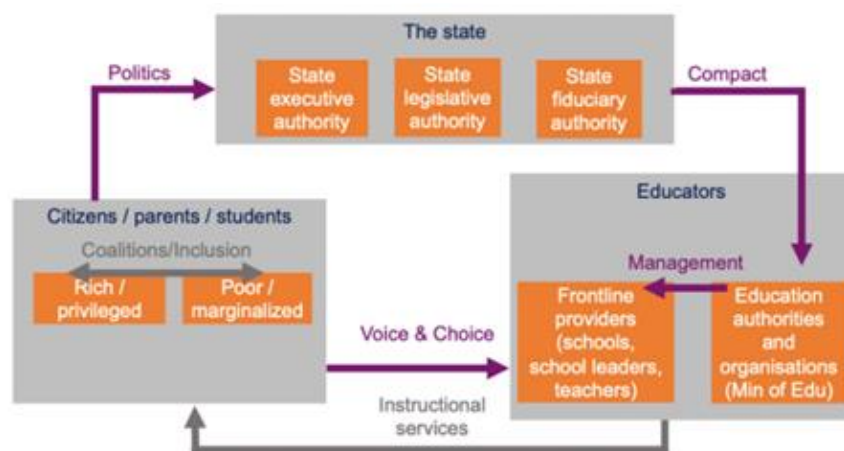
Using this diagnostic tool, Pritchett (2015) argues that low learning outcomes in many education systems result from the system's focus on schooling rather than learning, as well as the incoherence in relationships of accountability. Pritchett (2015, p. 44) states that:

[E]ducation systems' incoherence with respect to learning may account for many of the observed features of existing education systems, including the heterogeneity of the impact of specific proximate determinants and piecemeal reforms.

Improvements in learning outcomes will only occur when all components of the system unite behind this common goal, including the "highest authorities of a country," who "must possess the political will to prioritise learning" (Belafi, 2022, p. 6). In the RISE literature, researchers note that education has been politicised, and short-term reforms are implemented by political agents to win support, as opposed to implementing more long-term reforms for learning outcomes (Levy, 2022; Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023).

Spivack (2021) has further developed the accountability triangle (Figure 3), to delineate specific features of an education system and its accountability relations.

Figure 3 RISE Accountability Triangle, Expanded Version of the Relationships Between the Various Elements of the System



Source: Spivack (2021, p. 8) adapted from (Pritchett, 2015)

These accountability relationships are categorised based on their position within the system (Spivack, 2021):

1. **Politics:** This represents the accountability relationship between the highest executive, legislative and fiduciary authorities of the state (the Principal) and citizens (Agent).
2. **Compact:** This represents the accountability relationship between the state's highest executive, legislative, and fiduciary authorities (the Principal) and education authorities and organisations (the Agent).
3. **Management:** This represents the accountability relationship between education authorities and organisations and frontline providers (schools, school leaders, teachers).
4. **Voice and choice:** This represents the accountability relationship between frontline providers and citizens, parents, and teachers (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023, p. 3).

Within the RISE framework, these accountability relationships contain five key features (Spivack, 2021; Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023, p. 3):

1. Delegation refers to "What the principal wants the agent to do".
2. Finance refers to the resources the Agent made available to the Principal.
3. Information refers to the assessment of the task allocated to the Agent by the Principal.
4. Support refers to how the Principal supports the Agent.
5. Motivation refers to how the Agent is motivated by the Principal, including attention to their welfare.

The RISE framework relies heavily on principal-agent theory. This theory, according to van Thiel, van Genugten and Voorn (2020, p. 322), "was originally developed to describe and analyse the relationship between shareholders and the management board of a private-sector company" but has since been applied to a range of disciplines and sectors. At its core, however, it is a theory grounded in assumptions of "rationality and information asymmetry" (van Thiel, van Genugten and Voorn, 2020, p. 323). Individuals are believed to make decisions for their benefit or self-interest. As an extension of this, institutions, composed of individuals, are seen as "collections of rational self-interested individuals" (Allais, 2012, p. 261). The assumption that individuals are utility-maximising is considered one of the causes of the principal-agent problem because the Principal and the Agent may not share the same objectives, leading to the pursuit of activities that may be at odds with one another (van Thiel, van Genugten and Voorn, 2020). Additionally, it is assumed that either the Agent or the Principal will possess more, less, or different information than the other, thereby influencing their actions and decision-making.⁸ The approach does not address how the meanings associated with education can change based on who provides it and the conditions under which it is provided.

Applying principal-agent theory to education systems implies that educational decisions and choices, from parents to education ministries, can be reduced to agents' "optimizing, selfish behavior" (Anderhub, Gächter and Königstein. 2022, p. 6). The distinctions between principals and agents, information asymmetry, utility maximisation, etc., are widely used in (neoclassical) economic theory, particularly rational-choice theory, which is "the idea that people make self-interested and calculated decisions" (Jabbar and Menashy, 2022, p. 281). Analytically, this leads to the "reductionism of the social to the aggregate of individuals and crude optimising behaviour" (Fine,

⁸ In the RISE framework, in the management relationship of accountability example, it is assumed that teachers (agents) have more information about their work and set the normative orientation regarding how the education system is intended to function than education authorities and organisations (the principals). Therefore, it is important for the education authorities to collect information from teachers and, in the interests of teachers, share the information they have with education authorities when coalesced around the shared goal of improving learning outcomes.

2002, p. 191). There is an assumption in such an approach that individuals and institutions will act the same way across time and space when presented with the same information.

This (neoclassical) economic bias is evident in two RISE studies on the role of the private sector in education conducted in Pakistan and Tanzania. For instance, Andrabi et al. (2023) conducted an RCT with a sample of 815 private schools "randomized to receive access to financial products, ESPS [educational products and support services], or both" across 566 villages in Punjab, Pakistan (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 3). In the experiment, private school owners could choose a loan from Tameer Microfinance Bank, either as a "risk-based loan (RBL) with a fixed interest rate depending on the collateral provided by the school owner" or as "a revenue-contingent loan (RCL), a quasi-equity product with an interest rate depending on growth in monthly school revenues", with interest rates on the loans ranging between 10 and 20 percent (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 10). For the private school owners "in the ESPS treatment arm", events were organised for owners to "explore and express interest in buying a range of products and materials" (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 10). Seven rounds of data collection were conducted between 2014 and 2020 (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 13). The study explores the "take-up rates and the economic returns", school survival rates, and "heterogeneity of impact by school initial quality and size" by comparing the different types of interventions (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 15). The findings suggest that school owners used loans "as a type of insurance, saving it to tide them over hard times" and argues that because most schools paid back their loans, "providing financing to this sector is a relatively low-risk and commercially viable route for banks" (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 22). This study applies standard economic models to the education sector and aims to understand financial constraints on growth and innovation, treating education as a market. From this study, the authors argue that increasing access to financial instruments, such as loans, could stop private schools, including LFPS, from closing during "difficult economic times" (Andrabi et al., 2023, p. 22). The study pays minimal attention to the social, cultural, and political conditions under which these reforms were implemented, including a lack of attention to how and why markets formed in this context. It is also unclear how the RISE systems diagnostic tool has been applied, particularly around relations of accountability between lenders and school owners.

Similarly, a study conducted in Tanzania by Sabarwal, Sununtnasuk and Ramachandran (2020), as part of the RISE programme, explored the impact of the Fee-Free Basic Education Programme on the secondary school system, highlighting the capacity of private schools to absorb increased enrolments. Through a descriptive overview of private schools in the region, including information on size, date of establishment, teachers, financing, and student performance, the study finds that "private schools are at 70 percent of their student capacity while public schools are currently at 130 percent of their intended capacity" (Sabarwal, Sununtnasuk and Ramachandran, 2020, p. 11). The

study argues that the state should partner with private schools to expand enrolment in these institutions. Again, it is unclear how the RISE diagnostic has been applied beyond the reference to the importance of "clear communication channels and clarity of accountability as the most important criteria for partnership" (Sabarwal, Sununtnasuk and Ramachandran, 2020, p. 15) cited by private school owners.

The studies pay little attention to how these reforms might affect the poorest households, systemic inequalities, and the historical and political conditions under which these forms of provision have occurred. Chapter 2 demonstrated that private sector involvement in education often perpetuates inequalities, although this is highly dependent on the context. In the RISE research on the private sector, there has been a particular focus on understanding how interventions can improve educational outcomes, for example, by providing incentives to private schools or through partnerships (Andrabi et al., 2018; Sabarwal, Sununtnasuk and Ramachandran, 2020). These studies do include some consideration of access and inequality, such as making schools financially accessible to individuals across all income brackets, the availability of free public schools and the implementation of policies designed to ensure that market mechanisms enhance learning outcomes across all school types. Nonetheless, they lack a comprehensive theoretical framework for addressing structural and systemic inequalities.

The RISE Political Economy workstream does pay some attention to history and politics. As of 2023, there were two political economy workstreams in RISE: one focused on "adoption" and the other on "implementation" (RISE, 2023a, 2023b). The implementation workstream examined "the accountability of relationships between parents, communities, and frontline providers of education" (RISE, 2023a), while the adoption workstream concentrated on "the political, social, institutional, and historical environment in which education systems are embedded [...] to gain a more holistic understanding of the political drivers and inhibitors of progress in learning outcomes" (RISE, 2023b).⁹

Under the Political Economy Adoption (PEA) workstream, the country studies provide a historical overview of political changes and education reforms across various contexts and periods. These studies include Ethiopia from 1941 to 2021 (Gershberg, Kefale and Hailu, 2023), Tanzania since 1961 (Opalo, 2023), Nigeria between 1970 and 2003 (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023), India

⁹ When writing this thesis, 14 Working Papers had been published under the adoption stream, covering Ethiopia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tanzania, Vietnam, Chile, South Africa, Nigeria, India, Egypt, and Peru (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023). Under the implementation workstream, 13 Working Papers had been published, with four papers related to Pakistan, two each for Indonesia, India, and Nigeria, and one for Malawi.

since 1975 (Singh, 2023), Chile since 1990 (González et al., 2023), and Peru between 1995 and 2020 (Balarin and Saavedra, 2023). In the case of South Africa, the study situates the political economy of learning outcomes within the longer history of apartheid and post-apartheid political and economic changes (Gustafsson and Taylor, 2022). Similarly, in Indonesia, the study places the "learning crisis" within the context of historical policy changes since the 1960s, arguing that low learning outcomes result from the influence of "predatory political, bureaucratic, and corporate elites" (Rosser, King and Widoyoko, 2022, p. 1).

The studies in this workstream apply the RISE framework and draw on the political settlements literature to varying degrees in their analyses (e.g., Chile, Ethiopia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania, and Vietnam). The RISE Nigeria study in the PEA workstream analyses the impact of what are described as "political breaks"—significant shifts or disruptions in the political landscape—on access to and quality of education between 1970 and 2003, focusing on altered policies, institutional norms, governance structures and attitudes (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023). The study draws on 119 key informant interviews with parents and other key stakeholders who worked in the education system during that period. Additionally, 2,617 individuals aged 60 and over who had worked in the education sector between 1970 and 2003 were surveyed in Adamawa, Anambra, Delta, Jigawa, Kano and Oyo (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023, pp. 21–23). The study describes the views of key stakeholders on changes to the education system, including the state's takeover many private schools in the 1970s (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023). It focuses on the political formations at the federal level and applies a political settlements framework to the various military regimes in Nigeria in this time period, arguing that these formations—characterised by high centralisation, top-down policy-making, "erosion of accountability", and "duplication of efforts"—negatively impacted education outcomes and access (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023, pp. 7–9). The emphasis on political breaks suggests that systems change can be reduced to a few individuals within the system who either do or do not have the political will to implement education reforms but says very little about economic structures and processes or the role of international actors in the system. There is minimal engagement with inequality, including gender, beyond access as a feature of the education system.

Gershberg and Spindelman (2023, p. 7), drawing on economic reform literature and a "binding political constraints" framework that focuses on "areas of intervention that present critical bottlenecks impeding a country's ability to deliver learning outcomes", alongside Pritchett's (2015) framework to a selection of studies. The authors view politics are as either obstructing or promoting "education systems that are coherent for learning" (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023, p. 2). In the case of Ethiopia, they argue that system incoherencies exist across Delegation, Information, and

Motivation (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023, p. 11). This incoherence is partly attributed to the ruling party's decision to delegate responsibility for primary education, including the curriculum, to regional governments. According to the authors, this delegation has led to problems such as inconsistent exams across regions, which complicates comparisons and contributes to low learning outcomes in Ethiopia. Their analysis minimally engages with economic structures and focuses on the incoherence of accountability relationships within national political processes, rather than exploring the interface between national, local, and global factors. Despite some consideration of power dynamics and political contestations, the study adopts a somewhat simplified perspective, reducing conflicts over resources to political inconsistencies. The paper does not address inequalities or how they manifest in and through education, other than referencing the challenge in Ethiopia of comparing learning outcomes across regions, which is "needed to ensure equality of learning outcomes at the national level" (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023, p. 13).

An example of how inequality is conceptualised in RISE comes from a paper on measurements of learning inequality that explores whether learning interventions aimed at improving "means" also reduce inequality, and under what conditions (Rodriguez-Segura et al., 2021a, 2021b). Rodriguez et al. (2021b) investigate specific measures of inequality applied to learning outcomes, including the Gini coefficient, the coefficient of variation (CV), different P_x to P_y ratios, and the percentage of children scoring zero. These measures are applied to data on oral reading fluency (ORF), a subtask of the early grade reading assessment (EGRA) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, the Philippines, and Uganda. They find that in Uganda and Kenya, "socioeconomic status is highly correlated with literacy achievement," with "an increase of 1 standard deviation (SD) in SES correlated with a 0.31 SD statistically significant increase in oral reading fluency in the Kenyan sample and 0.20 SD in the Ugandan sample" (Rodriguez-Segura et al., 2021b, pp. 25–26). While RISE acknowledges that education system performance encompasses more than standardised testing, this method of ranking and rating affects how education inequalities are understood, and which aspects are considered.

Unlike learning outcomes linked to tests or the number of children in school (or out of school), other aspects of education, including social and emotional dimensions and gender inequalities, cannot be easily quantified and measured (Unterhalter, 2017). As Unterhalter (2017, p. 8) notes, "Gender equality in education is linked with well-being, agency, aspects of embodiment and lack of violence, knowledge and criticality, public good, social relationships, and context." One metaphor used by Unterhalter (2012, p. 68; 2014) is that of a "net" to describe how "gendered relations of power, distribution of resources, forms of struggle, or representation" manifest within educational settings. This approach considers economic, political, and social structures of inequality, recognising that

gender is a key organising (or structural) feature of education systems, along with other markers of difference (Unterhalter, 2012, p. 68).

Although the RISE approach emphasises political-economic factors in education systems and considers contextual and historical specificities, it is less clear how these factors are integrated into analyses of systems. In RISE studies, such as those on Nigeria, Tanzania and Ethiopia, there is minimal engagement with other welfare issues, including poverty and access to essential services, which affect how parents and communities interact with and engage with the system (Gershberg, Kefale and Hailu, 2023; Opalo, 2023). The approach discussed in the next section addresses broader complexities and the interplay between different social systems.

Complexity: Education Systems for Transformation

A third approach to education systems discussed in this review draws on concepts and ideas from complexity theory (Tikly, 2019). Originally developed in the physical and biological sciences (Marchand and Hilpert, 2020), complexity theory has since been applied to the social sciences (Byrne and Callaghan, 2013) and various sectors, including education (Marchand and Hilpert, 2020; Mason, 2008; Tikly, 2019), health (Thompson et al., 2016) and International Relations (Kreienkamp and Pegram, 2021). According to Tikly (2019, pp. 40–42), complex systems, including those related to education, share the following characteristics:

- The parts of the system are interdependent, making it impossible to understand the system by analysing its individual parts alone.
- Complex systems are self-organising, and their behaviour is often difficult or impossible to predict.
- Small actions within complex systems can have significant effects, while large actions might sometimes produce minimal outcomes.
- These systems are susceptible to initial conditions, which can result in long-term momentum or "path dependence."
- Complex systems exhibit "emergence," where their behaviour evolves from the interactions between their elements.
- They may contain "strange attractors" or demonstrate extended regularities of behaviour that can undergo radical changes.
- Complex systems develop within a "fitness landscape" shaped by their interactions with other systems.

Complex systems differ from complicated systems (Byrne and Callaghan, 2013). A complicated system can be "described by a mathematical system founded on linearity" where relationships are "constant across time and space", and changes in one element proportionately affect another (Byrne and Callaghan, 2013, p. 17). Marchand and Hilpert (2020) refer to this as a "nomothetic approach", where "smaller elements in a system combine in law-like ways to produce determined outcomes"—a perspective found in the SABER and RISE approaches. An OECD report on governance in education systems using complexity theory notes that linear approaches view "small tipping points or trigger events as causal" (Snyder, 2013, p. 13). In contrast, complex systems are non-linear, meaning "very small variations in the value of input parameters can generate very different output values in a system of equations" (Byrne and Callaghan, 2013, p. 19). The non-linear nature of complex education systems means that outcomes, including learning outcomes, result from complex, multi-causal interactions within the system (Tikly, 2019). This approach contrasts with RISE and SABER, where, for example, low learning outcomes are often attributed to incoherence in relationships of accountability and misalignment within the system. In a complex system, aligning agents' priorities toward learning outcomes may not necessarily produce the desired effect.

The concept of emergence illustrates this further. In a complex system, emergence refers to behaviours that arise from interactions between elements, leading to "dramatic new effects" and "unexpected structures and events" (Nicolis, 1995, cited in Byrne and Callaghan, 2013, p. 21). However, Kreienkamp and Pegram (2021, p. 783) argue that despite the "openness, emergence, nonlinearity, and self-organisation" characteristic of complex systems, it is still possible to "identify relational patterns, repeat interactions, path dependencies, and broad directions of change", even if the system's behaviour itself cannot be predicted. Identifying these patterns requires analysing interactions between "smaller elements in a system" and the emergent outcomes they produce (Marchand and Hilpert, 2020, p. 352).

In addition to nonlinearity and emergence, complexity theory as a framework "asserts the ontological position that much of the world and most of the social world consists of complex systems" (Byrne and Callaghan, 2013, p. 8). According to Tikly (2019), education systems are just one complex system among many complex systems, including developmental domains (economic, polity, civil society, violence, cultural, and environmental domains), regimes of governance (comprising global, regional, and national networks of actors, including multilateral institutions, donors, governments, and international civil society organisations), regimes of inequality (outlined below), discursive systems (systems of signification and meaning, encompassing both knowledge systems and discourse), knowing systems (systems and processes linked to the act of learning, incorporating cognitive and sociocultural dimensions), and natural systems (both social and environmental) (Tikly,

2019, pp. 38–39). In this sense, an education system is not qualitatively different from other complex systems.

Another feature of Tikly's (2019) application of complexity theory to education systems that differs from RISE and SABER is the engagement with "inequality and the causes of inequality". Tikly (2019, p. 68) draws on Walby (2007, 2009) to argue that "regimes of inequality"—such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, and rurality—shape various domains, including economic, political, civil society, and cultural. Using gender as an example of a regime of inequality, Tikly (2019, pp. 69–70) shows how it shapes domains economically (through a gendered division of labour essential for sustaining colonial economies), civically (influenced by Christian beliefs that position women as inferior to men), and culturally (reflected in diverse attitudes toward women within "African cultures"). However, Tikly's (2019) exploration of regimes of inequality, including gender, within the context of education systems is somewhat underdeveloped, with few empirical examples provided.

Connected to this focus on inequalities are path dependence and history. Tikly (2019, p. 34) emphasises the importance of incorporating a historical analytical lens that considers the complexity of social relationships "characterised by intersecting regimes of inequality". Kreienkamp and Pegram (2021, p. 786), highlight that "complex social problems have a history, generating path dependencies and power asymmetries that are difficult to anticipate or override" in their study of the COVID-19 pandemic as a complex issue in International Relations.

Kalinnikova Magnusson and Walton (2023) compare inclusive education strategies in South Africa and Soviet Russia (USSR). The study spans from 1917 in the case of the USSR and from 1948 in South Africa (when the National Party came to power) until the late 1980s to early 1990s. Their study analyses key policies in each context to uncover "the legacies of special education systems" inherited from "two authoritarian twentieth-century regimes" (Kalinnikova Magnusson and Walton, 2023, p. 489). They find that the USSR and apartheid ideologies, along with the "initial conditions of special education," have impacted the development of the education systems, creating "path dependencies" that are difficult to overcome due to "entrenched patterns of exclusion at different levels of the education systems" (Kalinnikova Magnusson and Walton, 2023, p. 500). In other words, current exclusions and discriminatory practices in the education systems of South Africa and Russia are rooted in initial conditions that continue to shape patterns of exclusion and discrimination. However, the study primarily focuses on state control of education provision and offers limited engagement with role of other providers (such as for-profit and religious institutions) in shaping the system.

Another example of research drawing on complexity theory is an Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report on governance in education systems, which examines the role of feedback channels in education systems (Snyder, 2013). The report highlights governance reforms in Ontario, Canada, noting that the increase in literacy and numeracy between 2001/03 and 2012/13 was driven by identifying "key nodes by eliciting feedback from all stakeholders, at all levels, through a variety of forums and panels" (Snyder, 2013, p. 19). This feedback informed reforms that included capacity building, professional development, hiring new teachers, and reducing class sizes (Snyder, 2013). Similarly, in Hong Kong, the Education Commission gathered feedback from government officials, academics, teachers, and administrators over 20 months to understand system challenges (Snyder, 2013). In both cases, "continuous and iterative feedback was viewed as a key component of the reform," and this approach continued after the reforms were implemented through "weekly meetings of working groups representing stakeholders at various levels" (Snyder, 2013, p. 22). By operationalising complexity theory, the analysis highlights the role of agents at various levels and the importance of integrating diverse perspectives multiple for a comprehensive view of the system. This approach also underscores the need for continual learning and tweaking of reforms but offers limited attention to ownership and governance structures within the system. Unlike the RISE and SABER approaches, which tend to focus on specific outcomes, complexity theory emphasises processes and inequalities. However, RISE, SABER, and complexity theory all have limited focus on how meanings attached to education systems shift depending on who finances, manages, and regulates them (state, private, non-state or a combination).

Another study that addresses the role of different stakeholders in a complex system is by Szekely and Mason (2019), which focuses on the Solar Night Schools Programme run by Barefoot College in India. The study argues that this initiative has addressed "unequal distributions of power and resources concerning the design and implementation of education development initiatives" with a systemic focus on capacity development (Szekely and Mason, 2019, pp. 669–670). The authors argue for recognising self-sustainability in education systems to avoid "over-control" and "uncritical transfer of policies" (Szekely and Mason, 2019, p. 679). Viewing the system as complex, the study emphasises the "connections among different constituents" and the need for "flexibility for constant readjustment" and "frequent replanning" (Szekely and Mason, 2019, p. 682). It calls for greater devolution of power and resources throughout the system, particularly to non-state education providers, and away from the state.

In the OECD report (Snyder, 2013) and Szekely and Mason (2019), complexity theory emphasises the importance of flexibility and ongoing dialogue between agents or stakeholders within the system. The processes involved in facilitating dialogue are considered just as important as the

outcomes. In complex systems, where issues are also complex, interventions to affect change must come from "as many points as possible, from as many directions as possible, at as many levels as possible" (Mason, 2024, p. 3). This multi-intervention strategy aims to create momentum within the system to reach a "tipping point" so that new characteristics, properties and behaviours can emerge (Mason, 2024, p. 3). In complexity theory, the who of provision is not a critical factor in the analysis; instead, analytic focus is placed on a range of processes and small changes within the system to identify "tipping points".

However, applying complexity theory to research on education systems is still relatively underdeveloped (Marchand and Hilpert, 2020). One limitation of this approach is its difficulty in uncovering the root causes of change within education systems, particularly concerning inequalities and the roles of both private and non-state sectors. Although complexity theory has been used to examine the influence of the private sector on education systems in Africa in the post-colonial period (Tikly, 2019, pp. 37, 120), this application is relatively piecemeal and there is a notable lack of empirical studies employing this approach to explore the roles of both private and non-state sectors in education systems.

Systems of Provision: A Critical Perspective on Education Systems

A fourth approach to education systems comes from the Systems of Provision (SoP) approach. Developed by Fine and Leopold (1993) in the early 1990s, this approach emerged in response to the "perceived collective failings of consumer theory across the social sciences" (Fine, Bayliss and Robertson, 2018, p. 29). Its primary aim was to rectify what the authors viewed as shortcomings in both economic and postmodern approaches to consumption. In postmodern studies, this shortcoming was the neglect of material conditions, which failed to account for how economic and political structures and processes shape the circumstances under which consumption occurs (Bayliss, Fine and Robertson, 2013). In contrast, within neoclassical economic approaches, Fine (1997, p. 12) contends that "the economic theory of the consumer is essentially limited to decisions on what to purchase", giving scant attention to "time, context and activity" except as a backdrop against which consumption unfolds. Consumption is thus viewed as an outcome of "optimising behaviour on the part of the individual in the light of available income and prevailing prices" (Fine, 1997, p. 12). An important point to make is that the SoP approach has also expanded to include the public sector, known as the public sector systems of provision (PSSoP), thereby broadening its scope to areas traditionally excluded from consumption studies.

As demonstrated in the sections of this chapter on RISE and SABER, both these approaches tend to perceive the outcomes of an education system as significantly influenced by individual utility

maximisation. By considering material conditions, historical contexts, and power dynamics, the SoP approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of consumption, aspects that are only addressed piecemeal in SABER, RISE and Tikly's complexity theory.

The SoP integrates both horizontal (social determinants of consumption) and vertical (economic determinants of consumption) factors that play a role in the creation and use of a good or service (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, p. 8). In broad terms, a SoP is defined as "the integral unity of economic and social factors involved in its creation and use" (Bayliss, Fine and Robertson, 2013, p. 2). Each SoP is considered unique, implying that an education system is qualitatively different from a health or housing SoP; an education SoP in Nigeria differs from an education SoP in Ghana. Nonetheless, each system is composed of five fundamental categories that are historically and contextually specific: agents and agencies, structures, processes, relations, and material cultures (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, pp. vii–viii). The approach illuminates the "whole chain of activity" or provision, emphasising the interactions between the real or material (i.e., physical products, labour, structures, and resources) and the non-material (i.e., values, norms, and meanings) (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, p. 42)

The SoP approach has been applied to various sectors, including housing (Robertson, 2016), water (Bayliss, 2016; Teles, 2015), clothing supply chains (Brooks, 2015), and health (Chukwuma, 2021). These studies apply the SoP in various ways and have been summarised in different diagrammatic forms. The framework allows for different facets of the system to be emphasised depending on the study's topic and focus.

In the SoP approach, structures—historically shaped patterns of ownership, financing, control, and delivery—evolve, giving rise to unique provisioning forms for each social arrangement and institution (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, p. vii). Processes within the SoP approach refer to the sequence of activities that produce a good or service and determine how it is provided (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, p. vii). Examples of such processes include, but are not limited to, decentralisation, commercialisation, redistribution, and commodification. Agents and agencies within the SoP broadly encompass producers, consumers and regulators, including the state, actively engaging with structures and processes—reproducing or challenging them. Social, economic, political, and cultural relations are foundational. These relations are differentiated by gender, ethnicity, religion, and of capital (or the state as an employer) and labour. Consumption norms or material cultures (MC) in each SoP emerge from the interactions between these components of a SoP and the relations between them, encompassing the norms, values and meanings associated with a good or service (Bayliss and Fine, 2020, p. 54).

In the early to mid-2010s, studies drawing on the SoP were conducted as part of the European Union (EU)-funded research programme Financialisation, Economy, Society, and Sustainable Development (FESSUD) under the finance, real economic, and state work package. These studies compared water and housing systems in the UK, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, and Istanbul (FESSUD, 2021). Five studies examining water systems in the UK, South Africa, Poland, Portugal, and Istanbul were synthesised by Bayliss (2016, p. 48), who shows how the SoP "highlights the contestation and conflict among agents, leading to diverse results from the implementation of similar policies." These contestations often emerge around price structures and water usage. The attention to processes of contestation and diversity within systems contrasts with the utility maximisation dynamic in RISE and SABER.

Research employing the SoP has highlighted the growing impact of financialisation on the provision of goods and services, especially in the UK. A study comparing the provisioning systems of water, energy, and local buses in England found that financialisation has adversely affected end-users (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020). The transition from public to private ownership and increased decentralisation has favoured shareholders and investors, who benefit financially at the expense of end-users expense. Payments for bills and fares contribute more shareholder profits than to improvements in the services provided (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020). For example, in the bus SoP, privatisation and deregulation have allowed major transport companies, backed by influential financial investors, to dominate the supply of bus transport in England (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020). These companies can terminate or restrict routes deemed no longer commercially viable, leading to increased car ownership and household debt among low-income families who relied on these bus routes (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020). With limited alternatives, these households often have to purchase cars on credit. The study shows that within the system, conflicts between agents often "tip in favour of investors" (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020, p. 493). This trend is underpinned by a "strong ideological commitment to market-led solutions, framed with narratives emphasising efficiency and competition over equity and public service" (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020, p. 493). Similarly, the financialisation of the water sector in England has been justified by the narrative of homo economicus, which frames "each consumer [as] responsible for their welfare via the market" (Bayliss, Mattioli and Steinberger, 2020, p. 480). This narrative supports the idea that individuals or households should pay for what they use or access via the market.

Other research has applied the SoP approach to contexts in the global South, including health in Nigeria (Chukwuma, 2023, 2021), housing in South Africa (Isaacs, 2016) and energy in Zambia (Bayliss and Pollen, 2021). For instance, Chukwuma's (2021) PhD thesis examines reforms aimed at

achieving Universal Health Coverage in Nigeria. This study, which involved 52 semi-structured interviews, 12 focus group discussions and documentary analysis, explores the role of various stakeholders in shaping and implementing the 2014 National Health Act (Chukwuma, 2021, pp. 97–98). Chukwuma (2021, p. 17) finds that private sector agents wield disproportionate influence and notes that "continuous underfunding has left a vacuum for the private sector actors to fill" (Chukwuma, 2021, p. 17). Similarly, Bayliss and Pollen's (2021, p. 5) analysis of Zambia's electricity sector reveals how the energy SoP is dominated by a single supplier, ZESCO, described as a "corporatised, state-owned monopoly utility". Their study illustrates how interactions between agents within the sector uphold a system that benefits "international private capital" with minimal impact on expanding electricity access (Bayliss and Pollen, 2021, p. 10).

These studies highlight a key difference from the RISE and SABER approaches: while RISE and SABER often prioritise relations and outcomes, the SoP approach does not privilege any single element within the system. Instead, it focuses on understanding how goods or services are provided by examining the interactions between various elements—who provides, who has access, and under what conditions. Although the SoP approach, like complexity theory (Kalinnikova Magnusson and Walton, 2023; Walton and Engelbrecht, 2022), includes attention to culture and ideology, it emphasises how these aspects are interwoven with other elements such as processes, structures, agents, and relations within the system.

The SoP Applied to Education

The SoP has been applied to education in limited studies (Fine and Rose, 2001; Languille, 2014). Fine and Rose (2001, p. 172) argue that there is a need to "understand education provision in terms of highly country-specific socioeconomic systems." They critique mainstream (economic) approaches to education for being homogenising and individualistic and argue that education systems "should not be forced within a framework or typology of pre-determined systems" (Fine and Rose, 2001, p. 175). However, they draw attention to the following five features of education (Fine and Rose, 2001):

1. It is provided through a series of economic and other activities, e.g. building schools and labour markets for teachers.
2. It is sequential (pre-school, school, post-school).
3. It interacts with economic, social, political, and cultural relations.
4. Educational processes are embedded in social structures, relations and processes and their associated conflicts, which are attached to underlying economic and political interests.
5. The formation and evolution of education systems are historically contingent.

Languille's (2014) PhD thesis on junior secondary education expansion in Tanzania between 2004 and 2012 drew on the SoP approach as "a general framework for the study". It deployed an understanding of education systems as follows (Languille, 2014):

[S]ocial constructs, products of history, with material and ideological dimensions, embroiled in the politics and economy of a country and forged at the intersection of internal and external factors.

A predominantly qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was employed, involving 180 semi-structured interviews "with members of the elite at the national level and in Lushoto district," along with "visits to 28 secondary schools and focus groups with parents, students, and teachers" (Languille, 2014, p. 38). Through interviews with key stakeholders in the education system, Languille (2014) contends that their narratives reveal the "ward schools policy as the outcome of intra-ruling class struggles". The study sheds light on political contestations surrounding education, including how the ideologies of donors and national elites shape education policies and budgets, which are "forged through conflict-ridden historical processes" but also significant power differences at the local, national, and international levels (Languille, 2014). While this study only loosely applied the SoP framework, employing a broader political economy analysis, it underscores the intense political, economic, social, and cultural contestations rooted in historical processes around education policymaking and budgetary allocations (Languille, 2014).

In essence, then, the SoP approach argues for an understanding and analysis of education systems as part of "country-specific socioeconomic systems" (Fine and Rose, 2001, p. 172), i.e., embedded within social, cultural, economic, and political systems that are historically, temporally, and contextually contingent. In the existing body of work on education systems there is a tendency toward a descriptive analysis of inequalities within the system (as discussed in the sections on RISE and SABER), often without adequately explaining why these inequalities take the specific forms they do, how and why policies are enacted in particular ways, and why certain actors align themselves with reformist agendas (or not) in specific contexts. As Unterhalter (2023) notes, some of the more economics literature or what she terms "what works" (here I also include SABER and RISE) has not engaged, or only minimally, "with gender issues, failing to address the misogyny, violence, and long histories of dispossession that are part of the stories of girls out of school or learning little within" (Unterhalter, 2023, p. 153). This section develops the SoP for education, specifically focusing on privatisation and gender.

The SoP analysis highlights the structures, agents, processes, and material cultures that need to be described and categorised to enable critical analysis of education systems, uncovering who gets

access to education and under which conditions. For example, education is provided through economic, political, social, and cultural processes, including "learning and teaching interactions" (Unterhalter, Longlands and Peppin Vaughan, 2022, p. 527). Education processes relate to resource allocation, decision-making and power distribution at all education system levels. In the case of decentralisation, which is closely linked to privatisation, Zajda (2006, p. 11) defines this as the "process of delegating power and responsibility concerning the distribution and the use of resources (e.g., finance, human resources, and curriculum) by the central government to local schools" and could take the form of greater autonomy over the curricula at the school level instead of central government designing the curriculum. The state is thus often deeply involved in education processes, including delegating authority to the private and non-state sectors for the financing, management, and delivery of education services (Ball, 2009).

Closely connected to this are processes of commodification—most well-known from Marx's commodity fetishism, which is described by Hermann (2021, p. 26) as the "process by which market value comes to dominate use value". In other words, what a good or service can be exchanged for, and its market value, "usually in units of money," supersedes that of its use value, which "can only be assessed qualitatively" (Hermann, 2021, p. 26). At the extreme, the elevation of market value over use-value means that "things which have no price have no value and become worthless" (Hermann, 2021, p. 24). In education, paying for schooling or higher education may be one aspect, which can involve a process in which "students are seen as consumers, rather than as individuals who want to learn" (Hermann, 2021, p. 31) or lead to a more profound shift when education institutions need to make a profit, as this can alter the structure of education, including greater standardisation and larger class sizes (Hermann, 2021). Processes such as commodification, privatisation, and so on can change education structures but are, in turn, shaped by structures.

Education processes are not neutral and can involve forms of exploitation, sexism, heterosexism, misogyny, and racism. Examples of gendered processes are found in studies of the curriculum, which may perpetuate sexist stereotypes, and in research into school-related gender-based violence (Johnson Ross and Parkes, 2021; Parkes et al., 2016) – that is "sexual, physical or psychological acts or threats of violence, in and around schools, as a result of gender norms and stereotypes" - and including violence perpetrated by teachers (Parkes et al., 2022, p. 196). On the other hand, inclusive processes in education require "attention to the knowledgeable practice of teachers" and "ensuring education is delivered in ways that are gender equitable and supportive to children, irrespective of background" (Unterhalter, 2020, p. 7). The form these processes take can be democratic and transparent, embedding critique and debate (Unterhalter, 2020).

These processes are not free-floating but are shaped by the political, economic, and social structures in which they occur. Structures in an education SoP are formed over time, specific to each social arrangement and institution, encompassing the financing, management, and regulation of education. The financing and management of schools may be wholly private, wholly public or some combination. Schools that charge fees will have a specific financing structure that will depend wholly or in part on the financial contribution of parents and households. In contrast, public schools are more likely to be financed in totality through government budgets. Governance and accountability structures could include testing regimes standardised to compare outputs across schools and performance levels linked to processes of commodification and privatisation (Hermann, 2021).

Again, these structures are not neutral. Gender is an organising framework within society shaping institutional structures (including in education) based on presumed biological differences (Acker, 2004, p. 20). For example, Connell (2010, p. 609) argues, "Where there is a gender ordering of employment and authority in the state, there is necessarily a gender structuring in public school systems." The specific form the gender order or regime takes, however, is highly context-specific; in other words, "Gender is a construct that offers variation from place to place and from context to context" (Stromquist, 2015a, p. 62). The variations in gender and private schooling across contexts were explored in Chapter 2, with more boys than girls enrolled in private schools in contexts across South Asia (Narwana, 2019; Srivastava, 2013). For example, parents in one context may justify only sending sons and not daughters to private schools because when education is viewed as an investment, boys' education may have higher returns (Narwana, 2019). In other contexts, the reverse may be the case. The studies in Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of paying close attention to the form gender takes across contexts and how this shapes the forms in which education is provided from the classroom to the highest levels of government and legal apparatus, noting that both public, private and non-state educational institutional structures are gendered.

Education SoPs are also composed of agents and agencies, including state and non-state sectors. These agents and agencies include students, their families, and the communities they are embedded in. Depending on the context, education ministries, local boards, and governments bear varying degrees of responsibility for their citizens' welfare. Regulatory bodies and inspectors also play essential roles alongside international development agencies, such as aid organisations and multistakeholder partnerships.

The private and non-state sectors can encompass school owners, ranging from individuals to large school chains, with diverse motivations, including profit-making. Non-state donors, philanthropists, and private school associations are also part of this landscape. Within schools, various paid and

unpaid agents work together, encompassing roles such as cleaning and security personnel, kitchen staff, administrative staff, head teachers or managers, teachers, and teaching assistants. Parents, guardians, extended family members, communities, and students themselves represent the end-users or consumers of education but also actively engage in the chain of provision. They engage through avenues like Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), supporting homework, and other volunteer positions. CSOs and movements, including teachers' unions, actively contribute to education SoPs through campaigns to ensure quality education, sometimes calling for more significant funding for education or more equitable practices within schools, as well as through practical initiatives such as training and mentorship programmes.

Not all agents within the system have equal influence or power, which may depend on factors such as gender, ethnicity and religion. For instance, government officials who write opinion pieces in newspapers or deliver speeches to broad audiences can significantly shape public discourse and opinion.

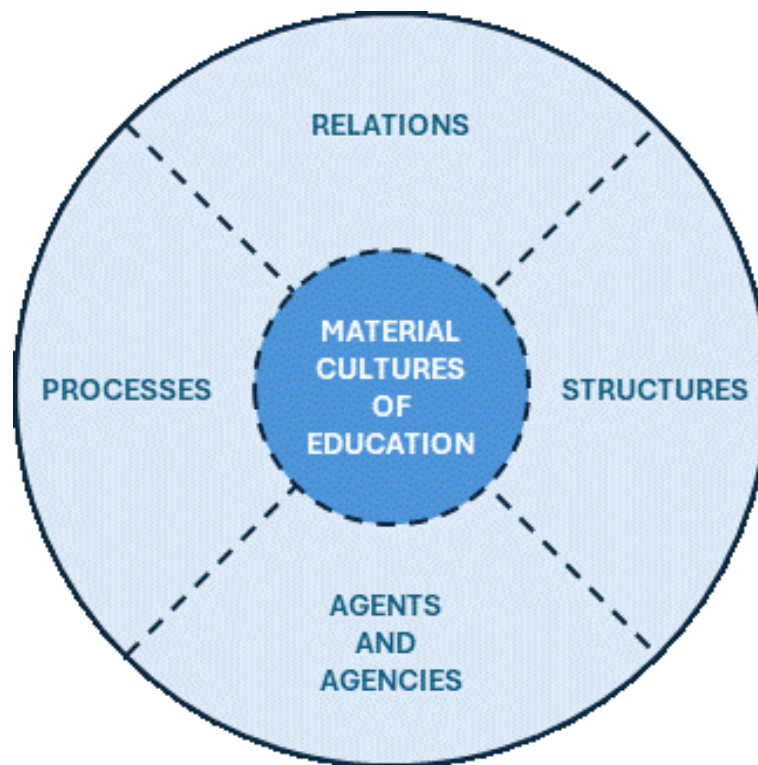
The social relationships and relations of consumption and production among various agents and agencies underpin an education SoP. These relations are differentiated by gender, ethnicity, religion, and of capital (or the state as an employer) and labour. Social relations within the classroom can be based on care, love, and play but are also affected by external processes and structures, resulting in unpredictable interactions. Classroom dynamics can challenge or reinforce ideas about gender, ethnicity and class, leading to more equitable or inequitable outcomes. Similarly, relationships between teachers and parents are also influenced by these dynamics.

Other examples of relationships within an education SoP include those between the Ministry of Education, state regulatory bodies, and private school owners, often characterised by contentious interactions but highly dependent on factors like the terms and conditions under which private schools operate. These relationships affect interactions between private school owners and teachers, as well as between teachers, pupils, and parents. For instance, school management may face pressure to attract new pupils or funding and demonstrate academic performance. As a result, they may discipline teachers and students who are perceived as underperforming, often assessed through metrics like test scores. However, students come from diverse home backgrounds, which influences their classroom relationships. Consequently, teachers often grapple with the challenge of balancing these pressures while prioritising the well-being of their students. Again, this context is highly dependent on temporal and situational factors.

Figure 4 shows a diagrammatic representation of an education SoP. Each education SoP can be understood by unpacking its processes, agents, structures, relations, and material cultures. Within a

particular education SoP, each element is influenced by the other, and the dotted lines show the permeability of each part, each of which overlaps with the other. Relations connect agents, shaped by and shaping the cultures of provision, processes and structures. For example, constitutional and legal structures influence financing structures, such as whether public funds support private sector education providers, shaping the relations between agents in the system. In a PPP, for example, a contract is agreed upon between the state and private sector companies outlining agreed terms, including payment for services. The state is connected to the private sector company through this contract or agreement so that the state is liable to pay the company, and the company is liable to provide a service. Another structure that may form the relationship, for example, could be through regulatory structures, i.e., the state can regulate private sector providers, including closing down operators, but does not provide additional financial support.

Figure 4 Education System of Provision



Source: Author's illustration

When education undergoes processes of commodification, parents become customers, and pupils transition into consumers, affecting the relationship between teachers and pupils in the classroom, according to the SoP framework. For example, teachers may be asked to provide extra support to a pupil from a wealthy family. Other instances may involve the roles played by parents in the education system as they are expected to take on additional work to support their children's education in a highly competitive education market. Who takes on this responsibility within the

household will depend on gendered structures within society and may well reinforce existing inequalities.

The interactions between the various elements in a SoP give rise to contextually and temporally specific material cultures related to education. Material cultures encompass how education is perceived, for example, as a public or private good within society and the narratives associated with this framing. These insights differ from RISE, SABER, and even complex systems to some extent, as they emphasise the significance of who provides education, whether the state, private or non-state agencies, whether fees are charged or not, and other factors. Understanding how changes to ownership structures within education, such as who provides education, shift relations within the system to make it more or less inclusive, is critical to a SoP analysis of education. However, it is important to re-state that cultures simultaneously form the other elements in the SoP, i.e., the SoP is not determinist in the sense that (economic) structures determine cultures in a one-way interaction but that they interact in a symbiotic relationship.

To gain a deeper understanding of material cultures and their impact on agents within the SoP, Fine (2013, as cited in Bayliss and Fine, 2020) has identified ten key factors that shape cultural systems: constructed, construed, commodified, conforming, contextual, contradictory, chaotic, closed, contested and collective (see Appendix 1 complete with examples and descriptions, as well as their relevance to education). These factors illuminate how the meanings of consumption are generated and how they vary across different SoPs, which are mutually reinforcing.

Conclusion

Similar to complexity theory, the SoP approach engages with processes and historical formations. However, in contrast to the perspective from complexity theory on complex systems, the system takes on a more structured form in the sense that each SoP is composed of pre-defined components. However, the shape this takes and what the SoP produces in terms of access is highly dependent on temporal and contextual specificity. Further, the SoP provides a deeper and more holistic analysis of education systems, encompassing historical, economic, political, social, and cultural structures and processes affecting education, allowing for an understanding of how gender works in a system. Importantly, this study provides a framework that allows for deep interrogation of who provides education and how this changes qualitative and quantitative aspects of education provision. In contrast, RISE and SABER's focus on outcomes give rise to a focus on isolated elements of the education system, such as accountability or relations between agents, with minimal attention to processes and cultural meanings associated with education, including how structural forms impact this. Complexity theory, similarly, does not provide a framework for deep engagement with

privatisation and commodification processes in education because of its openness and fluidity. Among these approaches, the SoP is the most compelling when critically analysing education provisioning. Unlike the SABER and RISE, the SoP does not take market logic in education for granted. Instead, it allows for scrutinising how these forms of provision have developed. For these reasons, the SoP has been selected to frame the investigation of education privatisation and inequalities in Nigeria. The next chapter outlines how the historical investigation was planned and carried out.

Chapter 4. Methods

This chapter outlines the methodological approach used to study the evolution of non-state and private sector engagements in the Nigerian primary education system from 1945 to 2023. The research employs a case study approach, primarily drawing on historical research methods, including archival research and document analysis. It also incorporates data from semi-structured interviews and reviews of official statistics to capture the contextual specificity and cultural significance of the role and impact of private and non-state sector engagements within the education system, as well as how gender is intertwined in these processes. As outlined in the previous chapter, the research is framed by the SoP approach. The historical lens organises the chapters chronologically, applying SoP analysis to each period. To my knowledge, this is the first study to apply the SoP framework over such an extended historical period and one of the few studies to apply SoP to an education system, both generally and specifically in Nigeria.

The study draws on the SoP approach to analyse the Nigerian education system and addresses the following research questions:

- How has the private sector's involvement in the Nigerian primary education system evolved from 1945 to 2023, and what factors have driven these changes?
- How has the private sector's role in the primary education systems of Anambra, Kano, and Lagos states differed, and what local factors contributed to these variations?
- What has been the impact of private sector engagement in the Nigerian primary education system on gender dynamics?

The case study method provided a path to examine the history of education provisioning in Nigeria, looking at how privatisation and particular gendered formations did (and did not) form part of the primary education SoP by looking closely at the structures, processes, positioning of agents, their relationships, and the material cultures they developed. Given Nigeria's marked regional divisions with distinct historical experiences of education provisioning, the nested case study design encompasses both the federal and regional experiences of the role of the private sector in the primary education system. Three states form the nested case studies and provide insights into these different regional experiences: Anambra in the South East, Kano in the North West, and Lagos in the South West.

Research Design

The case study is an empirical research design that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the

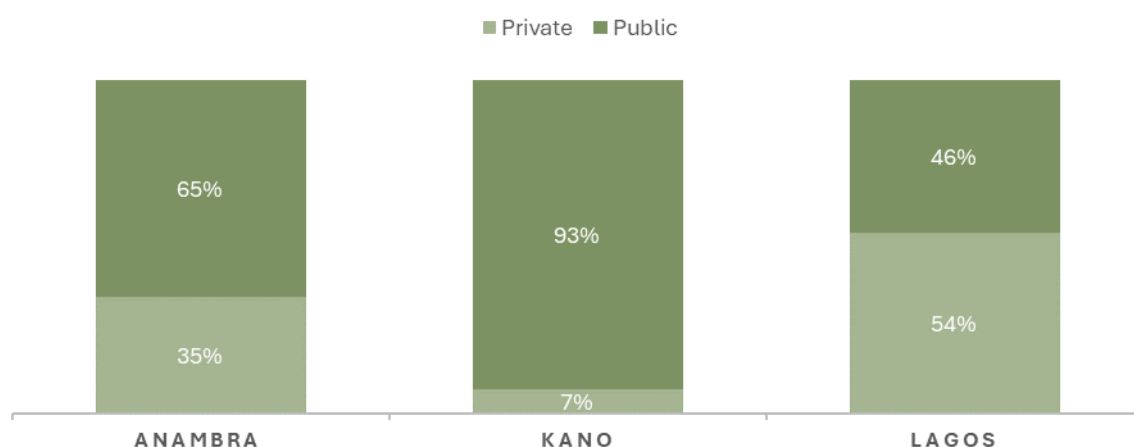
phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (Yin, 2017, pp. 42–43). It explores "a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals" (Cresswell, 2014, p. 241, cited in Priya, 2021, p. 95). An important aspect of the case study is its depth and context specificity, as well as encompassing "multiple methods of data collection" driven by the phenomena under investigation (Priya, 2021, p. 95; Yin, 2017). Yin (2017) argues that the ability of the case study to incorporate multiple forms of inquiry, including direct observation and interviews, alongside historical research methods, is one of the unique strengths of the case study approach. These aspects are particularly important for this study as Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of analysing longer histories of private sector engagement in education systems. Tracing the historical evolution of private provisioning in education in different states in Nigeria allows for an assessment of the conditions of access today and the extent to which private sector involvement addresses gendered inequalities.

Another feature of the case study approach, as Yin (2017) outlines, is its spatial and temporal boundaries. In this case, spatial boundaries align with Nigeria's borders, and the three nested sub-case studies align with the political boundaries of the three states of Lagos, Kano, and Anambra. Temporal boundaries extend from the period following the end of the Second World War in 1945, leading up to independence from Britain in 1960 and until 2023, when federal presidential elections took place. An important point concerning the spatial and temporal boundaries is that in 1945, the geographic and political boundaries of Anambra, Kano and Lagos were very different from those of 2023. In the period from 1945 to 1967 the areas that came to comprise these three states (Lagos, Kano and Anambra) fell within larger regional formations. In the case of Anambra, this was the Eastern region; for Lagos, this was the Western region; and for Kano, this was the Northern region. Chapter 5 provides a brief history of the three regions' political, economic, social, and cultural formations. The political creation of states in 1967 provides some temporal and spatial boundaries. However, there were some changes to the boundaries of the three states after this date, especially notable in Anambra, which assumed its current geographically and politically bounded form from 1991.

The three states were chosen because they provide examples of different forms of private sector engagement in primary education and because of their historical, cultural, economic and political differences. These differences are explored in more detail in the following chapters. Lagos State, located in the South West region, provides an example of high rates of private school enrolments. In this context, more children attend private than public schools. Data from 2019 show that 54 percent of primary school enrolments in Lagos are in private schools (Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), 2019, pp. 68–70). In the North West, Kano state has a long history of Islamic and religious education provision, but provides an example of a context with low levels of private primary school

enrolments with less than 10 percent of overall primary-level enrolments in private schools (UBEC, 2019, pp. 68–70). Anambra state, located in the South East, provides an example of medium rates of private primary school enrolments, with total enrolments at the primary level in private schools around 35 percent (UBEC, 2019, pp. 68–70). Figure 5 below provides an overview of public and private primary school enrolments in the three states (UBEC, 2019, pp. 68–70). The figures shown here may miss some LFPS, thus undercounting enrolments in private schools.

Figure 5 Public and Private Primary School Enrolments, Anambra, Kano, Lagos (%), 2018



Source: UBEC (2019, pp. 68–70)

The three states also have varying levels and experiences of poverty. Of the total population of Nigeria, 63 percent were multidimensionally poor in 2022, i.e., experienced deprivation in at least two dimensions (health, education, living standards, work and shocks) (NBS Nigeria, 2022). Nigeria's 2022 multidimensional poverty index provides a snapshot of the national picture regarding experienced deprivations across the population. It points toward the structural features of inequalities across a range of axes. Rather than only focusing on monetary poverty, the index captures deprivation across health, education, living standards, and work and shock dimensions (NBS Nigeria, 2022). Each dimension includes a range of indicators weighted across the four dimensions, and each person is given a deprivation score based on the "share of weighted deprivations they experience" (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 14). Multidimensional poverty rates are lower in Anambra and Lagos than in Kano (NBS Nigeria, 2022). For example, 34 percent of Lagos' population lived in poverty in 2022 compared to 66.3 percent of Kano's population (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 28). Low rates of school attendance contribute significantly to Kano's multidimensional poverty rates (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 26). In contrast, food poverty significantly contributed to multidimensional poverty rates in Anambra and Lagos (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 30). The

multidimensional poverty rates highlight that poverty rates in Kano are higher than in Anambra and Lagos and that higher numbers of children are out-of-school in Kano than in Anambra and Lagos.

The case study methodology applied to this research also aims to reconcile seemingly disparate elements within an education system, providing in-depth insights into evolving cultures of education provisioning and their gender dynamics within the context of a single country. However, the approach poses specific challenges, particularly given the vast data and the diversity of the sample. As noted by Robinson (2014, p. 28), the greater heterogeneity of the sample "may lessen the likelihood of meaningful core cross-case themes being found during analysis" due to the "sheer diversity." The diversity and volume of data proved challenging and, at times, overwhelming during this study. Detailed record-keeping was essential to address the issues associated with diverse histories, variations in the education system, varying levels of archival data, and access to interviews. Organising data by period, geographic location, and type helped mitigate these challenges.

The decision to employ qualitative methods was driven by the thesis' focus on cultural meanings attached to education from a SoP perspective, tracing how these meanings change and shift over time. These meanings extend to gender and the gendered meanings associated with other forms of provision that are shaped through discursive practices. The language used by various agents in a primary education SoP conveys meanings that interact with other parts of the SoP (structures, processes). These meanings may be contested, and the discourse used may be contradictory. Quantitative data are drawn on in the form of descriptive statistics, offering valuable insights into patterns of enrolment and progression and shedding light on inequalities of access across systems, including but not limited to gender, religion, and ethnicity. However, relying solely on these data has limitations when it comes to understanding the deeper meanings and reasons behind certain educational practices. In contrast, qualitative approaches are rich in contextual detail and "sensitive to the social context of the study" (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 28), focusing on processes and providing nuance where numerical data fall short.

Given the emphasis on cultures of provisioning and the meanings attached to education in this study, qualitative data collection and analysis involving semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis were deemed most appropriate.

Positionality and Reflexivity

Acknowledging the researcher's positionality and ongoing self-reflection is important in qualitative research and involves constant self-interrogation across social, personal, intellectual, and political dimensions (Nnaemeka, 2004). Relatedly, reflexivity is a key concern (for qualitative and quantitative researchers) due to the acknowledgement that "the researcher will influence all research and there

is no completely 'neutral' or 'objective' knowledge" (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 46). This recognition means it is necessary to reflect on how personal beliefs and values impact and potentially bias the research (Ormston et al., 2014), i.e., recognising one's position as an active subject within shifting contexts, where meaning is constructed rather than fixed. Positionality extends to historical and archival research, and researchers must position themselves within the historical account being examined (Armstrong, 2003). Historical facts are not static entities waiting to be discovered and interpreted; they are actively constructed and given meaning through the historian's process of reconstruction and reasoning (Armstrong, 2003).

In this research, it was necessary to recognise "Whiteness" as a structural advantage and standpoint rooted in historical and cultural practices within knowledge production, impacting the knowledge produced and the interpretations made (Faria and Mollett, 2016). This recognition extended to addressing the politics of location, considering diversities of class, race, culture, and sexuality (Mama, 2007). As a Scottish white woman who attended a publicly funded state school in a rural area, the concept of school choice was unfamiliar to me. Private schools were not easily accessible, and the culture of education provisioning in my area emphasised the public nature of education, with students from diverse backgrounds attending the same school. However, this did not guarantee equality in outcomes or processes within the school. Teachers were aware of social characteristics and backgrounds, influencing decisions on attention and support.

Subsequently, my experience working as a Kindergarten teacher in a private school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, provided additional insights into the impact of Whiteness and the power it carries. With their increasing popularity among the emerging middle class, private schools in Addis Ababa presented a stark contrast to my previous experiences. As a white teacher in a school owned by a white woman from the US and her Ethiopian husband, I witnessed first-hand the influence and power that Whiteness afforded, both structurally and at the individual level. For example, despite Amharic being the official language of Ethiopia and widely spoken in Addis Ababa, the school enforced English as the primary language. Children and teachers caught speaking languages other than English were sanctioned, with some teachers having a percentage of their pay deducted as a punishment. These processes elevated the English language over languages spoken in Ethiopia, including Amharic, reinforcing structural inequalities and class privileges with middle-class families able to send their children to private schools specialising in English. As a white woman from an English-speaking country, I contributed to the reinforcement of these racial and class structures because I could speak English more fluently and because I was paid more than local teachers. These experiences revealed the dynamics of race and class inherent in educational systems and the position of individuals within these systems and structures.

My awareness of these power dynamics deepened through my academic career — from studying gender and higher education in Ethiopia during my master's degree to engaging critically with colonial structures during my PhD. For example, during this study, I was part of a decolonial collective alongside colleagues Laila Kadiwal, Mai Abu Moghli, Charlotte Nussey and Colleen Howell within the Centre for Education and International Development (CEID) at UCL. The collective critically engaged with how colonial structures were reproduced in EID research, including the real-world implications of this to unlearn and transform systems of oppression (Kadiwal et al., 2020). These experiences heightened my sensitivity to ongoing colonial relations within research on education in global South contexts (Kadiwal et al., 2020).

During the data collection period in Lagos and Abuja in March and April 2021, when I gathered interview data with key stakeholders in the education system, I became acutely aware of the power dynamics inherent in the research process. For instance, teachers and other stakeholders generously gave their time to share their views on the education system, including personal challenges. These narratives often evoked strong emotional responses, ranging from anger to sadness. In these moments, guidance from research methods courses emphasised the importance of maintaining composure, acknowledging the participant's response, and encouraging them to elaborate on their feelings (Yeo et al., 2013, p. 204). However, a more challenging aspect was the need to maintain a certain level of neutrality and refrain from expressing my judgments on the situation, especially when participants explicitly sought my perspective. For instance, in one interview, the participants asked me to share my views on the challenges facing education in the state we were in; given that the interview was concluding and involved teachers in a public school, I chose to shift the conversation towards discussing the educational situation in the UK and the challenges it faced. Sharing personal experiences opened me up to a certain level of vulnerability, and if we had had this conversation earlier, the participants might have felt more comfortable expressing their views. In other interviews, I was asked whether I was a teacher or not, and when I explained that although I am not a trained teacher, I do have teaching experience, I noticed a slight softening toward me. Questions also arose about why I wanted to study the Nigerian education system, highlighting the power dynamics in this process and the less likely reverse scenario — a Nigerian PhD student based in Nigeria travelling to Scotland to study the education system there. These structural challenges (funding structures) are deep-rooted and cannot be easily overcome, but they are important to acknowledge. One avenue is to provide accessible outputs from this thesis and travel to Nigeria to present the findings to key stakeholders. The collaborative partnership with ActionAid UK and subsequent support from ActionAid Nigeria (discussed below) means that this research will feed into their work on the right to education.

Another issue that arose during the fieldwork in Lagos was the commencement of campaigns for the 2023 presidential elections and some state elections, adding a layer of sensitivity to the education topic. For instance, one high-level official in the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) initially agreed to an interview but declined, ignoring my messages. This change may have been due to their plans to run in the 2023 elections. The sensitivity of specific topics, including education programmes and projects, became evident, leading some officials to refuse specific questions or become more agitated. During a follow-up interview with a high-level official, it became clear that they did not have time for the interview, were tired, and wanted it to conclude quickly. I decided not to probe further, ending the interview earlier than anticipated. The details regarding the interview data collection and the associated challenges are discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

Ethics

The research obtained ethical approval through UCL in January 2020.¹⁰ Since Nigeria does not have a specific social science research ethical process, key officials were notified, and permission was secured from the Public Affairs Office in Lagos during fieldwork in 2022 (Appendix 2). The Lagos Ministry of Education (MoE) and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) were also informed.

The research adhered to eight aspects of ethical feminist research practice, which "emphasises responsibility and caring relationships", outlined by Bell (2014, p. 85), including:

- Do no harm;
- Confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity;
- Informed consent;
- Disclosure and potential for deception;
- Power between researcher and subject;
- Representation or ownership of research findings;
- Ensuring respect for human dignity, self-determination, and justice, including safeguards to protect the rights of vulnerable subjects;
- Obtaining formal ethics approval by adhering to a professional code.

The research sought to do no harm and to ensure confidentiality and protection from harm to all participants. Permission for interviews was obtained, and consent forms were signed (Appendix 3). I

¹⁰ Z6364106/2020/10/64 social research

made it clear to participants, some of whom were public officials as described below, that "complete anonymity may be difficult to achieve" (Wiles, 2013, p. 51), I endeavoured to do so by giving all participants pseudonyms, a "primary way that researchers seek to protect research participants from accidental breaking of confidentiality" (Wiles, 2013, p. 50). Information disclosed during the interview remained confidential, and no information, such as the harm of another individual, that required follow-up was disclosed during interviews. Further, the questions asked were not sensitive, although they evoked strong emotions, as discussed above. I also included my contact details on the information sheet and ensured each person interviewed could contact me if they had concerns or wished to withdraw from the study (Appendix 4).

Several measures were implemented during the in-person interviews to ensure the safety of participants and comply with COVID-19 guidelines (which were in force during the in-person fieldwork in Lagos and Abuja in March and April 2022). For example, I carried out COVID-19 rapid tests whenever symptoms appeared, and interviews with teachers and parents were conducted in well-ventilated areas. I also opted to travel by taxi rather than public transportation when commuting to research sites to minimise exposure and potential risks. By adhering to COVID-19 protocols and taking necessary precautions, the research aimed to balance obtaining valuable data with safeguarding the health and well-being of all those involved in the study.

Research Process

The first element in the research design involved collecting information from various documents. The sources of data included formal studies and evaluations of primary education in Nigeria from 1945 to 2023; colonial, federal, and regional government education policies and legal frameworks from 1945 to 1967; federal and state government policy and legal documents from 1967 to 2023; biographies and selected speeches of key political figures, notably Ọbásanjó, Awólówò, and Azikiwe; news clippings from the National Archives at Kew, London; and international and national newspaper articles accessed through online databases such as LexisNexis News Media and ProQuest historical newspaper archive, covering the period from 1945 to 2023 and relating to primary education in Nigeria.

Historical data included archival research on colonial documents held in the National Archives at Kew, London, pertaining to education in Nigeria from the 1940s to the 1950s. This type of official historical documentation has several strengths, including its ability to undergo multiple reviews and its breadth, as it "can cover a long period, many events, and many settings" (Yin, 2017, p. 140). These documents were expected to provide valuable insights into the evolution of relationships among various agents within the system and structural changes, including shifts in school ownership

patterns. Archived media reports offer insights into dominant societal narratives about education, revealing relationships around provisioning. Protests and other forms of activism might be reported in the media but omitted from official accounts. Archival data also serve as necessary documentation of specific events. It is important to recognise the potential bias of the document's author and consider their societal position (such as gender, race, class, etc.), as well as what is considered significant for archiving and what is not (Yin, 2017). For instance, official documents often reflect the perspectives of those in positions of power, while marginalised groups (historically women, ethnic minorities, and others) are frequently overlooked (Dever, 2017; Rupp, 2006; Shrivastava, 2017).

The eleven files consulted were Records of the Colonial Office, Commonwealth and Foreign Commonwealth Offices, Empire Marketing Board and related bodies, specifically the Colonial Office West Africa Original Correspondence, which dates between 1951 and 1960 and concerns education in Nigeria. In addition, one file from the Commonwealth Relations Office: Education Registered Files, Commonwealth Relations Office, Education Department, 1960-1961 was consulted (see Table 3). These records relate to the period immediately preceding and following independence from 1951-1961, expressing the views of the colonial regime.

Table 3 List of Archived Material Consulted

DO 167 Commonwealth Relations Office: Education Registered Files, Commonwealth Relations Office, Education Department, 1960-1961
DO 167/3: Ashby Commission report on higher education in Nigeria (1960-1961) Public Record.
CO 554 Colonial Office: West Africa Original Correspondence (1911-1965)
CO 554/167/5 : Nigeria: Constitution (1951)
CO 554/437: Meetings of the Central Board of Education in Nigeria (1951-1953)
CO 554/434: Education policy in Western Region of Nigeria (1953)
CO 554/1166: Education in Nigeria under the revised constitution (1953-1954)
CO 554/1174: The 1954 Education Law, Western Region of Nigeria (1955)
CO 554/1173: Education in the Eastern Region of Nigeria (1955-1956)
CO 554/1170: Education in the Western Region of Nigeria (1955-1957)
CO 554/1848: Policy on education in Nigeria (1957-1959)
CO 554/1858: Policy on education in Eastern Region of Nigeria (1957-1959)
CO 554/1860: Review of education structure in Eastern Region of Nigeria (1959)
CO 554/2397: Financing of primary education in Northern region of Nigeria (1960)

Reports and statistics on education in Nigeria from 1940 to the 1990s were consulted. The collection is held in the UCL's Faculty of Education and Society library in the Overseas Statistics Collection (when fully catalogued, this collection will be known as the International Educational Statistics

Collection). These sources included federal and state-level statistics, such as statistical digests and annual abstracts, and official education reports and surveys covering the same period.

The LexisNexis and ProQuest historical databases of newspapers and newswire services worldwide were searched for articles related to the private and non-state sectors in the Nigerian primary education system between 1945 and 2023. Further, online reports from development agencies (FCDO, World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF), civil society organisations (ActionAid International, ActionAid Nigeria), and policy documents (Federal Ministry of Education and State Ministries of Education), including data from large household surveys such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), were consulted.

In addition to gathering data for the case studies from documents, interviews were planned with key stakeholders in the education system who were knowledgeable about private and non-state sector engagements in particular settings and who had insights into some of the gender issues (see Table 4, which sets out the planned and achieved interviews). Criterion sampling was employed so that "the objective is to include instances in the sample that match a predefined profile" (Schreier, 2018, p. 13), which entails clearly defining the relationship between the sample and the population. Applying the SoP framework to education in Nigeria aims to understand what is happening in this context and to build theory from it instead of generalising it to other contexts. With qualitative interview data, which aim for depth over breadth, the sample size is highly dependent on the purpose of the study and can range from 10 to hundreds (Schreier, 2018). This is particularly apparent when it comes to the case study approach, which "require complex decisions on multiple levels" (Schreier, 2018, p. 15). As the study involved comparing three nested or within-case studies, it was important to identify comparable organisations and participants across cases while maintaining flexibility. Further, since the research aimed to uncover the underlying structures and processes within the education system, it was crucial to explore various opinions from different stakeholder groups, especially concerning policy decisions and changes over time.

The perspectives of both 'insiders', those responsible for implementing policy changes at the state level, and 'outsiders', such as CSOs, including teachers' union representatives and private sector associations were included. These groups often advocate for change from the 'outside'. Due to the historical orientation of the research, it was important to ensure that the sample included individuals with institutional or organisational historical insight or oversight. This requirement meant that the sample had to comprise participants in senior positions, such as Commissioners, Permanent Secretaries, Chairs, etc. In each state, around ten interviews were expected to be conducted with

officials and other key agents, and a similar number were expected at the national, federal, and international levels (Table 4).

Table 4 Planned and Completed Interviews

Location	Desired interviews	Completed / Not Completed Interviews
Anambra, Kano, Lagos	State Ministry of Education (SMoE)	Anambra, Kano, Lagos
	State Ministry of Finance	Anambra
	State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB)	Anambra, Kano, Lagos
	Local Government Education Authority (LGEA)	Lagos
	Private School Organisations / Bodies, e.g., the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS), Association for Formidable Education Development (AFED)	Anambra, Kano, Lagos, National
	Private School Teachers' Organisations	National
	Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)	Anambra, Kano, Lagos, National
	State CSOs	Lagos
	School-Based Management Committees (SBMC)	Kano, Lagos
	Private School Owners	Lagos
Private School Teachers	Lagos	
Abuja (FCT)/National	Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE)	National
	Federal Ministry of Finance	Not complete
	Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC)	National
	FCDO	National
	World Bank	National
	UNICEF	Not complete

Interviews with the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) were anticipated to provide insights from teachers' perspectives. In contrast, interviews with private school associations were expected to offer the viewpoints of private school owners. An effort was made to elicit the perspectives of parents and community members' perspectives through SBMC representatives.

Beginning in February 2020 and extending to April 2022, interviews were conducted face-to-face, online, and by telephone. Face-to-face interviews have long been the "preferred mode of conduct

[...] claimed to provide a stronger basis for establishing a good rapport between the researcher and the participant" (Yeo et al., 2013, p. 182). As Yeo et al. (2013, p. 182) note, there are some disadvantages to online interviews, including missing "physical cues of body language [...] which could be essential pointers for probing for further detail." At the same time, Yeo et al. (2013, p. 182) argue that in-person interviews are not "inherently superior" to online interviews. The research design primarily influenced the decision to include online and telephone interviews, encompassing three cases (three states) making extensive travel impractical, and participants had demanding schedules. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions further made face-to-face interviews practically impossible.

Consequently, online and telephone interviews were conducted between February 2021 and December 2021 in Anambra, Kano, Lagos, and Abuja (Appendix 5 provides a timeline of fieldwork). Most interviews were conducted using Zoom with cameras turned on, allowing certain facial expressions to be visible and permitting additional probing when participants exhibited discomfort or other emotions. In-person interviews were conducted in Lagos and Abuja between March and April 2022. All interviews followed a particular schedule (Appendix 6), and participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 3). All interviews conducted during the research were recorded, except for two interviews where detailed notes were taken during the interview as the participants did not feel comfortable being recorded.

The recruitment of participants involved working with Research Assistants (RA), and there were two reasons for this. The first was related to the importance of personal introductions to education stakeholders, which may have required personal travel to Anambra and Kano. At the time of the planned fieldwork, the COVID-19 pandemic made travel impossible, so the only way to access stakeholders was with the assistance of researchers working and living in Nigeria. In Anambra and Kano, in March 2021, RAs were identified with the help of a Nigerian researcher with extensive knowledge of the education landscape in Nigeria and who had previously worked with the researchers on an education research project between 2014 and 2016. In both contexts, I provided the desired list of participants listed in Table 4 to the RAs and requested their assistance in identifying potential participants. An online briefing with the RAs was carried out before the commencement of the research in February and March 2021, including an overview of the research expectations of conduct to ensure that interviews were conducted confidentially and ethically. The RAs subsequently suggested suitable candidates based on Table 4. Upon mutual agreement, they contacted the individuals with a letter of introduction and information sheets, inviting the participants to join the project (see Appendix 7 and Appendix 4). If the participants agreed, we

scheduled interviews based on their availability on Zoom or WhatsApp. All participants signed a consent form (see Appendix 3).

In Lagos and Abuja, I received contact details for high-level officials from ActionAid Nigeria, the collaborative partner for this thesis, and their partners in Lagos. I could also draw on personal contacts, including those from earlier research in Lagos that was conducted in partnership with the Lagos NUT (Unterhalter, Robinson and Ibrahim, 2018). Through these connections, I was introduced to medium-and high-level officials and key stakeholders connected to the education system based in Lagos and Abuja through email or WhatsApp. Further, a contact studying at the same institution as me, who had strong connections in the private education sector in Lagos, sent several introductory emails to key agents in the education system on my behalf. Subsequently, I followed up by sending introductory emails with an attached information sheet to inquire about scheduling an interview. In some cases, the response was immediately positive, leading to online or in-person interviews being arranged, while in other cases, responses were delayed, necessitating multiple follow-up emails. Appendix 8 provides an example of anonymised email correspondence. Once a date and time were set for the interview, either on Zoom, WhatsApp or in person, a consent form was sent to the interviewee in advance for signing before the interview (Appendix 5 provides a timeline of fieldwork).

Tables 5 and 6 detail the actual sample achieved. All names have been changed, and pseudonyms have been used. The following section describes some challenges faced during fieldwork, including access to specific groups and those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5 Achieved Interviews¹¹

ORGANISATION	ANAMBRA	KANO	LAGOS
	Position	Position	Position
STATE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	Senior Official, MoE (F, Esther) 4th March 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	Retired Senior Official, Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs (F, Becca) 8th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)	Senior Official, MoE (F, Ronke) 14th February 2021 Online (Lagos)
	Senior Official, Ministry of Tertiary	Advisory board on private and voluntary	Senior Official, MoE (F, Bon) 5th April 2022

¹¹ All names have been changed and pseudonyms have been used.

	Education (F, Onyeka) 17th March 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	school management (M, Isaac) 7th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)	In-person (Lagos)	
		Advisory board on NGOs (F, Abigail) 14th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)		
		Advisory board on <i>Tsangaya</i> and Islamiyah Schools (M, Ibrahim) 13th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)		
		Senior Official, Monitoring and Evaluation (M, Bilal) 14th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)		
SMOF	Senior Official, Ministry of Finance (F, Marsha) 17th February 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)			1
SUBEB	Senior Official (M, Paul) 4th March 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	Retired Official (M, Kareem) 6th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)	Retired Official (M, Josef) 30th March 2021 Online (Lagos)	4
		Senior Official, Early Childhood Education		

	and Girls Education (F, Mariam) 16th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)		
LOCAL GOVERNMENT		LGEA Official (M, Bob) 9th April 2022 In-person (Lagos Urban Area)	2
		LGEA Official (F, Kate) 23rd April 2022 In-person (Lagos Urban Area)	
SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	Chair (Urban School) (M, Bashir) 13th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)	Chair (Urban School) (M, Anthony) 26th March 2021 Online (Lagos)	3
		Chair (Rural School) (M, Ray) 22nd September 2021 Online (Lagos)	
TEACHERS	Retired Head Teachers in Public Schools (Sarah and Joy) 25th March 2021 Interviews conducted separately online (Anambra)		1

**PRIVATE AND
NON-STATE**

Senior Representative, Association of Community-Based School Owners (F, Marg) 11th February 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	Senior Representative, Private School Association (M, Faisal) 15th April 2021 Online (Kano City, Kano)	Senior Representative, Elite Private School Association (F, Clara) 12th February 2021 Online (Lagos)	6
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Senior Representative, Private School Association (F, Anna) 15th February 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	Senior Representative, Private School Association (F, Donna) 22nd September 2021 Online (Lagos)	Senior Representative, Private School Association (F, Donna) 22nd September 2021 Online (Lagos)	
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Senior Representative, Private School Association (F, Anna) 15th February 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	AFED Members and Private School Owners (Chris, Sean, Sue) 22nd March 2022 In-person (Lagos)		
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CIVIL SOCIETY

Senior Official, NUT (F, Ruth) 17th February 2021 Online (Awka, Anambra)	Senior Official, NUT (M, Kamil) 24th September 2021 Written answers (Kano City, Kano)	Senior Official, NUT (M, Dennis) 21st September 2021 Online (Lagos)	5
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Senior Official, NUT (F, Lois) 25th April 2022 In-person (Lagos)	Senior Official, Education CSO (F, Grace) 24th March 2021 Online (Lagos)		
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TOTAL	9	10	12	31
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Table 6 Achieved Interviews at the National/Federal and International Level

ORGANISATION AND POSITION OF THE INTERVIEWEE	
NATIONAL / FEDERAL	Mid-Level Official, Federal Ministry of Education Basic Education (F, Louise) 21st April 2022 In-person (did not want to be recorded, notes taken) (Abuja)
UBEC	Meeting with Senior Officials, UBEC Quality Assurance (M) 19th April 2022 In-person (notes taken) (Abuja)
INTERNATIONAL	Former FCDO / ESSPIN Consultant (M, Frank) 15th April 2021 Online (Abuja)
	Former FCDO / ESSPIN Consultant (M, Simon) 17th March 2021 Online
	FCDO Official, Education, Nigeria (M, Akin) 22nd April 2022 In-person (Abuja)
	Senior Official, World Bank Nigeria (M, John) 23rd April 2022 In-person (Lagos)
	Senior Official, Education Research Organisation (F, Rachel) 28th March 2021 Online (Lagos)
PRIVATE AND NON-STATE	Senior Official, Education Micro-Finance Bank (F, Shirley) 10th February 2021 Online (Lagos)
	Senior Official, Private School Teachers' Association (M, Dan) 28th October 2021 Online (Abuja)
	Senior Official, LFPS Association (M, Benjamin) 12th January 2021 Online (Lagos)
NUT	Senior Official, National NUT (M, Sam) 19th April 2021 Online (Abuja)

When COVID-19 restrictions eased in 2022, I conducted face-to-face interviews in Lagos and Abuja between March and April 2022. This research phase was particularly valuable as it allowed me to visit LFPS and public primary schools, interview teachers and headteachers in these schools, and conduct follow-up interviews. Three sites in Lagos were planned for the fieldwork: urban, semi-urban, and rural. However, due to time constraints, only two areas were feasible. Both locations were urban, but one was located further from the commercial centre of Lagos and often referred to as rural. Area One was situated on the Lagos mainland near the border with Ogun state. It attracted households seeking more affordable housing options within commuting distance of Lagos. Area Two was close to the border with the Republic of Benin and known for trade and fishing activities, including cross-border smuggling. While considered a more rural part of Lagos, most interviews occurred within the main town and could not be classified as rural.

In April 2022, I travelled to Abuja for five days and conducted three interviews at the federal and international levels: one with an FCDO Official, one with the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) Quality Assurance, and one with the Federal Ministry of Education Basic Education Department. Introductions to these officials were facilitated by ActionAid Nigeria.

During the fieldwork in Lagos in March and April 2022, I worked with an RA recommended by ActionAid Nigeria, who had previously worked on an ActionAid project. A meeting was arranged with the RA at the end of March 2022, before the data collection began. An overview of the research and expectations of conduct, including research ethics, was provided. The RA helped to identify suitable LFPS that charged low and very low fees in Area One. In addition, a contact at the Association of Formidable Education Development (AFED), representing LFPS, provided introductions to three LFPS owners who were interviewed together (pseudonymised names, Chris, Sean, and Sue) in March 2022. In addition, AFED provided introductions to two LFPS in Area One, and interviews were conducted with headteachers and teachers in these schools on the 1st and 4th of April 2022. Six schools (Apple, Orange, Banana, Kiwi, Lemon, Pineapple and Mango) were visited. Interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and headteachers with the RA on the 31st of March and the 1st of April 2022 (see Table 7). In Area Two, three LFPS (Strawberry, Berry, and Grape) were visited in March and April 2022 without the RA, and introductions to the school owners were made through connections in the area. Formal observations were not carried out; however, visiting the schools provided a deeper level of engagement and understanding of private schools in the state.

The process of obtaining permission to visit public schools involved the assistance of ActionAid Nigeria and Human Development Initiative, Nigeria (HDI) in March and April 2022. Permission was

given in March 2022 to visit the schools that ActionAid Nigeria and HDI Nigeria supported, and additional permission was provided from the Lagos State Government Public Service Office in April 2022 (see Appendix 2). The Lagos SUBEB and the Ministry of Education were informed of the research. One inclusive primary school and one Junior Secondary School (JSS) in Area One were visited (Hope and Grace), and interviews were conducted with a teacher and headteacher. In Area Two, three public primary schools were visited in April 2022 (Red, Yellow and Blue), and interviews were conducted with teachers in Yellow and Blue Schools. Three interviews were conducted with four public primary school teachers. One interview was with a teacher in an inclusive school in Area One, one with a primary school teacher in a different area of Lagos, and one with two public primary school teachers in Area Two. ActionAid Nigeria and HDI Nigeria provided introductions to the teachers.

While I had initially planned to conduct one-to-one interviews, upon arriving at the schools, I found that teachers felt more comfortable speaking in groups, requiring me to adapt to this change in approach. Nevertheless, this adjustment also led to more dominant group members sometimes dominating the conversation. Table 7 details the interviews recorded, and the schools visited in the two areas. All the schools were LFPS and the number of pupils in each school ranged from 52 to 80.

Table 7 Description of Lagos Schools Visited and Interviews Conducted

	NAME	SCHOOL VISIT	HEAD TEACHER / OWNER	TEACHERS	PARENTS	TOTAL INTERVIEWS	DATE
LFPS AREA 1	Apple	1	1	2	1	2	31st March 2022
	Orange	1	1	2		2	31st March 2022
	Banana	1	1	5	3	3	31st March 2022
	Kiwi	1	1	2	2	3	1st April 2022
	Lemon	1	1	3		2	1st April 2022

	Pineapple	1	1	3	2	1st April 2022	
	Mango	1	1	2	2	4th April 2022	
PUBLIC AREA 1	Hope (Inclusive Primary)	1	1	1	1	31st March 2022	
	Grace (JSS)	1	1	2	2	2	April 2022
	Other			1	1		
LFPS AREA 2	Berry	1	1		1	23rd March 2022	
	Strawberry	1				22nd March 2022	
	Grape	1		1	1	26th April 2022	
PUBLIC AREA 2	Red (Primary)	1				22nd March 2022	
	Yellow (Primary)	1		3 (Janine, Tola, Banke)	1	April 2022	
	Blue (Primary)	1	1 (Julia)	4 (Em, Nat, Lucy, Jo)	2	April 2022	
	Other public primary school teachers			2 (Naomi and Joan)	1	April 2022	
	Other public primary school teachers			1	1	April 2022	
OTHER	AFED Representatives and private school owners			3 (Chris, Sean, Sue)	1	22nd March 2022	
	Total	15	11	37	8	28	

In total seventy interviews were conducted online and in-person, as shown in Tables 5, 6 and 7. In Anambra and Kano, nine interviews and ten interviews, respectively, were conducted with key stakeholders in the education system - all of which took place remotely (Table 5). In Lagos, twelve interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, the majority were conducted remotely. In-person interviews with key stakeholders in Lagos included two interviews with Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) officials (Bob and Kate) in Area One and an additional urban area, facilitated by the RA; one interview with a senior NUT official (Lois); and one interview with a senior official in the Lagos MoE (Bon), facilitated by ActionAid Nigeria (Table 5). Additionally, a meeting took place in person with a senior official in the MoE in March 2022, alongside meetings in person with a senior official (Benjamin) in a LFPS association at their office in Lagos and with the senior representative of the Private School Teachers' Association in Abuja in April 2022. At the national and international level, 11 interviews were conducted in person and online. Two interviews, one with an official in the Federal MoE and one with officials in the UBEC at their respective offices, were not recorded but detailed notes were taken (Table 6). An interview with an FCDO official took place in Abuja at the FCDO offices in April 2022, and an interview with a senior official at the World Bank took place in Lagos in April 2022 (Table 6). At the school level in Lagos, seven LFPS' in Area One were visited, and three in Area Two. One public primary school and one public JSS were visited in Area One and three public primary schools in Area Two. An interview with three members of AFED, who had their own LFPS, took place in Area Two in March 2022, alongside an interview with two teachers in public primary schools in Area Two in March 2022 and an interview with a teacher working in an inclusive primary school in Area One, and an interview with a public primary school teacher in a different area of Lagos (Table 7).

Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded during the research, except for two interviews where detailed notes were taken instead. Each interview was given a code reflecting their position and location, i.e., Ana-Gov1 referred to a government official in Anambra and subsequently given a pseudonym name. Quotations used in the thesis are accompanied by contextual information, and the professional positions of the respondents have been anonymised, while their organisational affiliations have been included.

Complete anonymisation was done for all schools, parents, headteachers, and teachers. The schools were assigned names of fruits, such as "School Owner, Banana School", colours and other

descriptors. The specific locations of the schools have not been disclosed, except for providing general descriptions such as "densely populated urban area in Lagos State".

After the interviews were personally transcribed, they were uploaded to NVivo software for coding, while documentary data were coded by hand. The data were organised according to their position within the SoP (e.g., private, non-state, government, union official, teacher) and location (e.g., Anambra, Kano, Lagos, National, and International). In NVivo, the data were coded against SoP elements (structures, processes, agents, relations, cultures), involving some triangulation. For example, in cases where interviewees mentioned a state governor or other political figure, different data sources, including newspaper reports and journal articles, were consulted to identify the period and support the coding.

The coding frame (Appendix 9) was used to identify key themes and periods related to the involvement of the private and non-state sectors in the primary education SoP from 1945 to 2023. Four distinct periods were identified during the coding and analysis: 1945–1960, 1960–1978, 1979–1999, and 1999–2023. Each period coincided with significant social, economic, and political shifts that influenced how primary education was provided and the involvement of the private and non-state sectors.

The "Agents and Agencies" category revealed specific public, private and non-state sector agents and agencies involved in primary education, including Christian missions and missionaries, Islamic organisations, school owners, and private school associations. The "Structures" code helped identify key legal and policy instruments and financing flows shaping relations between agents, including the private and non-state sectors, in the primary education SoP. The "Relations" code revealed the relationships between the agents and agencies in the primary education SoP, including contestations leading to strike action by the teachers' union. The "Perspectives on the Role of the Private and Non-State Sectors" category uncovered diverse viewpoints, ranging from positive—i.e., the private and non-state sectors are better suited to providing education than the state—to pragmatic—i.e., the private and non-state sectors are filling a gap that the state cannot fill—and to negative critiques highlighting concerns over equity, equality, and quality.

These codes generated key themes that guided the development of the following chapters, with each chapter exploring the historical context, evolving policies, and cultures attached to the primary education SoP in relation to the role of the private and non-state sectors. For Chapters 6–9, diagrams representing the key agents and their relations in the primary education SoP for each period were developed.

Chapter 5. Background and History of Education in Nigeria

This chapter provides context and background information on Nigeria, including an overview of demographic data on gender, education, and inequalities. It also includes a bird's-eye view, drawing largely on secondary sources and some primary historical documentary material, as described in Chapter 4, of the history of colonial rule, gender, and education in Nigeria.

Background

In 2022, Nigeria's population was 218,541,212 (World Bank, 2023b). As of 2015, around 48 percent of the population was Christian, and about 50 percent of the population was Muslim, with the remaining two percent Other, which includes Baha'is, Hindus, Sikhs and animists, as well as those who do not follow any religion (Pew Research Center cited in Office of International Religious Freedom (Office of International Religious Freedom (OIRF)), 2022). Of the Muslim population, 38 percent identified with Sunnism, 37 percent with Sufism (Tijaniyyah, Qadriyyah or Salafism-Izala), and 12 percent identified as Shia (OIRF, 2022). Catholics comprised around 25 percent of the Christian population, and the remaining 75 percent identified as Protestant or Other Christian (OIRF, 2022). Nigeria also has around 250 ethnic groups. The Hausa-Fulani (36 percent), Yorùbá (15.5 percent), and Igbo (15.2 percent) (alongside Tiv, Kanuri/Beriberi, Ibibio, and Ijaw/Izon) are the largest ethnic groups (CIA, 2023). Although English is the official language, Hausa, Yorùbá, Igbo, and Fulani (along with 500 other languages) are also widely spoken (CIA, 2023).

The Hausa and Fulani, Yorùbá, and Igbo are the largest ethnic groups, respectively, in the following regions: the North West, where Kano is located; the South West, where Lagos is; and the South East, which includes Anambra. The other regions covered in this chapter but not the focus of the study are the North East, where the largest ethnic group is the Kunari; the North Central, which includes Hausa, Fulani, Tiv, Nupe and many other ethnic groups and where the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja is located; and the South South which includes Edo, Ijaw/Izon, Ibibio and other ethnic groups (Archibong, 2018).

Data from 2022 shows that almost 70 percent of the population lived in rural areas compared to 30.4 percent in urban areas, as outlined in Table 8, which also shows the population distribution across regions (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 15).¹² Sixty-three percent of the total population and 80 percent of the rural populations were multidimensionally poor in 2022, i.e., they experienced deprivation in

¹² The classification of urban and rural areas in the Nigeria Human Development Index followed the 2006 definitions of the National Population Commission. However, estimates based on the UN Population Division's World Urbanization Prospects: 2018 put the rural population as 46 percent of the total population (World Bank, 2024).

at least two dimensions encompassing health, education, living standards, work, and shocks (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 24). Poverty levels were also much higher in northern Nigeria than in southern (NBS Nigeria, 2022, p. 25).

Table 8 Distribution of the Nigeria Population by Region and Area, 2022

REGION	POPULATION SHARE (%)	AREA	POPULATION SHARE (%)
NATIONAL	100	NATIONAL	100.00
NORTH CENTRAL	14.4	RURAL	69.6
NORTH EAST	12.7	URBAN	30.4
NORTH WEST	28.4		
SOUTH EAST	10.5		
SOUTH SOUTH	14.8		
SOUTH WEST	19.2		

Source: NBS Nigeria (2022, pp. 15 & 24).

Education Inequalities

Inequalities are a feature of the education system, and Appendix 10 provides an overview of selected literature engaging with inequalities in education in Nigeria. Data on the Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) from the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) for Nigeria show that these inequalities cut across income level, location, and gender, as demonstrated in Table 9 (National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF, 2019). The NAR is defined as the "[t]otal number of students of the official age group for a given level of education who are attending school at any level of education, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023). A low NAR indicates a high rate of out-of-school children and vice versa. In Nigeria, the NAR for children living in rural areas was just 53 percent compared to 72 percent for children living in urban areas (NPC and ICF, 2019, p. 41). Even more concerning is that the NAR for children in the lowest wealth quintile was just 32 percent, compared to 71 percent for those in the highest wealth quintile (NPC and ICF, 2019, p. 41). The North East and North West regions have the largest out-of-school populations, with NARs of 45.5 and 54.9, respectively. The data also show that girls are less likely to be in primary school than boys across all income levels, locations (rural-urban), and regional zones (NPC and ICF, 2019, p. 41).

Table 9 Primary School Net Attendance Ratio by Residence, Zone, Wealth Quintile and Gender, 2018 (%)

		Male	Female	Total
Residence	Urban	72.8	70.2	71.5
	Rural	55.0	51.0	53.1

Zone	Northcentral	62.1	62.1	62.1
	Northeast	46.4	44.5	45.5
	Northwest	57.9	51.8	54.9
	Southeast	83.7	81.2	82.4
	Southsouth	72.8	68.0	70.5
	Southwest	73.6	71.9	72.7
Wealth quintile	Lowest	33.9	30.6	32.3
	Second	60.6	55.6	58.1
	Middle	73.1	69.4	71.3
	Fourth	77.2	76.1	76.6
	Highest	73.2	69.2	71.2

Source: NPC and ICF (2019, p. 41).

History of Colonial Rule and Education in Nigeria

Throughout the region that came to be known as Nigeria, British interventionism gained momentum in the mid-19th century, primarily driven by economic interests. Christian missionaries and missionary activity were key to British expansionism, notably through the introduction of Western education: "The school was the church, and the church was the school" (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 128).

From the 1840s, missionary activity in the South West expanded. The Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) (sometimes referred to as the Methodist mission) established a station in 1842 in Badagry, located in present-day Lagos state (Fafunwa, 2018). Thomas Birch Freeman, "the son of an African father and an English mother" (Agbeti, 1986, p. 56) and William de Graft from the area that is now Ghana, led the mission (Agbeti, 1986; Fafunwa, 2018). At this point, Badagry was already "an important commercial centre for merchants from Europe", particularly during the period of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and "subsequently for palm oil" (Abaka and Kumasenu, 2021, p. 105). Soon after the establishment of the station, de Graft and his wife (whose name is not recorded) established "[t]he first known school" in the area (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 72).¹³ The establishment of the Wesleyan school was followed by a boys' boarding school by the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1845 (Oyěwùmí, 1997). The CMS missionaries were led by Samuel Ajayi Crowther (and his wife Susan Asano Crowther), who was "born in an Oyo town—Oshogun—in 1806" (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 198) but was enslaved and subsequently taken to Sierra Leone before returning to the Yorùbá region.

¹³Fafunwa (2018, p. 68) does, however, note that in the domain of Benin, in the early 16th century, "some Catholic missionaries set up a school in the Oba's palace for his sons and the sons of his chiefs who were converted to Christianity".

Other missions included the American Southern Baptist Mission and Roman Catholic organisations, which gained influence from the late 19th century in South West cities like Lagos, Oyo, and Ibadan (Falola and Heaton, 2008). There was some openness to Christian teachings among those in power in the Yorùbá states, especially when these teachings could be harmonised with existing values, notably in spiritual and religious practices where the Christian God was seen as offering spiritual benefits (Oyěwùmí, 1997). Proficiency in English was also viewed as advantageous for trade, and the political connections between the British and missionaries were considered valuable for gaining support against enemies (Falola and Heaton, 2008; Oyěwùmí, 1997).

Initially, parents in the South West were hesitant to send their children to school, and missions had to find "incentives", such as payment and gifts, to encourage attendance (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 133). Fafunwa (2018) notes in a letter from Ajayi Crowther that many children were engaged in agricultural work, leading to irregular attendance. For instance, in one school in 1854, despite having 210 names on the register, only an average of 47 children attended in December of that year (Fafunwa, 2018,).

Ajayi Crowther noted that "[t]he four most advanced pupils present were all girls" (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 75). Oyěwùmí (1997) cites 19th-century sources indicating that both male and female Yorùbá children were initially sent to school equally showing that Yorùbá parents were not reluctant to send their daughters. However, this situation began to change toward the end of the 19th century and early 20th century.

In the South East, Anglican CMS missionaries established a permanent mission in Onitsha in 1857 (Achebe, 2005), led by formerly enslaved Igbo and Yorùbá missionaries (Bastian, 2000, p. 146). By the end of the 19th century, the number of British CMS missionaries, including some women, had increased (Bastian, 2000). Converts to Christianity in this region were often on the fringes of society, including slaves (Bastian, 2000; Oyěwùmí, 1997), twins and their mothers (Achebe, 2005; Bastian, 2000), poor and widowed women, as well as young men working in or around European industries (Bastian, 2000). The missionaries also used the new railway lines, built "for the evacuation of the coal" through Port Harcourt, to reach areas further from the coast (Achebe, 2005, p. 34).

The 1840s marked the start of the "missionary rivalry that was to last for more than a century in the Nigerian educational enterprise", in which "each denomination emphasised its own importance and spared no pains to prove that one denomination was better than the other" (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 75). Land emerged as a key issue over which different denominations fought as they opened schools and competed for pupils. This rivalry introduced sectarian divisions into schooling, creating new divisions within villages and towns.

British Annexation of Lagos and Occupation of the Southwest

Lagos was annexed as a British colony in 1861 and came "under the direct control of a British governor" (Falola and Heaton, 2008, p. 95). In 1886, following the Berlin Conference,¹⁴ the British governor in Lagos mediated a peace agreement among the states of the South West to advance British interests (Falola and Heaton, 2008). In 1887, Lagos was separated from the Gold Coast Colony to become the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos.

The first recorded school in Lagos was built in 1868 by Roman Catholic missionaries (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 73). The CMS established the first Girls' Seminary in Lagos in 1869, followed by the Wesleyan Girls' Seminary in Lagos a decade later (Pereira, 2005, p. 77).

As the British colonial regime solidified its economic and political control in the southern regions, interest in education grew. In Lagos, in 1870, £300 was allocated for the "support of missions", with £30 eventually distributed among the Anglican CMS, Wesleyan, and Catholic missions operating in the Lagos area in 1872 (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 84). From 1874 to 1876, an annual grant of £300 was shared among these missions (Fafunwa, 2018). The first Education Ordinance covering Lagos, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Gambia was introduced in 1882, establishing a general board of education that included the governor, Executive Council members, and up to four nominated members (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). This board had the authority to create local boards to advise on grant conditions and inspect schools (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). One-third of the Inspector of Schools for the Gold Coasts' salary was to be funded by Lagos revenues (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 12).

With the formation of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos in 1887, the Lagos Education Ordinance of 1887 was passed, and the annual grant to missions increased to £600, with £200 allocated to each of the three missions in Lagos (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, pp. 11–12). The ordinance introduced more detailed grant conditions, including distinctions between education levels (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). Although it was thought to be cheaper to work through the missions, the Inspector of Schools for the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos asked the government for more financial support arguing that "a really suitable system of education [...] cannot be provided under the voluntary system" (quoted in Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 12).

¹⁴ The Berlin Conference effectively led to the partitioning of Africa among European powers (Falola and Agbo, 2018). European powers agreed that "[w]hen a protectorate was declared by one European country, it must notify the others that it had acquired 'spheres of influence'" (Falola and Agbo, 2018, p. 86).

The number of primary schools in Lagos grew "from 54 in 1891 to 84 in 1911", with student enrolment increasing from 3,216 to 4,457 (Ogunlade, 1974, p. 329).¹⁵ The first government school in Lagos was established in 1899 "for the education of Muslim children" (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 12). Islamic schools in Lagos did not receive any support from the colonial government, and Fafunwa (2018, p. 86) argues that establishing this government school was a "form of compensation" intended for Muslim children. Generally, only schools established by Christian missions were supported financially by the colonial government – a pattern that persisted in the following years throughout the region.

British Forced Amalgamation of the South West and South East Regions

In the South East, European trading companies began expanding their influence throughout the 1800s, initially focusing on coastal areas and working through intermediaries (Sani, 2022). In 1879, "four British merchant companies trading on the Niger and Benue Rivers were amalgamated" (Sani, 2022, p. 267), and by 1886 this company was given a Royal Charter, becoming the Royal Niger Company (Swindell, 1994, p. 150). Following the formation of the Royal Niger Company, areas resisting trade were met with violence. For example, in 1880, Onitsha (present-day Anambra) was "blockaded to allow the company to establish a trade monopoly", and when resistance continued, the "agent-general [of the company] began to destroy the fisheries in Onitsha" (Sani, 2022, p. 267). Other towns in the region that supported Onitsha and refused to trade with the company were subject to similar violence until the company established a trade monopoly (Sani, 2022).

In 1885, the British established the Oil Rivers Protectorate, which was later renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate after merging with the Royal Niger Company territories (Korieh, 2010). A consul-general was appointed at Calabar, along with consuls and vice-consuls at district levels (Korieh, 2010, p. 61).

In 1900, the British Crown created the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. By 1906, the administrative headquarters moved from Calabar to Lagos, and the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos were incorporated into the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Falola and Heaton, 2008, p. 62). The administration included "a small legislative council [...] confined to the colony of Lagos" to support and advise the governor (Ezera, 1960, p. 22). This council existed until 1922, when it comprised "the Governor, six officials, and four unofficial nominated members", of whom only two

¹⁵ However, there were just three secondary schools in Lagos in the same period and just 157 secondary school students in 1908 (Ogunlade, 1974, p. 329).

were Nigerians (Ezera, 1960, p. 22). The region was divided into three provinces: Eastern, Western and Central.

In 1903, the Education Department for the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was established alongside a new education code specifying grant conditions (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 86). After the merging of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos with the Southern Protectorate in 1906, the Education Ordinance for the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was passed in 1908 (Fafunwa, 2018). This led to the reorganisation of the education department and the formation of three Provincial Education Boards (Western, Eastern, Central), with some flexibility to adapt regulations to the conditions (Fafunwa, 2018; Phillipson and Holt, 1949).

The first government elementary school in the South East was established in Benin City in 1901, with recurrent costs were paid for, in part, by local leaders (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). Around 1905, the government established six primary schools (three boys' and three girls' schools) (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 12). By 1912, the southern region had 59 government primary schools with approximately 3,984 pupils. These schools received public funds to cover some operational costs, but local communities were expected to maintain and build the school buildings, alongside an "annual subscription" ranging from £40 to £100 (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 87).

British Occupation of the Northern Region

From the late 19th century onward, British forces began the takeover of various regions within the Sokoto Caliphate, including the Ilorin and Bida emirates (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018). This takeover was marked by violence, as illustrated by the 1897 attack on Ilorin, where "British firepower mounted at Apata Yakuba pounded the town into submission, setting fire to much of the town in the process" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 109). These defeats significantly weakened the Sokoto Caliphate, and by the early 20th century, "colonial interventions by Britain, France, and Germany had [...] eroded the Caliphate's territories on its periphery" (Last, 2021, p. 1083).

In early 1903, the Battle of Burmi resulted in the defeat of the caliph (or Amir al-mu'minin), leading to the "establishment of British colonial rule over the Sokoto Caliphate" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 109). By late 1903, the British appointed a new Muslim leader, the Sultan of Sokoto (Last, 2021, p. 1084). This region was subsequently known as the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, which Korieh (2010, p. 59) describes as the "climax of the gradual occupation of what was to become Britain's most important possession in western Africa". Under British rule, duties on exports led to the decline of the caravan trade, and the economy shifted towards producing groundnuts and cotton for export to European markets (Pierce, 2022).

In the following years, resistance to the British occupation persisted and extended uprisings targeting the elites of the Sokoto Caliphate. A notable example is the Mahdist uprising of 1905-1906, which originated in what is now the Niger Republic and later spread to Satiru, south of Sokoto (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 111). Initially, the Mahdists made significant advances, but the combined British and Sokoto forces resulted in an estimated 2,000 casualties and approximately 3,000 people enslaved (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 111). These ongoing resistance efforts solidified an alliance, described as "a marriage of convenience," between the British and Sokoto elite (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 112).

Education in the Northern Region and Christian Missions

Islamic education was well-established and widespread in both urban and rural areas of the Northern region. From the 14th century, Islamic scholars gained increasing influence, with Kano becoming a central location for Islamic teaching and learning (Bano, 2017, p. 64). The region's most common schools were *Qur'ānic* and Islamic institutions known as Makarantun Allo/Makarantun Ilimi/*Tsangaya* (Kurfi, 2022, p. 59).

Tsangaya schools (also referred to as *Almajirai* or *Qur'ānic* schools) catered to students from around age seven, focusing on reading and writing in Ajami,¹⁶ numeracy, and memorising the *Qur'ān* (Bano, 2017). As noted by Kurfi (2022, p. 60), the term *Almajiri* derives from *Almuhājir*, describing the Prophet Muhammad's companions who emigrated to Medina, and came to represent those who left behind their homes and wealth to seek knowledge. In Hausa, *Almajiri* refers to *Qur'ānic* school students under the care of a mallam (Kurfi, 2022). Communities were expected to support these students with food, clothing, and other donations (Kurfi, 2022). *Ilimi* schools, which catered to "young adults" studying Islamic texts under senior scholars, received financial support from the Sokoto Caliphate alongside the regulation and recruitment of teachers (Bano, 2017; Kurfi, 2022, p. 67).

One consequence of the "marriage of convenience" between the Sokoto elite and the British was the imposition of restrictions on Christian missionaries (Fafunwa, 2018). However, a CMS school was established in Bida (in modern-day Niger state) to "encourage court officials to write in Nupe and Hausa Roman script" (Fafunwa, 2018). Although this school had limited reach (Fafunwa, 2018), it symbolised the shift in regional hierarchies: Christianity was elevated above Islam, and the Roman script above Hausa Ajami. Mallams were "[brought] back to school as pupils" under the instruction of Christian missionaries, and Hausa in Roman script became the "administrative language" (Kurfi,

¹⁶ Ajami "refers to writing non-Arabic languages by using a modified Arabic script" (Kurfi, 2022, p. 68).

2022, p. 69; Hoechner, 2018, p. 77). Simultaneously, the colonial regime stopped the Sokoto Caliphate's financial support for Islamic schools and reduced supervision, leading to a more fragmented system (Kurfi, 2022). Despite this, there were still a large number of schools and pupils: in 1913, for example, there were around 19,000 *Qur'ānic* schools in the region, with an estimated 143,312 pupils (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 98). Bano (2017, p. 75) notes that the period of British colonial rule harmed Islamic scholarship, shifting the focus toward rote learning "with an emphasis on ritual practices and beliefs" and away from the dynamism and innovation associated with Islamic education in the earlier decades.

In 1909, Hans Vischer, a former CMS missionary in the region, became the Director of Education for Northern Nigeria "to organise a system of education for [northern Nigeria]" (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 95). After this appointment, a government school was opened at Nasarawa, near Kano, and by 1913, approximately 300 students (men and boys aged six to 50) from elite families were attending these schools (Fafunwa, 2018; Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 27). Teacher training also took place, and these schools came under the direct control of the Director of Education.

By 1913, there were 13 CMS schools, four Sudan United Mission schools, seven Sudan Interior Mission schools, three Mennonite Brethren in Christ schools, one "Freed Slave Home", and one Roman Catholic School with an estimated total enrolment of 604 pupils (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 28). There were seven government schools in 1914 (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). The estimated number of pupils enrolled in primary schools in the region was 1,131 in 1913, compared to 35,716 in the southern region (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 98). Native Administrations (NA), discussed below, also began establishing and financing schools in the region (Phillipson and Holt, 1949).

Indirect Rule and Gender

The British regime in Nigeria operated through a system of "indirect rule," which was largely shaped by Frederick Lugard, the governor of the Northern region from 1900 to 1906/7 (Ezera, 1960, p. 33; Mamdani, 1996 [2018 edition]). Under indirect rule, the administration was organised through a structure known as the Native Authority (NA), which "controlled the courts, police, prisons, taxes, land, education and social services" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 112). The system comprised "a Native Court, a Native Administration, and a Native Treasury" (Mamdani, 1996, p. 79). The NA collected taxes, and a portion was given to the colonial government to cover the salaries of NA officials (Mamdani, 1996). While these institutions were part of the colonial framework, they operated under the authority of the governor (Mamdani, 1996).

By the end of the 19th century, educated Africans were increasingly viewed by British colonial officials with suspicion and as threatening British rule as they pushed for "self-administration and

independence" (Mamdani, 1996, p. 76). The experiences of "racism and colonial occupation" fuelled resistance movements and the development of "Africanist thought", including Pan-Africanism and Ethiopianism (Mamdani, 1996, p. 76). Indirect rule should be understood against this backdrop as "a search for institutional forms of control anchored in a historical and cultural legitimacy" (Mamdani, 1996, p. 77). The changes involved working through "native chiefs" (rather than Western-educated Africans) who, in turn, worked through "native institutions" (Mamdani, 1996, p. 77). These "native" structures were often re-shaped by the colonisers to support their rule, and as Mamdani (1996, p. 77) argues, "[i]n reality, native institutions were given life and substance through a policy that combined a recognition of existing facts with creative modification and even outright fabrication". These institutions were gendered and entrenched or introduced a power structure that led to the dominance of elite men while marginalising women (Korieh, 2001).

Across the southern regions/provinces, the colonial government established native courts "in which civil cases were to be adjudicated" (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 147). According to Oyěwùmí (1997, p. 147), these "native courts" introduced a "new way of thinking about justice". In Yorùbá areas, legal power was transferred to "male chiefs to the exclusion of all other groups", including all "female officials", which contrasted with the precolonial system where judicial power was distributed among various courts (Oyěwùmí, 1997). Higher courts, administered by colonial officials from England, had the power to override or influence legal proceedings, often reinforcing British ideas about gender, including in cases of land rights (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 148).

In Northern Nigeria, indirect rule involved working through local leaders and the "Islamic structures and social institutions of the caliphate" (Korieh, 2010, p. 65). This system led to the concentration of power "in the person of the Emir and often shifted the balance of power within the ruling lineages" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 112). The British also "forbade" emirs from forming an army or even a "personal guard" (Kane, 2003, p. 56). Under this new regime, Sharia law was restricted to the "sphere of personal laws, i.e. laws regulating marriage, divorce, child custody, maintenance, inheritance and the like" (Pereira, 2021, p. 329), while English common law "provided the main legal and administrative framework" (Bano, 2017, p. 73).

In the South East, Korieh (2001, 2010) highlights various ways women were marginalised and restricted access to state structures under indirect rule. The creation of the warrant chief system, which had not been a feature of Igbo politics, gave new (male) chiefs the authority to adjudicate court cases, undermining the precolonial Igbo system of "government by consensus" (Korieh, 2010, p. 72). Similar processes occurred in the South West, where men gained greater control over local

affairs, while women were generally excluded from NA councils despite paying taxes (Johnson, 1982).

Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern regions

In 1914, the British merged the Northern and Southern protectorates to become Nigeria and installed Frederick Lugard as the first governor-general (Korieh, 2010, p. 62). Fafunwa (2018, p. 101) highlights Lugard's particular interest in education for ensuring the running of the colonial administration and concerns around the cost, quoting Lugard:

The commercial interests of the country are no less hampered than the government by the lack of staff, and the merchants say that the greatest boon which at this stage could be conferred upon them is a better supply of reliable natives to occupy posts of responsibility [...] Education has thus become a matter of vital urgency, even if regarded solely from the material point of view, and demands the utmost efforts, not merely of the Education department but of the whole administration and especially of the Political department.

In other words, attempts were made to align schools with colonial political and economic objectives, with some agreement that Christian missions should continue to manage schools. As Fafunwa (2018, p. 102) argues, Lugard applied similar principles of indirect rule to education policy "by encouraging dual control of education" or "indirect administration of education through the Christian missions".

The amalgamation process "did not result in the establishment of a unified Educational Department"; instead, the Northern and Southern Provinces largely retained their separate educational administrations (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 15). In 1914, a draft education ordinance was prepared, outlining regulations for government grants to mission schools, known as grants-in-aid. By 1916, a new education ordinance and Code were introduced, shifting the basis for these grants from individual exam results to the "general efficiency of each school as determined by inspectors" (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 99). Funding was released based on specific criteria, including discipline, organisation, and moral instruction (30 percent); adequacy and efficiency of the teaching staff (20 percent); exams and general progress (40 percent); and infrastructure (buildings, equipment and sanitation) (10 percent) (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 99). Under this 1916 Code, schools were classified as fair, good or very good (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 20). The Code led to an increase in the number of schools receiving grants, and by 1922, there were 195 government and aided schools, with a total enrolment of 28,000 pupils, compared to 2,432 unaided schools enrolling 122,000 pupils (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 103).

In 1925, the British colonial regime issued a Memorandum on education in British Colonial Territories, outlining principles for education systems across the colonies. This was followed by the

Education Ordinance of 1926, with additional regulations and a separate ordinance for the Northern Provinces (No. 14 of 1926). The Education Ordinance included the registration of teachers, that schools could only be opened with the approval of the Director and Board of Education, greater powers to close schools, and clarification around the role and function of supervisors,¹⁷ as well as greater powers of the Board of Education (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 20). Supervisors' reports on education were submitted annually to the legislative council (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). While the 1916 Code expanded the regulatory function of the state and increased the number of schools eligible for grants, it also reinforced the idea that the government's role was to support only the most "efficient" schools, which remained a small percentage of all schools (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 23).

These developments occurred in the context of the Phelps-Stokes Commissions on education in Africa, which published reports in 1922 and 1925 (Barnes, 2020). The reports "became the basis of colonial educational policies in British-held territories in Africa across the 1920s and 1930s" (Barnes, 2020, p. 2). They argued for the "adaptation" of education to "African conditions", with greater emphasis on technical and agricultural education and away from "Western academic curricula" (King, 2017, p. 125). This shift in educational focus occurred against a backdrop of growing discontent with British colonialism and increasing momentum for independence and anti-colonial movements (King, 2017, p. 70). The British colonial office was increasingly concerned that "academic" education was being used against them and were keen "to avoid in Africa the mistakes of educational policy in other regions such as India, China, and the Southern States of America" (King, 2017, p. 129).

The Phelps-Stokes reports also played a role in bringing the British colonial office and missionary bodies into closer alignment (Barnes, 2020). Barnes (2020) argues that the reports put forward a plan for missionaries to assume the role of (welfare) service providers on behalf of the colonial state, with overt forms of evangelism and proselytising taking a backseat. This approach was seen as part of a broader "civilizing mission" through the building of "social institutions" (Barnes, 2020). From the 1920s onwards, missions were more fully incorporated into the colonial infrastructure. In June 1923, "a major conference of African Governors and church leaders" was organised by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, leading to the establishment of a Colonial Office Advisory Committee on African Education (King, 2017, p. 128).

¹⁷ "[A] person appointed by a proprietor and approved by the Governor to assist in the supervision of schools belonging to that proprietor" (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 19).

The system of providing grants to mission schools continued under the governor-general Hugh Clifford (1919-1925) who argued that in the future, primary schools in the southern regions should be under the exclusive control of Christian missions, marking a shift away from the policy of establishing some government schools (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 19). At the same time, there were growing concerns within the colonial government about the growth in unassisted schools (mission schools not receiving government grants) and the quality of education they provided (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 16). They were unregulated, and because of the large number and the colonial government's unwillingness to spend much of their revenue on schools, it was not thought feasible to regulate them (Phillipson and Holt, 1949).

In 1929, the northern and southern education departments were merged (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). By this date, there were 49 government primary schools and 16 NA schools, with around 9,649 boys and 1,000 girls; 269 assisted schools (36,780 boys and 10,050 girls), and 2,440 unassisted schools (72,250 boys and 8,874 girls) (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 22). In the northern region, the Northern Provinces Law School was established in Kano in 1934 by the colonial regime which (Baba, 2012, p. 109):

[P]rovided the basis for the emergence of a new generation of ulama schooled in both classical Arabic/Islamic studies and in formal school subjects such as English, arithmetic, general knowledge, and history.

The merging of Arabic/Islamic studies and Western forms of education became the blueprint for integrated schools, which, from the 1950s, taught both Islamic and Western subjects (Baba, 2012). Further, in 1930, the first girls' schools were established in Kano and Katsina (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 30).

In 1933, the colonial government began to transfer government schools to missions and NAs. By 1938, the number of government primary schools had decreased to 31, down from 51 in 1930 (Fafunwa, 2018). At the same time, the number of mission schools increased, though most did not receive grants from the central government. Between 1929 and 1939, the number of mission schools rose from 2,413 to 3,390, and student enrolments grew from 81,042 to 163,541 (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 25).

Throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s political mobilisation, movements for independence, and resistance to colonial rule intensified (Coates, 2022). A constitution enacted in 1922 provided for very limited enfranchisement for elections to the Legislative Council, with only four elected members (three in Lagos and one in Calabar), out of 46 members (Ezera, 1960, p. 27). Voting rights were restricted to adult male British subjects or British-protected persons who had resided in Lagos

or Calabar for at least 12 months and earned a gross income of £100 per annum (Ezera, 1960, p. 27). These constitutional changes spurred the formation of new political parties.

Herbert Macaulay, an "engineer turned nationalist and politician" emerged as "the most dominant personality in Nigerian politics" until his death in the 1940s (Ezera, 1960, p. 30). He established the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), which won all three Lagos seats in the 1923, 1928, and 1933 elections, as well as the "the triennial elections for the Lagos Town Council" (Ezera, 1960, p. 31). However, the NNDP and subsequent parties were primarily based in Lagos, and as Mustapha (2006, p. 4) asserts, these parties "represented the nascent elite of Lagos and its immediate surroundings but claimed to speak for the 'nation'."

The Nigeria Youth Movement (NYM) was established in the early 1930s "by a group of Yorùbá-speaking, Christian-educated men" (Schler, 2022, p. 358). Nnamdi Azikiwe joined the NYM in 1937 after returning to Nigeria from Ghana (Ezera, 1960 p. 53). In 1938, the NYM won elections to the Lagos Town Council and the Legislative Council (Schler, 2022).

Resistance to colonial rule also manifested outside these formal structures. One of the most famous examples is the "Aba Riot" or the "Women's War" (Korieh, 2010). This protest began in 1929 when a "peasant woman" living in the South East refused "to be counted for an impending colonial tax" (Korieh, 2010, p. 125). This protest spread throughout the region, with ordinary women challenging the authority of warrant chiefs (Korieh, 2010). At least 53 women were killed in this protest, alongside the destruction of buildings, including European trading companies (Korieh, 2010).

During this period, the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) was established in this period and originating from teachers' associations primarily in the South West, which had been formed in the late 1920s (Fafunwa, 2018). The first NUT meeting was held in Lagos in 1931 (Fafunwa, 2018). The NUT had emerged partly as a response to the 1926 education code, which introduced new criteria for teachers that effectively demoted many teachers who did not meet the new standards (Fafunwa, 2018). This occurred against the backdrop of an economic downturn and cuts to education spending. In 1930, the actual spending on grants-in-aid was £109,268, but in October of that year, the governor "directed that the annual allocation for grants-in-aid should be limited to £85,000 per annum" which was fixed for five years (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 23). By 1941, the NUT had officially registered as a trade union, and an NUT representative was appointed to the board of education.

Gendered Processes and Education

The introduction of Western education was a gendered and classed process that prioritised boys' education (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 128). As Bastian (2000, p. 146) highlights, "[t]he Niger Mission's

greatest success in Onitsha came through its early decision to educate local boys [...] in basic English literacy and western numeracy". Further, Vaughan (2016, p. 74) argues that conversion to Christianity and access to Western education meant that converts could use:

[T]he training they had acquired from mission schools to gain access to new professional opportunities that the colonial system afforded and to advance the interests of their ancestral hometown within the colonial administrative system.

Increasingly, boys' education was prioritised over girls' as they were anticipated to find employment in the British colonial regime as "clerks, catechists, pastors, missionaries, diplomats" and negotiate "treaties among the warring Yorùbá states and the British" (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 132). Girls' education aimed to produce "mothers who would be the foundation of Christian families" (Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 130).

Although Christian missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries primarily focused on educating boys, they began to recognise the importance of girls' education, particularly in relation to marriage and the need for suitable wives for the growing population of Christian men (Bastian, 2000). In the South East, British women missionaries established girls' schools, often located "outside the environs of Onitsha proper," physically separating them from boys (Bastian, 2000, p. 147). The education provided to girls was distinct from that of boys, focusing on teaching them to "[read] enough Igbo to understand their Bibles and hymnbooks," alongside "domestic" subjects that prepared them to become "proper Christian homemakers and housewives" (Bastian, 2000, p. 147). Parents and sometimes even future husbands paid for the education of girls in training colleges or centres where they learned how to care for their future husbands, children, and homes (Bastian, 2000). In contrast, boys' education included reading and writing in English and other subjects such as maths, geography, and first aid that would allow for entry into the clergy and British colonial service (Bastian, 2000).

In the agricultural sector, women and girls were excluded from receiving training in agricultural practices in schools. The colonial regime focused on providing training exclusively to men, limiting women's opportunities to acquire the necessary skills for agrarian development (Korieh, 2001). Moreover, colonial financial support schemes were accessible only to male farmers, who could use these funds to purchase hand presses for palm oil processing (Korieh, 2001). As the economy shifted towards export-oriented production under colonial rule, men increasingly dominated the palm oil trade (Korieh, 2001). Despite these economic shifts and attempts to reduce women's role in economic activities, women continued to engage in trade, with some women becoming distributors and suppliers to the growing urban population in the region (Korieh, 2010).

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, elite families in Lagos and other cities in the South West sent their sons to England and the US to study (Oyěwùmí, 1997). Although much fewer in number, some women also pursued further education in England from the late 19th century (Byfield, 2015). Notable examples, include Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, who was educated in an Anglican mission school, trained as a teacher in England and became active in nationalist politics after returning to Nigeria (Byfield, 2015). Oyinkan Morenike Abayomi was a founding member of the Nigerian Women's Party (NWP), established in 1944, and a strong advocate for girls' education (Johnson, 1982). In 1927, she established the British West African Educated Girls' Club to "raise funds for girls' education", directly influencing the opening of Queen's College, the first girls' secondary school in Lagos (Johnson, 1982, p. 143). She also campaigned for the inclusion of science subjects in the curriculum for girls (Johnson, 1982, p. 143).

By the 1930s, significant gender disparities existed in primary school enrolment rates. For instance, E. G. Morris, the Director of Education between 1938 and 1942, proposed a ten-year plan to increase the number of girls in primary school from 53,000 to 74,000 (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 144). The plan projected an increase in boys from 260,000 to 360,000 over the same period (Fafunwa, 2018, p. 144).

British economic interests in the region formed the basis of the political structures that emerged at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Missionary bodies initially facilitated the expansion of British interests through the introduction of Western education and schools. By the 1920s, these missionary bodies were incorporated into the colonial structure through the system of grants-in-aid. As independence movements gained momentum and dissatisfaction with the colonial regime grew, missionary bodies increasingly took on the role of "welfare" providers, expanding access to education and healthcare services. However, the education provided was uneven and highly unequal, particularly across regions, genders, and rural-urban divides. Gendered economic and political processes created new hierarchies between men and women, elevating some forms of economic activity over others. Girls were taught to be mothers and homemakers, and boys to participate in economically "productive" activities such as agriculture or joining the civil service (Bastian, 2000; Korieh, 2001, 2010; Oyěwùmí, 1997). These dynamics persisted and set the stage for the post-Second World War period leading up to independence.

Changing Regional Formations in Nigeria

Upon independence in 1960, Nigeria adopted a federal system of government, providing each of the three regions—Western, Eastern, and Northern—with a relatively high degree of autonomy.

Subsequent chapters examine these governance structures in greater depth, but some background details regarding the changing forms of the regions and zones are presented here.

In 1963, the Western region was divided into the Western and Mid-Western regions. However, following the war between 1967 and 1970, the military government, which replaced the civilian government in 1967, restructured the regions into 12 states and expanded to 19 in 1976, weakening regional political and economic power (see Chapter 7). This period also saw concerted efforts to build and foster a national identity.

Return to civilian rule occurred in 1979, but amidst a downturn in the economy, the government was replaced by the military in 1983. Attempts at handing power back to a civilian government were made in the 1990s but ultimately failed, or were stalled, until 1999. In this period, the number of states increased to 21 in 1987; by 1991, it had risen to 30; in 1996, it reached 36. In 1991, the FCT was relocated from Lagos to Abuja, a centrally located city established for administrative purposes. In 1999, power was transferred to a democratically elected civilian government.

In 2024, at the time of writing, seven federal elections (Table 10) had taken place since 1999. Two parties dominated the political scene at this level, with the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in power from 1999 to 2015 and the All Progressives Congress (APC) from 2015.

Table 10 Overview of Presidential Elections, President Elected and Political Party, 1999-2023

YEAR OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION	PRESIDENT ELECTED	PARTY
1999	Oluşegun Qbasanjø	People's Democratic Party
2003	Oluşegun Qbasanjø	People's Democratic Party
2007	Umaru Yar'Adua (death in 2010)	People's Democratic Party
2011	Goodluck Ebele Jonathan	People's Democratic Party
2015	Muhammadu Buhari	All Progressives Congress
2019	Muhammadu Buhari	All Progressives Congress
2023	Bola Ahmed Tinubu	All Progressives Congress

In 2024, the number of states remained 36, with 774 local government areas (LGAs) and FCT Abuja. These 36 states were grouped into six geopolitical zones: North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West and South South.

Conclusion

This chapter has started to draw out some of the key historically formed regional differences in Nigeria, cemented during British occupation. It has shown that the primary education SoP formed under British colonialism by Christian missionaries was highly exclusionary, providing limited access

to education. The primary education SoP supported the gendered economic and political formations that emerged during this period, geared toward ensuring the continued dominance of the British in the region. Women, in general, were increasingly structurally disadvantaged, with the primary education SoP upholding and reinforcing patriarchal formations. The gender, regional, ethnic and religious inequalities that emerged in this period have proved difficult to overcome, as discussed in the first part of the Chapter and which the rest of the thesis explores in more depth. The next chapter draws on the SoP approach to detail the history of private sector engagement in the primary education system from 1945 to 1960, drawing out the dynamics around inequalities.

Chapter 6. The Primary Education SoP, 1945-1950s: A Patchwork of Agents and Agencies

The primary education SoP between the end of the Second World War and political independence from Britain in 1960 was characterised by a diversity of agents and had the characteristics of being highly shaped by regional governments, emerging nationalist leaders, and mission bodies. Ideas about public, non-state and private provision of primary education were not very sharply differentiated, except with regard to free education. The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes in the Eastern and Western regions in 1957 and 1955, respectively, forced a closer relationship between national parties and mission bodies. The Northern region, where the regional government did not implement a UPE programme, began to integrate Islamic education institutions into the formal education system.

As this chapter argues, this particular configuration of the primary education SoP produced highly exclusionary outcomes. Inequalities related to religion, ethnicity, location, and gender were deeply embedded in the education system, with Yorùbá and Igbo boys from Christian families in the southern regions being the most likely to attend primary school. Further, gender norms influenced by Christian patriarchal teachings were ingrained in the primary education system.

Agents and Access to Primary Education: Primary School Enrolments, 1945-1950s

In this chapter, "Native Authority" or "Native Administration" (NA) is used as an umbrella term by the colonial administration to cover a range of regional governance structures, which are discussed broadly in Chapter 5. "Voluntary Agency" (VA) predominantly refers to schools managed by Christian missions and some Muslim organisations, but it also includes individuals, companies, and corporations that had established and were running schools.¹⁸

In this chapter, VA schools and forms of VA management are defined as non-state sector engagements in primary education. This is because most of these schools were managed by Christian missions, partially funded by governments, and were primarily non-profit.

¹⁸ The Lagos Education Ordinance of 1952 states that VA "includes a person, mission, society, company, corporation, and any other body of persons, who or which is the proprietor of a school, but does not include a local authority or a Local Education Committee" (Lagos Education Ordinance, 1952, p. 3) and the Eastern Regional Government, states that VA "includes a person, mission, society, company, corporation, and any other body of persons, who or which is the proprietor of one or more institutions but does not include a local authority or a local government council or a local education authority" (Eastern Regional Government, March 1956, C118).

In 1946, the majority of the roughly 545,000 children enrolled in primary schools across Nigeria attended schools managed by Christian missions, although ownership patterns varied within and between regions (Government of Nigeria, 1947). Some of the primary schools during this period were not run by missions or did not receive state funding, but their number was relatively small and decreased over time. For example, in the Western region in 1958, around 70 percent of schools were under VA management (Western Region Ministry of Economic Planning Statistics Division, 1959, pp. 8–9). Other types of schools included community schools, which "were established by the community of a township or village" (found in Kabba Province, for example) and managed by a board or committee selected by the community (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, pp. 47 & 53).

The Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) and the Anglican CMS managed the majority of schools in the Eastern and Western regions, although other denominations such as Methodists, Baptists, and the African Church Mission were also involved (Abernethy, 1966; Fafunwa, 2018). In the Northern region, the primary school structure followed a slightly different pattern. Although most children attended aided schools, more were enrolled in NA and local government schools than in the southern regions (Oldman, 1961). Despite these regional variations, the primary education SoP was characterised by high non-state sector engagement, predominantly in the form of Christian missions.

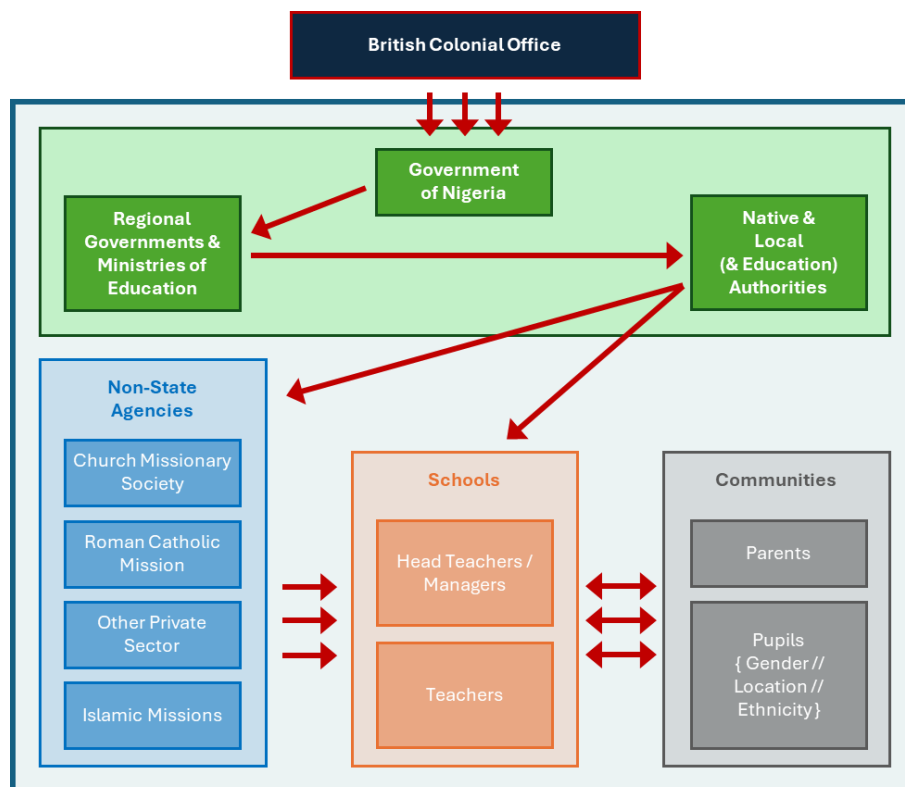
The main agents and agencies involved in the primary education SoP during this period are listed below (taken from Colonial Education Reports, cited throughout this chapter).

- Colonial Government of Nigeria, including the governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies
 - Directors of Education
 - Education Inspectorate
 - Boards of Education
 - Colonial civil service
 - Regional governments
 - Local and district-level governments and committees
- Nigerian political parties
 - National Council of Nigeria Citizens / National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) in the Eastern region
 - Action Group (AG) in the Western Region
 - Northern People's Congress (NPC) in the Northern region
- Christian missions

- RCM and CMS managed most schools across the southern regions. However, other denominations, such as Methodists, Baptists, and African Church Missions, were also involved.
- Islamic organisations
 - Young Ansar Ud Deen Society, Nur Ud Deen Society, Nur Ul Islam, Islamiyah Society
- Teachers, Parents and Pupils

Figure 6 below diagrammatically illustrates the key agents in the primary education SoP between 1945 and 1960, with the arrows indicating the relationships between these agents. At the top is the British Colonial Office, which, although external to the Nigerian primary education SoP, maintained oversight and influence over education policy and decisions made by the Colonial Government of Nigeria. The colonial government is linked to regional governments and regional ministries of education through central allocations (financing). These funds were then distributed to NAs and LAs, which, in turn, provided financial support to non-state sector agencies through the grants-in-aid system or directly covered the costs of NA and LA schools. The relationships between the agents in the primary education SoP are explored more deeply in the following pages, particularly in relation to the constitutional and legal changes that allowed for independence and national political parties to be elected to government.

Figure 6 Agents and Relations in the Primary Education SoP, 1950s



The structure of VA schools varied between missions. In larger or more established missions, such as the RCM and Anglican CMS, a manager, "usually a missionary or a pastor," was responsible for overseeing several schools, ranging from five or six to as many as 50-60 (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 47). These missions also employed a supervisor to inspect the schools, and the larger missions had their own Education Advisers. The larger the mission, the more centralised the management and financing structure. For example, the accountant for the Methodist Mission "west of the Niger" allocated about half of his time to educational finance, though this varied across missions (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, pp. 47 & 53).

Enrolments and Inequalities in the Primary Education SoP, 1945-1950s

The primary education SoP provided highly unequal access to education, with large disparities in enrolment rates within and between regions, and by gender. As detailed in Appendix 11, approximately 10 percent of total primary school enrolments were in the Northern region, with the largest share of the population, compared to 42 percent in the Western region and 48 percent in the Eastern region (Government of Nigeria, 1947, p. 10). Girls comprised just 19 and 20 percent of total enrolments across all regions (Government of Nigeria, 1947, p. 10). These figures highlight a primary education SoP that predominantly provided boys in the southern regions access to primary schooling.

The spread of missionary activity and education within the southern regions, particularly in the 19th and early 20th centuries, was uneven and linked to colonial economies (see Chapter 5). This development led to greater educational coverage in cities such as Lagos, Abeokuta, and Ibadan in the Western and Eastern regions. Additionally, by the late 1940s, some large mining companies, such as the Tin Mines of Nigeria Ltd in "Plateau Province", had established schools for their employees' children (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 53). Although mission schools were established in rural areas, there were disparities in the quality of education received: just 13 percent of teachers across all school types (government, local, VA schools) had some form of teaching qualification in the late 1940s, and most of these teachers worked in schools in urban areas (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 50); despite the majority of the population residing in rural areas and engaged in agriculture.

Nigeria during this period has been characterised as an "agrarian society", with an economy centred around the "production and export of primary agriculture commodities" (Usman, 2022, p. 61). In the Eastern region, well over three-quarters of the working population was engaged in agriculture or agriculture-related activities such as trading in the late 1950s (Dike, 1962, p. 22). A similar pattern

was found in the Northern and Western regions. "Small-scale" farms produced cocoa in the West, palm oil in the East, and groundnut and cotton in the North (Usman, 2022, p. 62).

The Western region was a major producer of cocoa, the Eastern region of palm products, and the Northern region of groundnuts and cotton, with some overlap between the regions. In 1950, 74 percent of exports were composed of four commodities (palm kernels and palm oil comprising one commodity): cocoa (21 percent), palm kernels (19 percent), groundnuts (17 percent), palm oil (14 percent), and cotton (3 percent) (Usman, 2022, p. 62). These commodities were bought and sold by European trading companies linked to the colonial regime, such as the United African Company (UAC), with only "six colonial trading companies control[ing] seventy percent of import trade and over seventy percent of the export trade" (Schler, 2022, p. 361).

Despite the domination of the primary education SoP by Christian missions, Christianity was a minority religion. As shown in Table 11, taken from an official census published in 1952, only 21 percent of the population identified as Christian, 47 percent identified as Muslim, and 32 percent identified as Other (Traditional / Indigenous African Religions) (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 119).

Table 11 Percentages of Muslims and Christians in the 1952 census

	POPULATION	MUSLIM	CHRISTIAN	OTHER
NORTH	16,835,582	73	2.7	24.3
WEST	6,352,472	32.8	36.9	30.3
EAST	7,215,251	0.3	50	49.6
TOTAL	30,403,305	47.4	21.1	31.6

Source: Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose (2018, p. 119).

There were regional variations in religious belief and identification. Figures from the 1952 census, shown in Table 11, indicate that Christianity was the majority religion in the Eastern and Western regions, with 50 percent and 37 percent of the population identifying as Christian in the respective regions (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 119). In the Western region, over 30 percent of the population identified as Muslim and around 30 percent were categorised as Other, which included Indigenous African religions (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018). In the Eastern region, around half the population was classified as practising a religion other than Christianity or Islam, predominantly Indigenous African religions; this was 24 percent in the Northern region (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018).

In the Northern region, 73 percent of the population identified as Muslim, while just three percent identified as Christian (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 119). Mustapha, Ehrhardt and

Diprose (2018, p. 115) provide an overview of the pattern of Christian conversion in the Northern region, which included "pockets" of Hausa-Fulani Christians in "Zaria, Kano, Sokoto and Katsina" alongside the "[m]illions of Southern Christians who moved to segregated neighbourhoods of northern cities" and the "[m]illions of Christians and traditionalists from the ethnic minorities of the 'lower' Northern Region." These patterns of religious belief shaped the primary education SoP, as Christian communities generally had better access to primary education, including in northern cities where Christianity was practised by people from the Southern regions living in "segregated neighbourhoods" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 115).

Ethnic identity intersected with religion to perpetuate divisions and inequalities within the primary education SoP. Table 12 shows the ethnic composition of the country according to the 1952 census. The largest ethnic groups were the Yorùbá, Igbo, Hausa, and Fulani, which together accounted for over 60 per cent of the population (Mustapha, 2005, p. 5). In the Northern region, the Hausa and Fulani comprised around 50 percent of the population (Mustapha, 2005, p. 5). In the Western region, the Yorùbá made up around 70 per cent of the population, while in the Eastern region, the Igbo constituted around 60 per cent (Mustapha, 2005, p. 5). This ethnic-regional structure became increasingly entrenched in the constitutions throughout the 1940s and 1950s, shaping the primary education SoP and reinforcing ethnic, regional, and religious inequalities.

Table 12 Ethnic Structure of the Population, 1952/53

ETHNIC GROUP	POPULATION	PERCENTAGE (%)
EDO	468,501	2
FULANI	3,040,736	10
HAUSA	5,548,542	18
IBIBIO	766,764	2
IGBO	5,483,660	18
KANURI	1,301,924	4
NUPE	359,260	1
TUV	790,450	3
YORÙBÁ	5,046,799	16
OTHER	8,349,391	27
ALL NIGERIA	31,156,027	100

Adapted from Mustapha (2005, p. 5).

Although religious beliefs were diverse in the period, Christian conversions had multiplied in the southern regions in the early 20th century but not in northern areas (Ibrahim, 1991). This process of Christianisation, as discussed in Chapter 5, was closely linked with the primary education SoP,

resulting in enrolment figures that were disproportionately higher in the Eastern and Western regions, which had large Christian Igbo and Yorùbá populations. These relationships between ethnic regionalism and religion became more salient as the decades progressed.

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1945-1950s

Constitutional reforms under various governors—Clifford (1919-1925), Cameron (1931-1935), and Bourdillon (1935-1940)—had already begun the process of "transform[ing] the old-style Lugardian system of indirect rule" (Vaughan, 2022, p. 292). However, the most significant changes were introduced under the 1946 Richards Constitution, which replaced the 1922 Constitution. Named after Arthur Richards, who served as governor of Nigeria from 1943 to 1947, this constitution introduced regionalism into Nigeria's governance structure (Ezera, 1960). Regional councils were established in the Eastern, Western, and Northern regions (formerly provinces). Although primarily "deliberative and advisory bodies" (Ezera, 1960, p. 70), they were intended to form a link between the NAs and the Legislative Council and to "consider and advise by resolution on matters referred to them by the Governor" or other members (Ezera, 1960, p. 69). NA representatives, self-selected by the NA rather than through direct elections, constituted the largest group of unofficial members in each regional council, known as the House of Assembly (Ezera, 1960).

The limited devolvement of power along regional lines affected the provision of education, including its governance and financing structures. Although the newly established regional councils lacked the power to raise money or enact legislation and could only approve expenditure estimates, education was increasingly viewed as a regional issue (Dike, 1962). A new office for education administration was established in Ibadan in the Western region in 1946/47; previously, there had been one office in Enugu for the entire southern regions (Government of Nigeria, 1947, p. 6). There was also no uniform approach to primary education. In the South, primary schooling consisted of two years of infants' classes, followed by a six-year primary course (standards one to six) (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). In the North, NA and local government schools had a four-year elementary cycle followed by middle school, later changed to junior primary and senior primary schools (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 51). The regionalisation of the primary education system was further reinforced when the 1947 Ten Year Plan for Education, introduced by the Director of Education for Nigeria, was approved and adopted by the Legislative Council in 1948 as a policy framework (Dike, 1962).

This plan emerged against the backdrop of a political shift in Britain during and after the Second World War towards more welfarist principles, including greater attention to the welfare aspects of

colonial development policy as part of modernisation efforts (see Chapter 7). As Bush (2014, pp. 284–285) notes, British colonial research and policy began to articulate:

a discourse of accelerated modernisation and partnership through gradual incorporation of the colonial intelligentsia into governance, expansion of welfare programmes, education for boys and girls, and the promotion of cooperative production.

However, despite the passing of the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1945, and the funds allocated to them, Colonial Office officials in Britain were reluctant to support the expansion of primary education using British taxpayers' money (Usuanlele, 2014). Usuanlele (2014, p. 260) argues this was partly because the "Colonial Office disfavoured school-based education because of its destabilising effect on the existing social order by producing unemployed and embittered school leavers". Despite this perspective from the Colonial Office, the Nigerian government pushed for greater spending on primary education in the first iteration of the Ten-Year Education Development Plan, increasing the allocation from "4.3 per cent to 11–12 per cent of total expenditure" (Usuanlele, 2014 p. 259). Costs were to be shared between the Government of Nigeria and the Colonial Development and Welfare funds, with spending expected to eventually reach £300,000 from Nigerian funds and £500,000 from British funds by the plan's final year (Usuanlele, 2014). The Colonial Office, however, pushed back against this. In the revised plan, greater attention was given to teacher and secondary education, alongside the transferral of the majority of costs "to the Nigerian taxpayer through the use of pre-existing Nigerian funds as well as loans and new taxes" (Usuanlele, 2014, p. 260). These concerns about expanding primary education were in direct contrast to the views of Nigerian political leaders and unofficial members of the Legislative Council, who were pushing for compulsory education (Usuanlele, 2014).

The amended Ten-Year Plan became the foundation for the Educational Ordinance and Code of 1948 (Dike, 1962). This new ordinance established Regional Boards of Education with advisory and executive powers, particularly regarding the opening and closing of schools (Eze, 1978, p. 49). These boards could appoint standing committees and establish Local Education Authorities (LEAs) or Local Education Committees (LECs) (Eze, 1978). These local bodies were established in some parts of the Western and Eastern regions (Government of Nigeria, 1949). In the Northern region, Provincial Education Committees were established in most provinces to represent the government, NA, and VA (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 11). These education committees were sub-committees of Provincial Development and Welfare Boards (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 11).

Changes to the legal framework governing education began to affect relations within the primary education SoP, as regional political formations were given greater powers to intervene, bringing

them into greater contact with mission bodies and other education providers. Despite the greater powers devolved to regional and local bodies, the boards of education were "dominated by European missionaries and colonial officials" (Usonian, 2014, p. 259). In the Western region, the Education Board agreed that the Local Education Committee's authority should be moral rather than legal (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 42), limiting the power of these bodies within the primary education SoP.

During this period, efforts were made to increase the number of Nigerians employed in the colonial civil service. In 1948, a special commission was appointed to "make recommendations about the recruitment and training of Nigerians for the senior civil service" (Ezera, 1960, p. 86). The report's "guiding principle" was that non-Nigerians should only be recruited when no suitably qualified Nigerian was available, which the government accepted (Ezera, 1960, p. 86). Alongside this change, scholarships and training awards were introduced for women, including "a special allocation of thirty scholarships" (Ezera, 1960, p. 87). The number of Nigerians in the "upper grades" of the civil service increased from 182 in 1948 (compared to just 23 before the Second World War) to 628 in 1951 (Ezera, 1960, p. 87). However, Europeans continued to dominate the civil service: of the 3,679 senior civil servants in 1951, only 17 percent were Nigerian (Ezera, 1960, p. 87). There were also significant ethnic-regional inequalities. In 1961, "of the 1203 Nigerian officers in the elite Administrative and Professional cadre, only 34 were from the North" (Mustapha, 2005, p. 12).

It was not until after the Second World War that women were even employed in the civil service (Byfield, 2015, p. 156). In 1951, a circular on the employment of women in the civil service stated that "Only in exceptional circumstances should a woman be considered for appointment to senior grade posts." (circular on the employment of women in the civil service quoted in Oyěwùmí, 1997, p. 135). These gendered structures of the colonial civil service shaped the primary education SoP, with European men holding positions of power, followed by men from the southern regions of Nigeria, while women and men from the northern region were largely absent from these structures.

The Inspectorate responsible for supervising schools receiving government grants and ensuring schools' compliance with guidelines was severely understaffed (Government of Nigeria, 1949, p. 7). In 1947, for example, there were just 53 supervisory and advisory staff for 350,000 pupils and 14,000 teachers in the Eastern region (Government of Nigeria, 1949, p. 7). This light-touch regulatory structure was characteristic of the colonial government's largely hands-off approach to education, allowing the missions to run their schools with minimal interference.

However, the colonial government increasingly bore the costs of running these schools. As discussed in Chapter 5, mission agencies were provided grants from the central government budget, known as

"grants-in-aid". As the decade progressed, more schools came under this funding structure, and mission agencies became increasingly reliant on the state for the funds to operate their schools. Between 1944/45 and 1947/48, government spending on grants-in-aid more than doubled from £288,281 to £758,700 (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 39). This increase was due to a growth in the number of schools allocated grants, notably in the Northern region, where NA schools had not previously received any central government funding (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). The rise in the number of teacher training centres, reinstatement of building grants, and revisions to the cost-of-living allowance also contributed to the increased expenditure (Phillipson and Holt, 1949).

Concerns were raised by the colonial government about the efficiency and management of funds for education. In 1948, the governor appointed Sydney Phillipson to review and make recommendations about the grants-in-aid system (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). In a speech to the Legislative Assembly on August 28, 1947, Governor Richards argued that mission bodies were increasingly dependent on colonial government funds due to reduced support from Europe and rising operational costs (cited in Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 102):

The agencies can no longer rely on the sustained flow of philanthropic support which, in the more prosperous days of Europe, was drawn from overseas, and they are now faced with the problem of rising costs, particularly the problem of paying the staffs salaries relative to their qualifications, and to the salaries paid in other occupations where similar qualifications are required [...] it is mistaken to suppose that Government can accept a direct financial responsibility for the remuneration of a large body of persons not in its employment or under its control.

The post-war economic conditions in Europe and decreased charitable donations meant that the colonial government was more responsible for supporting education (as noted by Kallaway, 2020 in the context of mission policy in the 1920s and 1930s). Richards' speech also indicated reluctance to cover teachers' salaries from central government budgets, making clear that teachers in VA schools were not government employees.

The review led to the Phillipson Report in 1949, which proposed several changes adopted by the central government in 1950 (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). The reforms included reinstating principles of efficiency, educational necessity, and social usefulness in granting funds, with considerations such as the number of schools in a community (Government of Nigeria, 1950, pp. 7–8). A new approach to teacher salaries based on qualifications and experience was introduced (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). Grants-in-aid were to be administered through local education bodies, and for the first time, NA schools were included on the same terms as VA schools (Phillipson and Holt, 1949). A formula for calculating the grant to be given to each community, dependent on the Assumed Local Contribution

(ALC), was adopted (Government of Nigeria, 1950). The ALC estimated the amount of support local communities gave to schools. In each school, teachers' salaries and certain expenses were fully covered by grants but minus the ALC (Government of Nigeria, 1950, p. 7). The ALC was to be reduced in "underserved" areas, and the ALC for girls was to be half that of boys (Government of Nigeria, 1950, p. 9). Additionally, a "special purposes" grant was established to cover specific building costs (Government of Nigeria, 1950, p. 10).

These reforms, while strengthening the relationship between the colonial government and Christian missions, as more schools came under the VA banner in the following years (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 35), also brought to light the challenges faced by the missions. The diminishing support for missions meant they became increasingly reliant on government funds (Phillipson and Holt, 1949, p. 102). This shift occurred against a backdrop of growing independence movements and an expanded role for Nigerian political parties.

Some of the abovementioned changes occurred after Richards' retirement in 1948 and under his replacement, John Macpherson, who immediately began reviewing and updating the constitution (Ezera, 1960). The new 1951 constitution established regional legislatures and executive offices in all three regions: Western, Northern, and Eastern, with Lagos merged into the Western region (Ezera, 1960). The Western and Northern Regions had two chambers in their Legislatures, the House of Chiefs and the House of Assembly, while the Eastern Region had one chamber, the House of Assembly (Ezera, 1960). A Central Legislature and Central Executive covering all regions and Lagos were also established, with Regional Executives headed by lieutenant governors advised by Executive Councils (Ezera, 1960). Policy decisions were made by a "simple majority" in the Executive Council and considered "ipso facto government decisions" (Ezera, 1960, p. 139). Legislation required a bill to be tabled by the minister in charge before the Regional House of Assembly (Ezera, 1960).

At the national level, the Council of Ministers, consisting of the president, six ex-officio members, and 12 Nigerian ministers, "was the principal instrument of policy in and for Nigeria" (Ezera, 1960, p. 142). Ministers were responsible "for a group of subjects" rather than a ministry or department (Ezera, 1960, p. 144). They could bring bills before their Regional House of Assembly, and the Regional Legislatures held legislative power over education alongside other sectors, including health and local government (Ezera, 1960). This constitution further regionalised the structure of the primary education SoP.

Revenue allocation was also regionalised, which had implications for education spending. On the recommendations of a commission into revenue allocation, established in 1950, it was decided that the division of revenues should be in line with equality, liberty, fraternity, and efficiency, following

the principles of derivation, needs, and national interest (Ezera, 1960). Each region was able to collect revenues, which were then shared through the Distributable Pools Account (DPA). However, the principle of derivation meant that "central government would return to the regional governments the taxes that their citizens had paid" (Ezera, 1960, p. 149). The principle of needs accounted for specific regional needs based on adult male taxpayers (Ezera, 1960). Education and police were two sectors to be allocated a grant from the centre, with a higher grant to be given to the Northern region because of its comparatively lower levels of education and other social services (Ezera, 1960).

The central grant for education was intended to cover grants-in-aid, meaning regional governments did not initially need additional revenue for the primary education SoP. However, the allocation favoured the Western and Eastern regions, particularly the Western region, over the Northern region due to higher school enrolments (Sklar, 1963; Ovwasa, 1995; Pierce, 2022). The changes to the allocative structure would have implications for education financing when regional governments took on the costs of the primary education SoP under the subsequent constitution.

The Macpherson Constitution, enacted in 1951, was soon replaced by the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954, named after Secretary of State for the Colonies Oliver Lyttleton (Lynn, 2006). This constitution further solidified the regional political structure and established a federal system (Ibrahim, 1989). This new constitution followed negotiations during the 1953 Constitutional Conference in London, where regional self-government by 1956 was agreed upon (Lynn, 2006, p. 256). Other agreements included the introduction of premierships in regions and separate elections to the federal legislature (Sklar, 1963, p. 133). Lagos was separated from the Western region, and the Southern Cameroons were separated from the Eastern region. While the Council of Ministers remained, three members from each region were directly elected to the Central House (Ezera, 1960, p. 201). Regional legislatures gained the power to pass bills without central legislature approval (Ezera, 1960).

Under the new constitution, regional governments assumed responsibility for education, except for higher education (Ezera, 1960). The federal government was responsible for education in Lagos, including financing the school system, the University of Ibadan, and the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 25). From 1954, regional governments could pass education legislation without central approval and financed primary education from their own sources, including federal allocations but without a special grant for grants-in-aid (Callaway and

Musone, 1968; Ezera, 1960). Federal allocations represented almost the entire budget of the regional governments.¹⁹

The devolution of power to regional governments led to Nigerian political parties taking on the responsibilities previously held by the colonial government for the primary education SoP. These regional political formations often took on an ethnic-regional character, effectively creating "national" education systems at the regional level, governed by leaders who saw themselves as representing distinct nations within the framework imposed by British colonial rule.

Regional Political Structures Shaping Relations Between Agents and Agencies, 1950s

The constitutional changes outlined in the previous section expanded the role of (newly) established political parties in the state machinery, albeit following some of the patterns set by the colonial regime. By 1951, when regional elections began, political divisions were distinctly ethno-regional (Mustapha, 2006, p. 5). The Hausa-Fulani-dominated Northern People's Congress (NPC) formed the government in Northern Nigeria; the Yorùbá-dominated Action Group (AG) governed the Western Region; and the increasingly Igbo-dominated National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) formed the government in the Eastern Region (Mustapha, 2006, p. 5). The AG and the NCNC advocated for increased funding for education and the introduction of free primary education, healthcare, water supply, and other social services as part of their election campaigns (Jakande, 1987; Sklar, 1963). These welfare programmes, including the expansion of education, were viewed by political leaders as necessary for regional development, and were important components of nationalist aspirations for independence (Sklar, 1963; Callaway and Musone, 1968).

The NCNC was formed in the 1940s. After disagreements with the NYM, Azikiwe²⁰ and Macauley launched the National Council of Nigeria in 1944 (Schler, 2022). The National Council later changed its name to the NCNC to "accommodate the membership of Cameroonian associations in Lagos" (Ezera, 1960, p. 62). Despite its initial cross-regional and inter-ethnic nature, including its appeal to labour movements, by the late 1950s, it was increasingly associated with the Eastern region and Igbo

¹⁹ In 1958, the principle of regional per capita representation in parliament was adopted, allocating parliamentary seats on a regional basis according to constituencies rather than solely based on the votes cast (Mustapha, 2006, pp. 15–16). Consequently, more than half of the federal parliamentary constituencies were in the Northern region (Sklar, 1967, p. 526), with the largest population share of 53 percent according to the 1953 census (Sklar, 1967, p. 526).

²⁰ Azikiwe was born in Nigeria in 1904 but left in 1925 to study in the US, where he graduated with an MA and an MSc (Ezera, 1960, p. 53).

interests (Sklar, 1963; Ajayi, 1999; Mustapha, 2006).²¹ The executive members of the party, 1957-1958, which included the National Executive Committee, the Eastern and Western Working Committees, and members of ministerial rank in the Eastern and federal governments, included many "educators" (Sklar, 1963, p. 483).²² Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, a key figure in independence movements and leader of the Abeokuta Women's Union in the 1940s, was also a member of the NCNC until 1959 and is listed as the Treasurer of the Western Working Committee and President of the Western NCNC Women's Association and Nigerian Women's Union (Johnson-Odim, 2009; Johnson, 1982; Sklar, 1963, p. 522). The Vice President of the Eastern NCNC Women's Association was Margaret Ekpo, also a prominent trade unionist (Sklar, 1963). The other members listed under the Women's Association are Felicia Obuga, Keziah Fashina, R. Nzirmiro, and Mary Ezedem (Sklar, 1963, p. 520). However, the NCNC did not put any women forward as candidates in the 1959 federal elections, which influenced Ransome-Kuti's decision to resign from the party (Nwapa, 1987).

In the Western Region, the AG was formed in 1950 out of the Egbe Omo Odùduwà, which was initially a cultural group, to contest the 1951 elections and was led by Ọbafémi Awólówò (Schler, 2022; Sklar, 1963). While the Egbe organisation initially focused on cultural promotion, it also served as a platform for cooperation between the "new elite of the Western Region" and the Yorùbá "chiefs" (Sklar, 1963, p. 101). The AG were predominantly Yorùbá-speaking Christians who represented business interests or had backgrounds in law, media, or education (Sklar, 1963). This pattern is further evident in the composition of the Federal Executive Council of the AG, 1957-1958, which included Awólówò as Leader of the Party, alongside 14 other members, of which thirteen are listed as Yorùbá, one Igbo and one ethnicity is not listed (Sklar, 1963, p. 528). In terms of religion, just three were listed as Muslim, and the rest were Christian, despite 33 percent of the Western region's population identifying as Muslim in the 1952 census and 30 percent as Other (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 119; Sklar, 1963, p. 528). The only female members listed are (Mrs) Olu Solaru, a teacher, (Miss) RT Brown, and (Madam) C A Onabolu (Sklar, 1963, pp. 530 & 531). Other prominent women in the party included Oyinkan Morenike Abayomi, who joined the AG in the 1950s. She was appointed to the Western House of Assembly in 1956 and played a role in establishing the Western Regional Women's Conference in the late 1950s (Johnson, 1982). Lynn (2006, p. 252) notes, the AG was perceived as "the party of upwardly mobile, educated Christians".

²¹ For example, the Igbo State Union (also known as the Igbo Federal Union) was a member organisation of the NCNC, and in 1948, Azikiwe was elected its first president (Ezera, 1960, p. 91).

²² Alongside 20 businesspeople, 15 lawyers, four doctors, and four senior civil servants and functionaries.

Two parties dominated the political landscape in the Northern Region. The NPC was formed in 1949 and became an established political party in 1951 (Sklar, 1963). It was at this point that Ahmadu Bello, the Sarauta of Sokoto "whose grandfather and great grandfather were Sultans of Sokoto", alongside Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, joined the NPC (Sklar, 1963, p. 367).²³ The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) was formed in August 1950 by "a small group of radical youth", which at first operated under the NPC but split in December 1950 after "moderates and conservatives" within the NPC "secured the adoption of a resolution to the effect that no member of the NEPU could remain as a member of the NPC" (Sklar, 1963, p. 94-96). By 1951, Aminu Kano had been elected the Vice President of the NEPU (Sklar, 1963, p. 101). The aim of the NEPU was "the emancipation of the Talakawa" (commoners) and the reform of political institutions (Sklar, 1963, p. 95). Both women's enfranchisement and rights to education were important elements in the NEPU's vision for society (Pereira, 2005, p. 80). Further, Sklar (1963, p. 419) described the NEPU women's organisation, led by Malama Gambo Ahmed Sawaba,²⁴ as "a political factor of growing importance in the North", particularly in its campaigning for universal suffrage, and which became affiliated with the Nigeria Women's Union in 1958.

Nigeria's first direct Federal House of Representatives elections were held in December 1954 (Johnson-Odim and Mba, 1997). The Eastern Region implemented universal adult suffrage law, allowing men and women over 21 to vote by secret ballot (Ezera, 1960). In the Western Region, the right to vote was limited to male taxpayers aged 21 and over, with a turnout of 411,840 for the central Legislature (Ezera, 1960, pp. 208–212). Some sources suggest that women who had paid a local rate could also vote in the Western Region (Pereira, 2005, p. 81). In the Northern Region, an indirect electoral college system was in place, where only male taxpayers aged 21 and over could vote (Ezera, 1960). In the Western and Eastern Regions, universal suffrage existed by the 1959 federal elections, but not in the Northern Region, where only male taxpayers could vote (Pereira, 2005).

The NCNC won in the Western and Eastern regions in the federal elections, while the NPC won in the Northern region (Ezera, 1960). Abubakar Tafawa Balewa became the prime minister in 1957 when this post was created, and a coalition government was established between the NPC and the NCNC (under Azikiwe), with the AG led by Awólówò forming the opposition in the House of

²³ Bello was born in 1909 in Sokoto and attended the Sokoto Provincial School before studying at the Katsina Teacher Training College and subsequently teaching at the Sokoto Middle School from 1931-1934 until he became Rabba District Head until 1938 when he became Sarauta (Sklar, 1963, p. 97).

²⁴ Malama Gambo was arrested and imprisoned throughout the 1950s, alongside other campaigners, for her activism.

Representatives (Diamond, 1988, pp. 83–84). Regional self-government was implemented in the Western and Eastern regions (Ezera, 1960; Pereira, 2005).

In the 1952 legislative assemblies, teachers were the most represented profession, accounting for 25 percent of the listed occupations (Ezera, 1960). Expanding education, specifically primary education, was a key element in the visions of the NCNC, AG, and NEPU. These aspirations also increased their interaction with the missions managing the schools. The AG and NCNC introduced UPE programs in the Western and Eastern regions. In the Western Region, this program was launched in 1955 and made the first six years of primary school free; in the Eastern Region, it was launched in 1957, covering the first eight years of primary school; and in Lagos, it was introduced in 1957, covering six years of primary schooling but only for children under 14 (Federation of Nigeria, 1959a, p. 11).

The introduction of the free education programmes led to an increase in primary school enrolments between 1952 and 1962, with enrolments rising "at an annual rate of 17 percent" (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 92). Total enrolments in primary schools grew from around one million in 1952 to over 2.8 million pupils in 1962, as shown in Table 13 (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 92). Table 13 also provides an overview of total enrolments in the three regions, Lagos, and at the national level. It shows that enrolments in the primary education SoP more than doubled everywhere between 1952 and 1960. Additionally, although not shown here, Lagos had an enrolment-to-population ratio of 85.4 percent in 1958 (UNESCO, 1961).

Table 13 Enrolments in Primary Schools by Region, 1952-60 (in thousands)

Year	Northern region	Eastern Region	Western Region	Lagos	All of Nigeria
1952	122.1	518.9	400.0 (est)		1041.0
1953	142.5	572.7	429.5		1144.7
1954	153.7	664.7	456.6		1275.0
1955	168.5	742.6	811.4	37.0	1759.5
1956	185.5	904.2	908.0	38.6	2036.3
1957	205.8	1209.2	982.7	50.2	2441.9
1958	229.1	1221.5	1037.4	56.7	2544.7
1959	250.9	1378.4	1080.3	66.3	2175.9
1960	282.8	1430.5	1124.8	74.5	2912.6

Source: Callaway and Musone (1968, p. 115)

Most of these enrolments were in mission schools in the southern regions, and many more schools began to receive government grants during this period. Callaway and Musone (1968, p. 35) describe

this as a "mass phenomenon" in the following extract from a UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) report on education financing in Nigeria:

The passage from the non-assisted to the assisted sector was a sort of mass phenomenon between 1949 and 1954, and the non-assisted sector, which in 1952 still included 17.2 percent of all primary schools, disappeared almost entirely in the following years.

In other words, the expansion of the primary education SoP in the southern regions occurred through non-state agencies as more schools came under the VA banner.

Lagos and the Western Region

In 1952, S. O Awokoya, the first education minister for the Western region, presented a policy paper to the Legislature outlining plans for the UPE programme that aimed to provide free primary education for six years. The AG launched the UPE programme in 1955, and over 811,000 children enrolled in the first year—a number much higher than expected (Bánjo, 1961, p. 14). By 1960, the number of pupils had increased to 1,124,788 enrolled in 6,500 primary schools (Bánjo, 1961, p. 14).

A "three-tiered structure of divisional, district and local councils" was established (Abernethy, 1966, p. 22). Even before the increased decentralisation brought about under the Lyttleton Constitution, local councils could raise education rates and, in some areas, were responsible for planning and constructing new schools, establishing school committees, parent-teacher associations, school boards and management committees, as well as disbursing grants-in-aid in some areas (Abernethy, 1966; Government of Nigeria, 1947). These functions were reiterated in the Western Region Education Law of 1954, and LEAs were expected to raise additional district revenue "to cover between 30 and 45 percent of the recurrent costs" (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 36). Callaway and Musone (1968, p. 36), note that "the majority made it clear that they were unable to impose a new taxation, whatever its name and purpose", so this was changed to "maintenance" costs, with LAs asked to contribute what they could.

In addition, more schools were to be managed by LAs: 60 percent of the new schools built under UPE were to be LA schools, and 40 percent VA missions, with Muslim educational agencies included in this 40 percent quota (Abernethy, 1966). Muslim agencies could also claim an additional 10 percent from the LA quota (Abernethy, 1966). Despite these conditions, in 1958, the Anglican CMS and the Catholic RCM managed 41 percent of schools in the Western region (Western Region Ministry of Economic Planning Statistics Division, 1959, pp. 8–9). Table 14 below provides a snapshot of the management structure of primary schools in 1957 and 1958, taken from the Western Region Ministry of Economic Planning Statistics Division, and shows that the majority of schools were under

Christian mission management: the combined total percentage of all Christian mission schools (CMS, RCM, Methodist, Baptist, African Church, and Other) was 64 percent in both years. In contrast, 28 percent of all primary schools were under LA management in the same period, and less than one percent were under government management (Western Region Ministry of Economic Planning Statistics Division, 1959, pp. 8–9).

Table 14 Number of Primary Schools by Ownership, Western Region, 1957-58

AGENCY	1957		1958	
	Number of schools	%	Number of schools	%
GOVERNMENT	8	0.1	7	0.1
LOCAL AUTHORITY	1,844	27.8	1,843	27.6
CHURCH	1,673	25.2	1,673	25.1
MISSIONARY				
SOCIETY				
ROMAN CATHOLIC	1,062	16.0	1,082	16.2
MISSION				
METHODIST	302	4.6	300	4.5
MISSION				
BAPTIST MISSION	383	5.8	388	5.8
AFRICAN CHURCH	332	5.0	326	4.9
MISSION				
MUSLIM SOCIETIES	444	6.7	444	6.7
OTHER MISSIONS	478	7.2	479	7.2
PRIVATE	102	1.5	128	1.9
TOTAL	6,628	100	6,670	100

Source: Western Region Ministry of Economic Planning Statistics Division (1959, pp. 8–9)

Mission bodies thus retained a key role in the Western region's primary education SoP. VA representatives were to be included in local planning committees (which made decisions about school sites and the registration of children for UPE), and under the 1954 education law, at least a

third of the members of Local Education Committees were "to represent voluntary agency interests" (Abernethy, 1966, p. 25). Additionally, religious worship and instruction in VA schools were the responsibility of the school's owner, although parents could request alternative forms of religious instruction or ask for their child to be excused from religious activities (Abernethy, 1966).

Lagos introduced UPE in 1957, providing six years of primary schooling for children under 14 (Federation of Nigeria, 1959a, p. 11). In Lagos, the federal government and the Lagos Town Council shared responsibility for education. The Lagos Education Office, "a subordinate branch of the ministry of education," received funding from the federal government and "the Lagos Town Council was asked to contribute at a rate finally agreed upon as 30 percent of total recurrent expenditure" (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 37). The Colony Education Officer became the Chief Education Officer and held executive responsibility for education in Lagos (Federation of Nigeria, 1959a, p. 10).

Eastern Region

The Eastern Region launched its UPE programme in 1957, offering eight years of primary education (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 36). The UPE Regulations were enacted to support this policy and came into force in January 1957 (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 6). This meant that tuition was free for all pupils attending primary schools (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 6). As noted in the Eastern Regional Annual Report of Education, 1956 (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 2): "The Regional Government decided to bear the full cost of the scheme and abolished education rates in April 1956. All primary school fees were to be abolished on January 1, 1957."

Over 1,700 primary schools were built in 1956-57 to accommodate the new enrolments, which increased from around 500,000 to around 1.2 million in 1957 (Callaway and Musone, 1968, p. 115; Government of Eastern Nigeria, 1962, p. 4).

Under the Eastern Region Education Law of 1956, regional and local government bodies were given greater powers over missionary bodies. The Ministry of Education, headed by the Minister of Education, had the authority to approve new schools, establish government schools and institutions, and close any schools that did not meet regulations, such as if the proprietor was not resident in Nigeria or if the school or institution was managed in a way "not in the interests of the pupils" (Legislature of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1956, p. C124 para 29). The law also stated that schools would remain under the same ownership/management, and previously unassisted primary schools enrolling children under UPE were also to receive grants-in-aid. However, any VA-mission schools that were unopened and where construction had started before May 31, 1956, were to be taken over by the LA or the District Council. Only these schools would receive the building grant. In other

words, under the law, there was a freeze on establishing any new VA mission schools during this period. When the LA or District Council did not want to manage the schools, they could be passed to a VA for a specified period, selected by the government education officer in consultation with the council and VA in the area.

The Minister of Education also established the Education Board, responsible for "advis[ing] the Minister upon such matters connected with educational theory and practice as they think fit and upon any questions referred to them by him" (Legislature of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1956, p. C120 para 9). The Eastern Region Minister of Education was also responsible for primary education, including to "secure the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the people of the Eastern Region" (Legislature of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1956, p. C 121 para 20).

The Eastern region moved from a three-tier system to a two-tier system, so district councils increasingly took over the responsibilities of county councils (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958). Additionally, in 1956, the Director and Deputy Director of Education were replaced by the posts of Chief Inspector of Education and Chief Executive Officer (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957). Attempts at implementing local education committees in the Eastern Region during the 1940s had little success, which the colonial government attributed to the region's more decentralised governance structures (Government of Nigeria, 1949).

These legal and regulatory changes attempted to restrict the power of the missions in the primary education SoP in the Eastern region, giving greater powers to local authorities. Despite these restrictions, in 1958, the Anglican CMS and the Catholic RCM managed 57 percent of schools in the Eastern Region (Abernethy, 1966, p. 37). Table 15 below shows that in 1958, over a million children were enrolled in aided primary schools compared to around 86,000 in LA schools and 3,000 in government schools (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 27). Enrolments in unaided primary schools were relatively small, at just over 4,000 (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 27). These figures suggest that the Eastern region's primary education SoP retained a pattern of ownership similar to the 1940s, with Christian missions retaining a high degree of power.

Table 15 Enrolments in Primary Schools by School Type, Eastern Region, 1958

	GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS	AIDED SCHOOLS (NOT INCLUDED IN GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS)	UNAIDED SCHOOLS
MALE	1,937	49,976	737,615	2,568

FEMALE	1,109	36,322	377,763	1,877
TOTAL	3,046	86,298	1,115,378	4,445
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	11	1,511	5,381	86

Source: Eastern Region of Nigeria (1958, p. 27)

Further, fees were reintroduced in most primary school classes in 1958 when the NCNC reversed its policy of tuition-free primary education. The UPE Regulations were amended to allow for the reintroduction of ALC in specific classes. Infant Classes I and II (children who had entered school at the beginning of the first and second years of UPE) continued to receive free tuition (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 6). However, from January 1, 1958, fees were introduced for the remaining classes, with the following annual rates of ALC: Standards I and II: £2 x 30; Standards III and IV: £4 x 30; and Standards V and VI: £6 x 30 (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 6).

With accompanying legal changes, UPE programmes in the Western and Eastern regions brought regional political parties into direct relationships with Christian missions. The expansion of the primary education SoP in both regions occurred through these non-state agents, and missions retained a high degree of control.

Northern Region

The Northern Region did not implement a policy of UPE in the 1950s, and fees continued to be charged in both NA and VA schools. The 1954-55 Annual Education Report argued that the popularity of schools made it easier to charge fees, highlighting the elite nature of these schools and their connection to Christian communities (Northern Region of Nigeria, 1956, p. 8):

Fees are collected in all Voluntary Agency Schools and Training Centres, and the more popular the schools are, the easier it is to charge an economic fee. This state of affairs means that in the Riverain and adjacent Provinces, and among communities served by Christian Missions, parents contribute to the education of their children.

This type of education was accessible only to a small minority of privileged pupils. However, an approach combining Islamic and Western education was introduced. *Islamiyah* schools taught the *Qur'ān* alongside "Western sciences" and Islamic subjects (Umar, 2001; Thurston, 2018a).

In 1957, the Ministry of Education was reorganised to comply with Section 121 of the Nigeria (Constitution) Order in Council, 1954, which stipulated that, as cited in the Annual Summary of the Education Department in the Northern Region (Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, p. 2):

Where any Regional Minister has been charged with the responsibility for a department of government, he shall exercise general direction and control over that department; and subject to that direction and control, the department shall be under the supervision of such officer in the public service of the Region (who shall be styled the Permanent Secretary) as the Governor acting in his discretion may select.

As this extract highlights, the colonial government of Nigeria retained a high degree of control over education in the Northern region. The Department of Education was merged with the Ministry of Education, and the Permanent Secretary (Hector Jelf in 1956-57) was given executive control (Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, pp. 2–3). Director and Deputy Director positions were abolished, but "the holders of these two offices were appointed respectively as Adviser and Chief Inspector of Education, the latter assuming charge of the newly formed Inspectorate Division of the Ministry." (Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, pp. 2–3).

Enrolment rates in primary schools in the Northern region remained very low throughout the 1950s. Government records show that in 1956 and 1957, just 8.8 percent and 9.5 percent of children, respectively, were enrolled in junior primary school classes (approximately aged 7-11 years) (Ministry of Education Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, p. 8). Tables 16 and 17, taken from the Annual Report of the Ministry of Education in the Northern Region, show enrolments by school type. The majority of enrolments were in aided schools, with 100,956 in 1956 and 114,768 in 1957, compared to 84,538 and 91,001 enrolments in government, local authority and unaided primary schools in 1956 and 1957, respectively (Ministry of Education Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, p. 13). Of this population, girls accounted for only 24.3 percent of total enrolments in 1956 and 24.9 percent in 1957 (Ministry of Education Northern Region of Nigeria, 1959, p. 13).

Table 16 Northern Region Primary School Enrolments by School Type and Gender, 1956

	SCHOOLS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	5	365	301	666
LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS	810	50,210	14,017	64,227
AIDED SCHOOLS NOT INCLUDED ABOVE	771	74,311	26,645	100,956
UNAIDED SCHOOLS	345	15,553	4,092	19,645

TOTAL	1,931	140,439	45,055	185,494
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Source: Ministry of Education Northern Region of Nigeria (1959, p. 13)

*Total enrolments in the final column differ from those found in the Northern Region Ministry of Education Report, which showed total enrolments for unaided schools as 19,635, total enrolments as 185,484, and total male enrolments as 140,429.

Table 17 Northern Region Primary School Enrolments by School Type and Gender, 1957

	SCHOOLS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	5	173	178	351
LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOLS	850	55,459	15,719	71,178
AIDED SCHOOLS NOT INCLUDED ABOVE	787	83,282	31,486	114,768
UNAIDED SCHOOLS	369	15,582	3,890	19,472
TOTAL	2,011	154,496	51,273	205,769

Source: Ministry of Education Northern Region of Nigeria (1959, p. 13)

Table 18 below shows significant differences in enrolment patterns across the Northern region in 1960. Kaduna, which had a large Christian population in the southern part of the region had the highest percentage of primary school-aged children enrolled in school in 1960, at 56.95 percent (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018; Oldman, 1961, p. 176). In contrast, Kano had only 3.82 percent of its school-aged population enrolled in primary school, with similar figures for Katsina and Sokoto – the strongholds of the emirate (Oldman, 1961, p. 176).

Table 18 Population of Northern Nigeria, Taxpayers and Primary School Enrolments by District, 1960

DISTRICT	1960 POPULATION	NUMBER IN PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE GROUP	NUMBER IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS	% OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE GROUP IN SCHOOL
ADAMAWA	905,661	129,380	12,435	9.61
BAUCHI	1,668,908	238,415	16,951	7.11
BENUE	1,720,968	245,853	51,403	20.91
BORNU	1,559,353	222,765	11,332	5.09
TRUST TERRITORY	805,281	115,040	5,155	4.48

ILORIN	622,007	88,858	29,954	33.71
KABBA	778,251	111,179	38,024	34.20
KADUNA CT	73,346	10,478	5,967	56.95
KANO	3,982,099	568,871	21,712	3.82
KATSINA	1,738,643	248,378	8,615	3.47
NIGER	849,051	119,864	13,830	11.54
PLATEAU	970,022	138,575	29,600	21.36
SOKOTO	3,141,613	448,802	11,338	2.53
ZARIA	1,020,735	145,819	26,541	18.20

Source: Oldman (1961, p. 176)

The figures highlight the challenges faced by the government of the Northern Region in expanding access to education in the lead-up to independence. The limited number of people accessing and completing school in the Northern region led to a shortage of qualified personnel for civil service positions, including teaching roles (Vaughan, 2016). As a result, the colonial administration began employing "Western-educated Christian Southerners" to meet the demand for skilled personnel in the Northern civil service (Vaughan, 2016, p. 90). The employment of "southerners" in the Northern regional civil service increased tensions, already high, between political leaders in the Northern region and southern regions. Northern leaders feared that independence would lead to domination by southern Christian politicians "more versed in western ways" (Lynn, 2006, p. 253). The primary education SoP continued to reproduce these inequalities throughout the 1950s.

Financing the Primary Education SoP, 1950s

From 1954 onwards, the responsibility for the costs of running the primary education SoP shifted to regional governments (Callaway and Musone, 1968). According to Callaway and Musone (1968), regional governments had to meet their financial obligations (primarily grants-in-aid allocations) towards the education system using their internal sources of financing. However, the limited nature of taxation systems within the regions led to low internal revenue and a dependence on centrally allocated funds (Callaway and Musone, 1968).

Table 19, from Callaway and Musone (1968), provides insight into the allocation of recurrent expenditure to education in the Eastern, Western, and Northern regions from 1955. It shows that the Eastern and Western regions allocated a high percentage of their recurrent expenditure to education. In the Western Region, 40.7 percent of recurrent expenditure was dedicated to education, while in the Eastern Region, it was 37.6 percent. In contrast, the Northern region allocated a much smaller percentage of recurrent expenditure to education, with only 20.1 percent in 1955. This figure was half of that allocated by the Western region, reflecting the comparatively

smaller education system in the Northern region despite having a larger population of primary school-aged children.

Table 19 Education as a Percentage of Government Expenditure in the Regional Accounts and the Consolidated Report for the Federation during the period 1955-60

REGION	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
	Recurrent expenditure					
NORTHERN	20.1	25.4	24.0	24.5	24.4	23.0
EASTERN	37.6	42.5	49.0	43.4	45.2	44.9
WESTERN	40.7	36.5	42.8	41.3	40.8	43.9
FEDERATION (LAGOS)	16.4	18.7	22.0	21.2	21.4	22.6
	Capital expenditure					
NORTHERN	21.1	10.0	12.5	11.7	13.6	22.2
EASTERN	6.6	40.9	10.9	5.7	4.6	6.9
WESTERN	34.2	40.9	41.9	17.1	9.7	10.1
FEDERATION (LAGOS)	12.1	13.5	11.7	10.2	5.5	5.8
	Recurrent and capital expenditure					
NORTHERN	20.5	19.5	19.5	19.7	20.7	23.9
EASTERN	28.4	42.3	43.0	34.0	34.8	36.7
WESTERN	38.7	37.5	42.6	33.7	28.1	30.5
FEDERATION (LAGOS)	18.7	17.3	18.7	17.0	15.2	16.1

Source: Callaway and Musone (1968, p. 24)

In the next decade, the struggle over resources among regional political formations intensified. By 1958, oil was being commercially exported and constituted 58 percent of total exports (Itaman and Awopegba, 2021). Uche (2008) argues that this marked "a turning point in the history of Nigeria and marked the beginning of the dilution of the powers of the regions to the benefit of the national government" (Uche, 2008, p. 116). The colonial government granted Shell-BP priority to "choose 46 oil mining leases in the most promising areas, which gave the company a virtual monopoly over Nigeria's oil exploration and production in the decades to come" (Frynas, Beck and Mellahi, 2000, p. 412). Contestations over this resource would eventually contribute to conflict and the fragmentation of the primary education SoP in the 1960s (explored in Chapter 7).

Cultures and Processes Shaping the Primary Education SoP: Regional and Ethnic Nationalism, 1950s

The NCNC and the Catholic Church

The relationship between the church and state became increasingly strained under (ethnic) national political parties as political leaders gained more control over education, particularly in the Eastern region. The Dike Report, commissioned by the Eastern regional government and led by Dr K Dike in 1958 and published in 1962, examined the region's educational structure and highlighted the varying responses of Christian denominations to the growing role of the regional government in education (Dike, 1962). The RCM used the language of religious freedom and parental choice to resist the change to the regulations that restricted the expansion of VA schools (Abernethy, 1966). These regulations allowed District Councils to place the children of Roman Catholic parents in the new District Council schools if there were no space in existing RCM schools (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 12). For instance, a newspaper report in the *Chicago Defender* (1956) noted that the UPE programme "[met] stiff opposition from Roman Catholics who have denounced it as a 'godless monopoly of education.'" The report also mentioned that public protests against the scheme were staged in some areas (The *Chicago Defender*, 1956). The Catholic Bishops of the Eastern region issued a statement published in *The Leader* (Owerri) in June 1956, as quoted in Abernethy (1966, pp. 31–32), which emphasised religious freedoms and parental choice:

This right is entirely fundamental. Children belong to their parents by natural law, and the parents are responsible before God for their proper upbringing and education. They cannot fulfil this responsibility unless they are free to choose the agency (or Mission) to which they give their children. Freedom to choose a school for one's children is an essential freedom. It should be removed from Government.

The Catholic Church "hierarchy", as Fafunwa (2018, p. 161) notes, was dominated by Europeans in this period, and "[t]here were less than three Nigerian Catholic bishops in Nigeria." The policy was eventually amended, allowing churches to remove some children of their denomination from LA and District Council schools and place them in their schools, after which approximately 100 LA schools were closed (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 10).

The power of the Catholic Church in the primary education SoP in the Eastern region is evident in the shift in language used by Nnamdi Azikiwe in official speeches before and after the introduction of UPE. In a Presidential address to the Sixth Annual Convention of the NCNC in January 1954, Azikiwe criticised the existing grants-in-aid system and expressed a desire to overhaul it (Azikiwe, 1961a, pp. 26–27):

We are not happy at the way our education is administered. Whilst we realise the great contribution made by those who have operated this important department of State in the past, yet we have decided to take positive measures towards working out a new educational programme in the future. The idea of 'approving', 'recognising', 'assisting', and 'aiding' certain schools to the exclusion of others must have been well-conceived but it has outlived its usefulness [...] we shall abolish all forms of discrimination [...] and we shall establish a State system of certification for the elementary and secondary schools of the Region [...].

This speech reflects the NCNC's intention to assert greater regulatory control and state intervention in the primary education SoP. However, by March 1957, Azikiwe appeared to soften his stance in an address broadcast on the national programme of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service at Lagos, Enugu, Ibadan and Kaduna about the Eastern regional general elections. In this speech, he emphasised instead the need to work with the Catholic Church stating (Azikiwe, 1961b, pp. 35–38):

It is true that the working of the Universal Primary Education Scheme has presented some embarrassment to the Government, as a result of the activities of the Catholic Council, but it is equally true that that wise statesmanship on the part of His Grace Archbishop Heerey and some spokesmen of our government averted a misunderstanding which could have developed out of proportion [...] the Government of the Eastern Regions has made it clear in unmistakable terms that although it intends to introduce a State system of education yet this must be realized on a cooperative basis with the Missionaries and other voluntary agencies. To this end we have guaranteed religious freedom in respecting the fundamental right of parents to choose schools which their children should attend, from a purely religious point of view.

This speech highlights the political influence of the Catholic Church and the NCNC's ultimate concession to the church's demands regarding school expansion, maintaining the grants-in-aid system with limited changes.

The missions did not hold the same position on the state's role in the primary education SoP in the Eastern region. The Dike Report noted that the approach of both the Methodists and the CSM was to "disengage" from primary schooling whilst retaining a few secondary schools, but with greater attention to training colleges (Dike, 1962, p. 43). A memorandum from an Anglican Diocese Education Secretary stated that there were too many schools in some areas but not a large enough population, so they should be amalgamated under a neutral body like a Local Council or a Committee of staff from all denominations "since it is only by so doing that secret proselytization in the school can be stopped" (Dike, 1962, p. 43). These positions reflected a closer relationship between these missions and the colonial government, as well as a larger percentage of Nigerians in church leadership roles compared to the Catholic Church (Fafunwa, 2018). Additionally, many NCNC

leaders, including Azikiwe, had stronger ties to the Anglican Church than to Catholic traditions (Abernethy, 1966; Chiamaka Nwaka, 2013).

Whilst the NCNC conceded to the RCM on school ownership, it reintroduced primary school fees despite widespread public opposition. This led to large protests, particularly by women, in early 1958 in cities such as Aba and Port Harcourt (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 11).²⁵ The 1960 Education Department Report also acknowledged that the policy reversal was met with "dismay" by the public, resulting in unrest and instability during the first quarter of 1958 (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 11). The resistance to the reintroduction of fees highlights the importance of the UPE programme in the region alongside women's resistance efforts, in a context where this form of protest had a long history (e.g., Women's War of the 1920s).

The Western Region and Religious Formations

In the Western region, contestations in the primary education SoP arose around the syllabus in Islamic and Christian-run schools. In 1956, a decision was made to stop the teaching of Arabic in primary schools due to the lack of trained teachers and the perceived challenges young children faced in learning multiple languages (Western Region of Nigeria, 1959). However, by 1958, a sub-committee was formed to develop a syllabus for primary schools that allocated 2.5 hours per week for Islamic religious instruction in primary schools (Western Region of Nigeria, 1959, p. 32). Some Islamic leaders and groups also felt that government funding was unfairly skewed toward Christian mission schools. Alhaji Y P O Sodeinde, "an erudite Muslim scholar and [...] community leader" in Lagos (Danmole, 1990, p. 336), voiced these concerns in the *Daily Service* newspaper, stating that, "[t]he whole [education] grants have been, as it were, consecrated for Christianity" (Y. P. O. Shodeinde in the *Daily Service* on March 15, 1952, quoted in Abernethy, 1966, p. 23). This statement reflects the dominance of Christian missions in the primary education SoP, financially supported by the colonial government and regional government, despite the large Muslim population in the Western region and Lagos—around 33 percent according to the 1952 census (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 119).

These examples from the Western and Eastern regions illustrate how deeply religion influenced the primary education SoP during this period. In the Eastern Region, the RCM's stance exemplified the power religious missions held in the primary education SoP and the tensions surrounding religion,

²⁵ *Daily Times*, Lagos February 14, 1958 (CO 554/1858: Policy on education in Eastern Region of Nigeria (1957-1959) /98/352/01)

nationalism, and education. The RCM fought to retain control over its schools and the right to continue expanding, despite being financially dependent on the state.

In the Western Region, with its significant Muslim population, Islamic agencies contended with the ongoing dominance of Christian missions in the primary education SoP, even under the AG government. This reflects the broader struggle between religious communities and political authorities over control and influence in education in this period.

Gender and the Primary Education SoP, 1945-1950s

Gender structured the primary education SoP at various levels, with girls and boys receiving different types of education. In the Eastern region, girls' education remained closely tied to domestic and reproductive roles within society (see Chapter 5). The RCM established a Domestic Subject Education Training Centre in 1956 in the Eastern Region to train more teachers in domestic subjects (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 13). Further, girls' schools were a feature of the primary education SoP. By 1956, there were 300 girls' primary schools, including 16 newly built that year (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 12). Despite government plans to phase out these schools, 23 new girls' schools were opened in 1957 (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 12). These schools reinforced gender roles, focusing on teaching "manners and general behaviour" (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 12). While the education department viewed girls' schools as necessary to gain parental trust in the education system and encourage them to send their daughters to school (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 12), their emphasis on domestic skills and manners perpetuated a gendered societal structure.

Gendered enrolment patterns also varied by school management structure. In the new District Council or LA schools, girls comprised 42 percent of enrolments, compared with 24 percent in aided or VA schools (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 27). In 1956, 244,557 girls were enrolled in primary schools in the Eastern Region (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957, p. 12); by 1957, the number had increased to 417,071 (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958). However, in the same year, 792,096 boys were enrolled (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958, p. 27), indicating that boys' education was prioritised over girls'. Further, when fees were reintroduced in the Eastern region in 1958, there was a decrease in the number of girls attending school. The Annual Report of the Eastern Regional Education Department highlighted this issue, noting, "The unexpected reimposition of school fees bore particularly hard on girls, as boys' school fees are normally a prior consideration when there is not enough money to go round" (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960, p. 14). Chapter 5 discussed prioritising boys' education over girls in mission schools and Christian teachings. These figures show that the same structure continued into the 1950s in the Eastern Region.

These processes within the primary education SoP reinforced gendered social relations. In Lagos, the 1958 Annual Report of the Federal Education Department provides some insight into the gendered structure of the household. The report notes, "Much of Lagos Island is overcrowded, and the home conditions of children are not good. The mother is, in most cases, required by the husband to pay any school expenses" (Federation of Nigeria, 1959b, p. 19). This extract highlights the conditions of poverty in which many children lived in this period and the gendered nature of educational responsibilities. In resource-constrained households, women were often expected to bear the financial burden of ensuring their children's education. As discussed above, women in the Eastern region protested the reintroduction of fees, highlighting that the responsibility for ensuring children's school attendance often fell on women.

Expanding the primary education SoP alone did not alter these gendered power relations and structures. The gendered dynamics in the Eastern Region and Lagos demonstrate that women were primarily responsible for ensuring their children attended school. However, across all regions, boys' education was consistently valued more highly than girls'. These gendered structures were also evident in the political sphere, where middle-class men dominated all the major political parties and the civil service, holding the main decision-making powers.

Conclusion, 1945-1950s

The chapter has demonstrated that the configuration of the primary education SoP in the 1940s and 1950s was heavily reliant on Christian missions despite only 21 percent of the total population being identified as Christian in the 1952 census (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018). This resulted in extremely uneven enrolment and access rates along gender, ethnic, religious, and regional lines, with Christian Igbo and Yoruba boys living in the Eastern and Western regions most likely to attend primary school (Appendix 11). The analysis reveals that the main non-state agencies, such as the RCM and CMS, played a key role in shaping education in these regions, with Islamic organisations and NAs playing a larger role in the Northern region but with much more limited government funding and support.

The focus on the Eastern, Western, and Northern regions in this analysis highlights the stark contrasts in how education was provided and accessed across Nigeria. Each region's unique socio-political and religious context offers insight into how the role of non-state agents in the primary education SoP varied. In the Eastern region, the tension between the Catholic Church and the NCNC reflects the complex interplay between religion and politics in education (Dike, 1962), while in the Western region and Lagos, the dominance of Christian missions and the marginalisation of Islamic education reveal the uneven distribution of resources and influence (Abernethy, 1966). The

Northern region's limited access to formal education further illustrates the unequal allocation of educational resources across Nigeria, particularly in a system that favoured Christian mission schools over Islamic education in this predominantly Muslim region.

Ideas about public, non-state and private provision of primary education were not sharply differentiated. Although notions of welfarism circulated, the patchwork of agencies providing education was not a contested issue for either nationalist political parties or the colonial government, particularly in the Western region and Lagos. In the Eastern region, however, the NCNC challenged the role of the church in the primary education SoP. Nationalist political leaders advocated for greater control over education, which the Catholic missions resisted (Abernethy, 1966). Despite this tension, the primary focus across regions remained on expanding access to primary education through any available means, with regional governments particularly in the Eastern and Western regions, primarily shouldering the financial burden of this expansion. In the Northern region, the government allocated a much smaller percentage of recurrent expenditure to education compared to the Western and Eastern regions—approximately half of what was allocated by the Western region, despite its larger population and higher number of primary school-aged children.

These changes occurred against the backdrop of shifting political and economic configurations, including regional government contestations over political and economic power. These were shaped by constitutional structures that devolved greater power to nationalist political parties (Ezera, 1960; Sklar, 1963). In the Northern region, there were concerns that when the British left, the Eastern or Western regional powers would step into their role. This fear was heightened by the configuration of the primary education SoP, which meant children in the Northern region had much more limited access to formal education. Consequently, positions in the civil service, which required formal education, were filled by individuals from the southern regions, as Islamic education in the Northern region did not provide the qualifications needed for civil service entry (Vaughan, 2016).

Gender shaped the primary education SoP across all regions. Boys generally had higher access rates than girls, reflecting broader societal norms that prioritised boys' education (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960). Christian teachings, particularly in the southern regions, reinforced gender roles, with girls' education often focusing on domestic skills. The establishment of girls' schools in the Eastern region, while increasing access, also perpetuated these gendered roles (Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1957). The reintroduction of school fees in 1958 further exacerbated gender disparities, as families prioritised boys' education over girls', leading to a decline in girls' enrolment (Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1960). These patterns mirrored the

nationalist political parties and civil service, dominated by men from the largest ethnic groups, where decisions about education policy were primarily made.

The primary education SoP in this period was highly fragmented and stratified—according to region and religion. There was minimal engagement with processes of redistribution aimed at improving access and resources or making the education system more equitable within and between regions. The patchwork of non-state providers, including Christian missions and some Islamic organisations, contributed to this fragmentation. Education policies were often siloed, focusing on regional rather than national priorities, which reinforced existing inequalities (Abernethy, 1966). This regionalism, coupled with entrenched gender norms, further constrained the potential for developing more inclusive and equitable education policies (Fafunwa, 2018; Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1960). Consequently, the education system remained uneven, with significant disparities in access and resources across different regions, religions and genders.

Chapter 7. The Primary Education SoP, 1960-1970s: Restraining Non-state Agents and Agencies in a Period of Militarism and Nation-Building

The primary education SoP of the newly independent Nigeria in the early 1960s was shaped by a culture of optimism. Regional governments largely retained financial responsibility for primary education through the grants-in-aid system. The ethnic-regional formations that had characterised politics in the 1950s continued to shape the primary education SoP. There was no uniform approach to primary schooling at the national level, and each region vied for political and economic power. These tensions eventually fractured the primary education SoP in the Eastern region when the regional government attempted secession by establishing the State of Biafra in 1967, and the Federal Government of Nigeria launched a military offensive in response. By the war's end, when the Biafra was defeated, Nigeria no longer comprised three regional blocs but smaller states under a centralised federal government.

Post-war, relations between federal and state military governments and the church shifted significantly. These changes were particularly evident in the former Eastern region, where the Catholic Church was perceived to have supported Biafra and where all schools were nationalised at the end of the war in late 1970. Although the primary education SoP took different forms across Nigeria, the federal government assumed a more prominent role, and the influence of missionary agencies was diminished. Nation-building and the goal of maintaining a unified Nigeria included establishing a national education system with minimal involvement from non-state agencies, including missionary agencies. By the end of the 1970s, the ownership structure of primary schools had transitioned from predominantly Christian missionary agencies to predominantly government control in all regions.

In this chapter, the war between 1967 and 1970 is referred to as the Biafran War rather than the Civil War. This terminology emphasises that Biafra was an "independent entity between 1967 and 1970 by that fact that it had its institutions of governance [...] and was officially recognised by other African countries" (Onuoha, 2016 p. 11). A second clarification is around the World Bank: as Toussaint (2023) shows, the World Bank includes the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA) (established in 1960). The World Bank Group covers the IBRD, IDA, and other agencies, such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) (established in 1956 to finance the private sector) (Toussaint, 2023). In this chapter, the World Bank refers to the IBRD and IDA unless otherwise specified.

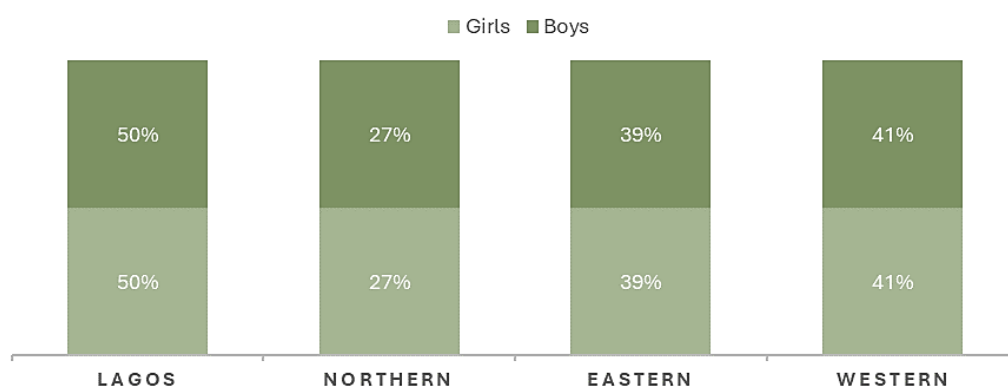
Agents and Access to Primary Education: Primary School Enrolments, 1960s

In the 1960s, the majority of children enrolled in primary schools in Nigeria attended VA-aided schools across the Mid-West (which was created from the Western region in 1963), Western, Eastern regions, and Lagos, as detailed in Appendix 12 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1968). This appendix highlights that the diverse array of non-state providers from the colonial era persisted into the 1960s.

In 1962, the percentage of primary school enrolments by region (calculated as the number of primary school-aged children estimated to be 2.5 percent of the total population for every year of schooling) was as follows: seven percent in the Northern region, with the largest share of the population; 74 percent in Lagos; and 68 and 58 percent in the Eastern and Western regions, respectively (World Bank, 1964a, p. 6). In Kano City and its suburbs, the administration introduced UPE in 1960 for the first four years of primary school (Bray, 1981). Within a year, the number of NA schools increased from nine to 34, and enrolments rose from 1,760 to 3,600 (Bray, 1981, p. 46). Despite this increase, by 1963, just five percent of primary school-aged children in Kano City were enrolled in primary schools (Bray, 1981, p. 48). Bray (1981) also notes that many of these pupils came from families originally from the Southern regions rather than being "indigenous" to Kano.

Gender inequality was also a feature of the primary education SoP, another hangover from the colonial period. Inequality in enrolment, in favour of boys, was apparent across all regions other than Lagos, as shown in Figure 7. In the Eastern and Western regions, boys comprised around 60 percent of enrolments, whereas in the Northern region, this figure was around 73 percent (World Bank, 1964a, p. 6).

Figure 7 Percentage of Enrolments by Gender and Region, 1962



Source: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development International Development Association (IBRD-IDA) (1964a, p. 6)

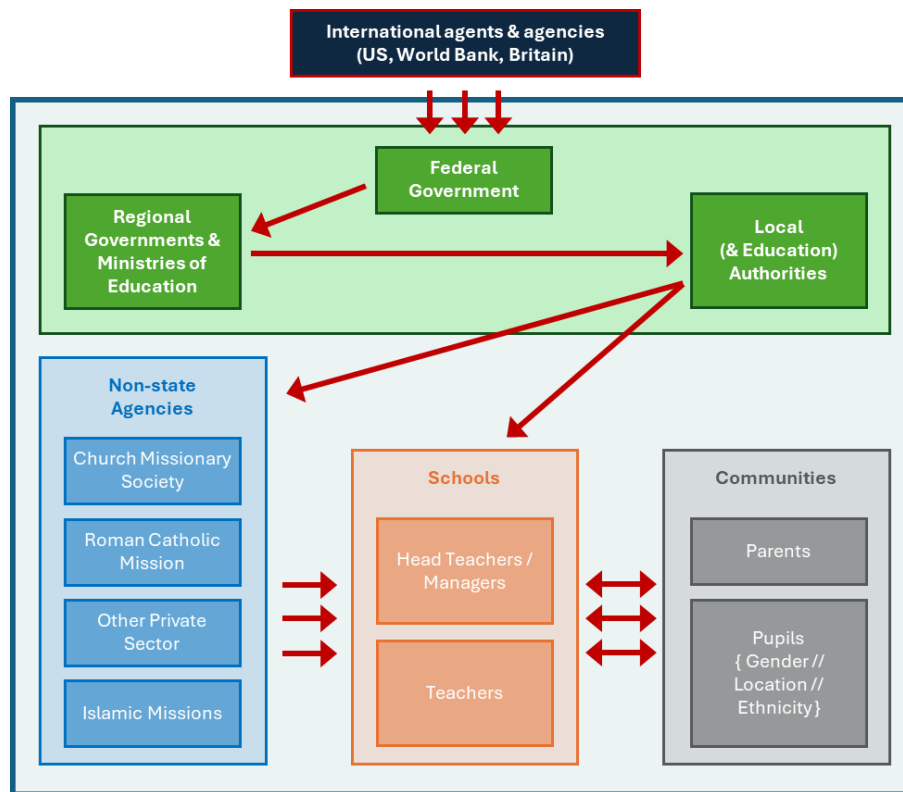
Regional-ethnic, gender and religious inequalities continued to shape enrolments in the primary education SoP (Appendix 12). Despite the introduction of UPE programmes, a large percentage of the primary school-aged population remained out of school in the 1960s.

New Agents and Agencies Entering the Primary Education SoP: Relations Between International Agencies, Regional Governments and Non-state Agencies, 1960s

Ideas about modernity and development, originating in the US, were a feature of the primary education SoP in the 1960s. As Britain's influence in Nigeria and across Africa shifted from direct colonial rule to softer forms of power, the US began to play a more prominent role in the political, economic, and social processes of newly independent African nations, set against the backdrop of Cold War rivalries between the US, Western Europe, and the Soviet Union (Grant, 1979). Under the Kennedy Administration in the US, aid was used "a vehicle for American idealism and a means to challenge the Soviet Union" (Grant, 1979, p. 4). The narratives underpinning US foreign policy were heavily influenced by W.W. Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. This theory offered an alternative path to development compared to Communism, positing that every society must progress through several stages of development within the capitalist economic system (Moeller, 2018, p. 65). Parmar (2012, p. 150) argues that in the US, "experts" on Africa viewed the continent "as a laboratory for theories of development and modernisation, much as missionaries had seen it as a source of converts to the truths of Christianity". These ideas on modernity and development began to shape the primary education SoP in the 1960s.

Figure 8 illustrates the key agents in the primary education SoP in the early 1960s. The figure resembles the primary education SoP of the 1950s but include US-dominated development agencies, which had replaced the British colonial office. These agencies are shown as external to the primary education SoP in this period, reflecting their role in influencing policy decisions with some financial support through various education programmes and projects. However, financial flows to primary education from international agencies were limited in this period, with greater emphasis placed on higher education, as discussed below. During this period, engagement in the primary education SoP by non-state and private sector agents was predominantly through Christian missions (such as the RCM and CMS), as illustrated in Figure 8. Therefore, these are categorised as non-state engagements.

Figure 8 Agents and Relations in the Primary Education SoP, 1960s



An example of how these relationships influenced Nigeria's development policies, including the primary education SoP, is evident in the framing and development of Nigeria's First Development Plan (1962-1968), heavily influenced by US economists and "development experts" (Parmar, 2012). The MIT-trained economist, Wolfgang Stolper, played a key role in the Plan after receiving funding from the Ford Foundation to head the Economic Planning Unit of Nigeria's Ministry of Economic Development (Parmar, 2012).²⁶ Before the plan had been approved by the federal and regional governments in Nigeria, the US government "pledged assistance to the order magnitude of \$225 million" (Rivkin, 1962, p. 321). Writing at the time, Arnold Rivkin, who was then the World Bank Special Adviser on African Affairs, noted this was the "largest single economic aid commitment made to date by the United States to a country in Africa south of the Sahara" (Rivkin, 1962, p. 321).

The First Development Plan emphasised the importance of all levels of education for an independent Nigeria, both for democratic stability and economic progress (The Federal Ministry of Economic Development, no date, pp. 22–23). The expansion of primary and secondary education was viewed as serving a dual purpose: ensuring an informed electorate essential for democracy and "providing a pool of school-leavers from which, subject to further training, the future managers, foremen, administrators and technicians are drawn." (The Federal Ministry of Economic Development, no

²⁶ According to Parmar (2012, p. 174), Stolper was "candid" about how little he knew about Nigeria, "[c]elebrating his ignorance of Africa and Nigeria, he authored the book *Planning Without Facts*".

date, pp. 22–23). Education was one of three key priority areas, alongside industry and agriculture, with greater emphasis on higher and technical education linked to the labour market, reflecting the focus on agricultural development and industrialisation in the development paradigm (The Federal Ministry of Economic Development, no date).

The linking of the primary education SoP and capitalist economic development can be found in concerns around the (in)ability of the economy to absorb the new class of Nigerians educated to primary school level (and above) and increasing rates of rural-urban migration (Stolper, 1966). In his analysis of Nigeria's First Development Plan, Rivkin (1962, p. 324) observed that Nigeria was "determined to educate its people to better their standard of living, as well as to increase their contribution to the development of its economy" while also noting that:

[Nigeria] needs an expanding economy not only to maintain this level of expenditure on education but to absorb the school-leavers being produced. Nigeria is increasingly being confronted by a growing problem of unemployment among young primary school leavers.

Similarly, the Western Regional Development Plan 1962-68 expressed concern that the success of UPE had led to "a growing number of primary school leavers for whom employment has to be found" (The Federal Ministry of Economic Development, no date, p. 273).

During this period, the economic structure of Nigeria was predominantly agricultural, with most of the population engaged in agricultural activities and living in rural areas (Berry, 1984). In 1973/74, around 70 percent of the labour force was employed in agriculture (World Bank, 1975, p. 1). Revenue for financing the primary education SoP in the 1960s largely came from agricultural production, which constituted about half of GDP in the early 1960s (World Bank, 1964a, p. 2).

In the 1960s, oil began to gain greater importance in the economy as the Nigerian oil industry expanded rapidly. This included the opening of new oil fields throughout the Eastern region, the expansion of pipelines, the establishment of new export terminals, and the discovery of offshore oil (Watts, 2011, p. 52). By 1965, eight new "foreign oil companies were engaged in oil exploration in Nigeria" (Frynas, Beck and Mellahi, 2000, p. 410). These companies, granted licenses by both the colonial and postcolonial governments to explore, search, drill, and produce oil, depending on the license, with the oil mining lease being "the most important license" offering "the exclusive privilege to produce oil in a specific area for 30 years and 40 years in the Niger Delta" (Frynas, Beck and Mellah, 2000, p. 410). Just before independence, Shell-BP was given priority to "choose 46 oil mining leases in the most promising areas, which gave the company a virtual monopoly over Nigeria's oil exploration and production in the decades to come" (Frynas, Beck and Mellahi, 2000, p. 412). Mobil,

Chevron, and Amoseas, alongside Shell-BP, were subsequently awarded offshore licenses (Frynas, Beck and Mellahi, 2000).

A study by Berry (1984, p. 5) on the effects of the oil boom in the 1970s on cocoa farmers in the South West found that these farmers "were worse off" at the end of the 1970s compared to 1969, despite the price of cocoa increasing throughout the decade. State involvement in agriculture decreased throughout the same period because, as Berry (1984, p. 5) shows, the reliance on revenues from oil "removed the need for state exploitation of the cocoa farmers", which had begun during the colonial period. Farmers in the South West sought new opportunities, such as trade or services, and sent their children for apprenticeships when they could not afford post-primary schooling (Berry, 1984).

The role of non-state agencies, notably Christian missions, was not a significant area of contestation in the primary education SoP during this period.

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1960s

At independence, Nigeria's "legislative power was vested in an elected Parliament" consisting of two chambers (Diamond, 1988, p. 83). The lower chamber, known as the House of Representatives, was responsible for electing the Prime Minister and for legislation and finances of the federation. The upper chamber, the Senate, was limited to delaying ordinary legislation (Diamond, 1988). The Prime Minister, who headed a Council of Ministers, was responsible for the executive functions of the government (Diamond, 1988). Judicial power was "vested in an independent court system, including a Federal Supreme Court" (Diamond, 1988, p. 84). Under this parliamentary system, Richard Osuolale Akinjide became the first Minister of State for Education (covering the whole of Nigeria) (Adeyemi, 2020). However, each region had its own Minister of Education.

In 1963, Nigeria adopted a new constitution and became a republic. The regional structure continued with three regions until 1963, when it expanded to four with the creation of the Mid-West region. This change was approved by the Federal House of Representatives in March 1962 and confirmed by a referendum in July 1963, which was supported by 90 percent of registered voters in the Mid-West (Diamond, 1988; Uche, 2008). The 1963 Constitution established exclusive, concurrent, and residual lists (Elaigwu, 1988).²⁷ Primary education, along with (but not limited to)

²⁷ The exclusive list included powers given to the federal government, whereas the concurrent list included powers shared between the federal and regional governments, and the residual list included regional powers (Elaigwu, 1988, p. 178).

health and public works, was placed on the residual list, granting regional governments autonomy over primary education throughout the first half of the 1960s (Elaigwu, 1988). Each region had a different period of primary schooling: eight years in Lagos, seven years in the Northern region, and six years in the other regions.

Regional governments could also pass legislation for primary education. For example, the 1962 Education Law in Northern Nigeria separated primary education administration from the supervision of primary schools (Kolawole and Pakata, 1977, p. III).²⁸ This legal change resulted in the division of responsibilities previously held by the Provincial Education Officer into two posts: Provincial Inspectors of Education, who were responsible for inspections and "professional matters," and Provincial Education Secretaries, who handled the "administration of schools" (Kolawole and Pakata, 1977, p. III). LEAs, as discussed in Chapter 6, were also introduced in the Northern region, with Kano having four LEAs: Kano, Hadeiia, Gumel and Kazaure (Bray, 1981, p. 48).

In the early 1960s, the relationship between the federal, regional, and local governments and non-state agencies, primarily Christian missions, largely continued in the same form as in the 1950s, as discussed in the section on regional structures and financing.

Regional Political and Economic Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies, 1960s

Throughout Nigeria in the 1960s, the system of grants-in-aid continued, with the relationship between the state and the non-state agencies in education characterised primarily by substantial public funding directed towards non-state providers. Recurrent expenditure on education, as a percentage of total recurrent expenditure, varied by region, with the highest spending in the Eastern and Western regions, as shown in Table 20. A 1964 World Bank appraisal of its Education Project, which included an overview of the education system, reports that recurrent expenditure accounted for "6% of the total recurrent expenditures in Lagos, 25% in the North, and over 40% in the East and West" (World Bank, 1964b, p. 16). Additional funding came from "local governments, Voluntary Agencies, and school fees" (World Bank, 1964b, p. 16). However, the specific breakdown of these additional funding sources by agency and region was not provided.

²⁸ Appendix I Extracted from Constraints to Curriculum Development in Kwara State Nigeria (Pakata, 1977 in Kolawole and Pakata, 1977).

Table 20 Federal and Regional Government Recurrent Expenditure on Primary Education, 1959/60-1963/64

	1959/60		1960/61		1961/62		1962/63		1963/64*	
	£ (thousands)	% of total	£ (thousands)	% of total	£ (thousands)	% of total	£ (thousands)	% of total	£ (thousands)	% of total
Federal recurrent spending on primary education	347.0	13	514.6	17.5	452.9	13.6	479.2	12.6	570.0	12.4
Total Federal Recurrent expenditure	40,280		45,898		53,343		60,151		69,501	
Grant-in-Aid % of total education	500	18.3	680.6	23.2	712.9	21.3	754.6	19.3	905.4	19.7
Northern recurrent spending on primary education	1,338	40.6	1,603	40.0	1,729	34.2	1,833	30.7	2,279	32.4
Total Northern Recurrent expenditure	16,959		19,350		20,946		23,814		26,004	
Grant-in-Aid % of total education	1,808	19.4	2,395	58	2,719	54	2,371	48	3,735	53
Western recurrent spending on primary education	4,883	66.4	6,204.9	71.4	6,144.0	69.9	5,943.9	65.1	6,000.0	63.2
Total Western Recurrent expenditure	17,287		20,852		20,111		20,476		21,376	
Grant-in-Aid % of total education	5,897.7	80	7,478.7	86	7,565.7	86	7,849.5	86	8,083.0	85

Eastern recurrent spending on primary education	4,116	74.0	4,860.0	72.4	4,636.7	66.8	4,008.3	59.8	4,068.5	57.4
Total Eastern Recurrent expenditure	12,840		15,099		16,801		17,679		20,285	
Grant-in-Aid % of total education	5,012	90	5,912	88	5,920	85	5,313	79	5,487	77

*Estimates for 1963/64

Source: IBRD-IDA (1964a Annex IX)

In the Eastern Region, over 40 percent of total recurrent expenditures were allocated to education (World Bank, 1964b, p. 16). The Ministry of Education Annual Report for 1963 in the Eastern Region shows that grants to non-state VA Primary Schools remained the largest expenditure item in the primary school budget for 1963 (£3,998,800), compared to £40,900 allocated to government primary schools and £50,300 for the government supervision of all primary schools (Eastern Group of Provinces of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1966, p. 9). In the local government budget for 1963, primary education was the highest line item, receiving £676,800 out of a total of £1,334,575 (Eastern Group of Provinces of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1966, p. 11). However, the grants-in-aid system was increasingly viewed as inefficient, raising concerns about the cost of primary education across all regions (Dike, 1962; World Bank, 1964b, p. 16).

In the Northern Region, from 1964, approved *Qur'ānic* and *Islamiyah* schools began to receive direct financial support from the regional government. For *Qur'ānic* schools, this support included a single grant of £150 for infrastructure development and an annual recurrent grant of £25 (Bray, 1981, p. 60). *Islamiyah* schools received a grant of £150 per classroom building, as well as provisions for teachers and a payment of N6 per child for every trained teacher (Bray, 1981, p. 62). Fees continued to be charged in integrated *Islamiyah* schools that received this support (Bray, 1981). However, Bray (1981) argues that the owners of these schools, including religious organisations (e.g., the Nur-ud-Deen Society and the Young Muslims' Congress of Nigeria), wealthy individuals, and communities, operated these schools for "religious reasons rather than for financial gain" (Bray, 1981, p. 62). Fees were generally only enough to cover costs, and government grants were minimal (Bray, 1981).

As noted in Chapter 6, many school-aged children attended some form of Islamic school in the Northern Region during this period. Ahmadu Bello, the Northern Premier, supported the integration of Islamic schools into the formal education system and commissioned several reports on these schools. He also established a committee to investigate "government assistance to schools" (Thurston, 2018a, pp. 128–129). Additionally, Bello's position as the Deputy President of the Muslim World League was an important factor in sending a "team to Libya, Sudan, and the United Arab Republic to study educational practices" (Thurston, 2018a, p. 129). The report from this team recommended introducing a more standardised approach to Islamic schooling, including organising classes by age and year of entry, alongside integrating arithmetic, reading and writing with *Qur'ānic* studies (Bray, 1981).

Contestations in the Primary Education SoP around the Role of Non-state Agents and Agencies, 1960s

Concerns about financing the primary education SoP were found in a 1964 World Bank report, focusing on efficiencies and costs and encompassing the role of the non-state agencies in the system. The report questioned "how much" primary education Nigeria could afford and the extent to which regional governments could bear the financial burden of primary education (World Bank, 1964a, p. 17). It argued for measures to cut cost, including increasing class sizes, shortening the duration of schooling, and merging "non-viable" schools run by VAs (World Bank, 1964b, p. 17). The report noted that competition among different missions for students led to inefficiencies in the system, such as small enrolments in schools, location selection, and administration issues (World Bank, 1964a, p. 18). It concluded that it was difficult to determine exact expenditures and "that grants-in-aid are often based on average rather than actual costs, leaving room for profit making" (World Bank, 1964b, p. 17). A similar point was made in the Dike report, which reviewed the education system in the Eastern region and noted that memoranda received indicated "many anomalies exist in the present system and the complexity of the Voluntary Agency system makes for inefficiency and wastage in the educational administration of the Region" (Dike, 1962, p. 42).

These examples illustrate contestations within the primary education SoP regarding the role of non-state agencies. Although neither report called for a shift in management from non-state to public providers, they highlighted concerns at both national and regional levels about the ability of a predominantly VA primary education SoP to achieve UPE.

Further highlighting this issue, the World Bank report also raised concerns about the influence of non-state agencies in the primary education SoP. The report pointed out that because non-state agencies (VAs) controlled the majority of schools, they could influence the terms of grants-in-aid (World Bank, 1964b, p. 17).²⁹ The involvement of non-state agencies in the primary education SoP was increasingly linked to concerns about education costs and the efficiency of the grants-in-aid system, though there were fewer concerns about inequalities within and through education.

Despite these concerns about the high costs associated with extensive non-state sector engagement in the primary education SoP, regional governments did not increase their control over these agencies. Instead, the financial burden was shifted onto parents and communities. For example, the Eastern regional government increased class sizes from 30 to 36 pupils in 1963 and also raised the

²⁹ The World Bank Report did highlight the financial contributions made to education by missionary bodies. These contributions included overseas church donations, local church collections, teachers' salary deductions, and school fees, used to support the construction of schools and houses for teaching staff quarters at lower costs (World Bank, 1964b, p. 17).

ALC. According to the 1963 Annual Report of the Eastern Region Ministry of Education, this increase in ALC "caused considerable hardship to pupils, parents, teachers and managers alike" and could not be collected in full in some communities (Eastern Group of Provinces of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1966, p. 12). As a result, some teachers went unpaid, leading to the closure of schools and a loss of 13 percent of teachers (5,635) in the Eastern Region in 1963 (Eastern Group of Provinces of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1966, p. 7). The increase in the number of pupils per class led to the closure of some schools, and 13 percent of teachers (5,635) lost their jobs in the Eastern Region in 1963 (Eastern Group of Provinces of Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1966, p. 7). This situation underscores the power dynamics between the state, parents/communities, teachers, and non-state education providers, predominantly Christian missions. It highlights how additional schooling costs were pushed onto parents and communities, without fundamental changes to the grant system for non-state agencies managing the schools.

Support for this reliance on households and communities is also found in academic and policy literature. For instance, Wolfgang Stolper, in *Planning without Facts*, discusses the role of communities and households in education financing (Stolper, 1966). In the opening chapters, for example, Stolper (1966, p. 25) notes that "Yoruba mothers" were "traditionally [...] responsible for the education for their children", including costs associated with schooling, arguing "[t]his sort of attitude can be "transferred," while others must be changed", i.e., that the responsibility for education borne by mothers, should be encouraged in the next phase of development. Who provided education and issues with the financing model were less of a concern to Stolper (1966) than ensuring that the capital costs fell to local communities.

The role of the community in education financing and management remained a key concern in development circles in subsequent decades. For example, the fourth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States, organised by UNESCO in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, was held in Lagos in 1976 (Damiba, 1977). This conference built on previous meetings, continuing the focus on mass education for African development (Obanya, 1994).³⁰ King (1976a, p. i) observed that after the meeting the "the idea of 'community' had moved rapidly towards the centre of the stage", though its exact definition remained less well developed (King, 1976b). "Community" was more of a catch-all term, encompassing diverse structures and cultures around schooling. However, King (1976b, p. 10)

³⁰ According to Obanya (1994, p. 6), the "conference concluded that African education (the nature of institutions and the curriculum) was still suffering from serious shortcomings inherited from the colonial period".

noted that "expansion+change+cheapness=community" linking the reliance on communities for expanding the education system to efforts to reduce costs.

Political Processes and the Primary Education SoP, 1960s

The three main political parties—NCNC, AG, and NPC—dominated the political scene at independence, both at the federal and regional levels. In the 1959 elections, the NCNC and AG received more votes than the NPC (around 2.6 million votes for the NCNC, about 2 million for the AG, and 1.9 million for the NPC) (Mustapha, 2006). However, the NPC secured a majority of seats in parliament (Mustapha, 2006). The NPC's Vice-President, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, became the Prime Minister, forming his "independence" cabinet (Elaigwu, 1988). A coalition government was established between the NPC and the NCNC, led by Azikiwe, while the AG, led by Awólówò, became the opposition in the House of Representatives. The AG was increasingly vocal about "government corruption, extravagance, and high salaries" (Diamond, 1988, p. 96).

When Nigeria became a Republic in 1963, the NCNC's Azikiwe became the "first ceremonial president" (Elaigwu, 1988, p. 177). However, the NCNC and NPC coalition fractured when the 1963 census was published (Diamond, 1988). The NCNC expected a higher population share in the southern regions, which would have shifted the balance of power at the federal level (The Federal Ministry of Economic Development, no date, p. 197). The United Grand Progressive Alliance (UGPA), newly formed, along with the NCNC, the AG, and some northern political leaders, boycotted the federal election in December 1964, "alleging that it had been rigged against them" (Sklar, 1967, p. 530).

These political processes highlight the increasingly fractious nature of relations at the federal and regional levels, with less attention to large programmes like the UPE of the 1950s that had been key to election campaigns. In 1961, the Addis Ababa Conference of Education Ministers, convened by UNESCO and UNECA, recommended the universalisation of primary education in Africa, with a target date of 1980 for achieving UPE across the continent (Mbanefoh, 1994, p. 13). Nigeria's background papers for the conference identified challenges related to regionalism and national-level planning (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962, p. 113). The report acknowledged the "special difficulty" in Nigeria due to "political regionalism, as educational responsibility is divided between the four governments" (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962, p. 113).

Financing issues stemming from this structure were also highlighted, with projected capital investments of £75 million between 1961 and 1970 and recurrent expenditure of £75 million by 1970, amounting to over five percent of the national income in 1970 (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962). However, the report stated that the federal and regional governments

had no clear division of responsibility for education financing, and that estimates of spending by VAs, as well as student fees, were missing from official reports (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962, p. 114). The existence of different development plans in the regions further complicated the issue, leading to a recommendation for better alignment of these plans (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962).

The ethnic-regional structures shaping the primary education SoP kept it fragmented and made providing UPE more challenging. Nigeria's projected deficit in achieving the Addis Ababa targets for 1962-1963 was \$51,298,051 (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962, p. 28). The background paper on Nigeria argued for federal and regional cooperation and the necessity of "large-scale international financial aid on an unprecedented scale" to achieve UPE (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1962, p. 114). This highlights the emerging role of international agents in the primary education SoP, particularly international donor countries such as the US, and their influence on the national financing structure. The relationship that developed was characterised by the federal government's increasing reliance on "international financial aid" to fund the primary education SoP. This marked a significant shift from the previous relationship between the British colonial office and the Nigerian government, where the costs of providing UPE were primarily covered by internal revenue sources at both the national and regional levels (see Chapter 6).

The structures and relations shaping the primary education SoP in the 1960s were broadly consistent with those of the 1950s, except for the entry of new international agents in the system. However, the situation changed dramatically in the mid-1960s when the military took over the federal government, followed by the attempted secession of the Eastern region.

War and the Primary Education SoP, 1960s

In January 1966, a military coup led "by largely Igbo officers" resulted in the assassination of key officials, including the federal prime minister and the premiers of the Northern and Western regions (Last, 2000; Mustapha, 2006, p. 18). Following the coup, Major-General Thomas Aguiyi-Ironsi assumed power as the military government leader (Sklar, 1967). A second coup in July 1966 was "led by Northern officers" in which Aguiyi-Ironsi was killed and replaced by Lt-Colonel Yakubu Gowon, "a northern minority Christian" (Mustapha, 2006, p. 18; Sklar, 1967). Gowon set out to reverse Aguiyi-Ironsi's reforms by declaring the unitary government "unworkable" and forming an ad hoc constitutional committee (Sklar, 1967, p. 533).

At the same time ethnic-regional divisions increased. Violence escalated in 1966 when radio reports claimed that Hausa people had been killed in the Eastern region (Last, 2000). In response, riots took

place across Northern towns and cities, resulting in the deaths of at least 7,000 Igbo people and a "million or so refugees" fled to the Eastern region (Last, 2000, p. 317). After this, members of the ad hoc constitutional committee from the Eastern region resigned (Sklar, 1967). The sidelining of the Eastern region at the federal level under Gowon, combined with the violence against Igbos in the North, left Eastern regional political leaders in a vulnerable position (Sklar, 1967). As a result, calls for secession among Igbos in the Eastern region increased—marking a shift from the earlier secessionist sentiments in the Northern region during the 1950s and 1960s—and culminated in demands for an independent Biafra (Zinn, 2005, p. 98). The Eastern region's military governor, Lt-Col Ojukwu, argued that the only solution for Nigeria was "a confederation of four virtually sovereign states, each with its armed forces and police, and each in control of its own resources" (Baptiste, 1967, p. 302). Of the eight provinces in the Eastern region, five (Abakaliki, Enugu, Onitsha, Umuahia, Owerri) were predominantly Igbo, while the remaining three were composed of minority ethnic groups, including the Ijaw, Efik, and Ogoni (Onuoha, 2016, p. 9).

A State of Emergency was announced on May 27, 1967, and Gowon assumed control of the army, dissolved the Supreme Military Council of Military Governors, and implemented a decree dividing Nigeria into 12 states (Baptiste, 1967).

Contestations over oil were also a key factor in the conflict as the major oil-producing areas were in the Eastern region's non-Igbo majority areas (East Central State) (Uche, 2008, p. 123). In March, Ojukwu "issued his Revenue Collection Edict, ordering that duties and taxes payable to Federal collectors in the East must be paid from April 1 to the Eastern Nigerian treasury in Enugu" (Baptiste, 1967, p. 308). On May 30, 1967, Ojukwu "announced the independence of his Region as the new State of Biafra" (Baptiste, 1967, p. 301). In response, federal troops invaded Biafra in July of the same year (Zinn, 2005). At the international level, the British government supplied arms and military intelligence to the federal government (Uche, 2008). Shell-BP had initially agreed to pay a royalty to Biafra, but after Britain intervened, it paid £5.5 million to the federal government in December 1967 (Uche, 2008).

The war ended in 1970 when Biafran troops surrendered, and Ojukwu fled to Cote d'Ivoire, where he lived in exile until 1982 (Lodge, 2018). In January 15, 1970, Gowon said: "There would be no recriminations against leaders or soldiers" and in the former Biafran state, soldiers were rarely arrested, and civil servants were reinstated (Lodge, 2018, p. 10). However, Mama and Okazawa-Rey (2012, p. 104) argue that peace was not actively built but rather declared under the slogan "No Victors, No Vanquished" by the federal government.

Fractured Relations Between the State and Non-state Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1970s

The war fractured the education SoP in the Eastern region, leaving little room for non-state involvement in its reconstruction. The death toll from the war was extremely high: approximately 30,000 federal soldiers were killed, while estimates of civilian deaths —mainly from starvation used as a weapon—range from 600,000 to three million, though these figures are contested (Lodge, 2018, p. 3). A Washington Post report from July 1968 highlighted the impact of the war on children in the region and the role of the Catholic Church, notably Caritas, in providing aid (Friendly, 1968):

It is a children's war, I'm afraid," said Father Kevin Doheny, head of the Irish Holy Ghost Fathers Mission and Seminary in Okpala [...] Father Sean Broderick of the missionary order is running his present food distribution based on one 100-pound sack of dried milk and a few beans supplied by the Catholic organisation Caritas International, flown in by risky night flights from the Spanish Island of Fernando Po or from Portuguese Sao Tome. Father Donal O'Sullivan, Superior of the order, which once ran 100 schools with 300 priests in this former region of Nigeria, said that his missions are now urging the population to eat lizards, snakes, grasshoppers, locusts, white ants, dogs and monkeys.

According to Achebe (2012, p. 267), "Entire towns and villages, schools, and farms in Biafra were destroyed. Roads and rural areas were littered with landmines." A New York Times report from January 25, 1970, also emphasised the social, economic, and political destruction inflicted on Biafra during the war, especially the education system (Bourjailly, 1970):

By killing off the leaders—the two generations of highly educated Ibos now existing—and by destroying the local system of education, which provided real educational upward mobility for every child in the country, the distinct and valuable Ibo personality could be wiped out, at least for two more generations.

Reconstruction involved rebuilding schools, healthcare facilities, roads, and water infrastructure (Lodge, 2018). However, humanitarian agencies that supported Biafra during the war, including Catholic Church affiliates, were not engaged in reconstruction efforts (Lodge, 2018).

At the end of the war, in the states of former Biafra—particularly the East Central State (Anambra, Imo, Enugu, Ebonyi, and Abia), where the majority of Igbo people lived—the government took over all schools. The administrator of the East Central State, Ukpabi Asika (1967–1975), announced the takeover of all non-state schools, including mission schools, through the Public Education Edict (1970), which was amended in 1972 (Nwagwu, 1979; Okoro, 1975; Pritchard, 1975). The takeover of non-state primary schools by the state government was justified by citing the inability of these institutions to finance the reconstruction and maintenance of schools to an acceptable standard (East Central State, 1971, quoted in Nwagwu, 1979, pp. 78–79). Additional reasons for the takeover

included financial savings, regulated parental payments, and reinvestment of profits into schools. For example, the government found that a sample of five schools receiving grants-in-aid in 1965 were making an average profit margin of over £4,000, which was going to school owners and managers (Public Education Edict: East Central State of Nigeria, Gazette No. 37, January 21, 1971, p. 1 cited in Amadi, 1979, p. 533). The objective was to establish "central control and an integrated system of education" that would "guarantee uniform standards and a fair distribution of educational facilities and reduce the cost of running the schools" (Public Education Edict: East Central State of Nigeria, Gazette No. 37, January 21, 1971, p. 1 cited in Amadi, 1979, p. 533). The Public Education Edict argued that this move would "provide stability," meet the educational needs of the people, "combat sectionalism" and "religious conflicts," and foster loyalty to a united Nigeria (Public Education Edict: East Central State of Nigeria, Gazette No. 37, January 21, 1971, p. 1 cited in Amadi, 1979, p. 533).

This policy, however, faced opposition. Despite the compensation guaranteed in the Edict and the establishment of a State School Valuation and Compensation Tribunal, "Most of the church groups had decided not to accept compensations so that they could still retain their rights to parts of their landed properties" (Amadi, 1979, p. 539). Arguments around parental choice were also used to contest the policy; for example, "the Christian Council of Nigeria contended that the existence of a form of religious school is essential if parents will be enabled to exercise their freedom of choice of the type of education for their children" (Eastern Area Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Statement on the Public Education Edict, in Public Education Edict 1970, Pamphlet No. 5, p. 3 quoted in Amadi, 1979, p. 538). In this way, as in the 1950s, the language of "religious freedom" and parental choice was invoked to oppose increased state involvement in schooling.

The war completely transformed the ownership structure of the primary education SoP in the former Biafran heartland, as the administration took over all non-state schools. This transformation was linked to post-war reconstruction and nation-building processes in the states that had attempted secession from Nigeria, —essentially, the victors imposed the takeover of schools on the "losers." The role of the Catholic Church in the primary education system in the region, with its history of resisting state involvement (see Chapter 6), was significantly weakened.

Rebuilding the Primary Education SoP: Squeezing out Non-state Agents and Agencies, 1970s
In the post-war period across Nigeria, the federal government's role in primary education increased (Ukeje and Aisiku, 1982), while the role of the non-state sector, particularly Christian missions, diminished. In August 1972, the Supreme Military Council issued a policy statement that placed education—excluding higher education—on the concurrent list. This meant that both state and

federal governments shared responsibility for education, whereas previously, administration and financing were primarily state responsibilities (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975a; World Bank, 1973). Each State established a Ministry of Education "headed by a commissioner" (Ukeje and Aisiku, 1982, p. 228). The National Council on Education, which included Commissioners of Education, and the Joint Consultative Committee were established (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975a, p. 1).

An example of the structure of the education system at the state level can be seen in the East Central State (encompassing Anambra). Ukpabi Asika, the Military Administrator, led the Executive Council, which included military commanders and eleven Commissioners, including the Commissioner of Education (Okoro, 1975). The Ministry of Education comprised the administrative head (Permanent Secretary), and the political head (Commissioner) (Okoro, 1975). Additionally, a State School Board, mainly responsible for post-primary education, and Divisional School Boards, handled tasks such as teacher employment and transfers, maintenance of school premises, fee and revenue collection, and provision of facilities and school meals (Okoro, 1975).

With primary education now on the concurrent list, state governments could enact legislation to take non-state schools into public ownership. A Report prepared for UNESCO in 1975 notes (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975a, p. 6):

A number of State Governments in the Federation have taken over completely the running and financing of primary and secondary schools from the missionaries and voluntary agencies. This makes for effective government supervision and direction of education.

This excerpt highlights that while not all state governments implemented policies to take over non-state schools, the federal government supported such moves, viewing them as more "effective".

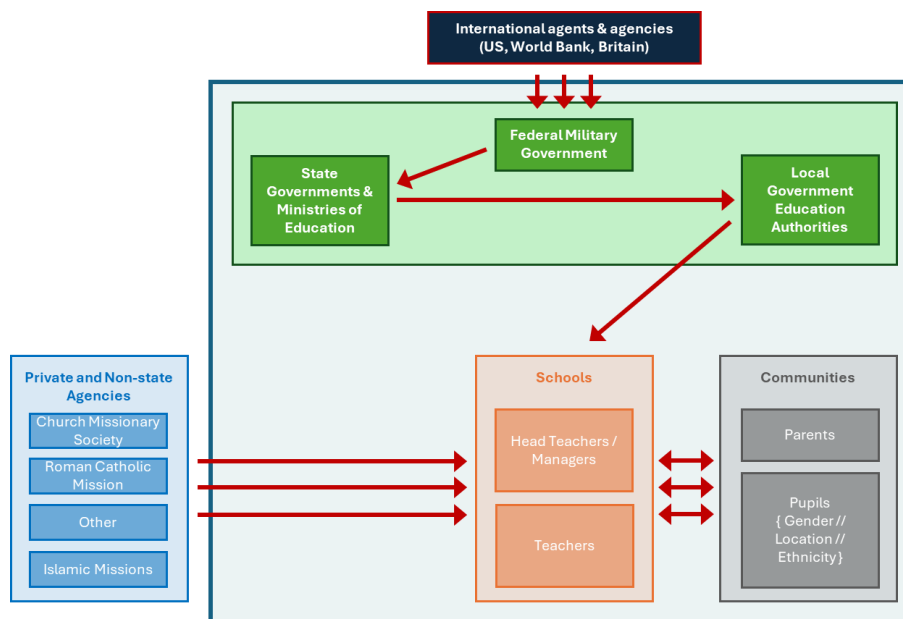
In 1974, Gowon announced his intention to make primary education free and compulsory through a national UPE programme. However, Gowon's rule ended in 1975 when Lt Colonel Joseph Garba and Shehu Musa arranged his removal while he attended an Organisation of African Unity meeting in Kampala (Iliffe, 2011). Gowon was replaced by General Murtala Mohammed, with Olúṣẹ́gun Ọ̀básanjó, a Yorùbá Christian from the Southwest of Nigeria, serving as his Chief of Staff (Iliffe, 2011). Under the new leadership, military governors were replaced by new officers who no longer sat on the Supreme Military Council but reported directly to Ọ̀básanjó (Iliffe, 2011). Senior civil servants, known as Super Permsecs, were retired, and around 11,000 other civil servants were made redundant (Iliffe, 2011, p. 44). Following the assassination of Murtala Mohammed in 1976, Ọ̀básanjó became head of the military government, further solidifying the military's influence in federal politics (Gberevbie, 2014; Iliffe, 2011).

The first national UPE program was introduced in 1976 under Obasanjo (Bray and Cooper, 1979), followed by the publication of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1977. This policy introduced the 6-3-3-4 model: six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education, three years of senior secondary education, and four years of higher education (Obanya, 1980). The policy made the first six years of primary education free for all students (Imam, 2012). Notably, the 1977 NPE stated that primary schools were under full government ownership for financing and management, as outlined here: "97 (3) [W]ith the introduction of UPE, the proprietorship of primary schools has passed into the hands of government" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1977). In other words, under UPE, the government aimed to take full responsibility for managing and financing the primary education SoP.

The 1976 guidelines for local government reform designated primary education as a responsibility of local governments (Hinchliffe, 1989). However, if local governments were initially unable to fulfil this role, state governments could step in (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1976, p. 2, quoted in Hinchliffe, 1989). Local governments became a key part of military federalism under this new structure. The 1976 local government reform "introduced a uniform structure of local government throughout the country" (Osaghae, 2018, p. 180), establishing them as the third tier of government with a share of federal funds and legislative powers (Osaghae, 2018). Under the new revenue allocation formula from 1977, local governments received 10 percent, states received 30 percent, and the federal government received 57 percent (Osaghae, 2018). The number of states increased from twelve to nineteen in February 1976, including the creation of Old Anambra State (Osaghae, 2018, p. 180).

Figure 9 below shows the agents and relationships in the primary education SoP in the 1970s following the Biafra War and the introduction of UPE. The arrows illustrate that the financing and management of primary education were the responsibility of federal, state and local governments. However, unlike in previous decades, most funding went to government schools rather than non-state agencies. Although some non-state schools continued to operate, but the bulk of funding from federal and state governments went to public schools.

Figure 9 Agents and Relations in the Primary Education SoP, 1970s



Simultaneously, the oil boom of the 1970s, marked by rising oil prices, contributed to a substantial increase in fiscal resources at the federal level (Adesina, 2012; Olukoshi, 1993). The price of an oil barrel increased from \$4 in 1973 to \$42 in 1980, so that "revenue accruing to the state rose from N4.733 billion in 1975 to N7.00 billion in 1977 and some N9.825 billion in 1981" (Olukoshi, 1993, p. 1). However, the dominance of oil as a major revenue source led to a decline in agricultural exports: groundnuts and palm oil exports "fell to zero in the 1970s" (Williams, 1994, p. 218). Oil revenue was used to finance the expansion of the primary education SoP.

Initially, the federal government took full financial responsibility for the UPE programme through specific-purpose federal grants to state governments, amounting to N35 per pupil and N3,500 per classroom (Hinchliffe, 1989; Imam, 2012; World Bank, 1989). In 1978, the grant was increased to N40 per pupil. However, the school building grant was reduced "following a review of unit costs by the National Council of Education" (Hinchliffe, 1989, p. 236), and state governments were expected to contribute more to the programme's financing. The allocation of federal grants was based on a combination of requests and financial returns, but political considerations also complicated the process (Bray, 1981). Recurrent expenditure was linked to enrolment rates (Bray, 1981). Lagos, with its high initial enrolment rate, received the largest capital allocation for primary schools in the 1976/77 fiscal year, including a special N7 million grant to abolish the triple-shift system (Bray, 1981). According to Bray (1981), this was also because of Lagos' position as the federal capital and proximity to the federal headquarters. In 1978, Dr J. O. J. Okezie, the former Federal Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, claimed that Imo State in the South East, which had been part of Biafra, faced discrimination in the UPE program (Bray, 1981, p. 88).

At the same time, the military government was preparing to transfer power to a civilian administration. Under Ḑbásanjó, a Constituent Assembly was formed "to approve the Draft Constitution produced by the Constitution Drafting Committee" (Mama, 1995, p. 43). Ḑbásanjó's military government endorsed the draft constitution along with the Constituent Assembly's recommendations, leading to the 1979 Constitution (Osaghae, 2018). In 1978, a ban on political activities was lifted with certain conditions: constitutional changes meant that presidential campaigns and parties could no longer "be formed along parochial lines" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 128) and required broader-based support, meaning that political parties could not be based on ethnicity, religion, or gender (Mama, 1995, p. 44). Five main political parties emerged: the Nigerian People's Party (NPP), with Azikiwe as their presidential candidate, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) led by Awólówò, the People's Redemption Party (PRP) with Aminu Kano as its presidential candidate, the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) led by Waziri Ibrahim (a breakaway faction from the NPP), and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) with Shehu Shagari as its presidential candidate. The impact of these political changes on the role of the private and non-state sector in the primary education SoP is discussed in more depth in Chapter 8.

Cultures and Processes Shaping the Primary Education SoP: Militarism, Nationalism and Religion, 1970s

In 1966, prior to the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War, the Joint Consultative Committee on Education—representing all Ministries of Education and universities—scheduled a curriculum conference for October 1966. The goal was to develop a curriculum for an independent Nigeria that would "respond to the political, economic, and cultural challenge of the age" (Republic of Nigeria, 1966, p. 9). This conference aimed to address criticisms that the existing curriculum was "designed to meet the demands of a country with a colonial status" (Republic of Nigeria, 1966, p. 9). However, the war delayed the National Curriculum Conference, which eventually took place in 1969 during the conflict. The focus was on creating a national curriculum to foster unity, integration, and "the spirit of patriotism," as highlighted by Federal Minister of Education Wenike Briggs in his speech (Nigeria Educational Research Council and Federal Ministry of Education, 1970, pp. xvii-xviii):

Education must contribute to national unity. It is no doubt the desire of our people that we should evolve a system of education that will integrate and bind us together as one nation so that our diversities may never be used as a means of alienating us from one another but of strengthening our unity and emphasising our interdependence. We must learn what it takes to live together. We must ensure that from the earliest stages, our children know our past and the various components of our cultural heritage so that they may grow up with respect and appreciation for the traditions and customs of the various groups that comprise

our population. Education must stimulate the spirit of patriotism and, at the same time, lay the foundations for international understanding and cooperation. If we must ensure our internal unity, it is equally important that we must secure and protect the territorial integrity of our country.

Briggs' speech provides insight into the ideas circulating at the time that linked education with nation-building during a time of war and disunity. The emphasis on nation-building and nationalism at the curriculum conference was echoed in Obasanjo's speech launching the UPE programme in September 1976 (Obasanjo, 1976). In this speech, he emphasised the importance of education for nation-building and that every child had a civic duty to attend school and "serve their fatherland" (Obasanjo, 1976). These examples highlight the expected role of education in (re)building the Nigerian state.

The National Curriculum Conference also discussed the roles of different stakeholders in education, focusing on control, management, and financing (Nigeria Educational Research Council and Federal Ministry of Education, 1970, pp. xiii–xiv). The conference report summarised discussions and recommendations, noting the consensus that "government control of primary education" was necessary to "achieve national educational goals for ALL Nigerian children" (Nigeria Educational Research Council and Federal Ministry of Education, 1970, p. 38). Regarding the financing of education, the report stated, "If the government controls education within the concept of equality of educational opportunities for ALL Nigerian children, the government must pay all the bills" (Nigeria Educational Research Council and Federal Ministry of Education, 1970, p. 38). The question of who managed and financed education was a critical concern and intimately bound with the goals of national development, including redistributive processes to ensure the stability and unity of Nigeria.

The South Eastern syllabus, published in June 1973, and the Lagos syllabus, published in 1971, provide a snapshot of how these ideas of Nigerian nationalism were reflected at the school level (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971; South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973). Primary schools were expected to play a vital role by teaching pupils about national identity and civic duties. For example, Lagos primary schools, were expected to "hoist the Nigerian Flag daily and sing the Nigerian National Anthem" at least weekly (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, p. vi). Alongside these rituals, social studies, which combined History, Geography, Civics and Economics (and History, Geography and Civics in Lagos), provides key insights into how these processes played out in the classroom. In Lagos primary schools, in the third term of primary one, social studies included lessons on national and local occasions, the national flag, anthem (history and

meaning), coat of arms and holidays (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, p. 80). The aims of social studies in the Lagos syllabus included:

- To build a foundation of knowledge about the Nigerian way of life
- To develop a spirit of tolerance and willing understanding of the effects of the great diversities of our social life as the basis of unity and progress
- To nurture a sense of pride in the diverse Nigerian cultural heritage
- To appreciate the significance or role of Nigeria in the African Social setting
- To develop an understanding of the relationship between our country and the rest of the world (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, p. 77).

Similarly, the South-Eastern state syllabus, in the third term of primary two, included "Acts of Patriotism", which encompassed (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973, p. 116):

- Salutation of the National Flag.
- Singing the National Anthem.
- Keeping the law of the country.
- Defending the country.
- Paying for services, etc.

The South Eastern syllabus also advised teachers to be mindful of the "population and knowledge explosion" and to ensure that education was "true, factual and free from prejudice, propaganda and political overtones," especially in senior primary classes (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973, p. 110). This highlights the ongoing ethnic-regional tensions and their impact on classroom dynamics and the curriculum, with these cultures of nationalism and nation-building attached to the primary education SoP.

Ideas around modernisation and development continued to shape the primary education SoP in the 1970s. The Northern region, in particular, was targeted for educational expansion as part of a broader development push. A World Bank education loan for a project, identified by UNESCO in 1971 and signed in February 1974 for \$54 million aimed to improve education in the Northern states (World Bank, 1984, 1973, p. 1). The project was part of a broader push toward developing towns and cities in the predominantly rural Northern states (only 20,000 people lived in cities in the Northern region, according to the 1963 census) (World Bank, 1973, p. 15). The project sought to establish educational institutions in towns to drive development and attract students from rural areas (World Bank, 1973, p. 15).

Similarly, the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP), originally called the UNICEF/UNESCO project,³¹ was implemented in the Northern states of Nigeria by UNICEF, UNESCO, the state governments, and the Ahmadu Bello Institute of Education in 1970. This programme focused on the development and improvement of primary schools, and objectives included developing "a curriculum that is more modern in its approach" and "a curriculum that is for Nigeria, in Nigeria, suitable for life in towns and in rural areas" (Lassa, 1977, p. 2). The PEIP pilot began in 1970 with 66 schools and was scaled up in 1974 to 700 schools (Lassa, 1977, p. 3). In Kano state, 100 schools were part of the PEIP project (Lassa, 1977, p. 3). Mobile Teachers' Trainees were expected to train and advise teachers in the project schools and provide feedback on the project, supervised by the In-Service Training Centre (Bray, 1981). However, the project had limited impact due partly to the high costs associated with teaching aids, transport and its annual conference (Bray, 1981).

Religious (Islamic) education was also often viewed as incompatible with modernisation processes. In 1971, over one million pupils were enrolled in *Qur'ānic* schools (World Bank, 1973, p. 5). However, according to a World Bank report these schools were not recognised by the federal and state governments as their "standards" were deemed "inconsistent with the rest of the system, although a number have added subjects to the curriculum" (World Bank, 1973, p. 5). Integration of these schools into the formal education system, which had begun in earlier decades, continued during this period.

These examples draw attention to Nigeria's underlying political, economic, and social tensions during this period and how they affected the primary education SoP. The primary school became a key site for fostering national identity and unity. The shift from a patchwork of missionaries and non-state providers to a state-centred system reflected political-military leaders' aims to unify Nigeria. However, as the next section will show, the state's complete takeover of schools was never fully realised.

Agents and Access to Primary Education: Public and Non-state Primary School Enrolments, 1970s

The introduction of the first national UPE programme in the mid-1970s led a dramatic increase in primary school enrolments. Appendix 13 shows that the primary school gross enrolment rate increased from around 42 percent in 1970 to over 90 percent by 1979 (World Bank, 2023e). This

³¹ The name was changed to the PEIP 'in order to place emphasis on the fact that the project is neither for UNESCO not UNICEF but Nigerians. The Government of Northern States is largely responsible for the infrastructure, and to the very large proportion of the cost of the programme.' (Kolawole and Pakata, 1977, p. 1)

appendix also details enrolment figures for primary schools in Anambra, Kano, and Lagos during this period.

In 1976, Anambra (Old Anambra State) was created out of the East Central State, and the UPE programme was (re)introduced in the same year (Anambra State of Nigeria, 1979, p. 3). By the end of the war, all primary school enrolments were in government schools, and throughout the 1970s, the enrolment rates of girls and boys became more equitable (Appendix 13).

The UPE programme was officially (re)launched in Kano on September 11, 1976 (Bray, 1981). Publicly, religious leaders in Kano and the surrounding region supported the programme. According to Bray (1981, p. 66), this support was partly due to the fact that the emirs received the majority of their income from government sources and "it was not in their interests to provoke a conflict which could have led to a further statutory reduction in their authority." Despite this general support, Bray (1981) reports that some parents were bribing officials to prevent their children from being enrolled in primary schools. Appendix 13 shows that primary school enrolments increased from 62,520 in 1970 to 341,806 in 1976/77 in all school types (LA, VA and Government). Most enrolments were in LA schools. Girls' enrolments as a percentage of overall enrolments did not increase in this period and stayed below 30 percent (Appendix 13).

According to the 1972 Kano State Education Statistics, around 87,157 pupils were enrolled in 5,215 *Qur'ānic* schools in 1961, and by 1972, enrolments were estimated to have risen to 250,000 (Kano State Ministry of Education, 1972, p. 4). A World Bank report estimated total enrolments in *Qur'ānic* schools across Nigeria at approximately one million (World Bank, 1973, p. 5). The lack of precise statistics and inconsistent reporting on *Qur'ānic* school enrolments indicate limited engagement by the Ministry of Education with these institutions.

In Lagos, Appendix 12 shows an increase in primary school enrolments following the introduction of the UPE programme. By 1977/78, the number of girls enrolled in primary schools in Lagos slightly exceeded that of boys. The specifics of school types and ownership in Lagos are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Overall, the introduction of the UPE programme led to large increases in primary school enrolments across Nigeria, including an increase in the number of girls enrolled. This led to more gender-equitable enrolment figures in Anambra but not in Kano (Appendix 13). In Lagos, gender parity in primary school enrolments was maintained before and after the introduction of the UPE programme.

Gender and the Primary Education SoP, 1970s

During the 1970s, gender dynamics in Nigeria's primary education system began to shift, partly reflected in the changing composition of teachers. As the federal government expanded its role in the primary education SoP, teachers became "members of the civil service" (Berry, 1984, p. 8). This expansion made teaching a more accessible career for women, as the education system grew throughout the decade (Berry, 1984, p. 8). However, despite the increase in the number of teachers, Berry (1984, p. 8) argues that this did not lead to higher wages for teachers. Instead, she suggests that "[P]rimary school teachers have slipped from a fairly prominent position in the small professional class of colonial days to the bottom of a large and increasingly differentiated class of educated people today."

As this quote highlights, the shift in the status of teaching highlights two important trends: more women entered the profession, but the prestige of the job diminished compared to earlier decades when many national independence leaders were trained as teachers (see Chapter 6). Appendix 14 shows that in Lagos 57 percent of teachers were women in 1977/78, while in Anambra this figure was 45 percent. However, in Kano, the proportion of women in the teaching workforce decreased from 12 percent in 1970 to just three percent by 1977/78, with a brief increase to eight percent in 1976/77 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7, no date, p. 7).

As is discussed below, the change in ownership structure and the increase in women entering teaching did little to transform gendered norms in the primary education SoP at a time when the role of women in political structures was weakened. Although some progress was made in appointing women to key positions—such as Flora Nwapa becoming the first female commissioner in the East Central State in 1970, followed by appointments of women like Dorothy Miller and Kofoworola Pratt in other states (Mba, 1989, cited in Mama, 1995)—military men continued to dominate formal political spaces.

The 1971 Lagos Syllabus provides a snapshot of the construction of gender through the primary education SoP in the period. For example, a section on relationships and marriage emphasised "Waiting until one is grown up before getting married" (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, p. 189), and stressed the "need for security in marriage, e.g., financial security (does the future partner have work and is he able to support a wife?)" (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, p. 189). The syllabus also outlined gendered societal roles, including women's rights and obligations in marriage and the responsibilities of men in the family (Ministry of Education and Community Development, 1971, pp. 190–191). These examples underscore the traditional roles assigned to women and men, with marriage as a key element in maintaining societal

order based on the union of one woman and one man. The emphasis on a husband's ability to support his wife further reinforced these gendered expectations.

In the South Eastern syllabus, published in June 1973, home economics was to be taught to both boys and girls (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973). However, the assumption was that girls were naturally more suited to these skills and that they would want to develop them. For example, the syllabus noted, "Needlework is a craft of the greatest educational value and one in which most girls take an interest" (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973, p. 101). It further stated that, "most normal girls will rapidly gain control and be anxious to begin needlecraft earlier than the nervous type of child," reinforcing the notion that girls are inherently responsible for reproductive tasks within the home, such as sewing and making clothes for dolls (babies), as found in the syllabus (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973, p. 101).

These gender norms were also evident in the papers presented at the 1969 Curriculum Conference in the section on the "Education of Women" (Adaralegbe, 1970; Iro, 1970; Jibowu, 1970; Omololu, 1970). The papers presented by Lady (Deborah) Jibowu,³² Abimbola A. Omololu and Malama Hassu Iro Kaita,³³ along with the introductory paper by the Rapporteur-General, Dr Adeniji Adaralegbe, linked girls' education with motherhood (Iro, 1970; Jibowu, 1970; Omololu, 1970). For example, Omololu (1970, p. 206) argued that education "made mothers aware of their responsibility to their children" and that it put them in a "better position to look after their children when they are sick". These ideas linking girls' education with motherhood and the reproduction of society are also found in the paper by Malama Hassu Iro Kaita (Iro, 1970, p. 215), which emphasises the importance of educating girls for the benefit of future generations:

In my opinion girls being the mothers of the next generation should be given the best and soundest education possible so that our future generation would have the very best foundation and background to sustain our civilisation. The educated girls of today will become tomorrow's mothers who will be in a position to take better care of the nation's children for tomorrow's schools.

The summary of the discussion and recommendations on women's education from the conference highlighted the connections between "modernisation processes", girls' education, motherhood, and marriage, as the following extract illustrates (Nigeria Educational Research Council and Federal Ministry of Education, 1970, p. 223):

³² Deborah Jibowu graduated from the University of Manchester in 1947 and was a member of the Local Government Service Commission in the Western Region between 1959 and 1971 (Ojomoyela, 2019).

³³ Head of an LEA girls' school in Katsina

Each of the papers recognised the role the Nigerian women is supposed to play in our modernisation process, as a housewife and mother, in the education and upbringing of children and in community services [...] We have to grapple with the problem [of lower education rates of women] bearing in mind that if we educate a woman we are educating an individual, but in educating a woman, we are educating a family. An educated housewife, mother or career woman is a better housewife, mother or citizen. The pay off to the nation intangible and intangible costs are much more than the capital outlay on girls' education.

These arguments emphasised the benefits of educating women and girls for motherhood and the reproduction of society. During this period of greater state involvement in the primary education SoP, the emphasis was placed on nation-building and national unity in the context of war, with gendered norms being reinscribed in and through the education SoP.

In the Northern states, an increased focus on gender and girls' education emerged during this period. For example, a 1974 seminar organised by the Ahmadu Bello University Institute of Education addressed the challenges of UPE in Nigeria (Gardner, 1974). One topic discussed was women's education in the context of UPE, with Gardner (1974, p. 1), arguing that educating women could "contribute to the fostering of a more enlightened environment within the home and the community", leading to more engaged and stimulated students in schools. The seminar also focused on Islam, with one session addressing the resistance to "non-Islamic education in the north" and attributing it to parents' concerns about potential behavioural changes associated with Western education (Gardner, 1974, p. 4). It was suggested that the curriculum address these concerns by "including moral education", which would "inculcate a respect for individuals and local cultural differences while attempting to integrate all communities into one nation, but above all, a respect for religious differences" (Gardner, 1974, p. 4).

At the international level, academics began to show an interest in attitudes toward schooling, with particularly regarding girls' education in Northern Nigeria, including Kano. For example, a study by Hake (1972, p. 14) on "childrearing practices in Northern Nigeria" surveyed 175 students "majoring in education and psychology at an advanced teacher-training college located in Northern Nigeria".³⁴

The study found that 37 percent of parents were not in favour of "Western-type education", while 63 percent were in favour. Among those in favour, the main reasons were "In a modern civilization, it is necessary" (28 percent) and "Good for future employment opportunities" (19 percent). Those

³⁴ The study included 108 men with an average age of 25 years and 67 women with an average age of 23 years (Hake, 1972, p. 14). The students were originally from Benue Plateau (17 percent), North Eastern (25 percent), Kano (nine percent), Kwara (23 percent), North Western (10 percent) and North Central (13 percent) states, and three percent from the southern states (Hake, 1972, p. 14).

not in favour cited concerns such as "It will make children repudiate Islam and customs" (30 percent) and "It is against our customs, especially for girls" (24 percent) (Hake, 1972, pp. 32–33). These responses reflected gendered attitudes toward the role of girls in society and concerns about the influence of education on gender relations.

These concerns around Islam, gender, education and modernisation processes occurred at a time of changes in religious affiliation and association. The 1963 census showed that fewer people were identifying with traditional African religions, dropping from 34 percent in 1952 to 18.2 percent in 1963 (Ibrahim, 1991, p. 116). At the same time, the number of Christians and Muslims increased, with 34.6 percent of the population identifying as Christian and 47 percent as Muslim by 1963 (Ibrahim, 1991, p. 116). The increase in the number of Christians was particularly sharp, as less than 10 percent of the population identified as such at the beginning of the century (Ibrahim, 1991). This shift indicated the growing importance of Christianity and Islam in Nigerian public life, at the expense of Traditional African religions. Chapter 5 showed the Christian missionary origins of primary education in southern Nigeria, whereas, in the Northern region, there was much more limited reach but higher rates of enrolment in Islamic schools.

Gendered norms and religious contestations were also evident in political processes. For example, only one woman, Chief Janet Akinrinade, was elected to the Constituent Assembly to approve the draft constitution, and four women were appointed out of 250 members (Mama, 1995). Initially, the draft constitution had no provisions for women until the women members, led by Abigail Ukpabi, passed an amendment "outlawing sexual discrimination in customary or Islamic law for the first time in Nigerian history" as cited in Mama (1995, p. 44):

a citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not by reason only that he is such a person be subjected either expressly by or in the political application of any law force in Nigeria (Proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Official Report, Vol. III: 2334-2343)

Despite this amendment, the overall space for women in national politics under military federalism remained limited, with gender inequalities persisting and reinforcing existing power imbalances (Mama, 1995, p. 44).

Conclusion, 1960-1970s

The SoP approach reveals how political, economic, social and cultural factors shaped the provision of education across Nigeria in the 1960s and 1970s. This chapter reveals both the ongoing regional disparities in access to primary education and that greater numbers of children were enrolled

throughout Nigeria following the introduction of the UPE programme when the responsibility for the management and financing of primary education was taken on by the federal and state governments. New agents began to take on new roles in the primary education SoP, notably military governments (state, federal, and local), the World Bank, and UNESCO, with Christian missions (the RCM and CMS) sidelined in the process. The chapter also reveals that the material cultures attached to the primary education SoP were linked to ideas around nation-building and nationalism, with girls' education viewed as instrumental for the reproduction of the nation as both wives and mothers.

The role of non-state agencies, notably Christian missions, in the primary education SoP during the 1960s and 1970s was shaped by political, economic, and social transformations, including the war and post-war reconstruction efforts, the oil boom, and the UPE programme. Examining the socio-economic and political structures, processes, agents, agencies, relations, and material cultures within this period, shows how these factors affected the role of non-state and private sector agents and agencies in primary education, and how this influenced access for different groups.

The early 1960s were characterised by optimism and a focus on economic development within a capitalist framework. In Lagos and Anambra, the primary education SoP largely retained a similar form to that of the 1950s, marked by a patchwork of non-state providers, predominantly Christian missions. Despite some concerns from the World Bank (IBRD-IDA, 1964a) regarding inefficiencies and the power of these providers, their dominance in the primary education SoP faced little challenge. Kano presented a slightly different picture, with lower enrolment rates in primary schools and efforts to integrate Islamic schools into the formal education system (Thurston, 2018a).

The Biafra War completely altered the primary education SoP in the South East, including in Anambra, where the military commissioner took control of all primary schools as part of post-war reconstruction and nation-building efforts (Nwagwu, 1979; Okoro, 1975; Pritchard, 1975). This move highlighted the federal government's imposition of changes on the defeated states of Biafra and weakened the influence of the Catholic Church, which had a history of resisting state involvement in education (see Chapter 6). The takeover of schools in Anambra by the military government highlights the shifting power dynamics within the primary education SoP, linked to wider ethnic-regional political and economic processes.

The introduction of UPE by military governments, announced by Gowon and enacted by Obasanjo, shifted the roles of agents within the primary education SoP at the national level (Bray and Cooper, 1979). Federal and state governments took on a more active role in managing and financing primary education, using oil revenues to expand the primary education SoP (Hinchliffe, 1989). This increased funding for public schools aimed to expand access to education as part of nation-building efforts. As

a result, enrolments increased across Nigeria, leading to more gender-equitable enrolment ratios in Anambra, although this was not the case in Kano. In Lagos, gender parity in enrolments had already been achieved.

Greater numbers of women entered the teaching workforce as the system expanded and teaching became an acceptable career for women. At the same time, at the federal and state government levels, very few women were included in any key decision-making bodies or roles in military governments (Mama, 1995). Additionally, the prestige attached to teaching began to decline (Berry, 1984). Unlike in the 1940s and 1950s, when key figures in the independence movement began their careers in education, political leaders in the 1970s were increasingly connected to the military (Berry, 1984; Mama, 1995).

Gender continued to shape the primary education SoP across Nigeria, though the nature of this influence varied by region and religion. At the federal level, while primary education was considered key to national development, papers presented at the 1969 Curriculum Conference emphasised the importance of educating girls for their future roles as wives, mothers and caregivers (Iro, 1970; Omololu, 1970). In Kano, where Islam was the dominant religion, some parents raised concerns about the potential influence of Western (Christian) education on traditional gender norms, particularly around marriage and family life, and fewer girls than boys were enrolled in primary schools (Gardner, 1974). In Lagos and Anambra, primary education continued to be influenced by Christian teachings on the roles of men and women in society. In subjects such as home economics, girls were considered naturally more suited to domestic roles within the home (South-Eastern State of Nigeria, 1973). Despite regional and religious differences, girls' education was primarily viewed as a means of maintaining social stability, rather than challenging traditional gender roles, with concerns in Kano about its potential to disrupt established norms.

Chapter 8. The Primary Education SoP, 1980s-1990s: A Turn to the Private Sector in a Period of Economic Crisis

In the 1980s and 1990s, the primary education SoP and the roles of private and non-state agents within it were shaped by the political structure and culture of successive military regimes, economic crises, and the introduction of the World Bank/IMF structural adjustment program. Non-state agencies, specifically Christian religious organisations, continued to engage with the primary education SoP, with churches increasingly advocating for greater (re)involvement in education, calling for schools to be "returned" to missionary organisations, a trend particularly evident in Anambra. In Kano, Islamic education maintained its dominant role in the education landscape.

Simultaneously, a different form of private sector engagement emerged in the primary education SoP—namely, for-profit private schools established by individuals. These schools, initially associated with the middle class, were concentrated in urban centres like Lagos and became an important form of provision. This shift from the non-state, religiously oriented, non-profit schools of previous decades to for-profit private schools, reliant on user fees, was partly driven by arguments put forward by international agents, such as the World Bank. These arguments further legitimised privatisation, suggesting that wealthier families could afford private schooling and that user fees would enhance efficiencies, as parents and local administrators would be more likely to "scrutinize" costs (World Bank, 1988).

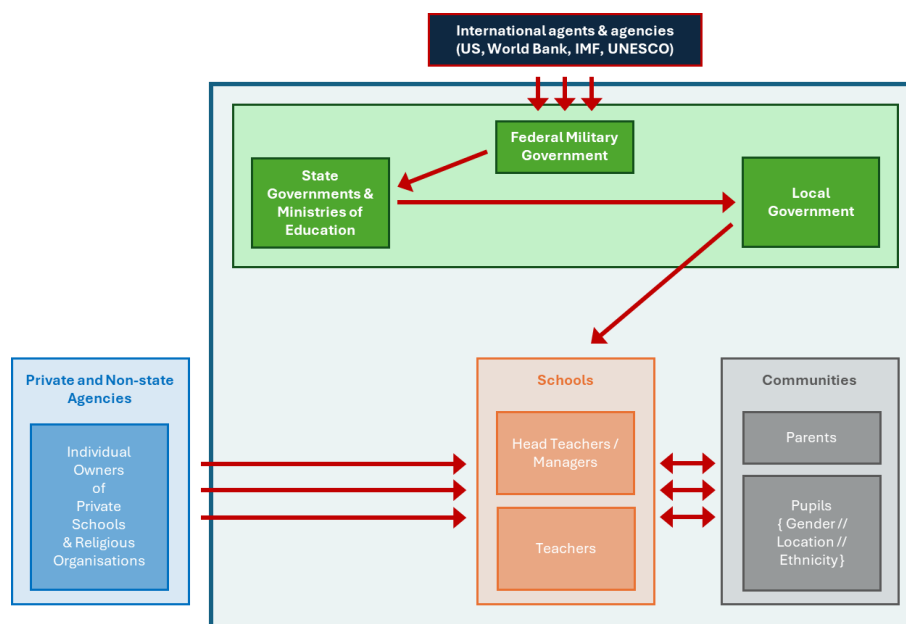
Agents and Access to Primary Education: Public, Private and Non-State Primary School Enrolments, 1980s-1990s

Before the introduction of UPE, the nature of non-state engagement in the primary education SoP varied across states. In Anambra and Lagos, primary education was predominantly provided by non-state, Christian mission-managed schools, which received some government funding. In Kano, primary education was primarily provided by NA and LA managed schools, with a large number of children also enrolled in Islamic educational institutions. However, the majority of these Islamic institutions were not considered part of the formal primary education SoP.

As detailed in Appendix 15 following the introduction of UPE, most children in Anambra, Kano, and Lagos—as well as at the national level—began attending state-funded and managed primary schools. During the 1980s, however, a new trend emerged with the rise of for-profit private primary schools, particularly in urban centres like Lagos. These schools, established by individuals, became an important form of private and non-state sector engagement, marking a departure from the earlier reliance on state provision and non-state religious institutions.

Figure 10 diagrammatically shows the key agents in the primary education SoP during the 1980s and 1990s. It shows how for-profit private schools began to offer an alternative form of provision to public primary schools for some households though they remained marginal to the overall system, unlike the forms of non-state engagement in previous decades. International agencies, including the World Bank and UNESCO, continued to play a role in shaping the primary education SoP, with the World Bank playing an increasingly influential role in policy formation, including in relation to the role of the private sector, as well as through the effects of World Bank-imposed economic reforms.

Figure 10 Agents and Relations in the Primary Education SoP, 1980s-1990s



Appendix 15 provides an overview of primary school enrolments in the 1980s and 1990s. The figures at the state level cover the 1980s in Anambra and Kano but are less comprehensive than those at the national level due to a gap in access to official reports covering the 1990s in these states.

In Anambra, as discussed in Chapter 7, primary schools were taken into public ownership—funded and managed by the state government—after the Biafra War. At that time, Anambra was part of the East-Central State, which was split into Anambra and Imo in 1976. In 1991, Anambra was further divided into Anambra and Enugu, so the enrolments discussed in this section cover the larger state of Anambra (including Enugu).

Non-state, privately managed, and funded schools began to re-emerge in Anambra in the early 1980s, with some established by religious organisations. A February 1982 newspaper report on the Pope's visit to Nigeria noted the re-establishment of Catholic schools in the former Eastern region (Mulligan, 1982): "Catholic schools have reappeared in Iboland, but not in the hundreds as in the

pre-war era. And so far, the ousted Irish missionaries have not been allowed to return." This indicates a relaxation of restrictions on private and non-state schools, though not a full return to pre-1970s conditions. Official statistics from this period do not show the share of pupils in private and non-state schools, suggesting that while these schools began to reappear, the majority of enrolments remained in state-managed and funded primary schools (Appendix 15).

As the 1980s progressed, fewer girls than boys were attending primary school in Anambra (Appendix 15). Gender inequalities also intersected with location. Anyamene's (1988) thesis on education in Anambra found a decline in enrolments during the 1980s, particularly among students in urban areas. The first cohort of pupils enrolled after the introduction of UPE in urban Anambra, from 1976 to 1981, was the largest, with 19,571 pupils, but this number dropped to 16,620 in the 1979-1984 cohort (Anyamene, 1988, p. 51). In rural areas, the first cohort included 13,821 pupils, decreasing to 12,752 in the 1979-1984 cohort. (Anyamene, 1988, p. 51). This chapter discusses the underlying reasons for these enrolment changes, focusing on the economic downturn and cost of living crisis affecting households across Nigeria.

In Lagos, the situation differed from that in Anambra. Between 1979 and 1983, the Lagos state government abolished school fees and moved to ban private schools, including those established by religious organisations and for-profit private schools. As a result, enrolments in private and non-state schools were minimal at the start of the 1980s. However, by the end of the decade, private sector engagement increased significantly, with 50 to 100 for-profit private schools being established annually in Lagos state (Härmä, 2013b). By the end of the 1990s, this number had risen to over 300 (Härmä, 2013b, p. 13). Appendix 15 shows primary school enrolments in Lagos, indicating that while enrolments in public primary schools increased between 1978/79 and 1991/92, they began to decline after this period (Lagos State Government Ministry of Education, no date, p. Table 2). The average number of girls enrolled was slightly higher than that of boys (Appendix 15).

In Kano and other northern states, enrolment patterns differed from those in Anambra and Lagos. By the end of the 1980s, *Qur'ānic* and *Islamiyah* schools accounted for approximately 13 percent of primary school enrolments in the northern states (World Bank, 1989, p. 11). Some of these schools were integrated into the formal education system, offering basic primary subjects and receiving government support for staffing and funding (World Bank, 1989, p. 11). During this period, Tijaniyya (Sufi) initiators and teachers, including some women, began opening *Islamiyah* schools and charging fees, a practice less common in earlier decades (Hutson, 2001). A World Bank (1989, p. 9) noted that in one *Islamiyah* school in Kano, "the ratio of girls to boys was 4:1, much higher than in public schools," with the Islamic Education Bureau supervising "about 20,000 students in Kano state, 60%

of whom are female." This underscores the continued importance of Islamic schools in Kano's educational landscape.

Concerning private schools, an advisor to the Kano State government on private and voluntary schools recalled that private schools began to emerge in the state during the 1980s and have operated ever since:

Well, the proliferation of private schools in Kano started around the 1980s, so we have stayed for a long with these private schools, since the 1980s to date. So, you see, about how many years, about 40 years or so, the operation or establishment of these schools in Kano State.

(Isaac, Kano, April 2021)

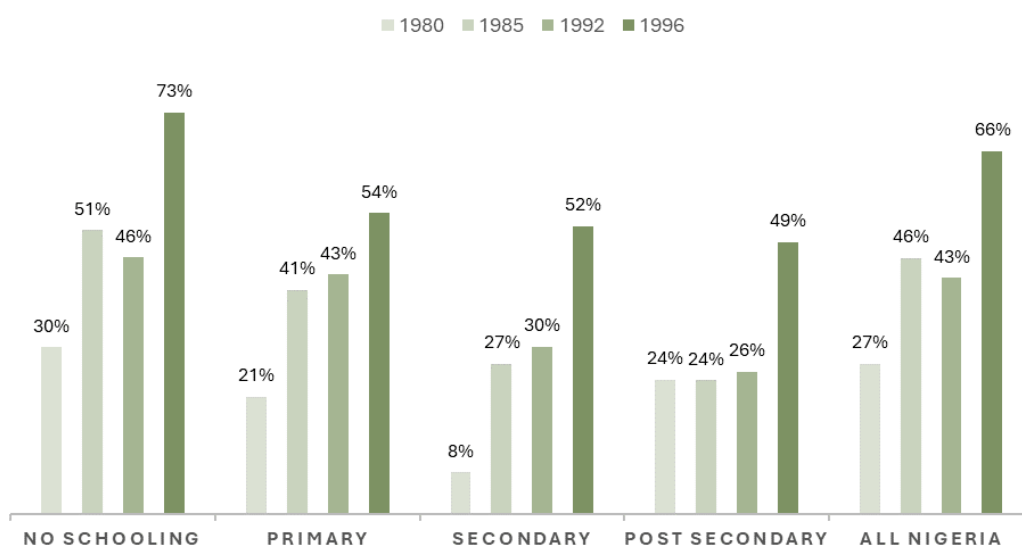
According to official government statistics, however, there were just seven private primary schools in 1984/85 and 1985/86 (Kano State Ministry of Education, no date a , p. 5). Appendix 15 shows a decrease in public primary school enrolments in Kano between 1982 and 1985/86. It also highlights that only about 30 percent of enrolments were girls, reflecting continued gendered inequalities in access to the primary education SoP, with boys having greater access throughout the 1980s.

The data on enrolments in Appendix 15, at both state and federal levels, indicate that the rapid expansion of the primary education SoP following the introduction of UPE in the 1970s was not sustained in the 1980s and 1990s. Unlike in Anambra and Lagos, where enrolment rates between boys and girls were relatively equitable, girls in Kano made up only about 30 percent of enrolments. Further, the economic and political crises of the 1980s and 1990s, discussed further in this chapter, severely impacted poor households, limiting access to the primary education SoP and exacerbating inequalities.

Households, Poverty, Inequality and the Primary Education SoP, 1980s-1990s

Population surveys indicate that poverty rates increased alongside inequality in the 1980s and 1990s (Aigbokhan, 2008). Figure 11 shows that by 1996, over 70 percent of the population without any education were living in poverty, up from 30 percent in 1980 (Aigbokhan, 2008, p. 14). In contrast, for those with post-secondary or secondary education, the poverty rate was approximately 50 percent in 1996—a significant increase from 1980 when the poverty rate for individuals with secondary education was around 8 percent (Aigbokhan, 2008, p. 15).

Figure 11 Poverty Incidence by Education Group in Nigeria, 1980-1996



Source: FOS (1999) Poverty Profile for Nigeria 1980 – 96, and NBS (2005) Poverty Profile for Nigeria, Abuja cited in Aigbokhan (2008, p. 15)

Unemployment rates rose from 6.2 percent in 1987 to 13 percent in 1999, primarily affecting rural populations (Aigbokhan, 2008, p. 8). Additionally, as measured by the Gini coefficient, national inequality increased from 0.43 in 1985 to 0.49 in 1996, as shown in Table 21 (Aigbokhan, 2008, p. 11). The table also presents inequality rates by location and geo-political zone, indicating that inequality grew more rapidly in urban areas compared to rural areas (Aigbokhan, 2008). Between 1985 and 1996, inequality decreased in the South South and South East (where Anambra is located), but increased in all other geo-political zones. The largest increases were observed in the North East and North Central, as well as a 0.04 rise in the South West (where Lagos is located) and a 0.06 rise in the North West (where Kano is located) (Aigbokhan, 2008, p. 11).

Table 21 Inequality Rates by Location and Geo-political Zone, 1985-1996

	1985	1992	1996
NATIONAL	0.43	0.41	0.49
LOCATION			
URBAN	0.49	0.38	0.52
RURAL	0.36	0.42	0.47
GEO-POLITICAL ZONE			
SOUTH SOUTH	0.48	0.39	0.46
SOUTH EAST	0.44	0.40	0.39
SOUTH WEST	0.43	0.40	0.47
NORTH CENTRAL	0.41	0.39	0.50
NORTH EAST	0.39	0.40	0.49

NORTH WEST	0.41	0.43	0.47
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Source: Aigbokhan (2000) and Federal Office of Statistics (1999) Poverty Profile for Nigeria 1980 – 1996, and National Bureau of Statistics (2005) Poverty Profile for Nigeria p. 27 cited in Aigbokhan (2008, p. 11)

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP: 1980s-1990s

The 1979 Constitution formed the political structures that shaped relations within the primary education SoP between 1979 and 1983. It introduced a "Presidential System of government" (Adeoti and Adeyeri, 2014, p. 139), consolidating power within the federal government and the presidency (Mustapha, 2006). Legislative power was skewed in favour of the federal government, which, according to Suberu (2001, p. 36 cited in Mustapha, 2006, p. 36), had the authority to "intervene in almost every matter of public importance". The federal government retained exclusive control over revenues from the "most buoyant and lucrative sources" (Smith, 1981, p. 372), which cemented its dominance "in all areas of economic policy except agriculture" (Smith, 1981, p. 366).

Primary education was listed as a concurrent responsibility, shared by federal, state, and local governments. As the next section shows, however, it effectively became a state responsibility, with less oversight from the federal government compared to the period leading up to and after UPE. The political formations that emerged at the state level, their perspectives on the private sector in education, and the governments they formed were important in shaping the interactions between non-state, private and public agencies and agents in the primary education SoP during this period.

Political Processes and the Primary Education SoP, 1979-1983

Under the 1979 Constitution, political parties and campaigns could no longer "be formed along parochial lines" (Mustapha, Ehrhardt and Diprose, 2018, p. 128), meaning they could no longer be based on regional, religious, or ethnic affiliations. Despite these requirements, the five main political parties registered for the 1979 elections were largely led by the same independence politicians from the 1950s and 1960s, and voting patterns largely followed ethnic-regional lines (Panter-Brick, 1979, p. 330; Mustapha, 2006, p. 18).

The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), led by Awólówò, and what Mustapha (2006, p. 37) describes as a "reconditioned" AG, focused its manifesto on free education at all levels, along with free healthcare and rural development (Ilfie, 2011). The manifesto also promised to "review the school year and revise the curriculum to highlight the importance of agriculture in modern development" (Olutola, 1981, p. 75). Similarly, the People's Redemption Party (PRP), led by Aminu Kano and seen by Mustapha (2006, p. 37) as a "renovation" of the NEPU, ran a campaign advocating for free education (Olutola, 1981, p. 77).

In contrast, the Nigerian People's Party (NPP), with presidential candidate Azikiwe and referred to by Mustapha (2006, p. 37) as a "reformed" NCNC, promised to return schools to VAs, largely Christian missions, and to encourage the establishment of private schools (Olutola, 1981, p. 75). Similarly, the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP), led by Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim, included a commitment to allow VAs to manage schools (Olutola, 1981).

The National Party of Nigeria (NPN) won the 1979 federal elections, with Shehu Shagari, a former teacher from Sokoto, becoming president (Iliffe, 2011). Like the NPP and GNPP, the NPN committed to encouraging non-state and private schools within the primary education SoP, though "under carefully designed laws and regulations" (Olutola, 1981, p. 76).

At the state level, NPN candidates won governorships in Bauchi, Benue, Cross River, Kwara, Niger, Rivers, and Sokoto; GNPP candidates in Borno and Gongola; UPN candidates in Bendel, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, and Oyo; NPP candidates in Anambra, Imo, and Plateau; and PRP candidates in Kano and Kaduna (Panter-Brick, 1979, p. 331). As education was on the concurrent list, state governments largely "determined" their approach to private and non-state sector engagements in primary education (Oriere, 1984). A May 1984 newspaper report highlighted that "when Shagari came to power, education policies were determined by whatever party governed a particular state" (Oriere, 1984). This report noted that in UPN-governed states, "education remained free at all levels," whereas in NPN-governed states, "fees were charged" (Oriere, 1984).

At the federal level, revisions to the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1981 enabled a change in the ownership structure outlined in the previous policy. The 1977 NPE had stated that primary schools were fully government-owned (financed and managed) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1977, p. 33): 97(3) "[W]ith the introduction of UPE, the proprietorship of primary schools has passed into the hands of government." This policy was revised to allow for the involvement of Voluntary Agencies, Communities, and Private Individuals in the establishment and management of primary education alongside state governments, as outlined here (Federal Ministry of Education, 1981, p. 46):

96(4) State Governments shall have the responsibility to establish and manage primary education alongside those run by Voluntary Agencies, Communities and Private Individuals, provided they comply with minimum standards prescribed by the Federal Government.

As the next section shows the relationships between private and non-state agents and agencies, and government bodies in Anambra, Lagos, and Kano evolved in distinct ways.

Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP in Anambra, Kano and Lagos, 1979-1983

In Lagos, following the election of the UPN and the appointment of Lateef Jakande as governor, significant changes were made to the primary education SoP and the role of private and non-state agents and agencies within it. Jakande implemented tight restrictions on private schools, including those established by religious organisations and for-profit entities. In his budget speech to the Lagos State House of Assembly on 8 April 1980, Jakande emphasised the "abolition of private primary education" as a key objective for the upcoming financial year (Jakande, 1980, p. 26). This policy was detailed in a booklet published by the Lagos State Government in this period, titled *Why Private Schools Must Go* (Lagos State Government, no date). Jakande's speech, published in the booklet and delivered when laying the foundation for the first 36-classroom school building in December 1979, referred to the UPN manifesto's promise to abolish private primary schools as a core commitment, as the following extract shows (Jakande, 1979, pp. 1–5):

The aspect of our programme which has been most vociferously attacked is the abolition of private primary schools in Lagos State with effect from the next Academic Session [...] Some critics have claimed that the abolition of private primary education is not part of our election promise. I can only refer to page 1 of the published Policy Papers of the Unity Party of Nigeria which says, among other things:

1. The Unity Party of Nigeria accepts responsibility on behalf of the State to provide every Nigerian with free education at all levels. There are strong and compelling political, economic and social reasons for so doing.
2. For these reasons, the Unity Party of Nigeria considers it to be in the best interest not only of the individual Nigerian citizens but also of the nation that education must be provided free for every Nigerian.
3. Primary education. This will be available to, and compulsory for, all children who are six years.

Jakande then referred to some of the criticisms of this policy, drawing attention to the contestations and "vested interests" in retaining private schools whilst arguing that free primary education and the banning of fees was the "greatest good for the greatest number" (Jakande, 1979, pp. 1–2):

In any democracy, there are bound to be vested interests who may be inconvenienced by a popular programme. But the rules of the game demand that such vested interest should not, and must not be allowed to stand in the way of the greatest good of the greatest number. We would be failing in our duty if we were to yield to the pressure of vested interests against the mandate of the electorate.

This speech reiterates the UPN's commitment to providing free education at all levels. Jakande justified the ban on private schools based on the principle of serving the welfare of most of the population. The reasons for the policy differed from those of the military regimes in the post-war period, which were directed toward nation-building and piecing together the fragments of Nigeria after the war.

Jakande's policy, while controversial, is remembered positively by some for increasing public school enrolments and directing more resources to public education. Clara, a representative of an elite private school association in Lagos, reflected on this period in an interview for this thesis (February 2021):

I remember maybe from the 70s in Lagos State. The governor that made that happen in this State, he just died yesterday or two days ago, he died at 91 [...] he created many more [public] schools. There are schools that were not properly constructed. At that time, they called them chicken sheds because there were no windows, just a covering and all of that. But then children were in school, and many children had to be enrolled. And one other thing that he did because it was like a populist governor at the time, he took over all private schools, so he cancelled the private schools, absorbed them into the public system. I mean, once everybody's child is in a public school, then attention will be paid to the public schools. I mean, that was his thinking, his rationale, and it worked, of course. I mean, there was a lot of backlash and all of that, but I mean, it worked for some time.

(Clara, Lagos, February 2021)

This excerpt highlights the construction of new public schools, which were initially of poor quality and referred to as "chicken sheds." Despite their makeshift condition, these schools contributed to an increase in school enrolments, providing access to education for many children. The representative also noted that integrating private schools into the public system during this period resulted in greater focus and resources for public education. This reflects an acknowledgment of Jakande's efforts to make education accessible and his impact on Lagos' educational landscape in this period.

Similarly, in Oyo state, where the UPN party was also in power, a Financial Times article from November 1982 noted that "primary school enrolments doubled "from 996,000 in 1979 to 1.9 million in 1982" (Hawkins, 1982).

In Kano, the PRP won the election, with Abubakar Rimi becoming governor. The PRP's campaign focused on promises of free education and emphasised the importance of women's education for development (Olutola, 1981, p. 77). Notably, this was the first time women in Kano and all northern

states could vote in federal elections (Callaway, 1987). The party drew on traditional gender norms, promoting the idea that education would make women "better wives and mothers in Islam" (Callaway, 1987, p. 386). The PRP aimed to expand access to education for both boys and girls, and "fathers and husbands were urged to send girls to school" (Callaway, 1987, p. 385).

The NPP was elected to power in Anambra, and Jim Nwobodo became governor. The NPP's manifesto pledged to return schools to VAs and establish private schools (Olutola, 1981). Consequently, Law No.4 of 1983 was passed in Anambra, allowing the transfer of school ownership from the state to VAs (Uyanna, 1999). However, only four training colleges were transferred before a change in government occurred (Uyanna, 1999).

Between 1979 and 1983, there was no national consensus on the role of non-state and private sector agents and agencies in the primary education SoP. These contestations played out particularly starkly in Lagos under the governorship of Jakande.

Economic and Political Structures and Contestations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1980s

Shagari assumed power during a period of economic buoyancy. As discussed in Chapter 7, in the 1970s, the price of oil skyrocketed in the 1970s, with a barrel of oil increasing from \$4 in 1973 to \$42 in 1980 (Olukoshi, 1993, p. 2). This led to a substantial rise in federal revenue, from N4.733 million in 1975-76 to N6,177 million in 1977 and N9,825 million in 1981 (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983, p. 104; Olukoshi, 1993, p. 1); During this period, oil exports accounted for ninety percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings (Olukoshi, 1993, p. 3). However, towards the end of Shagari's first term, the global oil market collapsed, causing a sharp drop in crude oil revenue from "N10,100 million in 1979 to N 5,161 million in 1982" (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983, p. 103; Olukoshi, 1993).

This economic crisis was largely due to Nigeria's heavy reliance on oil for foreign exchange (Olukoshi, 1993, p. 3). As a result, factories across the country either shut down or operated with reduced staff, leading to widespread unemployment (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983). Inflation soared, and the prices of essential goods increased by as much as 100 percent (Bangura, Mustapha, and Adamu, 1983). For example, the price of a tin of palm oil rose from N45 in February 1983 to N79 in October 1983 (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983, p. 107). This had a devastating effect across Nigeria, plunging many households into poverty as they struggled to afford basic necessities.

In response to the crisis, Shagari implemented the Economic Stabilisation Act in 1982, aiming to mitigate the downturn in oil prices (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983). The measures included

suspending capital projects, reducing travel allowances, requiring compulsory advance deposits on all imports (including food items, cars, trucks, and other vehicles), and cutting government expenditure (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983). At the same time, the government engaged in negotiations for a \$2 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a \$300 million structural adjustment loan from the World Bank (May, 1984).

Even before the recession, there was agitation among workers. In 1981, a "major strike" was called demanding a national minimum wage and minimum pension, and in 1983, another strike was narrowly avoided when the federal government provided a loan of N537 million to state governments to pay salary arrears and allowances to workers (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983; Mayer, 2016). Despite this, in 1983, state and local governments across Nigeria failed to pay teachers, leading to "protracted strikes by the teachers' unions and closure of schools by the authorities" (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983, p. 107; Diamond, 1984). As Diamond (1984, pp. 909–910) noted:

In a large number of the 19 states, teachers went on strike in 1983 after going four to six months or more without pay. Strikes by unpaid civil servants temporarily shut down some state governments. With emergency loans from the federal government, released after a threatened national strike on the eve of the elections, state governments started operating again, but many school systems remained shut down. By the time the soldiers took over, some areas had gone for more than a year with no schooling [...] Incensed at the growing gap between the suffering of ordinary people and the high living of the elite, trade unions were becoming newly restive.

In March 1983, around 50,000 women protested in Jos, Plateau state, when the government failed to pay teachers' salaries and provide school grants (Callaway, 1987, p. 387). At this time, the salary (excluding benefits like housing and travel allowances) of a commissioner/minister in Cross River state, one of the poorest states in Nigeria, was over 13 times the minimum wage (Ekwe-Ekwe, 1985, p. 614). However, the outcomes of these protests remain unclear, as a change in government occurred in December 1983.

The failure of states to pay teachers was partly due to changes in the federal revenue allocation formula in 1981. This change increased the share of federal revenue to state and local governments, with population size becoming a more significant factor in the formula (Hinchliffe, 1989, p. 235; Ovwasa, 1995). However, it also significantly reduced federal grants allocated to primary education (Hinchliffe, 1989), placing a greater financial burden on local governments, which received a relatively smaller share of federal revenue (Ovwasa, 1995).

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1983-1993

The 1983 elections returned Shagari to power, but in December 1983, a military coup was carried out by a group of generals, citing economic mismanagement as their justification (May, 1984).

General Muhammadu Buhari became the new Head of State (Mama, 1995; May, 1984). This coup marked the beginning of another period of military rule in Nigeria, lasting from 1983 to 1998, with only a brief interruption in 1993.

Under Buhari's regime (1983-85), austerity measures were intensified, and corruption was identified as a significant cause of the economic crisis (Olukoshi and Abdulraheem, 1985). To tackle these issues, the government undertook a "massive retrenchment of public service employees to cut down the wage bill" and implemented a wage freeze (Olukoshi and Abdulraheem, 1985, p. 96). The regime also focused on tax collection and imposed stricter import regulations (Olukoshi and Abdulraheem, 1985).

The deepening economic crisis further strained the primary education SoP. Buhari removed subsidies for primary education (and at all levels) (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983). According to Ekwe-Ekwe (1985, p. 611), the UPE programme was "abandoned, forcing thousands of poor urban and rural families to withdraw their children from schools". Ityavyar (1986, p. 171) argued that Buhari gave "the final assault to free UPE". Many states reintroduced school fees, with parents expected to pay bear all costs associated with schooling, including books, uniforms and transport (Ityavyar, 1986). A World Bank (1989, p. 8) report noted that "many state governments resorted to such ad-hoc fund-raising measures as fees, levies and semi-mandatory "contributions" by parents".

Unions opposed this reversal of the UPE programme. On International Workers' Day in 1984, the president of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Ali Chioma, expressed the NLC's commitment to "free education as a right for all Nigerians" and contested "the direct and indirect reintroduction of school fees by the federal and state governments" (Chioma quoted in May, 1984). However, under Buhari, trade unionists were targeted. Doctors striking over poor hospital conditions were fired, and union leaders were imprisoned (Olukoshi and Abdulraheem, 1985). University lecturers were accused of leading subversive organisations, and political seminars and talks were banned on campuses (Olukoshi and Abdulraheem, 1985). Despite the shrinking space for civil society, the NLC and NUT remained united in their demands for greater investment in the primary education SoP and the right to free public education.

Nigeria's economic and political situation worsened when, in August 1985, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida led a coup that ended Buhari's time in power (Mama, 1995). This coup became

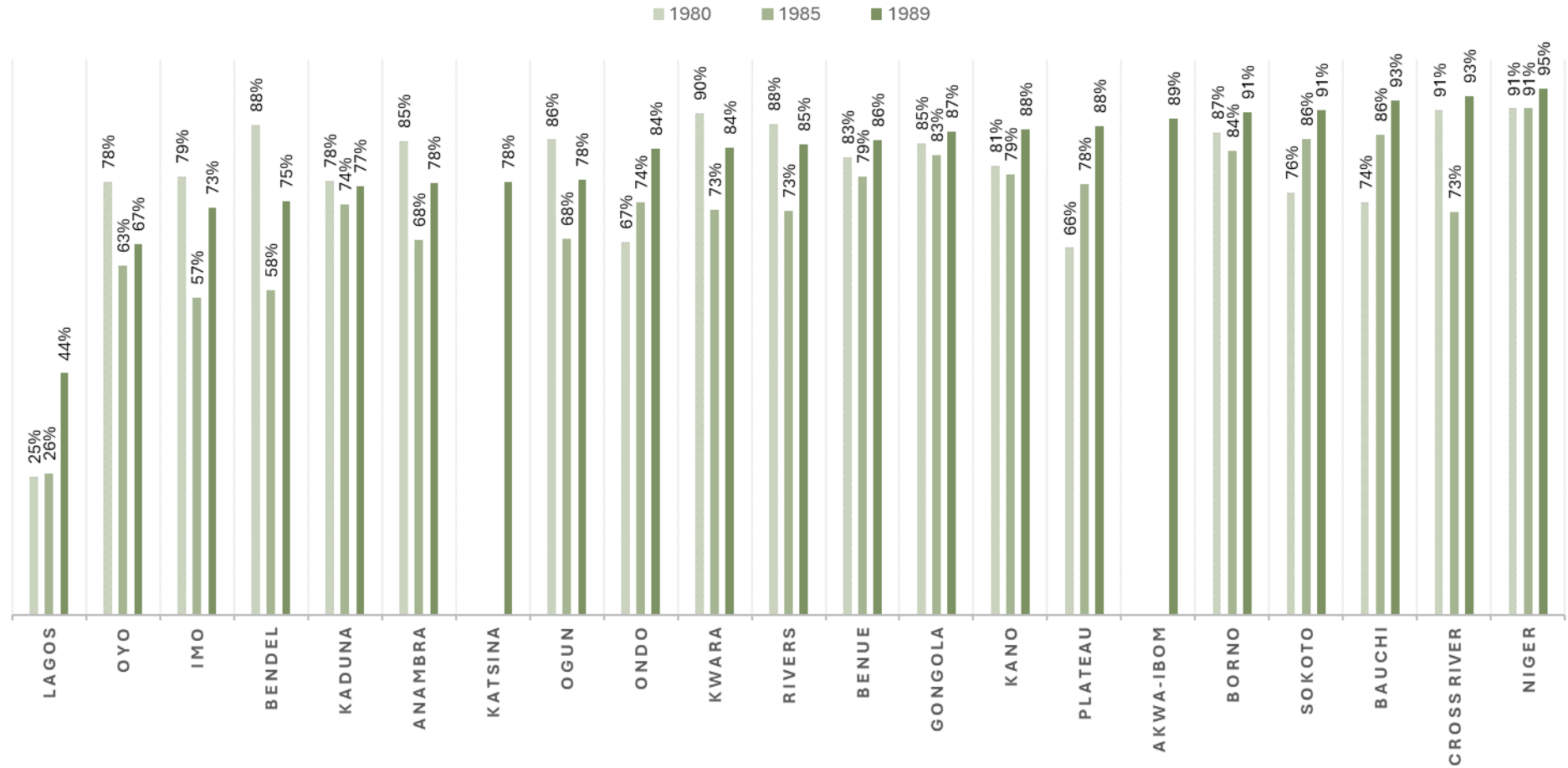
known as the "IMF coup" because Babangida quickly agreed to the loan conditions set by the IMF and World Bank, introducing the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) (Momoh, 1996). In October 1985, Babangida declared a "15-month national economic emergency" (Mustapha, 1991, p. 1), and implemented SAP, which included measures such as the managed-flotation of the naira, reductions in public spending, the abolition of import licensing, deregulation of interest rates, and various policies aimed at diversifying the economy and promoting market forces (Momoh, 1996; Mustapha, 1991). The flotation of the naira led to its depreciation by 87 percent between 1986 and 1990 (Mustapha, 1991, p. 1).

These political and economic structural shifts affected the primary education SoP. The proportion of federal expenditures allocated to education decreased from 21 percent in 1981 to approximately 13 percent in 1988 (World Bank, 1989, p. 38). Another study shows that between 1980 and 1989, federal education expenditures decreased by 70 percent in real terms, and health spending decreased by 51 percent (Soludo, 2003, p. 71). Primary education received a smaller share of the federal budget throughout the decade. In 1981, federal education expenditures were distributed as 36 percent for primary, 30.5 percent for secondary, and 24.5 percent for higher education (World Bank, 1989, p. 38). By 1985, the proportion of public recurrent expenditure allocated to higher education had increased, while the share for primary education had decreased (World Bank, 1989).

Under Babangida, local government was given more responsibility for primary education, although the specific roles of different government tiers remained unclear (World Bank, 1989). Decree No. 3 of 1991 made primary education the constitutional responsibility of LGAs (World Bank, 2001, p. 8). The decentralisation of primary education was consistent with the government's broader strategy of channelling of resources to local governments. For example, Decree No. 49 of 1989 established the National Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission, introducing a new formula that increased the share of federal revenue allocated to local governments and included a special fund of five percent (Ovwasa, 1995). The share of the federation account allocated to state governments decreased from 30 percent in 1981 to 24 percent in 1992, while the federal government's share decreased from 55 percent to 48.5 percent (Ovwasa, 1995). Meanwhile, the share going to local government increased from 10 percent to 20 percent (Ovwasa, 1995, p. 80). The special fund, which included allocations for ecological, mineral-producing, and stabilisation purposes, increased from 4.5 to 7.5 percent over the same period (Ovwasa, 1995, p. 80). Starting in 1990, local government allocations were directly channelled from federal accounts, bypassing state government (Phillips, 1991).

Most states, except Lagos, heavily relied on federal funding to finance education, with over half of their recurrent revenue coming from the Revenue Allocation Scheme (RAS), as shown in Figure 12 (Phillips, 1991, p. 107). For example, RAS contributed 25 percent, 26 percent, and 44 percent of recurrent revenue in Lagos state in 1980, 1985, and 1989, respectively (Phillips, 1991, p. 109). In Kano, the corresponding percentages were 81, 79 and 88 percent, and in Anambra, they were 85, 68, and 78 percent (Phillips, 1991, p. 109). This heavy reliance on federal revenues meant that the ability of states and local governments to finance primary education was largely dependent on federal allocations.

Figure 12 Revenues Received under RAS as a Percentage of State Recurrent Revenue, 1980-1989



Source: Phillips (1991, p. 109) from Federal Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Lagos (Katsina and Akwa-Ibom created in 1987)

In 1988, the federal government issued Decree No. 31 of 1988, establishing the National Primary Education Fund (NPEF) and the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) (World Bank, 1989). The NPEC served as an advisory body, with responsibilities including setting minimum standards for primary schools, providing guidance to federal and state governments, reviewing the curriculum, conducting research and collecting statistics, overseeing capital development projects, and maintaining the national teachers' register (World Bank, 1989). The decree also introduced the legal existence of Primary School Management Boards and Primary School Management Committees at the local government, district, and village levels (World Bank, 1989). These structures aimed to improve the management and administration of primary schools, ensuring effective coordination and governance at the grassroots level (World Bank, 1989). However, both the NPEC and NPEF were short-lived; Decree No. 3 of 1991 abolished these bodies and primary education was made the constitutional responsibility of LGAs (World Bank, 2001)

During 1987/88, some states withdrew education levies and fees due to the worsening economic situation (World Bank, 1989). For instance, Anambra made primary education free in 1987, while Plateau state "modestly reduced its education levy" (World Bank, 1989, p. 8). In 1989, the federal government introduced a Special Grant of N800 million for primary education, bringing total expenditure on primary education that year to approximately N2.3 billion (Mbanefoh, 1994, p. 20). However, local governments in many states struggled to cover the costs associated with the primary education SoP. A World Bank (1989) report noted the limitations on local governments in raising additional revenue to cover these costs. In Kano state, for example, "almost 80% of all local government finances" were used to cover teachers' salaries (Hinchliffe, 1989, p. 237). This increasing responsibility for primary education placed a significant strain on local government budgets, making the system unsustainable in the long term.

In 1992, the NUT called for a strike in both primary and secondary schools to protest Decree 3 (1991), which made local governments responsible for financing primary schools, including paying teachers' salaries (Mbanefoh, 1994; Olori, 1993a). After these changes were implemented, teachers in several states went unpaid for months (Olori, 1993a). A report for the Inter Press Service in January 1993 highlighted the lack of funds at the local government level to pay teachers, suggesting that local councils were diverting "education funds to other uses" (Olori, 1993a).

A nationwide teachers' strike began on December 8, 1992, lasting throughout much of 1993 and into 1994 (Okusanya, 1994; Olajide, 1993; Olori, 1993a, 1993b). The federal government responded by threatening to fire striking teachers (Olori, 1993a; Mbanefoh, 1994). (Mbanefoh, 1994). Initially, the strike garnered public sympathy. One parent, quoted in a news report, expressed their support,

stating, "teachers have been so relegated to the background in the scheme of things even though they taught those who are in the government today" (Olori, 1993a). Another news report in September 1993 highlighted the impact of the strike, with a mother stating (Olajide, 1993):

The education sector is in terribly bad shape. My children now stay more at home than in school. One of them was knocked down by a vehicle while playing football last week. He died two days after.

In January 1994, an eight-year-old pupil named Moni Aromire expressed their desire to be back in school, saying, "I wish we would be called back to school. I don't like staying at home while my friends whose parents can afford fees in private schools are attending classes" (Okusanya, 1994). This quote underscores how middle- and high-income households began enrolling their children in private schools during this period (Mbanefoh, 1994). In an October 1993 news report, one student urged the government to resolve the situation, stating, "The government should find a solution to this problem because not all parents can afford to send their children to private schools" (Olori, 1993c). A Lagos parent interviewed for a news report in November 1993 mentioned enrolling their two children in a private primary school, while other parents enrolled their children in evening classes (Olori, 1993b). In contrast, a parent who worked as a civil servant expressed their inability to afford school fees or even "good meals" for their children (Olori, 1993b).

The prolonged teachers' strikes are often cited as a catalyst for the establishment of private schools, particularly in Lagos (Rose and Adelabu, 2007; Urwick, 2002). However, as discussed earlier in the chapter, private schools operated in Lagos at the start of the 1980s (as Jakande's policy approach indicated) and began reappearing after Jakande's restrictions on private schools were eased. During an interview for this thesis, Clara, a representative of an elite private school association, recalled her experience of starting a school in the 1980s despite concerns about the uncertain political climate and the potential for regime changes that might lead to the banning of private schools. Clara shared how her father was initially cautious when she proposed opening a school:

But I recall that when we were going to start in 1985, my father was very adamant to say look, government just took over schools. Do you think this is a safe business to go into? Is this the best thing to do? You understand that there's always that danger that another government might just come and say that they will take over schools, you know.

(Clara, Lagos, February 2021).

Despite these concerns, Clara established the school, recognising the opportunities within the shifting political and economic landscape. She was also motivated by her desire to provide her

children with an education based on the Montessori pedagogy, which led her to the UK to train as a Montessori teacher before returning to Nigeria:

So, I went to the UK and trained as a Montessori teacher, and so that was how it started. And you know, way back then, which is what I try to point out to people, that was the time when a lot of Nigerians were leaving Nigeria to go settle in the UK, you know, it was a time, a period for that, but then as soon as I finished my course, I felt the urge to go back to Nigeria. I needed to give back to this community, you know, that means that there was a need for this education in Nigeria, there must have been many other people in my shoes at that time, and so that was how it all started, and we started with three children, and we've now grown to over 2,000.

(Clara, Lagos, February 2021).

As Clara's story illustrates, the motivation to open this private school was closely linked to middle-class aspirations for a specific type of education, which was not available in the public education system.

Therefore, it is important to consider the ideological shift that occurred during this period regarding the role of the state and non-state and private agents and agencies in education. While strike action may have increased the growth and demand for private schools, the culture of private schooling for the middle class, particularly in Lagos, was established earlier in the decade.

International Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP: Private Sector Efficiency, 1980s-1990s

Political and economic shifts in the 1980s shaped these ideas around the role of private and non-state agents and agencies in the primary education SoP. Although the SAP was portrayed as an "indigenous" initiative by Babangida's Government, it was a condition of World Bank/IMF loans (Momoh, 1996). The SAP's principles closely resembled those implemented in other countries, signifying a departure from the prevailing structuralism and import substitution industrialisation strategies that had characterised African development policies, including those in Nigeria, during the 1960s and 1970s (Soludo, 2003). These earlier strategies included nationalising foreign companies, expanding control over public services, and investing in education for scientific and technological advancements (Soludo, 2003) (see Chapter 7). However, by the 1980s, the "State" was increasingly viewed as inefficient, and there was a "strong political attack on big government as being both incompetent and oppressive" (Olukoshi, 2003; Soludo, 2003, p. 25).

The SAP was underpinned by "an ideology of reliance upon market forces, and the reduction of state intervention and expenditure to a minimum"; an ideology that had emerged in the US under President Reagan and in Britain under Prime Minister Thatcher and was subsequently transported to the global South by financial institutions under the guise of development (Fine, 2001, p. 3). In education, the World Bank's 1988 *World Development Report* argued against restrictions on or outright banning private schools as had occurred in Nigeria in the 1970s (alongside Congo, Ethiopia and Pakistan) (World Bank, 1988, p. 140). The report called for "relaxing these restrictions [on private schools and] voluntary organisations" to both increase enrolments and "mobilize new resources" (World Bank, 1988, p. 140). Simultaneously, the report argued for the (re)introduction of fees in education and health care services and greater decentralisation of responsibilities to local governments, which were perceived as being closer to "communities" (World Bank, 1988). These changes were expected to increase efficiency in public spending as "fees induce students, their parents, and administrators to scrutinize costs." (World Bank, 1988, p. 136). These narratives increasingly influenced the primary education SoP in Nigeria, promoting private sector efficiency and non-state engagements over state-led engagements.

At the same time, while the World Bank argued that "fees induce students, their parents, and administrators to scrutinise costs" (World Bank, 1988, p. 136), households were grappling with the effects of an economic crisis. The prices of essential food items such as gari, yam, beans, sugar, milk, and fish continued to skyrocket, with extreme poverty rates increasing from 28 percent in 1980 to 66 percent in 1996 (Bangura and Beckman, 1993; Gandy, 2005). The increased costs associated with primary schooling, combined with the rising costs of essential items, were felt particularly harshly by poor parents (World Bank, 2001). A report from *The Guardian (UK)* highlighted that in 1985, there was an increase in fees and levies for primary education, placing an additional burden on families already struggling with unemployment and high living costs (Bryce, 1985). A World Bank Primary Education Subsector Study noted that the average income of a rural household in 1987 was N1,568, with spending on education ranging from N52 to N132 per pupil, which was considered a significant amount for these households (World Bank, 1989, p. 38). In other words, the (re)introduction of fees in the primary education SoP placed an additional financial burden on poor households during a time of high inflation and unemployment, pushing more people into poverty.

Despite these reports showing the challenges faced by parents in covering the costs of schooling, the role of "local communities" in education provisioning also re-emerged as a central theme in international development projects. In 1991, the World Bank launched the Primary Education Project, providing Nigeria with a credit facility of US \$120 million (World Bank, 2001). This project

marked a shift in the World Bank's approach to education, explicitly targeting primary schooling.³⁵ In the World Bank's implementation completion report review of this project, the involvement of local communities in the primary education SoP was emphasised. While acknowledging that funding for education decreased following the introduction of the SAP, the proposed solutions included: increasing community participation through self-help projects; mobilising local communities using radio and television broadcasts to showcase physical improvements achieved through community efforts; and establishing District and Village Education Committees (World Bank, 2001, p. 6). The report highlighted the effectiveness of community involvement, stating (World Bank, 2001, p. 12):

The most successful interventions were those with substantial involvement from communities. In an overall environment of strong centralization, poor governance, and loss of trust in Government, the community self-help projects, although a small pilot, provided an approach that was effective in achieving results and in the effective use of limited resources.

Further, the report argued that there were limitations in designing a nationwide project for primary education delivered through a central agency. It stated that such an approach was "less than effective in responding to the individual situation of a state and the needs and conditions of its primary education system." (World Bank, 2001, p. 12). However, concerning the textbook revolving fund (whereby parents contributed to the cost of textbooks), the report also noted that (World Bank, 2001, p. 5):

Although the individual book fee was small (N 20, or about US \$.15 per book), this is too much for poor parents, with several children in school, all requiring books in at least five core subjects, all at the beginning of the school year when other school costs, such as uniforms also need to be spent.

The primary education SoP presented here reflects a situation where international agents and agencies advocated for greater responsibilities for schooling costs to be shifted onto parents and local communities. This approach was justified by the argument that local involvement would lead to more efficient use of resources and better outcomes. However, this shift occurred even as poverty and inequality rates were increasing, placing an additional burden on the poorest households (Aigbokhan, 2008).

³⁵ However, progress was limited, with only around 10 percent of the credit disbursed by 1997, the original end date of the project. Consequently, an agreement was reached to cancel US\$30 million of the funding, and the project was extended by three years to address the lack of achievement (World Bank, 2001, p. 3).

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1990s

Political changes at the federal level in the 1990s shifted relations within the primary education SoP. Babangida had pledged to transfer power to a civilian government by 1990. Although he banned political activities in 1987, this was lifted in 1989 when state-sanctioned parties were allowed to operate (Lewis, 1994, p. 324; Mustapha, 2006). These parties were the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), with the latter being centre-right and the former centre-left (Lewis, 1994). Despite local and state elections during this period, Babangida repeatedly delayed the handover of power to civilian rule, and when presidential primaries took place in 1992, he annulled the results (Lewis, 1994). In January 1993, a Civilian Transitional Council was established, headed by Ernest Shonekan, "a prominent Yoruba business executive" (Lewis, 1994, p. 325). Presidential elections were held in June 1993, but towards the end of the month, Babangida contested the vote, claiming it had been tainted by "procedural irregularities and legal haggling" (Lewis, 1994, p. 326).

In Anambra, the division of the state into Anambra and Enugu in 1991 meant new candidates had to be identified quickly for the newly created state, and boundaries had to be redrawn before the elections (Agbese and Anim, 1997). Chukwuemeka Ezeife (1992-93), "a retired federal permanent secretary" and member of the SDP, was elected governor of Anambra (Agbese and Anim, 1997, p. 231). The rivalry between the Catholic and Anglican churches in the state influenced the election outcome, with the Anglicans claiming that the NRC candidate benefited from the support of the Catholic church (Agbese and Anim, 1997). In Lagos, there was a shift away from the more centre-left politics associated with Awólówò, as the centre-right NRC's Michael Otedola (1992-93) was elected governor (Agbese and Anim, 1997). Religion played a role in this outcome: Otedola, a "devout" Catholic, was presented as the first Christian to govern the state (Agbese and Anim, 1997). He faced a Muslim opponent from the SDP, and the Catholic church's support for Otedola, allegedly endorsed by Archbishop Olubunmi Okogie, aimed to "break the Muslim hold on the Lagos government house" (Agbese and Anim, 1997, p. 230). Similarly, Kano (Jigawa, which was created out of Kano in 1991) saw a shift from its traditional leftist politics with the victory of Kabiru Ibrahim Gaya (1992-93) from the centre-right NRC as governor (Agbese and Anim, 1997).

The elections were eventually annulled by Babangida, leading to protests across Nigeria, particularly in Lagos and the Delta region – in Lagos in July 1993, at least one hundred people died (Gandy, 2005; Lewis, 1994). While the protests did not cause Babangida to reverse his stance, he stepped down in August, and the Interim National Government, under Shonekan, assumed control, releasing human

rights activists from prison and initiating new talks with the World Bank and IMF (Lewis, 1994). One key condition from these talks was the removal of fuel subsidies, "long a sticking point in negotiations with the multilateral lenders" and which would have resulted in a "seven-fold increase in fuel prices" (Lewis, 1994, p. 328). In response, the NLC announced a general strike, "paralysing Lagos and other southern cities" (Lewis, 1994, p. 328). These economic and political processes paved the way for General Sani Abacha, an "old friend" of Babangida, to assume power as the next military leader of Nigeria (Gandy, 2005, p. 47). As the defence minister in the interim government, Abacha held a military veto, forcing Shonekan to step down and subsequently "dissolv[ing] the entire transition framework" (Lewis, 1994, p. 329).

Under Abacha, one of the early changes to the primary education SoP was the reintroduction of the NPEC and NPEF through Decree No. 3 of 1994 (Nwagwu, 1997). Responsibility for education financing was thus shifted back to the federal government, "guarantee[ing] that the allocated government resources were used to pay teachers' salaries" (World Bank, 2001, p. 5). As a result, according to the World Bank, the frequency of teachers' strikes decreased (World Bank, 2001).

Like Babangida, Abacha also attempted to transition Nigeria back to civilian rule. A transition programme was initiated in 1995, involving the establishment of a Constitutional Review Committee, dividing Nigeria into six geopolitical zones, and the formation of an electoral commission (Malachy, 2013). During this period, five political parties were registered with the electoral commission: United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP), Congress for National Consensus (CNC), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM), and National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN) (Malachy, 2013, p. 69). However, under Abacha's regime, freedom of political expression was limited, and all five political parties registered Abacha as their presidential candidate (Malachy, 2013). National legislative elections were held in 1998, just before Abacha's death (Oshodi, 2007).

In 1997, a group of 18 prominent Nigerians representing the main political formations of the early 1990s came together (Malachy, 2013). This group was described as "eminent but angry" (Katsina, 2016, p. 4). It consisted of members from the All Nigeria Congress (ANC), the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM), and a coalition of politicians who were denied registration during Abacha's "self-succession project" (Malachy, 2013, p. 61). Eventually, this group became the People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Malachy, 2013, p. 61), which Iliffe (2011, p. 165) describes as "stretching across almost the entire political spectrum, with an umbrella as its symbol." The PDP would become the most significant political party in Nigeria in the 2000s, as covered in the next chapter.

Gender and Religious Cultures Shaping the Primary Education SoP, 1980s-1990s

Religious processes intertwined with narratives around the role of the community in the primary school SoP, shaping the cultures of education provisioning in this period. Immorality and deviant behaviours were increasingly seen as critical challenges within education, with concerns that pupils lacked moral guidance and discipline.

At the state level, attention to morality and discipline paralleled the growth of Pentecostal churches in southern states throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Burgess, 2008), influencing the culture of primary schooling. From the 1970s, Christian Pentecostalism—emphasising evangelism and conversion—became popular among university students, particularly in Lagos and other southern states (Adeboye, 2005). Adeboye (2005, p. 441) notes that this movement was heavily influenced by American Christian leaders and "adopted a Western outlook in terms of literature, music, and members' dressing." Most church leaders associated with Pentecostalism were educated and "upwardly mobile" (Adeboye, 2005, p. 441).³⁶ This form of Christianity also tended toward a literal reading of the Bible and roles assigned to women aligned with "traditional gender roles of mothering and nurturing" (Pereira and Ibrahim, 2010, p. 926).

Some of these newer Pentecostal churches began establishing schools in Anambra in the 1980s. According to Burgess (2008, p. 279), "these were mainly intended to cater to the needs of their members or to evangelise children." Examples include the Master's Vessel Church (MVC), which established a primary school in 1991, and Living Word Ministries in Anambra (Burgess, 2008). The establishment of these schools, which were non-state and religiously oriented but distinct from the mission schools of earlier decades, marked a new development in the role of non-state and private agents and agencies in the primary education SoP.

The established Anglican and Catholic churches were particularly vocal in advocating for the "return" of schools in southern states. The perceived lack of moral discipline was increasingly attributed to the individual and linked to the education SoP. For example, at a 1990 conference on "Discipline and Motivation in Schools," Babangida, the keynote speaker, attributed falling school standards to the "moral decadence of parents in particular, and the corrupt atmosphere of our homes in general"

³⁶ In the 1980s and 1990s, "the gospel of faith and prosperity" in Pentecostal movements grew in popularity (Adeboye, 2005, p. 442) against the backdrop of high inflation and worsening economic conditions for most individuals.

(Okafor, 1991, p. 18). Okafor (1991) notes that following this conference, the National Concord newspaper featured an editorial supporting the return of schools to VAs.

In Anambra, religious leaders and other agents in the primary education SoP associated the state takeover of schools in the 1970s with issues like indiscipline and declining educational standards (Obiefunna, 1999; Okafor, 1991). Okafor (1991), a former Dean of the Faculty of Education at Nsukka, positioned the church as a counterforce to state power, emphasising the importance of human rights and the involvement of non-state and private sectors in education. Okafor (1991, pp. 12–17) argued that church-administered schools instilled discipline and promoted good moral behaviour, urging the government to return schools to churches to restore these values.

In 1998, a conference organised by the Anambra government and Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka (the capital of Anambra since the formation of the new state in 1991) brought together political and religious leaders to discuss concerns about declining enrolment of boys and perceived threats to masculinity (Ejofor, 1999; Ukaegbu, 1999). The conference led to the publication of *Fighting a Monster: Declining Males in Schools*, which included contributions from the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha and the Anglican Bishop of Awka (Anikwenwa, 1999; Ejofor, 1999; Obiefunna, 1999). The discussions highlighted the decline in education standards and morality, attributed to the government's takeover of schools, with participants advocating for the return of schools to their "original owners" (Ejofor, 1999; Uyanna, 1999). Ejofor (1999, p. 261) stated that "the standard of education and morality has been falling since the government takeover of schools in 1970." In a paper by Uyanna, the former Chief Judge of Anambra, it was argued that the drop in standards and morality coincided with the government takeover of schools (Uyanna, 1999, p. 16).

Concerns about morality and indiscipline in the education SoP were also linked to the growing dropout rate among boys after primary schools (Ejofor, 1999; Uyanna, 1999). Educated women were increasingly seen as a threat to the traditional family structure, where men were expected to hold decision-making power (Obiefunna, 1999). There were also concerns about the declining participation of men in civil service jobs and their diminishing role in the decision-making processes of governments (Ukaegbu, 1999). Ejofor (1999, p. vii) argued that education had become associated with femininity: "Education, that one most important agent of social change, has become another 'kitchen'—a feminine affair. Our males were no more going to school." Additionally, Christian teachings were perceived to have been neglected in the state managed and financed education SoP (Ejofor, 1999; Okafor, 1991).

In northern states, different religious processes shaped the cultures around the primary education SoP. Islam in Kano had traditionally been dominated by the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya Sufi orders

(Kane, 2003). However, from the 1960s and 1970s, Islamic reform movements emerged, challenging prevailing theological teachings and including what Hutson (1999, p. 739) describes as "anti-Sufi" orders. The Wahhabi-inspired Izala, also known as the Society for the Removal of Innovations and Reinstatement of Tradition, gained strength, supported by Saudi Arabia, and advocated for an orthodox interpretation of Islam and a "return to roots" (Ibrahim, 1989; Isa and Adam, 2017, p. 228).

As Kano city expanded during this period, it absorbed many surrounding villages, attracting people "nurtured aspirations for social mobility and for emancipation from the traditional order" with formal education key to this aspiration (Kane, 2003, pp. 66–67). The expansion of *Islamiyah* schools, which incorporated both "modern" and religious education in urban areas, led parents to enrol their children in these schools instead of the *Almajiri-Tsangaya* system (Kane, 2003).

Gender inequalities also persisted in political activity at the federal level. Mama (1995, p. 45) notes that between 1979 and 1983, only three women held ministerial positions: the Minister of National Planning (Mrs. Oyegbola), the Minister of Education (Mrs. Ivase), and the Minister of International Affairs (Chief Akinrinade). Additionally, out of 450 members in the House of Representatives, only three were women; in the Senate, there was only one woman among 95 members (Mama, 1995, p. 45), highlighting a stark gender imbalance in federal representation.

Efforts to improve women's representation in politics were limited. Under Buhari's military government, a "proclamation" was issued "that there should be one woman commissioner in each of the nineteen states" (Mama, 1995, p. 46). Despite this, women's roles in federal politics, already limited, were further diminished, with no women in senior positions like the Supreme Military Council or ministerial posts at the federal level (Mama, 1995). Further, under Buhari, single women, women traders, and working mothers were accused of "indiscipline", "moral laxity", and "delinquency" (Mama, 1995, p. 46). The targeting of women varied regionally, such as the ban on single women in Kano state, which forced many women into marriage, and harassment of women traders in Lagos state (Mama, 1995).³⁷

As the 1980s progressed and Babangida assumed power, women's representation in federal politics did not improve. There were no women on the Armed Forces Ruling Council, and no women held ministerial positions (though two women eventually held positions in the Political Bureau) or were governors/administrators at the state level (Mama, 1995, p. 46). Moreover, in the local government

³⁷ However, women's organisations, particularly market women's organisations, were able to mitigate some of the effects of these policies (Mama, 1995).

elections of 1987, only "two out of 301 women were elected as chairs of local government", despite Babangida's proclamation "that one in four local government councillors should be women" (Mama, 1995, p. 46). Two women—Celia Ekpenyong in Cross River and Alhaja Sinatu Ojikutu in Lagos—served as vice-governors (Mama, 1995).

These gendered processes in federal and state politics were also found in the primary education SoP, intersecting with poverty. The (re)introduction of fees and additional costs led to poor parents, who relied on their children's financial contributions for household support, to withdraw their children from school (Mbanefoh, 1994). A study cited in Mbanefoh's (1994, p. 20) report on girls' access to primary education in Nigeria for UNESCO found that the cost of books was a barrier to schooling, particularly for girls:

Because pupils were to purchase their books, only those from the more affluent and educationally advantaged homes could buy theirs. Meanwhile, the bulk of primary school children come from low socio-economic and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Invariably, the majority of pupils who do not have textbooks are girls, as parents tend to see their education as a poor investment.

This extract indicates that although girls were not necessarily removed from school, they were disadvantaged compared to boys because parents, unable to afford textbooks for all their children, chose to invest their limited resources in boys' education rather than girls'.

In some contexts, boys' schooling was prioritised over girls' schooling, and girls were taken out of school to work as hawkers, domestic workers, or farm labourers, primarily at the post-primary levels (Obasi, 2000). In northern states, particularly, girls' limited access to formal education was further worsened by the economic situation and the necessity of their labour for household survival. Job opportunities for women in the formal sector were already scarce, leading to a higher dependence on informal work such as "petty commodity production" (Pittin, 1991, p. 43). Secluded women often relied on their daughters to sell goods, but in 1988, an edict in Kano prohibited girls under 16 from engaging in hawking activities (Pittin, 1991). Pittin (1991, p. 46) argued that:

The importance of (female) children as traders has been a primary reason for not enrolling girls in school; removing them from school; and treating school requirements as secondary even when the child is enrolled.

This extract highlights the significant economic role of girls as traders for household survival, which contributed to their restricted access to formal education.

Studies focusing specifically on the impact of SAP on girls' access to education document these gendered effects (Obasi, 1997; Rose, 1995). Rose's (1995) cross-country statistical analysis compared

enrolment rates of boys and girls in countries that introduced SAP with those that did not, using data from the United Nations Women's Indicators and Statistics (WISTAT) database across two time periods: 1970-1980 (the pre-adjustment period) and 1980-1990 (the adjustment phase). This study found that Nigeria experienced a decline in girls' enrolment rates of more than 10 percent between 1980 and 1990, alongside a decline in boys' enrolment rates (Rose, 1995, p. 1940). Nigeria's combined first and second level gross enrolment rate increased by 46 percent for boys and 37 percent for girls between 1970 and 1980 but decreased by 17 percent and 11 percent, respectively, from 1980 to 1990, closing the gender gap due to the decline in boys' enrolment rates (Rose, 1995, p. 1941). Similarly, Obasi's (1997) analysis of access to secondary schooling in Imo State from 1977 to 1990, using time-series data on secondary school enrolments, found that gross enrolment for girls rose from 56,226 to 168,316 between 1977/78 and 1981/82, while for boys it increased from 99,632 to 130,646 (Obasi, 1997, p. 164). However, gross enrolment decreased from 168,316 to 103,027 for girls in 1989/90 (up from 91,014 in 1988/89) and from 130,646 to 100,946 for boys (up from 90,219 in 1988/89) (Obasi, 1997, p. 164). The World Bank attributed these trends to limited economic opportunities for girls after completing primary school, leading parents to withdraw boys for early employment or apprenticeships (World Bank, 1989, p. 9).

Conclusion, 1980s-1990s

The primary education SoP during the 1980s and 1990s was shaped by economic crises, the SAP, and ideological shifts in favour of privatisation. The SoP approach allows us to see how different elements—structures, processes, agents, agencies, and material cultures—and their relations configured the primary education system, leading to varied access for different groups and reinforcing gender inequalities. The period saw the emergence of new agents and agencies influencing the primary education SoP. International agencies like the World Bank advocated for removing restrictions on private schools and for the reintroduction of school fees in public schools (World Bank, 1988), underpinned by narratives that promoted market efficiencies and criticised state inefficiencies.

The economic and political crises of the 1980s and 1990s, exacerbated by the SAP, led to high inflation, increasing the costs of staple goods and driving many families into poverty. As measured by the Gini coefficient, inequality increased at the national level from 0.43 in 1985 to 0.49 in 1996, growing fastest in urban areas (Aigbokhan, 2008). The federal government reduced grants to primary education, leaving local governments to shoulder greater responsibility despite limited resources (Hinchliffe, 1989; Ovwasa, 1995a). Teachers' salaries often went unpaid, leading to strikes and school closures across many states throughout the early 1990s (Bangura, Mustapha and Adamu, 1983; Diamond, 1984).

The easing of restrictions on private schools from the start of the 1980s created new inequalities. In Lagos, middle-class parents withdrew their children from underfunded public schools, enrolling them in private schools that continued to operate during strikes. This meant middle-class families could continue to send their children to school, while poorer families, severely affected by the economic crisis, often had to withdraw their children from school altogether, with gendered effects. This occurred despite the decade of the 1980s beginning with Governor Jakande's administration in Lagos restricting private schools and the charging of any fees in primary schools, reflecting a commitment to welfarist principles (Jakande, 1980).

Gender norms continued to shape the primary education SoP. The economic crisis led to the withdrawal of girls from schools in some states, as families prioritised boys' education (Obasi, 2000). In some contexts, girls were taken out of school if boys' education was prioritised and girls' labour was necessary for household survival, such as in Kano. In other contexts, boys were withdrawn from school to begin working, a situation more common in Anambra.

Although women were barely represented in formal political spaces, with no women holding ministerial posts or governors/administrators at the state level (Mama, 1995), in Anambra there were concerns from religious and political agents that education had become feminised (viewed as a negative shift) and that boys were choosing not to go to school, leading to women becoming more educated than men and destabilising the traditional family structure. Newer Pentecostal churches and established Catholic and Anglican churches, also impacted the educational landscape by reinforcing traditional gender roles and advocating for the return of schools to religious institutions (Pereira and Ibrahim, 2010; Okafor, 1991; Obiefunna, 1999). The re-emergence of Catholic schools reflected regional dynamics and historical connections to religious institutions. Discourse around the role of education in society often emphasised traditional gender roles, viewing girls' education through the lens of their future responsibilities as wives and mothers. At the same time, the established Anglican and Catholic churches advocated for the return of schools in southern states, connecting what they saw as a lack of moral discipline and reduction in quality in public schools with the takeover of schools in the 1970s. In their view, this was more to blame than the expansion of the system and the economic downturn and reduction in spending on public services from the 1980s. In Anambra, calls for the return of schools to churches were loudest (Okafor, 1991; Obiefunna, 1999), with churches viewed as the original owners of schools. In Kano and other northern states, *Islamiyah* schools and their integration into the formal education system, alongside the growing influence of Islamic reform movements that were increasingly "anti-Sufi," highlight regional religious and educational preferences. These variations show how different structures and processes shaped the role of the private and non-state sectors in the primary education SoP in different states of Nigeria.

Chapter 9. Patching the Primary Education SoP with Private and Non-State Agencies, 2000s-2023

This chapter brings the analysis of Nigeria's primary education SoP up to its current form as of 2023, tracing the changes in the system since 1999. As the chapter illustrates, providing "free" education has become less of a concern than ensuring children are enrolled in (any) school. Across Nigeria, a wide range of private and non-state agents and agencies are now engaged in the primary education SoP, leading to a blurring of lines between public, private, and non-state provision. Education is increasingly viewed as a shared responsibility among various stakeholders.

As will be discussed in this chapter, Lagos provides an extreme example of this trend, where more children are enrolled in private (for-profit low-, medium-, and high-fee) primary schools than in public schools (Appendix 16). This reflects the increased role of private schools in filling gaps left by the state. In Anambra, while there are medium rates of enrolment in private schools, there is more active discussion around the role of Christian missions in education provision, with some schools being returned to these non-state agencies. Kano, on the other hand, exhibits low rates of enrolment in private schools, but government officials still view private schools as an important supplement to public education. The Kano Ministry of Education has encouraged the growth of private schools, seeing them as a way to alleviate the state's burden by providing some children with access to education. Additionally, Kano maintains high rates of engagement in education provision from Islamic agents and agencies.

Similar to concerns around enrolment in (any) school, gender inequalities are primarily framed as issues of access and achieving equal enrolment rates for boys and girls. As will be shown, discussions of gender inequality in education less frequently address gender as a structural issue requiring systemic redistribution, as well as changes to the curriculum and pedagogy.

The trend towards privatisation in education, which began in the 1980s and 1990s, has continued across all three states. However, these processes have become hyper-mobilised in the current economic and political environment, where there is a lack of critical engagement with privatisation in much of the discussion surrounding the primary education SoP. In this context, the state increasingly relies on private and non-state agents and agencies to fulfil its obligation to provide primary education for all. The responsibility for providing education has shifted to parents, including those from poor households, creating a culture in which paying for education distinguishes families who do from those who do not. Monetary transactions define the relationships between parents, teachers, and school owners in private schools. School owners can only pay their teachers' salaries if

parents pay fees on time, and the dependence on poor parents for income becomes particularly risky during economic downturns, making everyone involved vulnerable.

Agents and Access to Primary Education: Public and Private Primary School Enrolments, 2000s-2023

Of the children able to access primary education, most were enrolled in public primary schools at the national level during this period (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022). Gender, religion and ethnicity continue to shape the primary education SoP, influencing the type of school a child attends and whether they will attend school at all (Appendix 16).

Survey data and official statistics estimate that the share of private primary school enrolments as a percentage of total enrolments increased from 13 percent in 2004 to 19 percent in 2020/21 (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2016, p. 187; Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning (NEMIS ERP), 2022, p. 34). The majority of these enrolments were in for-profit private schools, including low-, medium-, and high-fee.

Appendix 16 provides greater detail on enrolments in private primary schools between 1999 and 2023, with a focus on inequalities, showing that children attending private schools are more likely to come from high-income households and live in urban areas.

Enrolment rates in private primary schools differ significantly across Anambra, Kano, and Lagos. In Kano, only seven percent of primary school enrolments were in private schools in 2018, compared to 35 percent in Anambra and 54 percent in Lagos (UBEC, 2019, pp. 68–70). Enrolments in public and private primary schools by gender and location (rural, urban) for the academic year 2020/21 in Anambra, Kano, and Lagos are shown in Appendix 17. In all three states, private primary school enrolment was higher in urban than in rural areas, and enrolments in private primary schools were equitable by gender.

Political Structures Shaping Relations between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 2000s-2010s

The 1999 Constitution, enacted in May 1999 (Iliffe, 2011), shaped the relationships between private and non-state agents and agencies, federal, state, and local governments. Following the sudden death of Abacha in June 1998, marking the end of military rule, the Provisional Ruling Council began transitioning Nigeria to democracy (Lewis, 1999; The Carter Center and National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), 1999). General Abdulsalami Abubakar replaced Abacha, a

position decided by the Provisional Ruling Council, and in November 1998, a new constitution drafting committee was established (LeVan, 2019). This committee, with minimal public participation, recommended that the new constitution be primarily based on the 1979 Constitution, with some influence from the 1995 draft version (LeVan, 2019; The Carter Center and NDI, 1999).

The 1999 Constitution reiterated the government's responsibility to provide "free, compulsory, and universal primary education," with the caveat "as and when practicable" (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 17). Primary education was placed on the concurrent list, falling under the jurisdiction of state and local governments (World Bank Group, 2015).

Related to the constitutional commitments was the Universal Basic Education Programme (UBE), launched in 1999 and followed by the UBE Act, passed in 2004 (World Bank Group, 2015). The education SoP followed a 1-6-3-3-4 structure: one year of pre-primary education, six years of primary education, and three years of junior secondary education, totalling ten years of basic education (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 15). This basic education cycle could be followed by three years of senior secondary school, technical school, or other training centre, and four years at the tertiary level (World Bank Group, 2015). The UBE Act mandated that all levels of government and parents ensure that all children complete primary and junior secondary education (World Bank Group, 2015).

At the federal level, under the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was established and made responsible for formulating policy guidelines and minimum standards, coordinating with donor agencies and development partners, and conducting mass mobilisation and public awareness campaigns relating to UBE (UBE ACT A117 (9)).³⁸ The UBEC board, appointed by the President, represented various stakeholders, including the NUT and the National Parents Teachers Association of Nigeria, as well as representatives from each geopolitical region.

Each state had to pass its own UBE legislation and establish a State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), along with Local Government Education Authorities (LGEA) (Gersberg et al., 2016). LGEAs are accountable to the SUBEB, not the Local Government Authority (LGA) in which they are established, and only "liaise" with state Ministries of Education (MoEs) (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 21) i.e., in the official structure, LGEAs come under SUBEBs (Gersberg et al., 2016). They are

³⁸ There are 21 parastatals at the federal level responsible for education.

responsible for managing primary schools and teachers' salaries, although their degree of autonomy varies across states (Gersberg et al., 2016, p. 18).

State MoEs were made responsible for policy formulation and inspection (Gersberg et al., 2016). Private schools are outside the remit of the UBE programme, and state governments have autonomy over how they regulate and manage these schools (Gersberg et al., 2016).

The UBE-Intervention Fund (UBE-IF) was created under the Act as a statutory transfer of two percent of the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC). Part of this fund is released to state governments only if they provide 50 percent of the amount as a "matching grant," meaning state governments must contribute half the amount awarded through the UBE-IF to their SUBEB (Gersberg et al., 2016, p. 20). State governments are also expected to finance the primary education SoP using their resources, either from the FAAC (each state receives 26.73 percent based on the allocation formula) or from their Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) (Gersberg et al., 2016). LGEAs receive funding from the SUBEB for the primary education SoP, alongside a share of the FAAC through the Joint Account Committee (JAC) (Gersberg et al., 2016).

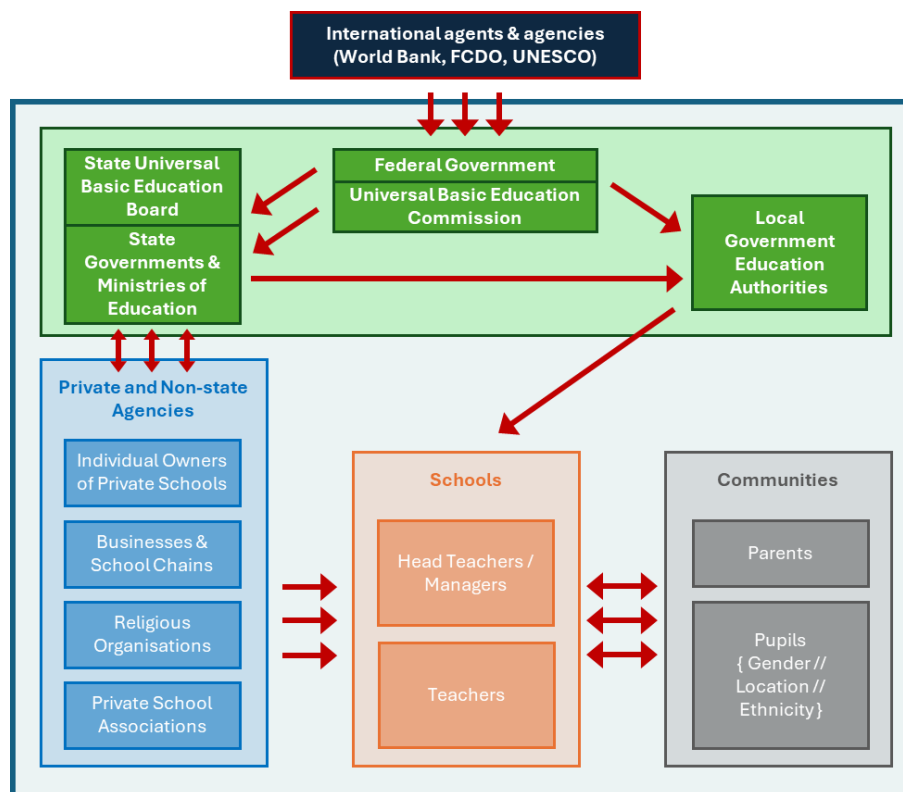
Additionally, 14 percent of the UBE-IF was "allocated to an imbalance fund" (Gersberg et al., 2016, p. 23). Seventy percent of this fund was allocated to "community self-help projects," 10 percent to "an All-Girls School Initiative," and 20 percent to "the National Almajiri Education Programme" (Gersberg et al., 2016, p. 23). To access the self-help project funds, communities submit an application to the SUBEB for review, along with 10 percent of the project's value (Gersberg et al., 2016). The other two funds are distributed to states with large numbers of *Almajiri* students and states with lower girls' enrolment and progression rates compared to boys, as well as out-of-school children (Gersberg et al., 2016).

While federal, state, and local governments are legally responsible for providing primary education as per the Constitution and UBE Act, private and non-state agents and agencies play an important role in the primary education SoP. Private primary schools provide education to a growing segment of the population, and communities support public schools financially through School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) and Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs).

Figure 13 highlights a selection of key agents and agencies involved in the primary education SoP under the UBE. As in previous iterations, international agents continue to shape the primary education SoP by working with the FME, UBEC, State MoEs, SUBEBs, and LGEAs. However, unlike in earlier periods, some international agencies now directly support private schools. Public sector financing flows from the Federal Ministry of Finance to UBEC, which then disburses funds to SUBEBs,

state and local governments, eventually reaching public primary schools. Private primary schools, while regulated by State MoEs, are generally not financed by state governments and rely primarily on fees. In this iteration of the primary education SoP, as shown in Figure 13, the private sector has moved closer to the centre of educational provision, rather than remaining on the periphery as in earlier periods. Community involvement through SBMCs and PTAs continues to support public schools, and Islamic education remains integral to the SoP, with some integrated *Islamiyah* schools receiving state funds.

Figure 13 Agents and Relations in the Primary Education SoP, 2000s-2010s



Political Processes and Cultures Shaping Relations Between Agents and Agencies in the Primary Education SoP, 1999-2008

Contestations between agents and agencies in the primary education SoP arose around the UBE programme and the passing of the UBE Act at the federal level, influenced by the political and economic processes surrounding the transition to democracy. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as the frontrunner in the federal elections, with former military leader Olusegun Obasanjo as its presidential candidate (LeVan, 2019). The challenges facing the primary education SoP became

a key focus for the PDP during the presidential elections, with Qbásanjó promising to "restore the Universal Primary Education scheme he had launched in 1976" (Iliffe, 2011, p. 172).³⁹

Shortly after his inauguration as president in 1999, Qbásanjó announced the launch of the UBE programme in September 1999 in Sokoto (Enweremadu, 2000; Ogunnike, 1999). This move was seen as politically expedient to gain support from the Sultan, who held significant political and religious influence in the northern states (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023). At the time, rising oil prices provided an opportunity for Qbásanjó to channel revenue into public services, including education, healthcare, and poverty reduction initiatives, as part of what he termed the "democracy dividend" (Iliffe, 2011, p. 204). This proposed increase in spending was reflected in what became known as the "People's Budget," which suggested a 38 percent increase in spending, to which the National Assembly added another N100 billion (\$1 billion) (Iliffe, 2011, p. 205). Public expenditure rose to 50 percent of GDP in 2001, up from 29 percent in 1997 (Iliffe, 2011, p. 205).

Contestations over the roles of different levels of government in the primary education SoP delayed the passing of the UBE Bill into law (Daily Trust, 2003a, 2002). In 2000, the Supreme Court ruled the Bill "void", and "that the powers to legislate on primary education rested with state Houses of Assembly and not the National Assembly" (Daily Trust, 2003a). In April 2002, the Supreme Court ruled that funding the UBE programme directly from the Federation Account was "illegal," meaning the federal government could not finance primary education "through first line charge allocation" (Daily Trust, 2002; This Day, 2002a). It also ruled that the federal government could not "[make] deductions from states' allocation to fund UBE" (Daily Trust, 2003b).

As a result, the federal government moved away from directly financing the primary education SoP, transferring any activities (e.g., construction and renovation of schools) started by the federal government to state governments (This Day, 2002a). The federal government's role in the primary education SoP was reduced to an advisory one, though it remained indirectly responsible for financing through allocations to state and local government agencies (This Day, 2002a).

The launch of the UBE was reported as "larger in scope" than the UPE of the 1970s, as it included JSS and early childhood education (Agence France Presse, 1999). *Agence France Presse* noted that

³⁹ The other main parties in the elections were the All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The APP was described by some as "the Abacha People's Party" - thought to be "a coalition of politicians who had often been closer to Abacha's regime" (Iliffe, 2011, p. 164). The AD was more closely associated with the South West and Yoruba interests, presented in the tradition of Awólówọ's AG and UPN (Iliffe, 2011, p. 166). The perceived "northern bias" of the APP led the party to ally with the AD and the APP did not put forward a presidential candidate (Ihonvbere, 1999; Oshodi, 2007, p. 619).

Ọbásanjó sought to distance himself from the free education programmes of earlier political parties in the tradition of Awólówọ̀' s AG and UPN, and the newer AD, emphasising that "[education] should be the responsibility of the entire society" (Agence France Presse, 1999). In a speech to the House of Representatives, Ọbásanjó reiterated the broad support for the UBE programme, asserting that "education for all is the business of us all" (Enweremadu, 2000). In the same speech, he also referenced the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "pointing out that the rights are also entrenched in section 18 of the 1999 constitution" (Enweremadu, 2000). These examples illustrate how Ọbásanjó mobilised human rights discourse and the right to education to advocate for the UBE, whilst also emphasising a shared responsibility between the state (federal government) and all other agents and agencies involved in the primary education SoP, including private and non-state.

In 2002, the FME and UNESCO organised a round table on *the Nigerian Private Sector Education For All initiative* (Fagbulu and Aderinoye, 2003). The holding of this round table is an example of the closer alignment between the federal government and the private sector in the primary education SoP. A subsequent report from a 2003 round table on *Private Sector Participation in Support of Girls' Education* (also organised by UNESCO and the FME) noted that the 2002 round table marked "the first time the Nigerian Organised Private Sector was being directly brought into discussions on basic education with the full participation of the Federal Ministry of Education and the International Development Partners" (Fagbulu and Aderinoye, 2003, p. ii). The introduction to this report also emphasised the importance of working with the "Organized Private Sector", as well as "all stakeholders", to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Dakar Framework for Action 2000 (Fagbulu and Aderinoye, 2003, p. ii).

The keynote presentation by Pai Obanya, former Assistant Director-General of UNESCO's Regional Office in Dakar (BREDA) and a key figure in the formulation of the UBE programme, argued that the broader private sector—not just private schools, but businesses and industries—were both a "source of funding" and a beneficiary of girls' and women's education (Obanya, 2003, p. 17). This underscores the government's supportive stance toward the private sector, in general, during this period. Obanya (2003, p. 17) highlighted:

Increasing the number of educated women would mean more persons with skills and abilities which can service the national economy through increased productivity. It also means a critical mass of enlightened consumers of products and services of the private sector, as well as a critical mass of persons who can be of use to the knowledge economy in which the private sector is operating the current century.

This statement reflects an instrumental argument linking the expansion of access to education for girls with economic growth. It suggests that girls' education, regardless of the type, is key for expanding the private sector (business, industries, etc.) and driving economic growth. It highlights a commitment to integrating the private sector into the primary education SoP, where investments in girls' education are seen as key to economic growth. This growth is linked to the expansion of the private sector, as educated women enter the workforce, become employees, and contribute to the economy with increased purchasing power.

The prominent role of the private sector in the primary education SoP in the early 2000s should be understood within the context of broader economic and political processes, including the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) for 2003-2007 (Nigerian National Planning Commission, 2004). The NEEDS document explicitly stated the government's aim to increase the role of private and non-state agencies in education (Nigerian National Planning Commission, 2004, p. 35).

NEEDS was part of a broader strategy for obtaining debt relief from the Paris Club, an "informal" and secretive group of "creditor countries that meet to provide debt treatments to debtor countries" (Blackmon, 2014, p. 1424). By 2004, Nigeria's external debt had reached \$35.99 billion, with 86 percent of it attributed to Paris Club debt, most of which was owed to Britain (Okonjo-Iweala, 2007, p. 4).⁴⁰ According to Okonjo-Iweala, Soludo and Muhtar (2003, pp. 8–9), the debt service, even after rescheduling and without any new commitments, would have totalled about \$43 billion for the rescheduling period—\$13 billion initially borrowed from Paris Club member states, mainly in the 1980s, of which \$17 billion had already been repaid (Okonjo-Iweala, Soludo and Muhtar, 2003, pp. 8–9).

Key economic advisors to the federal government included Charles Soludo, an economist from the University of Nigeria with consultancy experience with the IMF and World Bank, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a US-trained economist "who had spent eighteen years with the World Bank" (Iliffe, 2011, p. 268). In 2000, Okonjo-Iweala took a leave of absence from the World Bank to head the Economic Policy Coordinating Committee and set up the Debt Management Office, which was run by another World Bank official, Mansur Muktar (Iliffe, 2011).

At a Brookings Institution Roundtable Session on Development Challenges in August 2007, Okonjo-Iweala (2007) outlined the preconditions set by the Paris Club and the IMF for Nigeria to be eligible

⁴⁰ Approximately US\$8 billion was owed to Britain, and over US\$6 billion was owed to France (Okonjo-Iweala, 2007, p. 4).

for debt relief. These included NEEDS, along with efforts to tackle corruption, liberalise the economy, and privatise some state assets (Okonjo-Iweala, 2007). The measures implemented under NEEDS were approved by the IMF in 2005 after three rounds of assessments (Okonjo-Iweala, 2007, p. 6).

In October 2005, debt relief was agreed, reducing the debt burden from \$35 billion to \$5 billion (Okonjo-Iweala, 2007, p. 15). Ọbásanjó reportedly stated that "'God has granted us success in a near-miraculous way'" (Ọbásanjó cited in Iliffe, 2011, p. 270) and promised that the savings would be used to pay for education and health alongside investments in infrastructure (Nwozor, 2009).

The federal government "endorsed the United Nations Millennium Declaration in New York in September 2000", committing to the implementation of the MDGs, including achieving universal primary education by 2015 (OSSAP-MDGs, UNDP and DFID, 2015, p. xiv). According to a 2015 report reviewing progress, the "implementation" of the goals began after the debt relief was obtained in 2005 (OSSAP-MDGs, UNDP and DFID, 2015, p. xiv).

This commitment to spending public funds on public goods does not appear to conflict with discourse regarding an expanded role for private and non-state agents and agencies in the primary education SoP. This account positions the private sector as intrinsic to achieving state policy objectives for UBE.

International Agents and Agencies and the Primary Education SoP: Community Mobilisation, 2000s

British development agencies became more prominent in the primary education SoP during this period. In 2008, the UK's DFID launched the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria and the state governments in which it operated (FCDO, 2017). A consortium led by the consultancy company Cambridge Education delivered ESSPIN in Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, and Lagos from 2008 to 2017.⁴¹ The programme aimed to improve state primary schools by focusing on planning, financing, and delivery of education (ESSPIN, 2017; FCDO, 2017).

Community engagement was a key component of ESSPIN's work, particularly through strengthening SBMCs and CSOs (ESSPIN, 2017; FCDO, 2017). This approach built on the federal government's efforts to establish these bodies in all primary schools (ESSPIN, 2017; FCDO, 2017). According to Obanya (2011, p. 20), in a paper for the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions

⁴¹ In partnership with the British Council, Oxford Policy Management, Save the Children, and Social Development Direct.

and Equity (CREATE), supported by DFID, the language of PPPs, including references to SBMCs, became more prevalent during this period:

The present civilian government has since been preaching another doctrine, that of PPP (Public-private-partnerships). It has given directives for enforcing school management committees (SMCs) in schools.

This extract indicates that SBMCs were intended to integrate communities into the primary education SoP by involving them in financing and management. The language used to describe SBMCs as PPPs highlights a blurring of distinctions between private and non-state agents and agencies. Although SBMCs consist of non-state actors such as parents, community members, teachers, and religious leaders (Gersberg et al., 2016), referring to them as PPPs reflects a blurring of lines between public, private, and non-state roles in the primary education SoP during this period.

Although SBMCs had existed since 2007, they expanded under the ESSPIN programme (interviews with Josef, a retired SUBEB official in Lagos, March 2021, and Anthony, Chair of an SBMC in Urban Lagos, March 2021). In several states, SBMCs received support from ESSPIN and UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools initiative, including training and mentoring (Gersberg et al., 2016). According to Bashir, the Chair of an SBMC in Kano, it was only when ESSPIN actively promoted their formation that state and local governments began to place significant emphasis on them. For instance, in Kano, ESSPIN sponsored three LGEAs, impacting approximately 302 schools, and trained communities to support these schools (Bashir, SBMC Chair, Urban Kano, April 2021).

In Lagos, the SUBEB approves school projects, and community members seek financial or in-kind support from private corporations, businesses, and CSOs. An SBMC Chair from an urban school in Lagos described this process:

People might want to support the government in the area of infrastructure by donating funds; people might want to support the government in the area of provision for the school, school pupils themselves, so that is various areas, in whichever form the capacity of such an organisation can carry, that is the capacity they will want to come in.

(Anthony, Lagos, March 2021).

It was also highlighted that some private sector companies prefer to donate to schools in prominent or urban areas, where their branding visibility is higher or near their business locations (Anthony, Lagos, March 2021). Josef, a retired SUBEB official in Lagos, highlighted the effectiveness of SBMCs in raising funds, providing examples of the financial support collected:

SBMC started in Lagos in 2007, and by 2012, the SBMC supported the school's improvement to the tune of N197,193,970 in cash and kind, and this went up to maybe over One Billion Naira.

(Josef, Lagos, March 2021)

This emphasis on financing schools through SBMCs underscores the complex dynamics of this intervention, which initially aimed to provide an additional layer of accountability and enhance community involvement in education. SBMCs, although operating within public schools, integrate a mix of private and non-state agents, including parents, community members, and religious leaders. This integration creates a blurring of lines between public, private, and non-state roles and agencies.

As discussed in previous chapters, while the role of the community in the primary education SoP has been a recurring theme in development discourse, it often results in additional financial burdens on communities and households. In the 2000s, SBMCs became a mechanism for mobilising resources for primary schools at the community level, increasing reliance on community-based fundraising. This reliance paved the way for a significant emphasis on private sector contributions, including businesses and corporations, thus further entangling the roles of private, non-state, and public agents and agencies in the primary education SoP.

Political Processes and the Primary Education SoP, 2007-2023

Ọbásanjó's second term in power ended in 2007 when Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, whom Ọbásanjó had chosen as his successor, was elected president with 69 percent of the vote, representing the PDP (Katsina, 2016, pp. 8–9). Yar'Adua's presidency was marked by his health issues and frequent trips abroad for treatment (Zounmenou, 2010). Before his death in 2010, power was transferred to the vice president, Goodluck Jonathan, who was subsequently elected in the 2011 elections (Ezeibe, 2021). Jonathan ran against former military head of state Muhammadu Buhari, who had also contested the 2007 presidential elections, and Nuhu Ribadu, former Chair of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and candidate for the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), formerly known as the AD with a stronghold in the South West (Husaini, 2019, p. 61; Thurston, 2018b). The results of the presidential elections showed that Buhari had won 32 percent of the votes and Jonathan 59 percent (Thurston, 2018b, p. 229). Ribadu won just 5.4 percent of the votes, but the ACN regained control of most Southwestern governorships, as discussed in the section on Lagos (Husaini, 2019; Thurston, 2018b).

Dissatisfaction with the PDP occurred despite a relatively strong Nigerian economy, with saw growth rates averaging 6.2 percent in the 2000s and 5.8 percent between 2010 and 2013 (OSSAP-MDGs, UNDP and DFID, 2015, p. 8). Concurrently, poverty and unemployment rates continued to rise

(Owen and Usman, 2015). According to the 2015 MDGs End-Point Report, Nigeria was categorised as a low human development country, with a Human Development Index of 0.471 in 2012 (OSSAP-MDGs, UNDP and DFID, 2015, p. 10). Unemployment rates rose from 21 percent in 2010 to 24 percent in 2013, up from 13.7 percent in 2006 (OSSAP-MDGs, UNDP and DFID, 2015, p. 10). There were also increased levels of insecurity in this period associated with Boko Haram.

Boko Haram, formally known as "Jama'atu Ahi as-Sunnah li-Da'awati wal-Jihad," translates to "Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad" (Ibrahim and Bala, 2018, p. 4) or "The People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teaching and Jihad" (Thurston, 2017, p. 17). The term "Boko Haram" is derived from the Hausa language and means "Western-style education [...] was legally prohibited by Islam" (Thurston, 2017, pp. 1 & 18). Originating in Maiduguri, Borno State, Boko Haram emerged in the early 2000s with the goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate based on what they regarded as "true" Islamic principles, thereby replacing Nigeria's Western constitutional system (Ibrahim and Bala, 2018, p. 4). The group's influence grew throughout the 2000s, particularly alongside the establishment of Sharia law in some northern Nigerian states between 1999 and 2003 (Thurston, 2017).

Starting in 2010, Boko Haram intensified its militant activities, particularly in the North East, leading to severe disruptions in Maiduguri, including "curfews and bombings, crippling commerce" (Thurston, 2017, p. 17). Despite Jonathan's deployment of troops to the North East in 2011, Boko Haram's activities continued to escalate. High-profile attacks included bombings of the National Police Force headquarters and the United Nations building in Abuja in 2011, and an attack in Kano City in 2012 that led to 200 deaths (Thurston, 2017). Additionally, assassination attempts were made on northern "hereditary rulers," including the Emir of Kano in 2013 (Thurston, 2017, p. 13). The period also saw attacks on Salafis who publicly opposed the movement and supported education and state institutions (Thurston, 2017). In May 2013, a state of emergency was declared in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, lasting until 2014 (Ibrahim and Bala, 2018).

The conflict in the North East has fractured the primary education SoP in the region. Between December 2013 and June 2015, "all schools in Northeast Nigeria closed" (Amnesty International, 2020, p. 31). Over 1,400 schools were destroyed from the start of the conflict until 2018, and more than 2,295 teachers were killed (Amnesty International, 2020, p. 31). The conflict has also led to widespread abductions of children, with boys forced into becoming child soldiers and girls into forced into marriage with members of Boko Haram (Amnesty International, 2020).

Boko Haram gained international attention in April 2014 when they abducted 276 girls from a federal government college in Chibok, Borno (Atela et al., 2021). While this was not the first attack

on schools or women and girls in the region, it drew significant global attention and outrage (Atela et al., 2021). As of 2024, around 100 of those abducted from the college in 2014 were still missing, according to a report by the Guardian (UK) (Kimeu and Adetayo, 2024).⁴²

Against this backdrop, Buhari was elected president, representing the APC, in the 2015 federal elections. These elections "shattered the 17-year-old partisan balance in the Fourth Republic, in which the PDP controlled the Federal Government while various opposition parties fought for regional dominance over the states" (Husaini, 2019, p. 63). The APC, which emerged in 2013 as a coalition of the ACN, ANPP, CPC and a faction from the PDP, represented a significant shift in Nigerian politics (Husaini, 2019; Thurston, 2018b). As Husaini (2019, p. 74) notes, the party drew on the legacy of early independence parties and leaders such as Awólówò, while gaining support from "leaders of the business world, intelligentsia, and professional classes." However, Husaini (2019, p. 74) also argues that the APC and PDP shared remarkably similar ideological orientations that did not "exceed the bounds of centrist political logics and ethnocultural norms and values." This fusion is described as a blend of "right-wing populism and ideological centrism" (Husaini, 2019, p. 75).

Despite the worsening economy throughout Buhari's first term in power, discussed below, he was re-elected in the 2019 elections. His second term in power ended in 2023, when he was succeeded by Bola Tinubu also of the APC, who was inaugurated at the end of May 2023 (Pilling, 2023). Tinubu won with 8.8 million votes, "roughly one third of the total [votes]", although voter turnout was "the lowest recorded [...] of any election since Nigeria returned to democracy in 1999" (Hoffman, 2023). His victory came after a hard-fought political contest against Peter Obi of the Labour Party, the former governor of Anambra, and Atiku Abubakar of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Hassan and Vines, 2023).

Financing the Primary Education SoP, 2000s-2023

Throughout the 2010s, a series of economic crises affected the financing of the primary education SoP by federal, state, and local governments, as well as households and communities. Shortly before Buhari came to power in 2015, the price of crude oil collapsed, leading to a recession accompanied

⁴² A large splinter group emerged from Boko Haram, known as the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), in 2016, affiliated with the Islamic State, and "[c]onsidered together, the two factions of Boko Haram are by far the deadliest insurgent groups in the region." (OECD/SWAC, 2021, p. 104). Between 2009 and 2020 around "4,895 violent events have been recorded" in the region mainly attributed to Boko Haram and ISWAP (OECD/SWAC, 2021, p. 104).

by high inflation (Razlog et al., 2020; Varma et al., 2017). Varma et al. (2017, p. 11) provide an overview of the situation:

Oil GDP shrank by 14.4 percent, and non-oil GDP contracted by 0.2 percent. Oil exports plummeted by 25 percent in 2016 (in US\$ terms); however, imports contracted even faster (33 percent) due to constraints on foreign exchange, resulting in a positive current account balance (0.7 percent GDP) in 2016.

Despite contributing only 10 percent to GDP, oil remained the largest source of government revenue, accounting for around 70 percent (Roy, 2017, p. 12). Since the 1970s, approximately 70 percent of government revenue has been derived from the oil and gas sector (UNCTAD, 2020, p. 171). The economic downturn led to revenue shortfalls of about 50 percent of budget targets in the first half of 2017 across all levels of government (Roy, 2017; Varma et al., 2017). Transfers from the federation account to state governments, which accounted for 66 percent of total state revenues on average in 2016, "were 57 percent short of projected, while transfers from the VAT pool account were 48 percent short" (Varma et al., 2017, p. 25). The downturn in oil prices had a particularly severe impact on budgetary allocations and expenditures at the federal and state levels.

The FAAC distribution formula allocates revenue as follows: 52.68 percent for the federal government, 26.72 percent for state governments, and 20.6 percent for local governments (Razlog et al., 2020, p. 8). Within the 26.72 percent allocated to the 36 states, the distribution is divided into: 40 percent equally among states, 30 percent based on population, and 10 percent based on socioeconomic needs (Razlog et al., 2020, p. 8). Additionally, 20 percent depends on a state's share of aggregate IGR, "thus rewarding states with higher levels of revenue allocation" (Razlog et al., 2020, p. 8). Similarly, VAT revenues are distributed according to the VAT Act of 1993, with 14 percent going to the federal government, one percent to the FCT, 35 percent to local governments, and 50 percent to states (Razlog et al., 2020, p. 8). Of the 50 percent allocated to states, 50 percent is distributed equally, 30 percent is based on population, and 20 percent is tied to states' contributions to VAT revenues (Razlog et al., 2020, p. 8).

The heavy dependence of states on centrally collected revenue meant that any fluctuations in oil prices directly impacted their budgets, with Lagos being an exception. In 2013, "Kano only managed to generate 13 percent" of its state budget, compared to Lagos' 53 percent (Meagher, 2018, p. 8). This high dependence on oil revenues to finance the primary education SoP meant that federal allocations available for education funding decreased during this period.

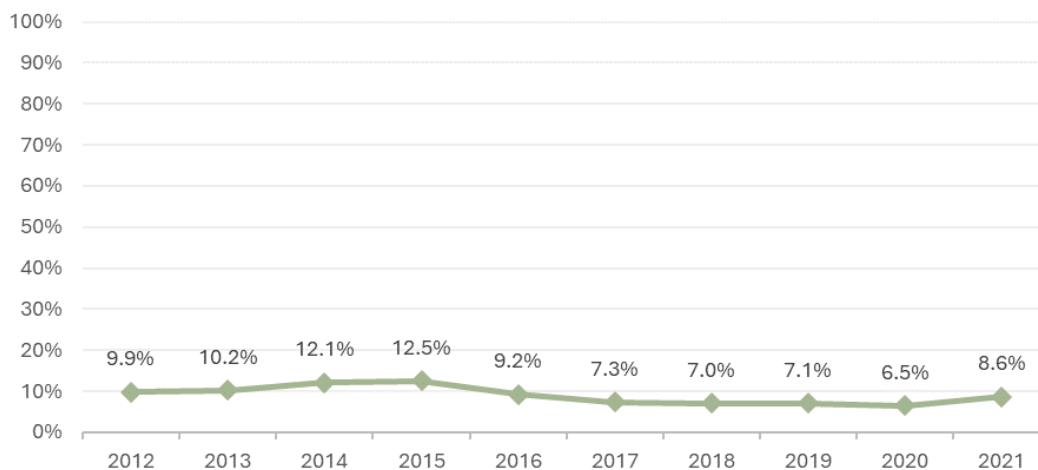
The exact breakdown of financial flows toward the primary education SoP is particularly complex. A World Bank report on the governance and financing of basic education in Nigeria highlights this complexity, noting that (World Bank, 2015, p. 37):

The overlap in the major financial responsibility between the three tiers of government (federal, state and local) makes it difficult to estimate the total amount of public expenditure and assess its impact on education sector outcomes.

This section aims to explain how the primary education SoP is financed in Nigeria, with this caveat in mind.

As a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), education—encompassing both primary and higher levels—comprised around 1.7 percent between 2009 and 2013 (World Bank, 2015, p. 39). During the same period, education's share of total consolidated expenditure increased from 10.2 percent in 2009 to 12.5 percent in 2013 (World Bank, 2015, p. 39). Figure 14 shows the federal education budget as a percentage of the total federal budget between 2012 and 2021 (BudgIT, 2021, p. 9; BudgIT, 2018, p. 7). BudgIT's analysis of the 2021 education budget revealed an allocation of N1.09 trillion to education (covering all levels, including the UBEC and the Tertiary Education Fund) (BudgIT, 2021). This allocation constituted 8.6 percent of the total federal budget (BudgIT, 2021, p. 9).

Figure 14 Federal Education Budget as Percentage of Total Federal Budget, 2012-2021

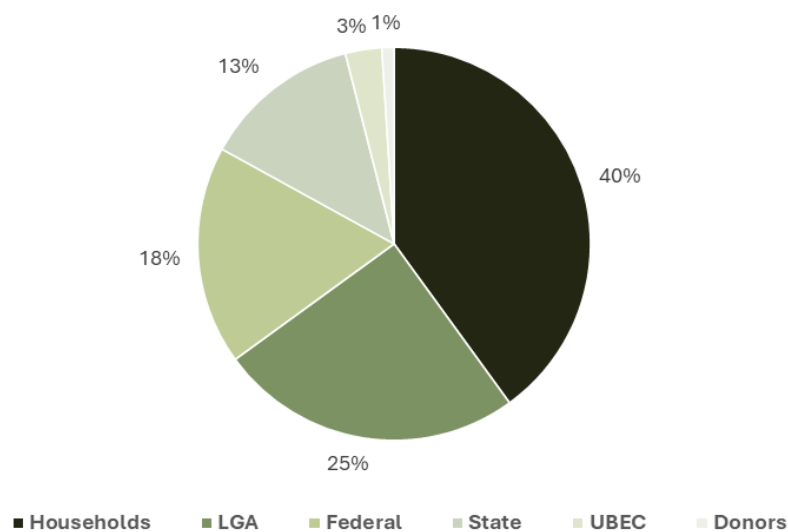


Sources: BudgIT (2018, p. 7, 2021, p. 9)

An analysis of the education budget at the federal level for 2013 by the World Bank found that "the total cost of the education sector (all levels of education) in Nigeria amounted to NGN 2,329.4 billion (14.6 billion USD)" (World Bank, 2015, p. 37). As shown in Figure 15, out of this N2.3 billion, household out-of-pocket payments comprised the largest share at 40 percent, followed by LGAs at

25 percent, the federal government at 18 percent, state governments at 13 percent, the UBEC at three percent, and donors at 0.4 percent (World Bank, 2015, p. 37). For basic education specifically, 48 percent of government spending on education (from federal, state, and local governments) went to this level in 2013, while 44 percent of total spending from all sources, including government, households, and donors, went to basic education (World Bank, 2015, p. 48). Thus, the primary education SoP is highly dependent on out-of-pocket spending at the household level.

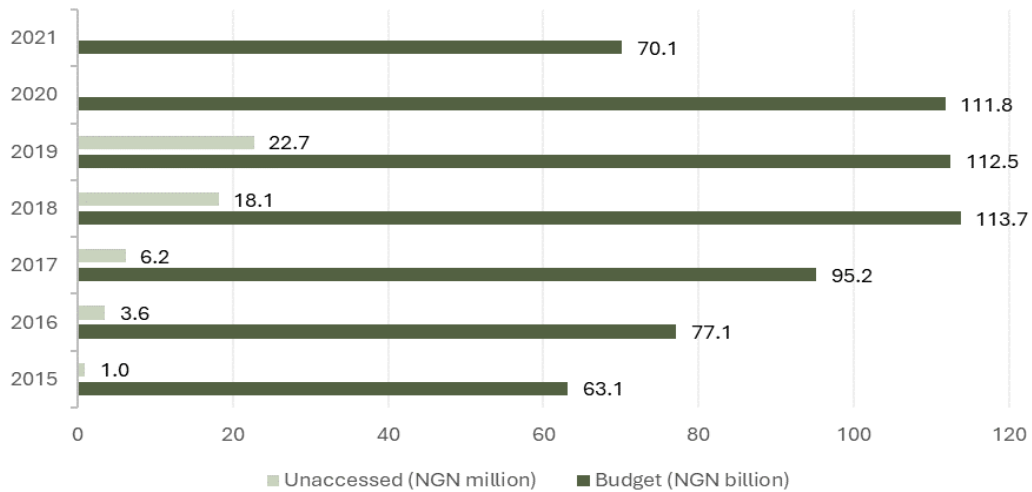
Figure 15 Sources of Education Sector Finance, 2013



Source: World Bank (2015, p. 38) (based on data from the CBN, OECD, Nigeria, State Budget, Federal Government Budget, and General Household Survey Panel 2012/13).

State and local governments are responsible for primary education, including financing, with support from the UBE-IF, and statutory transfers from the federal government, which cover salaries in basic education (World Bank, 2020b, p. 7). Figure 16 shows the UBEC budget allocation between 2015 and 2021, as well as the amounts not accessed by states during these years (BudgIT, 2021, p. 16). The budget for UBEC reached N113 billion in 2018 but dropped to N70 billion in 2021 (BudgIT, 2021, p. 16). Further, the amount not accessed by states in these years reached N22.72 billion in 2019 (BudgIT, 2021, p. 16).

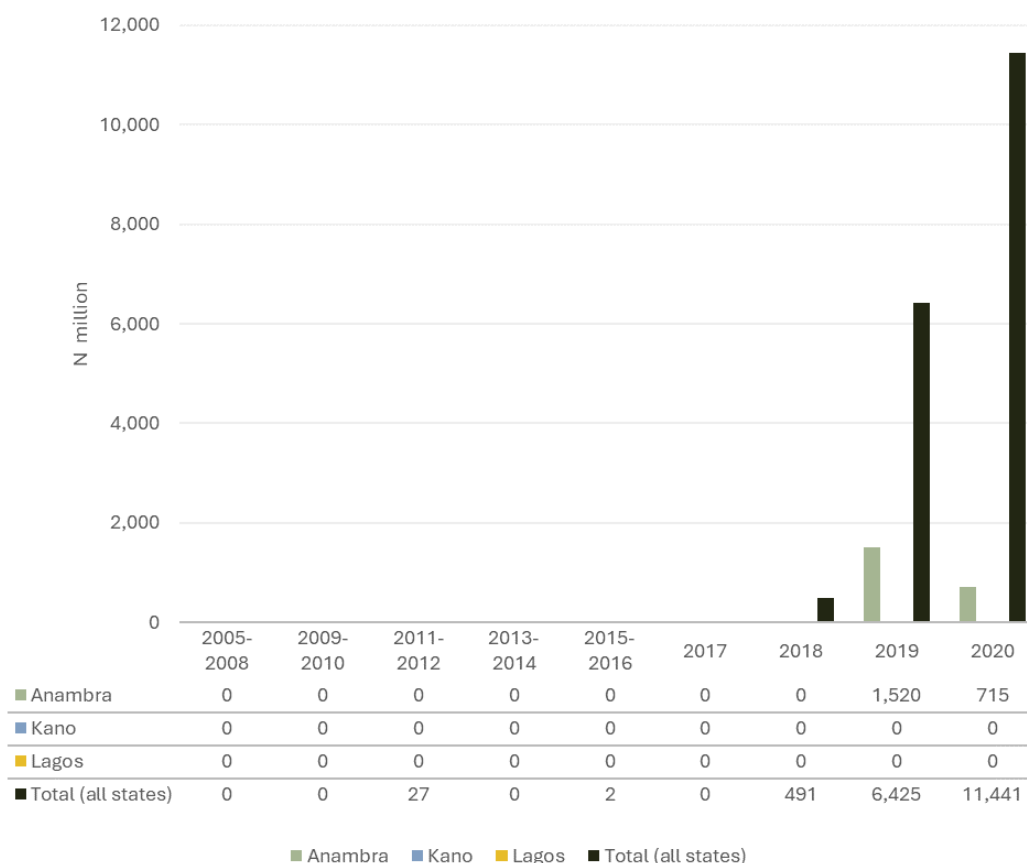
Figure 16 UBEC Budget, 2015-2021



Source: BudgIT (2021, p. 16)

Figure 17 shows UBEC data on unaccessed Matching Grants for all states, with a focus on Anambra, Kano and Lagos between 2005 and 2020. The data reveal that N18.3 billion in UBEC grants were not accessed (Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), 2022). Of the three states, Anambra had the largest unaccessed amount in 2021, totalling N2 billion, while Lagos had N141,190 (other reports estimate this at N0.44 billion [Onyekwena, 2019, p. 34]). By 2021, Kano had accessed nearly all available funding. Reasons for unaccessed grants include the inability of some states to provide the required matching funds due to constrained fiscal space from limited revenue, and because FAAC allocations are not earmarked specifically for education, state governments often allocate these funds to other areas rather than to match funding (Anselm and Okwo, 2013; Steenbergen et al., 2016).

Figure 17 Unaccessed Matching Grant, 2005-2021



Source: UBEC (2022)

Although the Lagos State government has accessed the majority of funding available through the UBEC Matching Grant, analysis by the Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA) found that public education expenditure was just 0.43 percent of Lagos State's GDP between 2011 and 2013 (Onyekwena, 2019, p. 33). The share of the total state budget allocated to education was 16 percent in 2012 and 2014, and 13 percent in 2013 (Onyekwena, 2019, p. 34), covering all levels of education under the Lagos State government's responsibility.

This section has outlined the complexities surrounding the financing of the primary education SoP by local, state, and federal governments. These complexities are tied to the fluctuations in the oil market and the revenues collected by the federal government. The varying responsibilities across different tiers of government further complicate the analysis of budgetary allocations to primary education. As a result, there is significant reliance on household spending and "community" contributions, as discussed in the section on SBMCs.

COVID-19 and the Primary Education SoP

The COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) and its associated economic effects followed the 2015 crisis, affecting relations between agents in the primary education SoP. The first cases of COVID-19 were

reported in Nigeria at the end of February 2020, and in March, "[a] Presidential Taskforce (PTF) on COVID-19 was inaugurated [...] to lead high-level policy decisions based on a Multisectoral Response Plan" (Abubakar et al., 2021, p. 2; Bolu et al., 2022). The PTF was responsible for Nigeria's initial response to the pandemic (Bolu et al., 2022, p. S169). At the state level, COVID-19 Task Forces or similar bodies were established "to prevent, prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in their respective states" (Mukherjee et al., 2023, p. 4).

Schools were closed between March and September 2020 (Ogenyi, 2022).⁴³ On March 19th, news outlets first reported that the FME had issued a directive to close all primary, secondary and tertiary schools (Premium Times, 2020). By this time, most state governments and some private schools had already announced the closure of all schools (Daily Trust (Abuja), 2020). According to the Nation (Nigeria), some private schools in Lagos, particularly high-fee and elite ones rather than LFPS, had closed on March 18th (The Nation (Nigeria), 2020a). Governors of the North West states, including Kano, agreed to close schools starting from March 23rd (PM News, 2020a; The Nation (Nigeria), 2020b). The Lagos state government announced an indefinite closure of all schools from March 23rd, initially for four weeks, on March 18th (Daily Trust (Abuja), 2020; PM News, 2020b). The Anambra State Government also announced the closure of all schools by March 27th, effective from March 19th (Daily Trust (Abuja), 2020).

When schools reopened in September 2020, new measures were implemented to limit the spread of the virus. These measures "included reductions in class size, social distancing, shortened school days, and basic preventive measures such as hand sanitiser and hand washing" (Ogenyi, 2022, p. 1). During the school closures, children from wealthier households had access to private tutors and online learning resources, which were not available to children from poorer families (Azubuike, Adegboye and Quadri, 2021).

The school closures were part of a broader strategy to curb the spread of the virus, which also included "a lockdown on Lagos and Ogun states and the Federal Capital Territory" mandated by the federal government and imposed by state governments in other parts of the country in March 2020 (World Bank, 2021, p. 6). According to a World Bank report, in 2020 "Nigeria experienced its deepest recession in four decades" (World Bank, 2021, p. 6). Oil production dropped by 8.9 percent (World Bank, 2021, p. 7). Although "growth resumed in the fourth quarter" (World Bank, 2021, p. 1), inflation rates remained extremely high. Food prices skyrocketed, accounting "for 63 percent of the

⁴³ The NCDC published COVID-19 Guidance for Schools in Nigeria on 5th March 2020, including information on the virus and how to prevent its spread, what to do if someone is unwell or if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed, but noting that schools should remain open at this stage (NCDC, 2020).

total increase in inflation" (World Bank, 2021, p. 6), and by April 2021 "the consumer price index was up 18.1 percent, year-on-year [and] the composite food index reached 22.7 percent" (World Bank, 2021, p. 12). Inflation rates in Anambra and Lagos ranged between 17.4 and 19.1 percent in 2021, while in Kano, they ranged between 19.2 and 24.3 percent (World Bank, 2021, p. 13).

Teachers in LFPS were disproportionately affected by the closure of private schools, as these schools did not tend to receive government support, could not charge fees, and so were unable to pay teachers' salaries (Ogenyi, 2022). A survey of 73 LFPS in Abuja by the RISE Nigeria team, which included over 1,000 parents, 59 school owners, and 214 teachers in 2020, found that some schools continued with tutoring sessions, which they suggest was likely driven by the need to "retain students and collect tutoring fees" (Ogenyi, 2022, p. 3). However, most schools were unable to pay teachers' full salaries during the lockdown (Ogenyi, 2022). Lois, a senior official in the Lagos branch of the NUT, contrasted the situation of private and public-school teachers:

When COVID happened, you know, I only laughed when COVID happened, and they expect their proprietors to pay? They cannot. The teachers in the public schools, the government pays them, so wherever they go, whether they are on leave or whether they go to work, they pay them. This is the government. You cannot compare the government to these people. It's a business. Private school is a business, right? You cannot get what you don't have. These pupils who are supposed to pay you are not in school. So, if these pupils are not in school to pay the proprietors, where will the proprietor get the money to pay you? So, when the money wasn't there. How do you expect them to pay? I think government later considered them and gave the private school some money just to help just to assist.

(Lois, Lagos, April 2022)

As Lois observes, the National Association of Private School Teachers (NAPST) was formed to represent private school teachers and called on the federal government to cover their salaries. In July 2020, the NAPST approached the federal government requesting "interest-free loans [...] with a guarantee to pay back gradually when schools resume" (Weekly Trust, 2020). By August 2020, the federal government agreed to fund private school teachers' salaries and included private schools in a N2.3 trillion stimulus package "to support businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown" (Ogunyemi, 2020). However, very few private school teachers and LFPS received federal government payments.

Reflecting on this process, Sue, an LFPS owner and member of AFED, described completing forms to access federal government funds, including those intended for teachers:

There was time that our teachers were so happy that we had to fill forms that they are going to give us some money during the Covid so that we can even sustain our families. I tell you, some school owners have to start begging, you know, borrowing here and there because there was nothing for them to feed on. Then, the government promised. We called our teachers. To date, nothing came out of it. Then there was a kind of loan they said they wanted to give to schools. The criteria and the requirements for the loan was so much, so many private schools [could not access the loan]. The schools of those big men could access it. Because in my own chapter of the association, I am the general secretary, so I did a collation. So many of them, we did, close to 200 schools or more, not even a single person was able to make up with that criteria, except only one, only just one person was able to, so no other person were able to meet up.

(Sue, Lagos, March 2022)

As the extract highlights, there was an initial sense of relief at the prospect of financial support during the school closures, which promised to provide owners with a source of income and enable them to pay teachers' salaries. However, the criteria for accessing these funds were geared toward well-resourced, middle- and high-fee private schools. Another LFPS owner in Lagos also recalled not receiving any funds but did receive some water and food, which they shared with their teachers:

The support that I think maybe [was] from the government was nothing to write home about, later they called us through the association that there will be support, then the support was maybe a bottle of mineral, a sachet of maybe Garri, it was not up to half KG, then this cube of Maggi I was able to divide it, I think I gave teachers maybe two, just two cubes, so that's it.

(Banana Private School Owner, Area 1 Lagos, March 2022)

During an interview with a senior official in the NAPST, the COVID-19 pandemic and period of school closures were recalled:

Covid was an eye-opener, and we don't want a repetition of that Covid. It was the saddest point in our history. Yes, that period made us understand that we don't have jobs at all because if we had a job, we would not be abandoned at a very sensitive period like that, so we just went, 'Ah, we don't have a job, we are always just managing, we are just managing somewhere.' So, we started a cooperative where we said, 'OKAY, should anything like that happen in the future, we now have somewhere where we can all at least rely on'.

(Dan, Abuja, October 2021)

The extract highlights a shift in the relationship between private school teachers and school owners. With the inability to charge fees during this period, teachers—who were already on low incomes—

found themselves in a highly precarious situation.⁴⁴ In response, teachers formed an association or cooperative to support each other. The senior official from NAPST noted that private school teachers are often reluctant to join associations or engage in union activities for fear of losing their jobs:

It's now that we are trying to see how we can begin to engage and because some of them are scared because of the high level of unemployment, some of them are scared, they are 'oh, if I take part in the union activity, I may be sacked by my employer.' Yes, that is their biggest fear. Even in fact, when we started the association, most people told me, 'ah, you will be fired from your place of work,' you will be this, you will be that I said, ah, it's a call to duty. At some point, some people must stand out, so whatever happens, we must be able to take some risk; if not, things will remain [...] a lot of people fear, 'Oh, they will just fire you' because it's a private concern, one person owns the business so he wakes up one morning he doesn't like your face, says please I want you to go.

(Dan, Abuja, October 2021)

Private school owners have disproportionate power over teachers in the primary education SoP. The picture presented shows owners can hire and fire at will. However, the pandemic underscored teachers' precarious situation, leading more of them to join associations or cooperatives during this period.

In the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation rates in Nigeria continued to increase and in 2023 were "increasing at their fastest pace in 17 years" (Sienaert, Joseph-Raji and Saldarriaga Noel, 2023, p. 7). Inflation surged from 15.6 percent in January 2022 to 22.4 percent in May 2023 (Sienaert, Joseph-Raji and Saldarriaga Noel, 2023, p. 7). For example, in April 2022, N1,000 would have covered the cost of 2.8 tubers of yam, 2.3 loaves of bread, and 1.7 litres of kerosene. By the following year, this amount would only cover 2.2 tubers of yam, 1.8 loaves of bread and 0.9 litres of kerosene (Sienaert, Joseph-Raji and Saldarriaga Noel, 2023, p. 7). Between December 2022 and April 2023, it was estimated that the proportion of poor people increased by 11 percent in urban areas and by four percent in rural areas (Sienaert, Joseph-Raji and Saldarriaga Noel, 2023, p. 8).

A compounding factor has been the removal of the fuel subsidy. Advocated for by the World Bank and IMF since the 1980s, the subsidy's removal led to a tripling of fuel prices in the first quarter of 2024, with significant knock-on effects on food and transport (Adeoye, 2024a, 2024b). A Financial Times report from March 2024 highlighted that "the food inflation rate jumped above 35 percent at

⁴⁴ The senior official of NAPST, for example, noted that some LFPS do not pay teachers the minimum wage of N30,000: "We have schools in Nigeria, where they don't even pay 10,000, as salaries, yes, because the minimum wage has a clause that you need to have about 25 staff for you to be held accountable" (Dan, Senior Official NAPST, October 2021).

the start of the year" (Adeoye, 2024b). The reliance on households to finance the primary education SoP means that during cost-of-living crises, parents are under extreme pressure to cover these costs.

Processes of commodification and privatisation in the primary education SoP have altered the relationships between teachers, parents, and school owners. Parents and, by extension, pupils have shifted from being rights-bearers to customers, with teachers, head teachers, and school owners dependent on these customers for their livelihood. During interviews in March and April 2022, teachers in LFPS were acutely aware of this situation and noted that parents had to work extra hours to afford school fees (Interviews with teachers in Mango, Pineapple, and Orange schools). For example, teachers in Pineapple LFPS commented:

The economy is too poor, there is no money, people have to work 24/7, and still, the income is too low, those working the money is not coming the way it's supposed to.

(Interview with teachers in Pineapple School Area One Lagos, April 2022)

Because Lagos is the place where we have a high standard of living and most of the parents, their income is very low, and most of them, they are petty traders, so they cannot afford to take their children to school.

(Interview with teachers in Pineapple School Area One Lagos, April 2022)

In this context, however, value is placed on the ability to pay for education. The more one pays (or struggles to pay) for education, the greater the perceived value (Interviews with teachers in Kiwi, Banana, Pineapple, and Mango schools, Area One Lagos, March and April 2022). As one teacher in an LFPS remarked, "You are paying for it now, they will know, they will really know the value" (Interview with teachers in Kiwi School Area One Lagos, April 2022). The struggle to access education had become normalised, with the investment in education seen as paying off in the long term (Interviews with teachers in Kiwi, Apple, Banana, and Pineapple schools). As another teacher noted:

If you really want to send your child to school but don't have money, you need to struggle because, since you know sending them to school will be a better future for you and the children, you have to struggle and get something.

(Interview with teachers in Kiwi School Area One Lagos, April 2022)

At the same time, poor parents are an unreliable revenue stream, leading school owners to implement flexible payment plans. For instance, in Kiwi School, one parent mentioned they could split monthly payments into weekly instalment of N1,000 per week (Interview with Parents in Kiwi School, Area One Lagos, April 2022). While this flexibility was helpful to parents, it created challenges for teachers (Interviews with teachers in Banana and Mango schools, Area One Lagos,

March and April 2022). A teacher at Mango School highlighted that the owner had provided scholarships to some students and many parents requested flexible payment plans. This had led to issues for the school because the payment of teachers relies on parents paying fees on time. As the teacher pointed out:

Money is important (laughing), if he's going to give all the students scholarships, how is he going to run the school [...] he has to pay the teachers.

(Interview with teachers in Mango School Area One Lagos, April 2022)

While some parents were criticised for not managing their finances more responsibly, there was also recognition, sometimes within the same interview, of the challenging economic situation—both parents and teachers in LFPS were living close to the poverty line.

International Agents and Agencies and the Scaling-up of the Private Sector in the Primary Education SoP, 2010s

From the early 2010s, international agencies increasingly supported private sector engagement in the primary education sector, focusing on for-profit private schools. Under the ESSPIN program in Lagos, the first comprehensive census of all schools, including both registered and unregistered private institutions, was conducted (Härmä, 2011). This census revealed that over 50 percent of children in the state were enrolled in private primary schools, confirming what was already widely known (Härmä, 2011). The findings from this census and subsequent research informed the UK-aid-funded Developing Private Education in Nigeria (DEEPEN) program, which ran from 2013 to 2018 and cost "nearly GBP10 million" (EDOREN, 2018b, p. 1).

According to the Baseline Report, DEEPEN was "the first program to employ a market systems approach to improving children's education in primary schools" by using the "Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach" (EDOREN, 2016, p. ii). The Endline synthesis report described it as "innovative" and "ambitious" (EDOREN, 2018b, p. 1). The program consisted of six work streams (and four activity streams) under the technical assistance component, aimed at enhancing the private school market in Nigeria, with a particular focus on Lagos. These included setting rules and standards for private schools, providing information for parents, and addressing cash flow and revenue issues for private schools (EDOREN, 2016).

A key component was the introduction of graded assessments of private schools (GAPS), where schools were ranked from one to five stars based on pre-specified criteria for management, governance, and the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Schools were categorised as "emerging," "establishing," or "enhancing" (EDOREN, 2018b, p. 2). As the pilot state for GAPS, the influence was strongest in Lagos (EDOREN, 2018b). However, during interviews for this thesis, the

impact of GAPS was also noted in Kano. As an advisor to the state government on private and voluntary schools mentioned:

Yeah, there were certain things we were not aware of, and when they came, we were made aware of the issues, and we are using them, and we have been seeing progress in what they taught us that made us aware. Especially this grading [...] this grading enables us to know the best schools, second best, third best, so before [...] we were not aware of these things.

(Isaac, Kano, April 2021)

The Endline evaluation of DEEPEN found that its interventions only minimally benefited low-cost schools and that, at the time of the review, "[it was] not yet clear that schools that participated in DEEPEN interventions have changed enough to improve learning outcomes" (EDOREN, 2018b, p. 13). Although DEEPEN's impact on learning outcomes and LFPS was relatively limited, it marks a significant shift in thinking around the role of the private sector in the primary education SoP, particularly regarding the acceptance of market-based education models, including the burden placed on poor parents to finance schooling.

A second component of DEEPEN was the Challenge Fund, which provided financial support to businesses improving education quality in primary-level LFPS in Lagos. This included a UK£3.45 million grant to the private school chain Bridge in 2015, facilitating its entry into the Lagos private school market (Unterhalter, Robinson and Ibrahim, 2018). The decision to use British aid money to support a for-profit private school chain was highly contentious, facing fierce backlash from the NUT and some private school associations (see Unterhalter, Robinson and Ibrahim, 2018). Despite this opposition, Bridge's parent company, NewGlobe, began operating as a technical partner in the Edo Basic Education Sector Transformation (EdoBest) programme in 2018 and, as of 2024, had partnerships with governments in Lagos, Kwara, and Bayelsa states (Vanguard, 2024) (Appendix 18).

In 2020, the Lagos state government awarded NewGlobe "a multiyear contract in which it agreed to pay NewGlobe N5,000 (\$12) per pupil, per term, a multi-year contract" (Pilling, 2022). During an interview with Kate, a senior LGEA official in Lagos, it was noted that the contract was with the state government and that "[t]hey are paying a huge amount on it" (April 2022). NewGlobe technology has since been introduced into all public primary schools in the state (Pilling, 2022). During fieldwork for this thesis, it was observed that government primary school teachers are provided Bridge tablets pre-loaded with scripted lesson plans and GPS trackers to monitor attendance and teaching (Kate, senior LGEA official, Lagos, April 2022). This technology allows the headteacher, LGEA, and other state agencies, including the MoE, to access data on teacher presence and performance. As Kate noted:

They will send us the list of our staff, those who don't log in, those who log in but did not log out. Habitual latecomers, absenteeism. So, when they send it to us, we will now work on it; how do we work on it? It's not all the information sent at times are correct. Let me give you an example. They might send to us the chronic absenteeism [...] They will say chronic absenteeism. That person when we look at it, it's not all of them that are chronic maybe somebody gave birth, she is on [maternity] leave.

(Kate, Lagos, April 2022)

This extract indicates that while technology is used to track teachers, there are issues with data reliability. NewGlobe's integration into Lagos public schools, reflects a broader acceptance of market-based solutions in education. This shift also highlights a transformation in the relationship between teachers and local and state government officials, characterised by heightened monitoring and the involvement of private sector solutions.

The example of NewGlobe underscores a significant shift in the support for private schools from international agencies. The UK government's FCDO, through its DEEPEN programme, explicitly supported for-profit private schools and endorsed market-based solutions for primary education. This represents a departure from previous decades when international agencies were more cautious about providing financial support to private schools.

Cultures and Narratives at the State Level Shaping the Primary Education SoP in Anambra, Kano and Lagos, 2000s-2023

In all three states, government and other education stakeholders expressed an acceptance of private and non-state sector engagement in the primary education SoP, acknowledging that the government alone cannot provide primary education for all.

In Anambra, interviews with public and private sector representatives revealed that private school provision is viewed as "complementing" government efforts. The following extracts from interviews with Paul, a senior SUBEB official, and Marsha, a senior official in the Ministry of Finance, illustrate this perspective:

So, every day the population is increasing, and the government is not meeting up with meeting schools here and there, so we are very close to the max [...] so some individuals [...] build some private schools to complement the work of the government like the missionaries.

(Marsha, Anambra, February 2021)

The fact that the government is not doing much in the education sector, private hands are coming to establish a number of schools to complement that of the

government [...] So they are trying to make up where the government is not doing very well, but these high prices in the delivery of their services are something else. It is a great challenge for people who cannot afford that.

(Paul, Anambra, March 2021)

Both Marsha and Paul suggest that private schools increase access to the (primary) education SoP by "complementing" or supporting government efforts. Despite their roles in government departments, they suggest that increased private sector engagement is necessary because the government "is not meeting up" or "doing much". According to them, individuals establishing private schools have stepped in to fill this gap. However, as Paul notes, the fees charged by private schools are often beyond the reach of most of the population, particularly those with low incomes.

During interviews with key stakeholders in Lagos, a similar acceptance of private sector involvement was observed as in Anambra. In both states, it was suggested that the government could not provide UBE without the involvement of the private sector in the primary education SoP. Dennis, a senior NUT official in Lagos, argued that, due to the high population density in Lagos, many more children would be out of school without the presence of private schools:

The public school cannot cater for the number of pupils and students because of the number of students [...] if they don't come to the aid of the government, we are going to have many more children out of school. They are trying to cushion the effect of those ones that cannot be accommodated.

(Dennis, Lagos, September 2021)

Other interviews with key stakeholders in Lagos highlighted concerns about population growth and the state's inability to keep pace with educational demands. Ronke, a senior official in the Lagos MoE, interviewed in February 2021, emphasised the government's commitment to education but again suggested that without private schools, more children would be out of school. This challenge was linked to the high cost of land in Lagos, with the official stating:

It's very expensive to set up a school, and we don't have land in Lagos, so getting land alone for schools is very challenging; we have to ask communities to give us land, and obviously because land is Lagos' gold and oil they prefer to sell to the private and make more money because we don't pay for land, they give us land we would build a school there. So, it's alright, let's work together. I don't see any problem with us working together. We can't educate everybody; the rate at which the population in Lagos is growing is such that it might be, it would be extremely challenging if we try and educate all children, where will we find the land and how will we build the schools, how will we equip the schools it's a, it's a near impossibility, it's just as well that the private sector is part of it.

(Ronke, Lagos, February 2021)

In this extract from the interview, Ronke goes beyond suggesting that the private sector merely provides an alternative to the state. Instead, it is argued that the state cannot fully provide UBE, and that the relatively high rates of primary school enrolment in Lagos, compared to some other states, are primarily due to the presence of private schools. The justification for this hinges on the state's inability to appropriate land, which is described as "gold" in Lagos. This extract highlights the intersection of the commodification of both land and education, revealing distinct political, economic, and cultural conditions that have allowed this reality to go unquestioned and accepted by government officials.

The most explicit support for the expansion of for-profit private schools was observed in Kano, including from both government agents and the teachers' union. The following extract from Isaac, an advisor to the state government on private and voluntary schools, exemplifies this perspective:

It is just recent, as I said, because of one of the [...] of this population I am talking about, so, and with time, our schools had problems: renovations, cracks. So that is why the government encouraged private sector participation in education, but before this time, the government has been taking care of this part of the social service.

(Isaac, Kano, April 2021)

This approach to education has gradually been recognised as complementing the public system, effectively addressing the shortage of school spaces within the public sector. A written response from Kamil, a senior NUT official, illustrates this:

Once more, private sector-established schools function as an alternative avenue for the multitude of applicants who seek enrolment, providing them with the opportunity to pursue their studies within privately owned institutions. This offers a viable alternative to remaining idle at home due to a lack of admission into competitive public schools. Private schools provide a solution that accommodates eager applicants, fostering an environment free from social challenges. In this context, the government must continue to encourage the involvement of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in education provision and management. This collaborative approach bolsters the government's initiatives and policies aimed at ensuring comprehensive education access.

(Kamil, Kano, September 2021)

In Kano, with much lower rates of enrolment in private schools than in Anambra and Lagos, private school growth is actively encouraged. In Anambra and Lagos, however, there is more of an acceptance of private schools as opposed to explicit encouragement of their growth.

Political Cultures Shaping the Primary Education SoP in Anambra

In the 1999 elections in Anambra, Dr Chinweoke Mbadinuju, representing the PDP party, was elected governor. Interviews conducted for this thesis suggest that Mbadinuju's government played a role in facilitating the expansion of private schools. Between December 2001 and October 2002, the National Labour Congress (NLC) called a strike in response to the state government's failure to pay teachers and other civil servants their salaries (This Day, 2003a). During this period, schools were closed, and according to a report in *This Day*, "Teachers had to look for alternative means of livelihood as the government owed them about nine months' salaries" (This Day, 2003a).

In an interview for this thesis, Ruth, a senior official in the Anambra NUT, linked the strikes and school closures to the rise in the number of private schools in the state:

Well, the rise of private schools in Anambra state can be accredited to the era of one governor called Mbadinuju. There was a one-year strike, no school, and nothing going on, and parents were eager to send away their children to school, so this gave rise to the rise of private schools. Parents were at that time anxious to send their wards to any school that was virtually open for them to learn, so these private schools later gained ground. Because public schools are not well funded and not well catered for, teachers are no longer there in numbers; most parents preferred sending their children or their wards to private schools where they will be taken care of.

(Ruth, Anambra, February 2021)

This point about the impact of strikes on the private sector's role in the primary education SoP was also echoed by Anna, a representative of a private school association in the state. She noted that while private schools did exist before the strikes, the prolonged closure of public schools led to a significant increase in demand for private education. As a result, some individuals began opening private schools to meet this demand:

I attended a public school and most of my friends attended public schools [...] then things were okay, but then came a time when a particular government [...] and the teachers went on industrial action, strike, strike for a good nine months in that period, the children were at home doing nothing [...] there were a few private schools at that time, but between 2000 and year 2000 or thereabout, during this time private schools started springing up, and parents saw it as a relief, you know, they saw it as a relief, where to take their children and this has been like that, it has been like that since.

(Anna, Anambra, February 2021)

These excerpts highlight the political disputes around financing the primary education SoP in Anambra in the early 2000s, particularly related to teachers' unpaid salaries, which culminated in a

nine-month strike. The emergence of private schools is seen as a direct consequence of this dispute, with individuals playing a key role in expanding the role of the private sector in the primary education SoP by opening new schools to accommodate the increased demand. A similar narrative is found in the emergence of private schools in Anambra and Lagos during the 1980s and 1990s, as discussed in Chapter 8. Although this obscures both the legal and policy environment that allows for establishing private schools, it does highlight a shift in cultures around the primary school SoP. Although this narrative may obscure the legal and policy frameworks that enabled the establishment of private schools, it underscores a shift in the cultures attached to the primary education SoP. As Anna, a representative of a private school association, notes, there is now a general acceptance of private schools in the state, particularly among parents who can afford to send their children to these institutions, rather than advocating for better resources for public education.

Alongside the strike action in the primary education SoP, there were contestations around the ownership of schools. The history of the federal military government's takeover of schools following the Biafra War began to feature in public discourse concerning the role of non-state agencies in the primary education SoP during this period. In 2003, Dr Chris Nwabueze Ngige (2003-2006) from Anambra Central was elected governor. It was reported in *This Day* that the Commissioner for Education (Prof. Leonard Moghalu), during a meeting with representatives from Nnewi South Council, "expressed regrets that many primary and secondary schools in Nnewi South and the state generally had fallen beyond expectations as pupils and students now abandon them for private schools" (This Day, 2003b). However, this renewed focus on public schools was not opposed to a larger role for non-state actors in the education SoP. It was further reported that the government was planning to transfer public schools to "former proprietors, voluntary agencies, and religious organizations" (This Day, 2004).

The plans for the handover of schools were put into action under Peter Obi, who at the time represented the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and became governor in 2006 (briefly impeached but re-elected in 2007, serving until 2014) (Obienyem, 2010; Onuchukwu, 2011; Osondu, 2011). Since then, APGA governors have held power in the state: Willie Obiano (2014-2022) and Charles Chukwuma Soludo (2022-current at the time of writing this thesis).

In 2009, Obi's government "returned" 18 secondary schools to churches, followed by the return of 1,040 primary schools. The churches received N6 billion for their management (Onuchukwu, 2011; Osondu, 2011). As part of this restructuring, the state provided financial support to these schools, now managed exclusively by religious organisations (Ovadge and Enyinnaya, 2018). The Catholic Church managed most of the returned schools and received the largest share of funding, N762

million, in the first instalment (Osondu, 2011). The Anglican Church received N498 million, while public schools were allocated N489 million (Osondu, 2011).

In a speech to "education stakeholders" in Awka in November 2011, Obi argued that the issues facing the education SoP in the state stemmed from the takeover of schools previously managed by Christian religious organisations and other non-state agencies in the 1970s. As the following extract from *This Day* illustrates (Osondu, 2011):

The collapse of education in Anambra State is directly connected with the takeover of schools owned by the missionaries, churches and voluntary organisations in 1970. That singular exercise signalled the disappearance of morality and the building of character from our school system. This can no longer be allowed.

The language of morality used in this speech underscores the appeal to religious groups, which helped win over religious leaders in the state who had been advocating for greater involvement in the education SoP since schools were taken over in the aftermath of the Biafra War (see Chapters 7 and 8) (Obienyem, 2010; Onuchukwu, 2011; Osondu, 2011). For example, *This Day* reported that the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha stated the following about Obi (Osondu, 2011):

You have written your name in gold and you have wiped the tears of our people. You have rectified the anomalies of the civil war and rectified the fault of past leaders. With this action, the church has forgiven them for forcefully taking our schools.

Reflecting on his efforts to transform the state's public sector during an interview with Ovadje and Enyinnaya (2018), Obi discussed the changes he implemented in the education SoP in the state, arguing that the "handover" of schools to churches had contributed to Anambra becoming one of the top-ranking states in Nigeria in national exams, after previously being one of the worst-performing states (Ovadje and Enyinnaya, 2018, p. 179). He further argued that state and local governments had mismanaged resources within state-run schools, leading him to decide to "handover" schools to Christian religious organisations (Ovadje and Enyinnaya, 2018, p. 179):

All the resources we were pumping into education were transacted away. We needed to do something drastic. Schools were originally built by missionaries, owned and managed by them, so we had no business managing schools. I decided to return the schools to the missionaries and see if it works.

In this extract, Obi further legitimises the role of non-state agencies in the primary education SoP by arguing that the state should not manage schools because their "original" owners were Christian religious organisations. Similarly, an opinion piece published in *Vanguard* on December 28, 2011,

described the state takeover of schools as "the illegally seized church schools" (Ubabukoh, 2011). What this discourse omits, however, are the contestations around the role of the state, non-state and private sector agents and agencies in the education SoP even before the takeover of schools in the 1970s, including debates about the inefficiencies of the largely non-state managed primary education SoP. Further, the context in which the schools were taken over—following the Biafra War and the destruction of the education SoP—is also omitted in these narratives.

There has been some critical engagement and resistance to the handover of schools and the expanded role of non-state and private sector agents and agencies in the education SoP (Daily Trust, 2011a, 2011b). The Anambra NUT raised concerns about the employment and rights of teachers under church management, specifically that this would leave teachers vulnerable to abuse (Okeke, 2011). As a concession, responsibility for teachers, including salaries and pensions, remained with the state (Okeke, 2011). At the national level, the President of the NUT criticised the policy, arguing that the handover of schools to churches contradicted the UBE Act and led to the commercialisation of education (Daily Trust, 2011a).

Contestations around the handover of schools in the state continued throughout the 2010s. For example, in January 2023, Umueji Community Primary School, in the village of Umuoji in Orumba North LGA, was "handed over to the Catholic Church" (The Sun, 2023). However, this decision was challenged, and over 100 community members, including the Chair of the SBMC, travelled to the Government House in the capital, Awka, to protest the move (The Sun, 2023). According to a report in *The Sun* (Nigeria), the primary school "was built on community land in 1973 through communal efforts" and not by the church (The Sun, 2023). Further, according to the Chair of the SBMC, "they were neither informed nor consulted by anyone before the school was handed over to the Catholic Church" (The Sun, 2023). It is not clear what the outcome of this dispute was. Still, it does highlight the contestations around the policy of transferring public schools to non-state agencies, including the lack of consultation with communities.

There has been an ongoing debate about the payment of fees in schools managed by religious organisations. In November 2023, at a "prayer rally organised by the Anglican Communion" held in Awka, the governor, Chukwuma Soludo, "appealed to leaders of churches who operate mission schools in the state to reduce their fees to give every child equal opportunity" (This Day, 2023). A news report covering Soludo's speech at the prayer meeting noted that (News Chronicle (Nigeria), 2023):

School fees in most of the schools owned by the missions in the state are quite exorbitant, and beyond the reach of the vast poor population, most of whom made sacrifices and contributions towards their establishment.

This "appeal" was followed later in November 2023 by the governor's decision to cover the "tuition fees of primary school pupils in Nawfia community Njikoka Local Government Area" enrolled in three schools that were "managed by churches" (Ozaji, 2023).

The examples of high fees charged by schools managed by religious organisations, alongside the concerns raised by the NUT representative about the handover of schools to churches leading to the commercialisation of education, and the contestations over who originally managed these schools, highlight the increasing blurring of lines between non-state, private, and public engagement in the primary education SoP.

This section shows that the current involvement of private and non-state agencies in Anambra's primary education SoP is deeply rooted in the debates surrounding the state's takeover of mission and church schools in the 1970s, following the Biafra War. Despite arguments that draw on the memory of these earlier periods, today's dynamics involve more complex interactions between non-state, private, and public agencies, reflecting broader economic, political, and social changes.

At the same time, a prevailing discourse seeks to delegitimise the state's role in the primary education SoP. A critical aspect of this discourse revolves around the question of who is best suited to fulfil UBE. Key political figures in the state argue that private and non-state agencies are better equipped than the state to deliver on this mandate, effectively positioning these agencies not just as supplementary, but as replacements for the state in the primary education SoP.

Political Cultures Shaping the Primary Education SoP in Lagos

In the 1999 state elections in Lagos, Bola Tinubu, "a former Mobil executive", was elected as governor for the Yorùbá-dominated AD, which claimed to be in the political tradition of Awólówò's AG (de Gramont, 2015, p. 4; Iliffe, 2011). Tinubu's victory set the stage for the ensuing two decades of political dynamics in Lagos. According to de Gramont (2015), Tinubu used his investments in real estate and business to secure political support for the AD and won a second term in 2003. The AD later became the Action Congress for Nigeria (ACN) and eventually merged with the CPC and ANPP to form the APC in 2013. Successive governors in Lagos have included Babatunde Raji Fashola (2007-2015), Akinwunmi Ambode (2015-2019), and Babajide Sanwo-Olu (2019-current at the time of writing this thesis) (Lagos State Governor's Office, 2024).

Chapter 8 highlighted that attempts to limit fee-charging private and non-state primary schools in Lagos' primary education SoP during the early 1980s were reversed throughout the rest of the

decade and into the 1990s (Tooley, Dixon and Olaniyan, 2005). Unlike Jakande, Tinubu did not attempt to restrict the role of non-state and private sector agents and agencies in the education sector. Instead, he made the restoration of schools to their "original" owners a central electoral promise. According to Dennis, a senior NUT official in Lagos, it was during this period that the government began returning schools to religious organisations, which are now considered to be "playing their role" in the education system:

In 2000, in 2001, in Lagos State, the majority of some of those schools were returned to the private school owners like the [name of school], Holy River Baptist, the Baptist Mission they took their own, the Methodist, Wesleyan they took their own, the private owners, then the Catholic all of them, even the Muslim, the [name of school] took their own. So, all those Christian and Islamic missions they took back their schools, and they continue with that; they are playing their role up to today.

(Dennis, Lagos, September 2021)

Official approval for the handover was given in February 2001 when the Lagos State House of Assembly adopted the recommendations of the "Committee on Return of Schools," overseen by the Commissioner for Education, Dr Idowu Sobowale (This Day, 2001). Prior to his election, during a reception organised by the Association of Nigerian Market Men and Women in January 1999, Tinubu argued that entrusting religious bodies with school management would improve moral and educational standards (Rasak, 1999).

The Lagos government's decision under Tinubu can be viewed as politically expedient, aimed at appeasing Christian religious groups and middle-class constituents. The NAPPS, the Anwar-Islam Movement of Nigeria, representatives of the Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, and some Christian Pentecostal churches collectively supported the return of schools (P.M. News, 2001a; This Day, 2001). According to P.M. News, the Pastor of House on the Rock, a large Christian Pentecostal church, endorsed the move, stating it would "help revive the dwindling fortunes of education in the country" and allow "Christian missions [...] to teach strict moral instructions to their pupils and educate them on how to be good citizens of the country" (P.M. News, 2001a).⁴⁵

Although most Christian groups supported the return of schools, there was strong opposition to the policy from labour unions and some Islamic organisations (Vanguard, 2001). In April 2001, the National Council of Muslim Youth Organisation planned to take legal action against the Lagos state government (P.M. News, 2001b). In September 2001, the NUT met with Tinubu and the

⁴⁵ This support was given "during the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the new 9000-seater auditorium of the church at Lekki" (P.M. News, 2001a).

Commissioner for Education to discuss the "return" of schools (Vanguard, 2001). The NUT national president argued that the policy was unpopular among the public and raised concerns about teachers' salaries and employment rights (Vanguard, 2001). The Lagos State Council of the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria also contended that transferring schools would not address the deep-seated challenges—referred to as "rot" in their statement—within the education system (The Daily Trust, 2001). Additionally, Alhaja M. Okunnu, former deputy governor of Lagos, criticised the decision as "hasty and disappointing" during a seminar organised by Criterion, a Muslim women's association (This Day, 2002b).

Despite critical voices regarding the role of private and non-state sectors in Lagos' education system—concerns about systemic and structural inequalities related to religion, wealth, and teachers' rights—48 secondary schools were "returned." Specifically, "17 schools were returned to 15 private proprietors" (P.M. News, 2001c), while 21 schools were given to "seven Christian missions" and ten to Muslim missions (Newswatch, 2001). Students in these schools were exempt from paying fees for the first five years (P.M. News, 2001c). Although primary schools were not included in the "handover," this move signalled an expanded role for both private and non-state providers in Lagos' primary education SoP. The return of schools to "private proprietors" and non-state religious agencies, coupled with the fact that these schools could begin charging fees after five years, underscores the blurring of lines between public, private, and non-state agents and agencies.

This handover occurred before a significant increase in Lagos State's IGR, a key focus of Tinubu's government in the early 2000s and central to his vision for transforming Lagos into a megacity (de Gramont, 2015). Personal income tax became the "most important source of state government tax revenue" (de Gramont, 2015, p. 10). According to Meagher (2018), the state government struggled to tax the informal sector, resulting in most IGR coming from the formal sector. This "overhaul" of the system led to a substantial increase in tax revenue, rising from about N49 billion in 2003 to N117 billion in 2007, and reaching N189 billion in 2011 (de Gramont, 2015, p. 13).

After Tinubu's time in office ended, there was a slight shift in the approach to private and non-state engagements in the primary education SoP. In 2007, Babatunde Fashola, Tinubu's Chief of Staff, was elected governor of Lagos state. Fashola, who was "widely perceived as a technocrat willing to elevate good governance over politics," continued the tax reforms started under Tinubu (Cheeseman and de Gramont, 2017; de Gramont, 2015, p. 3).

During the 2006-2007 election campaign, Fashola's running mate was Sarah Adebisi Sosan, a teacher and Head of the Department of Communication and Information Technology (CIT) in the State

Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) (This Day, 2007).⁴⁶ At an April 2007 meeting with education stakeholders, Sarah Adebisi Sosan emphasised that the AC was the "teachers' party" and that "as a trained teacher, the teachers would have a good ambassador in her" (This Day, 2007). She became Deputy Governor in 2007 and was also appointed to "oversee the affairs of the state Ministry of Education" in July 2007 (Akinola, 2011; Vanguard, 2007). Although her appointment at the State MoE was intended to be temporary, Sarah Adebisi Sosan still held this position when she announced her intention to step down as Deputy Governor in 2011 (Akinola, 2011; Vanguard, 2007).

The state government began to "clamp down" on unregistered private schools. In January 2008, it was reported that there were approximately 6,000 "unapproved, illegal private schools," and around 500 of these, including primary schools, had been closed down (Vanguard, 2008). The Vanguard (2008) report further noted:

Outright closure of these illegal schools may not be the best approach because the majority of the children to be displaced cannot be reabsorbed by public schools whose facilities are already overstretched.

Some of the reasons given by Fashola's government for closing down the private schools were presented during the All Nigeria Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools' annual congress in January 2007. At the congress, the Lagos State Special Adviser on Education, Elijah Adewale, stated (This Day, 2008a):

We can't afford to commit the future of our children into the hands of businessmen and charlatans, whose primordial intention is to make maximum profit at the expense of our innocent children and parents. Enough is enough.

This statement from Adewale, reported in This Day in January 2008, reflects the Lagos state government's negative view of unregistered and often LFPS', which were criticised as prioritising profit over the welfare of students and parents. This criticism does not appear to extend to high-fee private schools, which were not the focus of this particular critique.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ In December 2023, under Tinubu's Federal Government, Sosan was appointed to the Federal Civil Service Commission (Executive Appointments Monitor Worldwide, 2023).

⁴⁷ In June 2008, This Day reported that the President of AFED, Pastor Joseph Ejenav, representing LFPS owners, had suggested owners merge their schools together as a way "to pull their resources together to form a formidable institution with conducive learning environment" (This Day, 2008b). It was hoped that by merging private schools, standards would improve, and they would be able to register with the state and operate legally rather than shut down (This Day, 2008b).

Under subsequent APC governors in Lagos, Akinwunmi Ambode (2015-2019) and Babajide Sanwo-Olu (2019-), the approach to private schools softened. This improved relationship between the state and private providers was evident during interviews. Donna, a senior representative of a private school association, noted that the Education Commissioner at the time of the interview had previously worked in the private school sector:

In the private sector there's the quality that is laid on, the emphasis on the quality of education. That alone is enough experience for her to bring into the public sector, where she is now Commissioner of Education. And this is somebody who has gone through British Council training and has been Chief Executive of Schools Trust, who has headed a school [...], so she's coming from the strong background that has a deep knowledge [...] of what quality education is. Having been exposed to that within and outside Nigeria, she is in a good position to make a difference in the state schools in the public sector.

(Donna, Lagos, September 2021)

In this statement, the private sector is equated with quality, and the commissioner's experience in this sector is seen as beneficial for improving the public school system. Additionally, Benjamin, a senior representative of an LFPS association, highlighted the improved access and communication with the commissioner:

I do meet with the Commissioner, so it's not like before, we had no access to the commissioner. This time around the Commissioner on her own if, there is an issue that begs our attention, she calls me.

(Benjamin, April 2022)

Benjamin also observed that this improved relationship had contributed to the growth of LFPS:

Since government now is allowing people to operate schools and the low-cost schools, due to our dialogue and discussions, more schools sprung up, and I tell you particularly one of the reasons for that is people's loss of trust in state owned schools.

(Benjamin, April 2022)

Despite this more encouraging approach to private schools, including LFPS, by the state government, Lagos governors and the political parties they have represented since 1999 have continued to align themselves with the tradition of Awólówò and the AG (Husaini, 2019). However, interviews with teachers and LFPS owners reveal a divergence in social policy approaches between the AG and UPN of earlier periods and the political parties of the 2000s in Lagos.

One parent at an LFPS referred to Jakande's policies (see Chapter 8) and suggested that if current governors adopted similar strategies, there would be no need to pay for education:

So, you see, we talk about one of the best governments, Lateef Jakande, one of the best governors in Lagos state. The other governors, if they adopt his policy, I don't think we should be paying because, like, let's be sincere, the way he did then, if others should be doing it, there won't be room for private schools.

(Interview with parents in Kiwi School, Lagos Area One, March 2022).

Further, conflicting views emerged regarding the state's role in providing public goods, including education, and frustration was expressed about the lack of these services (Interview with teachers in Banana, Mango, Pineapple Schools, March-April 2022). This frustration with the local government is exemplified by the following excerpt from a community leader in an urban area of Lagos:

They will come out and say they will give you potable water, good roads, electricity, almost everything. They can promise you the kingdom of heaven but nothing. Let me just put an instance: when the local government was about, every year they make their budget. But this year now I have to fight them for one thing because for the past four years they have been, for the past four years their budget is just a road. A road. And that road nothing has been done, and this year to now, I said, "Look, you cannot use this road again for this year's budget. If it is the health centre you are going to work on, let's work on the health centre." Okay, like this road now. The chairman will just say, "Okay, oh, this road we are going to build this year". But they will not do anything.

(School owner, Apple School, Lagos Area One, March 2022)

Similarly, a teacher in an LFPS echoed concerns about the provision of public goods and services, including education in the state:

"Well, the only thing we are using is the road."

(Interview with teachers in Banana School, Lagos Area One, March 2022)

These statements reflect a broader dissatisfaction with the quality and availability of publicly provided education, health, and other services, highlighting the ongoing challenges and perceived inadequacies in the state's public service delivery.

Political Cultures Shaping the Primary Education SoP in Kano

Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso of the PDP was elected Governor in 1999, and Sharia penal and criminal procedure codes were introduced in 2000 and 2003 (and in Zamfara, Sokoto, Jigawa, Kebbi and Kaduna between 2000 and 2003) (Olaniyi, 2011). The 1999 Constitution included a clause that "allowed a state to extend the jurisdiction of its Sharia courts" (Ilfie, 2011, p. 190). Zamfara was the

first state to implement Sharia law, exempting its small Christian minority (Iliffe, 2011). However, tensions escalated in more religiously diverse states in the North, leading to protests by Christians in Kaduna (Iliffe, 2011). In Kano, where Sharia was introduced between 2000 and 2003, it applied to everyone in the state, and an independent "hisba organisation was established outside the governor's control" (Iliffe, 2011, p. 192). In the 2003 state elections, Malam Ibrahim Shekarau was elected Governor for the ANPP (2003-2011), followed by Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso for the PDP (2011-2015), and Abdullahi Umar Ganduje for the APC (2015-2023) (DAWODU, no date).

Contestations between federal and state governments over Sharia law also impacted the education SoP. Wetheridge (2022, p. 122) outlines how these contestations affected the Child Rights Act, enacted in 2003. Like the UBE Act, the Child Rights Act falls under state jurisdiction and "is unenforceable until it is passed into state law" (Wetheridge, 2022, p. 122). As of 2019, only 13 states had domesticated the law; however, by 2024, 34 out of 36 states had passed it into law, with Kano and Zamfara being the exceptions (Aya, 2023). Wetheridge (2022, p. 122) argues that the states slow to enact the Child Rights Act were also those that had implemented Sharia, a patriarchal legal structure where "elder males predominantly hold sway" in courts. Wetheridge (2022, p. 122) also notes that in 2016, "Muslim Senators from the northern states" resisted the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill, which "intended to domesticate the provisions of CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women] and the Maputo Protocol, including provisions for women's equality in marriage and education." These religious processes further entrenched patriarchal structures, impacting girls' education and rights.

Simultaneously, private and non-state sector engagements in the primary education SoP have been actively encouraged. For example, one of the main targets of the Kano State Education Strategic Plan 2009-2018 was to increase private sector provision of basic education to 20 percent in urban LGAs, aiming for 30 percent of children in urban areas to be enrolled in private primary schools and to absorb a projected increase in enrolments (Ministry of Education Kano State, 2008, p. 4 & p. 90). Additionally, by the end of the plan period, it was projected that 50 percent of public school enrolments would be in Integrated Islamic and Quranic Schools (Ministry of Education Kano State, 2008, p. 90).

Interviews with key stakeholders in Kano highlighted the perceived safety of private schools. Becca, a retired official from the state Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs, recounted an instance where a wealthy father sent policemen to his children's school during a crisis:

I remember when there was a crisis in Kano, one of the big men [...] before you knew it, a truck full of policemen was stationed there [laughing].

(Becca, Kano, April 2021)

However, it was also noted that private schools are accessible mainly to a relatively small segment of the population, indicating that the majority of private schools in the state are not low-fee private schools (LFPS) but are instead medium- and high-fee private schools:

But honestly, most of those who can afford to take their children to private schools are middle class.

(Becca, Kano, April 2021).

In this situation, private schools are safer, but how many parents can afford to take their children because they have to pay fees, you know? In some cases, you know, exorbitant fees, so very few parents, so some schools will charge as much as 200, 250 boarding schools anyway. Some may charge up to 70, 50 thousand Naira even in day schools.

(Becca, Kano, April 2021).

The high cost of private school fees meant they were often associated with middle-class parents, described as "modern" or "enlightened." Isaac, an advisor to the state government on private and voluntary schools, illustrated this point:

We have to go back to this income level. Most of the parents in the higher income level, most of them, can I say fortunately, their wards are female, because of the level they tend to take them to this type of school.

(Isaac, Kano, April 2021)

Key figures in the Kano MoE viewed these educated and wealthier parents positively, as they were more likely to invest in their children's education, including sending both sons and daughters to private schools. This contrasts with poorer parents, who were perceived as less likely to send their daughters to school or differentiate in the education of sons and daughters. Abigail, an advisor to the state government on NGOs, highlights the structural constraints affecting poorer parents' decisions about schooling. Some parents, she explains, are forced to keep their children, including daughters, out of school due to financial dependence on their labour:

Yes, they are of two categories: some do not enrol their wards in school because of the issue of poverty. Because they think keeping the children in school, especially the girl child and [...] asking her to contribute parts of the livelihood of the family, maybe she goes hawking, such parents, they do it out of poverty. However, some still do it out of ignorance because they still do not see the value that is being accrued by educating the girl child. But I want to mention that a lot of efforts are being made to sensitise them so that they can understand and

appreciate and be able to convince them to see the benefits that are being accrued by educating the girl child.

(Abigail, Kano, April 2021)

The extract also highlights that some parents place less value on girls' education, attributing this to "ignorance" or lack of education. Kano State interventions aim to "educate" parents on the value of girls' education, seeking to challenge and change gendered norms that devalue girls' education.

These interviews with Kano state officials suggest that private primary schools are mainly associated with middle-class parents who can afford to send both their sons and daughters to school, which is then linked to a perceived commitment to gender equality. In contrast, public education is often connected with poorer parents, who may find it difficult to afford schooling for all their children. This financial constraint is compounded by deeper structural issues related to economic inequality and redistribution, which are not always thoroughly addressed in discussions about educational access and gender equality.

Further, during this period, *Almajiri* students have faced increased marginalisation and are often perceived as a threat to social cohesion. Reports suggest that they have joined "violent gangs" (Gaya Best and Rakodi, 2011, p. 52) and are viewed as resistant to "modern" developments (Hoechner, 2014, p. 64). *Almajirai* and this form of non-state education provision are frequently associated with poor boys from rural areas, who are seen as security risks and in need of re-education.

Thus, critical engagement is more pronounced with certain forms of non-state education provision linked to specific religious practices, while private schooling associated with middle-class or wealthier households tends to escape the same level of scrutiny. Instead, equal enrolment numbers of boys and girls in private schools are often viewed as indicators of gender equality.

Gender and the Primary Education SoP, 2000s-2023

The primary education SoP continued to be marked by gender and regional inequalities, with the poorest girls living in the northern region facing the most significant barriers to accessing primary education (Appendix 17).

The politics landscape from 1999 -2023 has seen minimal presence of women in decision-making positions. In the 1999 elections to the Senate, just three women were elected out of 109 senators, constituting approximately 2.8 percent (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 9). Similarly, just twelve women were elected to the House of Representatives out of 360 positions, making up around 3.3 per cent (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 9). More recently, in the 2023 general elections, only 9.8 percent of all candidates standing for election were women across all political parties (Lemo, 2023). Only four women were

elected to the Senate and 17 to the House of Representatives, representing less than five percent of seats in both chambers (Iruke, 2024, p. 5).

At the state level, no women have held the position of governor, and only eight women have served as deputy governors (Iruke, 2024, p. 5). This lack of representation highlights the limited influence women have in decision-making roles at both federal and state levels.

The National Gender Policy (NGP), developed in 2006 and revised for 2021-2026, aims to "build a just society devoid of discrimination, where the needs and concerns of women, men, girls, boys, and other vulnerable groups are mainstreamed equitably into all sectors of national development" (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, p. 19). However, the revised NGP, while reflecting a commitment to gender equality, continues to echo arguments from the 1970s (see Chapter 7). It links gender equality primarily to women's reproductive functions, emphasising that (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, p. 24):

Families are healthier, safer, and better nourished when the women raising them are more knowledgeable and capable of meeting their needs. Development standpoints on women's need and welfare are also helping to refocus attention on the situation of girls across nations.

This perspective reinforces traditional roles of women in the family and their impact on social reproduction, rather than addressing broader, systemic issues of gender inequality.

The NGP also includes sections on education (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, pp. 48–50), the "girl child" (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, pp. 70–72), and the "boy child" (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, p. 72), underscoring the role of education in advancing gender equality. In its most recent iteration, the NGP connects girls' education and gender equality to the conflict in the North. Notably, two of the five targets for the "Girl Child" section under the Gender Equality, Empowerment of Women and Social Inclusion Framework are (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, p. 71):

1. Integrating the voices and needs of women and girls into resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration, and post-conflict reconstruction programmes.
2. Development of the technical capacity of agencies working in disaster management sector to mainstream the needs of the 'girl child' and GEESI frameworks into disaster management plans and projects.

These targets frame gender inequality in education, especially at lower levels, as a problem predominantly tied to the northern states of Nigeria. The focus is on addressing conflict and societal

beliefs as the primary barriers to girls' accessing education. Strategies to meet these targets focus primarily on community and school-level interventions, such as "Enlightenment campaigns and advocacy in local communities on gender value and reorientation" (Federal Ministry of Women and Gender Affairs, 2021, p. 71). These initiatives aim to address the most straightforward forms of gender inequality, such as enrolment rates and specific challenges faced by out-of-school girls in targeted communities. This approach often emphasises the more quantifiable aspects of gender inequality within the education system and tends to overlook deeper, systemic issues related to processes of redistribution. These processes involve broader political, economic, and social structures that impact historically marginalised communities, including women and girls, and are linked to religion, ethnicity, and location.

In Lagos, Clara, a representative of an elite private school association, offers a perspective on gender inequality as the unequal number of boys and girls enrolled in school, stating:

Obviously, I mean up North, the inequality will be also in terms of religion and discrimination to girls, the girl child, but down South, no, that's not that's not the case. Down South, it will be poverty. It will be poverty, essentially, that will keep the children out of school.

(Clara, Lagos, February 2021)

This extract highlights that in the southern states, gender inequality in education is often attributed to poverty, with poor families struggling to afford education for their children. In contrast, in the northern states, gender inequality is predominantly framed as a consequence of religious beliefs and cultural practices. What this perspective elides are the unequal development processes set in motion by British colonial policies that continue to shape the primary education SoP in Nigeria, including around gender, linked to economic and political structures.

The section on COVID-19 examined the unequal relationships between teachers and school owners in LFPS, highlighting the precarious working conditions that many teachers face. Data from UBEC reveal that, nationally, women constitute a larger proportion of teachers in private primary schools compared to men (UBEC, 2019, p. 337). There are regional variations: in the South West and South East (including Lagos and Anambra), 74 percent and 86 percent, respectively, of teachers in private primary schools are women, whereas in Kano, this figure is 41 percent (UBEC, 2019, p. 338). Additionally, the private school census in Lagos, conducted for ESSPIN in 2010/11, similarly showed a high percentage of women working in the private school sector, at 68 percent of all teachers (Härmä, 2011, p. 19). As Dan, the NAPST official, described in the section on COVID-19, many teachers in private schools are hesitant to join unions or associations that could collectively advocate

for improved working conditions. Consequently, the majority of these teachers, unlike in public schools, are not protected by the NUT, which, as discussed in previous chapters, has taken collective action to secure better working conditions for all public school teachers. Lois, a NUT official in Lagos, highlighted this issue, noting:

Everybody wants to be in the public school. Everybody wants to work with the government. Because they know, at the end of the day, most of these people in private schools too, when you retire, there's no pension, there's nothing like that. There's no pension [...] you want to work in the place for years. At the end of the day, it doesn't have, at the end of the day, it doesn't have. There's nothing to write home about, nothing to take home.

(Lois, Lagos, April 2022)

The "cheapness" associated with LFPS is largely due to the low salaries paid to teachers, many of whom are women. These women face significant challenges in collectively advocating for improved working conditions and pay, including the enforcement of the minimum wage in Nigeria.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the use of private schools to achieve UBE is often seen as a way to alleviate some of the state's financial responsibilities, thereby freeing up resources for children enrolled in public schools. However, in Lagos, this approach has reached an extreme, resulting in a highly stratified primary education SoP where value is attached to fee payments and individual investments in education. While private schools can offer educational opportunities for some girls and may exhibit more gender-equitable practices at the school level compared to some public schools, this is highly variable.

Private, public, and non-state engagements shape gender relations, structures, processes and cultures within the primary education SoP, though many of these impacts remain inadequately documented. The preceding chapters illustrate how Christian missions defined gender roles in the primary education SoP by associating girls' education with domestic responsibilities and boys' education with economic productivity. These non-state engagements reflect and reinforce broader power structures in society, contributing to the historical disparity in political and economic power between men and women across Nigeria, although this disparity continues to vary significantly at the state and local levels.

The chapters have shown that inequalities in Nigeria, including those related to gender, have been sustained and reproduced within the primary education SoP, shaped by political, economic, and social structures. The discourse on girls' education and gender equality over the decades has largely

focused on increasing school enrolment for girls, often neglecting how the primary education SoP itself produces and perpetuates gender inequalities that intersect with religion, ethnicity and region.

Conclusion, 2000s-2023

The SoP approach applied to private and non-state sector engagements in primary education across Nigeria, and specifically in Anambra, Kano and Lagos, between 1999 and 2023 reveals some distinct cultures, as well as the political, economic, and social processes and structures shaping education provision. This chapter has demonstrated the varying forms of access and provision in each of these states during this period, with gender continuing to shape the primary education SoP and the poorest girls most likely to be out-of-school at the national level (Appendix 16).

By the 2010s, in Lagos more children were attending private primary schools than public ones (Appendix 17). The privatisation processes that began in the 1980s and 1990s accelerated rapidly throughout the 2000s and 2010s, with some efforts from the state government to clamp down on unregistered private schools, mostly LFPS and not high-fee and elite private schools (Vanguard, 2008). Lagos now represents the most extreme case of commodification and privatisation within the primary education SoP, a process whereby the market value of education is elevated above its use value (Hermann, 2021). UK development aid, particularly through the DEEPEN programme, has supported this growth, including investments in a private school chain (EDOREN, 2018b). This has normalised the presence of private schools at the expense of broader debates about the long-term implications for educational equity. As demonstrated, these commodification processes have altered parent-teacher-school owner relationships, exacerbating the economic strains on poor households—strains that were particularly acute during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Anambra, private primary school enrolments are around 35 percent (Appendix 17), and non-state engagement in the primary education SoP in this context is closely linked to Christian churches. Some schools were returned to Christian churches in the 2000s and early 2010s, appealing to Christian leaders who had advocated for greater involvement in education since the Biafra War (Obienyem, 2010; Onuchukwu, 2011; Osondu, 2011). The prevailing narrative in Anambra suggests that Christian religious groups are better suited to provide education than the state, as they are perceived as less corrupt (Ovadge and Enyinnaya, 2018). The chapter also highlights that in the early 2000s, Governor Mbadinuju's failure to pay public school teachers further accelerated demand for private schooling, illustrating a shift from viewing education as a public good or religious mission to a private investment. This mirrors developments in Lagos, but Anambra maintains a strong influence from Christian churches, even as fees rise in these schools highlighting the blurring of lines between private and non-state agents and agencies in the primary education SoP.

Kano presents a different pattern of private and non-state engagement in the primary education SoP, with the majority of children enrolled in public schools, including integrated Islamic schools. As of 2018, the Net Attendance Rate (NAR) in Kano was 63.5 percent, the lowest among the three states (Appendix 17). Although enrolments in private primary schools is under 10 percent of all enrolments, Kano has the highest rates of enrolment in *Islamiyah* and *Qur'anic* schools (Appendix 17). Despite the prominence of public and religious schooling, there is strong push from state officials in Kano for the growth of for-profit private schools, which remain largely inaccessible to most households. Similar to Anambra and Lagos, private schools are seen as contributing to UBE, yet there is limited critical engagement on how privatisation might divert attention and resources from public education. In Kano, where out-of-school rates remain high, the government encourages private school expansion to fill gaps in public provision, primarily benefiting middle-class families.

The SoP approach also illuminates how Nigeria's dependence on oil revenues has affected education financing. The mid-2010s oil price collapse led to reduced federal education allocations, exacerbating inequalities and increasing household out-of-pocket spending at a time of high inflation affecting all households but particularly low-income households. International economic and political processes have reinforced privatisation, with debt relief efforts linked to economic liberalisation policies, including privatisation and private sector involvement in education. Insecurity, particularly in the North East, has further strained the education system. The Boko Haram insurgency has devastated educational infrastructure in these states, with kidnappings and violence compounding the challenges of achieving gender equality in education.

Across Anambra, Kano, and Lagos, the lines between private and non-state sector engagements in the primary education SoP have blurred. For-profit schools—whether high-, medium-, or low-fee—alongside religious institutions, are all viewed as contributing to UBE. The role of SBMCs and community engagement is also considered key to achieving these goals. Community members are perceived as adding an additional layer of accountability. Yet, as this chapter has highlighted, the effectiveness of SBMCs is often measured by their capacity to attract donations to public schools from the private sector. This dynamic can lead to private companies donating to public primary schools in more affluent areas, potentially exacerbating inequalities between schools located in wealthier and poorer areas. There is a lack of distinction between these different forms of private, non-state and public sector engagements in the primary education SoP.

British aid, particularly through the DEEPEN programme, has further blurred the distinctions between private, non-state, and public sector engagements in the primary education SoP. Traditionally, development aid financing has supported public education, but this programme

financed private education in Lagos, albeit with more limited influence in Kano and Anambra. In all three states a ranking system for private schools—echoing the way VA schools were ranked during the colonial period (see Chapter 5)—is being implemented.

The political cultures in Anambra, Kano, and Lagos have shaped the discourse around privatisation and the role of private schools in distinct ways. In Lagos, the commodification of education is justified by the belief that market logic is superior to public education, including issues related to land and the state government's inability to regulate land prices. In Anambra, religious missions continue to play an important role in shaping educational policies. In Kano, the government's support for private school growth reflects a different set of challenges and priorities, influenced by structural regional, religious, and gender inequalities in access to primary education.

Gender continues to shape the primary education SoP, although gender equality is often narrowly defined as an issue of access rather than addressing underlying structural inequalities. The emphasis on girls' education as a driver for economic growth has become a dominant narrative in both policy and development circles. As early as the 2000s, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and UNESCO, in collaboration with the Nigerian Private Sector, highlighted the economic benefits of educating girls (Obanya, 2003). The arguments are reminiscent of those in the 1970s that promoted girls' education for the reproduction of the nation, where educated women were expected to become better wives and mothers. The minimal presence of women in decision-making positions and the resistance to gender equality legislation in Kano (and other states), have also shaped the landscape of primary education. The rejection of the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill in 2016 by northern Muslim senators highlights the intersection of religious and gender politics, which has implications for girls' education and broader gender rights (Wetheridge, 2022).

As the chapter has demonstrated, in Kano, the growth of private schools has been associated with middle-class parents who are perceived by state-level government officials to hold more gender-equitable views. These parents are seen as more likely to invest in the education of both sons and daughters, in contrast to poorer parents who may prioritise the education of boys due to economic constraints and traditional beliefs. However, this narrative oversimplifies the complex socio-cultural factors that influence educational decisions and overlooks the broader structural inequalities that continue to disadvantage girls in many parts of Nigeria.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the precarious conditions of teachers, particularly in LFPS. Many of these teachers, who are predominantly women, faced significant challenges during school closures, as private schools struggled to pay salaries (Ogenyi, 2022). This situation illuminates the vulnerabilities inherent in a highly privatised and commodified education system, where job security

is low, and collective bargaining is weak. The pandemic highlighted the urgent need for stronger protections for teachers, especially in the private sector, where labour rights are weak. This situation is likely to worsen, as estimates suggest that between December 2022 and April 2023, the number of poor people in urban areas increased by 11 percent (Sienaert, Joseph-Raji and Saldarriaga Noel, 2023, p. 8). This increase will likely exacerbate the financial struggles of parents with children in LFPS, leading to further challenges in paying school fees, impacting teachers' salaries – a particularly acute situation in Lagos.

Chapter 10. Conclusion

This thesis has sought to examine the history of private and non-state engagements in the Nigerian primary education SoP and take discussion of this issue beyond parental choice to show that decisions around education are highly context-specific, shaped by cultures that emerge in conjunction with structures, processes, agents, agencies, and relations. It has aimed to contribute to the field of research on the role and impact of the private and non-state sectors in education systems in low- and middle-income countries. Specifically, it has highlighted the complex interplay between historical, political, and economic factors in shaping Nigeria's primary education system, the role of private and non-state agents and agencies in it, and its implications for equity and access to education for whom.

The research was conducted out of a concern that studies of private sector involvement in education from a systems perspective paid little attention to gender and/or provided limited insight into historical factors that led to the emergence of private and non-state engagements in particular forms; and that studies of gender and private and non-state engagements in education were not conducted from a systems or historical perspective. Based on a review of the literature, in Chapter 2, on education and private schools in EID, I concluded that there was a need for more nuanced studies that explored the broader effects, power dynamics, and socio-economic factors that shape educational landscapes and the positioning of private and non-state education and gender relationships. I argued that it was important to engage with contextual nuances associated with various forms of provision, including their historical evolution and how processes of privatisation within education systems affect inequalities.

The study provides a framework that allows for examination of who provides education and how this changes qualitative and quantitative aspects of education provision. It employed the SoP approach to examine the political, economic, social, and cultural factors shaping the Nigerian primary education system and private and non-state engagements between 1945 and 2023. A key aspect of this study is its focus on how changes to governance structures within education at federal, state and local government levels alter relations within the system. How education is provided differs depending on who is providing it (state, private, non-state or some combination), influencing whether it is seen as a public or private good, religious or secular, a human right or a privilege for the few, universal or restricted. The thesis argues that these cultures of provisioning are not isolated but are formed through economic, political, and social structures, processes, relationships, agents and agencies (Bayliss and Fine, 2020). When the private or non-state agents and agencies dominate an education system and is predominantly through religious institutional arrangements, education can become focused on religion, affecting gender relations within the system.

The SoP analysis highlights how region, religion, and gender have been shaped and reshaped through the primary education system over this long historical period. These processes, driven by interactions between state, private, and non-state agents and agencies, influence ideas about religion, region and gender. The comparison of Lagos, Anambra, and Kano brings these dynamics into sharper focus.

The thesis has shown that in the three states of Nigeria detailed in this study, the engagement of private and non-state agents and agencies in the primary education SoP exhibit distinctly different patterns shaped by historical economic, political, and social processes. Lagos and Anambra have historically had much higher primary school enrolment rates compared to Kano, traced back to Christian missionary activities and the establishment of schools in southern Nigeria during the colonial period, as discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. During the mid-20th century, non-state engagement in Lagos and Anambra was predominantly through Christian missions and religious institutions, whereas in Kano, Islamic education dominated, with many schools not formally recognised by the state.

From the 1950s, regional governments, responsible for primary education, introduced distinct programmes that reflected their unique contexts but generally expanded access through Christian missions in the southern regions. However, this expansion was not mirrored in the northern region, where formal primary education enrolment remained low. The cultures attached to the primary education SoP were predominantly religious, shaped by and shaping regional divisions.

In the late 1960s, the Biafran War shattered the primary education system in the Eastern region (Chapter 6). The post-war period saw a significant shift in the ownership structure of the primary education SoP, as non-state schools, notably those owned and managed by Christian missions, were taken over by state governments. The expanded role for the federal government was part of an effort to promote national unity and create a more centralised education system. Federal and state governments increasingly managed and financed schools, reducing the influence of Christian missions (Chapter 7). In Lagos, the governor attempted to ban all private schools in an effort to expand the public primary education system. During this period, the cultures attached to the primary education SoP were linked to nationalism and nation-building. The 1980s and 1990s, however, were marked by economic and political crises, including the effects of the SAP, which exacerbated poverty and stalled investments in education (Chapter 8). This period also saw the establishment of for-profit private schools, high-fee and elite in Lagos, and non-state engagement through the reopening of mission schools in Anambra.

Lagos' primary education SoP now represents the most extreme case of commodification and privatisation. These processes have altered parent-teacher-school owner relationships, exacerbating the economic strains on poor households—strains that were particularly acute during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. In Anambra, Christian churches remain closely tied to the primary education SoP, with some schools returned to church control in the 2000s and 2010s, reflecting long-standing calls for greater church involvement (Obienyem, 2010; Onuchukwu, 2011; Osondu, 2011). There has been an increasing blurring of lines between these different forms of provision – state, private and non-state – and as of 2023, private schools are widely accepted and viewed as essential in filling gaps the state is unable to fill. In Kano, the primary education SoP presents a different pattern, where most children attend public schools, including integrated Islamic schools. In 2018, Kano had the lowest NAR among the three states (Appendix 17). Despite high out-of-school rates, the government promotes private school expansion to fill gaps in public provision, benefiting primarily middle-class families.

The SoP allows us to see how regional inequalities continue to be formed and reformed through the primary education system, with a continued reliance on private and non-state forms of engagement to fulfil UBE, the historically greater engagement from Christian churches in the southern region, including Anambra and Lagos, continues to lead to greater access and enrolment in these states.

The SoP analysis has also illuminated the role of international agents and agencies in shaping the private and non-state sectors' engagements in primary education, at times supporting non-state and private sector engagement and at times taking a more critical stance, depending on the agency and political and economic context. The British colonial government worked through Christian missions, while the World Bank, during the 1980s, helped create the conditions for increased private sector engagement amid reduced state funding to education (Chapter 8). From the 1990s, international goals like EFA, followed by the MDGs and SDGs, have formed the backdrop against which private and non-state engagement in the primary education SoP has taken place. As the thesis demonstrated in Chapter 9, the focus in Nigeria has been towards getting children into any type of school as contributing to both national and international goals of universal primary education. In the 2010s, UK aid supported private schooling, offering direct financial backing to a private school chain using British taxpayers' money (Unterhalter and Robinson, 2020). Colonial-era policies created deep regional, religious, and gender inequalities, while the World Bank's support for privatisation processes further entrenched these structures. These inequalities have proven sticky and difficult to undo, with evidence presented in this thesis highlighting that a reliance on private and non-state agents and agencies, without attention to redistributive processes across gender, religion, and region within the primary education SoP, continues to shape and reshape these divisions.

In addition, the thesis has illuminated the impact of these shifts in the primary education SoP for gender. It has been shown that between 1945 and the early 1960s, when the primary education SoP was dominated by Christian-managed mission schools in the southern regions, dominant Christian notions which defined the role of men and women in society infused the system. There was limited access to schooling for girls, and where there was this was associated with domesticity, whereas boys' education was associated with productive spheres of the economy, including agriculture. In the period following the Biafra War, as the federal state took on a greater role in the provisioning system, in Anambra and Lagos, enrolments and attendance became more gender equitable, although not in Kano. However, there remained a differentiation in how key agents spoke about girls' and boys' education, with girls' education linked to motherhood and the reproduction of society (Adaralegbe, 1970; Iro, 1970; Jibowu, 1970; Omololu, 1970). This discourse around girls' education for the reproduction of society has continued into the 2000s and 2010s, with a focus on access to any type of school. There is little critical engagement around other aspects of gender equality, including around the curriculum and relations between teachers and pupils in private schools, with further the poorest girls are most likely to be out-of-school at the national level (Appendix 16).

The thesis offers an original contribution on several fronts. It is the first time the SoP approach has been applied to education in Nigeria, and as far as I am aware, the first time it has been applied over such an extended period spanning nearly a century. The approach has been used to illuminate the historical contestations around private and non-state engagements in the primary education system. Over the decades traced in this study, the narratives underpinning this engagement have changed, shaped by the relationships between agents structured by political, economic and social configurations. The thesis has shown that shifts in the primary education SoP that lead to greater or lesser roles for private and non-state engagement are not gender neutral and that who provides education matters for how gender (in)equality is conceptualised and engaged with, with implications for redistributive processes.

The thesis argues that that gender is a key organising (or structural) feature of education systems, along with ethnicity, location and other markers of difference (Unterhalter, 2012, p. 68). Private schools may provide increased access to schooling for some girls in some locations. However, from a systems perspective, it is possible to see that increasing access alone is not enough to transform gender structures and relations for greater equality. It may be that private school enrolment rates are more gender equitable than public school enrolment rates. However, this thesis has shown that this is not evidence that private school owners provide more gender-equitable forms of education or that relations within schools are more gender-equitable.

The SoP Approach: A New Framework for EID

By drawing on the SoP approach, this thesis distinguishes itself from the RISE and SABER approach to education systems, outlined in Chapter 3. These perspectives often oversimplify complex social phenomena, reducing them to individual self-interest or the actions of a few individuals in the education system. SABER prioritises accountability relationships in an education system, arguing that private schools provide a short route to accountability, bypassing the state (Baum et al., 2014). Greater levels of choice, then, become the marker of an efficient system (Baum et al., 2014; World Bank, 2011, p. 10). However, the nature of these relationships, particularly around gender and other historical and relational processes, is not interrogated. The RISE approach builds on SABER to provide a more sophisticated analysis of an education system, drawing on Principal-Agent theory and political settlements literature, but which ultimately tends to prioritise the actions of a few individuals in the education system as the catalysts for reforms and decisions (Gershberg and Spindelman, 2023; Spivack, 2021). The focus on learning outcomes in these studies tends to overlook how gender and other inequalities are ingrained within a system and often crucial to how it functions, as opposed to an "inefficiency", lack of information, or the result of elite capture (Rodriguez-Segura et al., 2021a, 2021b; Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023). Gender is often overlooked in the analysis of education systems in both SABER and RISE, such as in Nigeria and Tanzania, and inequalities are often studied separately from the system itself (Ezegwu, Okoye and Wantchekonpalo, 2023; Sabarwal, Sununtnasuk, and Ramachandran, 2020).

The thesis instead argues for an open analysis that allows for context specificity to interrogate how contested cultures of provisioning form around education; why, for example, choice becomes an important aspect of discourse and how markets in education form and why. It allows for questioning the frameworks that have emerged around education systems that prioritise some forms of provision over others. The SoP approach allows us to see that cultures of provision are not free-floating but formed in relationship with economic, political, social structures and historically formed processes i.e., the material and non-material in an education system. It provides a critical analysis of how education systems form over time, how inequalities come to be embedded within systems, and how this shifts depending on political, economic, and social contexts.

The SoP approach draws attention to how wider gendered structure associated with politics and the economy, shape education systems. An education system does not stand apart from the gendered social, economic, political and cultural processes and structures in which it is embedded. An education system's structural and process features impact how education is accessed, including relations within the classroom between teachers and pupils, parents and teachers and so on. The analysis of gender in this study has thus included both descriptive statistics to show enrolment

patterns, i.e., the numbers of girls and boys enrolled provide evidence of patterns, and more qualitative aspects of gender relations and processes evident from documentary and interview data. Finally, these patterns of enrolment and the cultural forms they take are highly context-specific, taking different forms within and between states in Nigeria.

The framework developed in this thesis can be applied to other contexts and can focus on different aspects of education provision. Its openness means that each study will illuminate a different feature of an education system: in this case, it was the private sector and gender at the primary education level in Nigeria. However, another study could have focused on a different element or aspect of education provision and/or in a different context.

Methodological Reflections

The case study and nested case study approach were applied to analyse Nigeria's primary education SoP. This approach allowed for the inclusion of a range of data and forms of analysis, holding together the long historical period and the different types of data involved. By utilising the case study, the research has been able to reconcile seemingly disparate elements within an education system, providing in-depth insights into evolving cultures of education provisioning and their gender dynamics within the context of a single country looking at national and subnational processes.

The decision to look at three different states emerged from a concern that studies of private schools in Nigeria have tended not to engage with an analysis of the national education system (Härmä, 2013a, 2013b, 2016a; Tooley and Yngstrom, 2014); i.e., how high rates of private sector involvement in one state impact on how education is provided and accessed in other states. The nested case study approach has allowed for the incorporation in the analysis of three states with very different historical social, economic and political traditions, including in relation to gender, whilst not losing sight of federal and national level dynamics. The rationale documented in the three different states for state support for private schooling is different, and the case study approach has allowed us to see these trends

In addition, qualitative methods were chosen to illuminate the cultural meanings associated with education from a SoP perspective. The study aimed to understand how these meanings change and shift over time, particularly concerning gender and gendered meanings associated with education and the private sector. Some aspects are more easily identified and mapped than others. Political and legal structures can be found in documents. In the earlier period, government reports provided insight into the views of government agents toward the private sector and gender, highlighting some of the key sites of contestation in the different periods. Newspaper reports provided further insight into some of these shifts, including how certain aspects of the primary education system were

reported and the narratives that emerged. These narratives were particularly apparent in discussions around religious agents and their role in the primary education SoP, as well as in relation to teachers' strikes sometimes linked to an increase in private schools. The perspectives of some agents (government) were more prominent than others (parents and teachers), particularly in the earlier periods (1945-1980s). Further, agents' views toward forms of education provision change over time, just as cultures change and asking an agent about education reforms in the 1980s tells us their view of that change now but not how it was viewed at the time. I acknowledge that the picture presented may only be partial and may become clearer as new information comes to light.

Interviews with key stakeholders in the primary education SoP in Anambra, Kano and Lagos shed light on the different forms the private sector takes in the three states and, importantly, the different cultures attached to the primary education SoP. In Lagos, interviews with teachers and parents in LFPS highlight the contestations around the role of the private sector and the government in the primary education SoP and that these discourses can be contradictory. The interviews allowed for these views and differing perspectives to be included in the analysis, illuminating the impact of structural shifts in the primary education SoP at the local level. The research was conducted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and shed light on the impact of school closures on teachers working in LFPS who in many cases went for months without pay (discussed in Chapter 9).

As a white woman from a global North context, researching education and gender in Nigeria raises particular issues around positionality. The historical work conducted for this thesis, which involves a great deal of documentary analysis, means that my perspective and biases have coloured the research process (Nnaemeka, 2004; Ormston et al., 2014), as acknowledged in Chapter 3. From this perspective, no knowledge is free-floating but is shaped by the experience of the researcher (Armstrong, 2003; Ormston et al., 2014) – in this case, a white woman from the country that colonised Nigeria.

The historical work and application of the SoP approach illuminate how features of inequality that continue to shape the primary education SoP were set in motion during the colonial period, including gender, religious and regional. Further, the thesis touched on how economic structures and processes, particularly around oil and gas, including contracts between the federal government and Shell-BP enacted in the 1950s before independence but that lasted for decades, have facilitated the extraction of resources from Nigeria that could have been used to finance the primary education SoP (Frynas, Beck and Mellahi, 2000; Uche, 2008; Watts, 2011). Although these dynamics were only touched upon in this thesis, they form a key feature of the background. Connecting this to positionality means I have a greater responsibility as a researcher to critically engage with these

structures and processes and push forward knowledge that seeks to undo colonial structures and processes. I recognise that this thesis has limitations to how this has been done, as touched on in the next section.

Limitations

Conducting the research during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the research process. It meant I could not travel to Anambra and Kano and interview parents and teachers in LFPS, public, and Islamic schools in these states. These insights would have allowed for a deeper comparison of the three states and the impact of privatisation processes on teachers and parents at the school level.

The long history of the primary education SoP covered in this thesis, from 1945 to 2023, alongside the focus on three states, has meant that the research was unable to cover in depth the ongoing security situation in the northern states, kidnappings in the South East, and their impact on the primary education SoP. These dynamics are shifting the provisioning system, including cultures attached to education and what this means for an inclusive education system. Gender relations in education are also under-researched except for looking at enrolments and learning outcomes, and more needs to be investigated.

The research initially sought to implement an intersectional analysis of the primary education SoP; however, given the breadth of the research, it was decided to focus on gender to provide more depth to the analysis. This decision has meant that I have given limited attention to disabilities and how shifts in the role of the private sector in the primary education SoP have impacted children with additional needs—a key area of concern when building an inclusive education SoP.

The research has relied on predominantly western epistemological frameworks. The SoP approach could be brought into dialogue with African feminist theory, including work stemming from Nigeria (Mama, 2007; Oyěwùmí, 1997; Oyěwùmí, 2016; Pereira, 2005) – some of whose work has been drawn on in this thesis. However, what is lacking in this thesis is a thorough engagement with Nigerian feminist theory, and how this work challenges western conceptions of selfhood and human rights (Wetheridge, 2022). Such an approach would allow for a deeper engagement with the relational aspects of gender (Nnaemeka, 2004) in particular African contexts, which is left undeveloped in this thesis.

Further Research

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the opportunities technology can bring by ensuring continued access to learning when schools are closed but also highlighted the significant inequalities and divisions around access (Robinson and Hussain, 2021).

Most recently, the 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) focused on information and communication technology and how this shapes education – highlighting some positive aspects, including increasing access in parts of Nigeria affected by conflict (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2023, p. 40). At the same time, the GEM Gender report, on the same theme, highlights the intersection of gender and wealth so that poor girls in some contexts are less likely to have access to digital technologies that can support learning, as well as the connection between social media and school-related gender-based violence noted in the report, including cyber flashing and cyberbullying (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2024, p. 37). The main GEM report also notes that (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2023, p. 9):

Resources spent on technology, rather than on classrooms, teachers and textbooks for all children in low- and lower-middle-income countries lacking access to these resources, are likely to lead to the world being further away from achieving the global education goal, SDG 4.

An analysis drawing on the SoP approach of digital technologies in a particular context would incorporate both these aspects of inequality.

The SoP approach applied to education systems provides a tool to assess the implications of digital technology for the whole education system, including financing mechanisms and governance structures. Chapter 9 discussed the introduction of NewGlobe technology into the education system in Lagos, Edo and other states in Nigeria. An application of the SoP approach to the specifics of this intervention in greater depth, looking at the states that have introduced the technology, the terms under which the contracts have been agreed and for how long, as well as what this means for teachers working in the primary education SoP, is one such example of further research, applying both the SoP to the introduction of technological innovations in education systems – looking at the effects of such an intervention beyond learning outcomes. An analysis drawing on the SoP approach of digital technologies in a particular context would incorporate both these aspects of inequality.

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Appendix

Appendices

Appendix 1. The Ten Most Significant Factors Shaping Cultural Systems

Table 22 The Ten Most Significant Factors Shaping Cultural Systems

10 FACTORS THAT SHAPE CULTURAL SYSTEMS	EXAMPLES / DESCRIPTION	EDUCATION EXAMPLES
CONSTRUCTED	Influenced by the material practices of the SoP and by the agents in the SoP and so how provisioning is constructed affects the way it is perceived i.e., cultures are shaped by the material factors of the SoP and by the agents within it.	Privatisation processes in education shape how education is perceived, so that it becomes an individual investment and paying for the schooling received is normalised.
CONSTRUED	"Ways in which meanings are internalized and reflected upon by consumers, households and other SoP agents." (Bayliss and Fine, 2020)	What does education mean to households, the state and so on: Is it viewed as an Individual investment or a public good? Is education only around getting a job? Or is it about learning to critically engage with the society?
COMMODIFIED	Commodification (C) "most obviously represented by privatisation where other forms of (state) provision have been displaced by commodity production for profit." (Fine and Bayliss, 2022, p. 200) Commodification and Commodity Form: "streams of revenue are involved, these can be securitised as assets and traded as such, the purest form of financialisation." (Fine and Bayliss, 2022, p. 201)	Commodity Form could be the introduction of user fees in education. Commodity Calculation or "commercial logic" would influence which degrees are on offer, or the type of education provided.

CONFORMING	The domination of certain narratives, and lack of critical engagement with these narratives i.e., "common sense" (Bayliss and Fine, 2020)	Unquestioning acceptance of certain narratives related to education, such as the "learning crisis" or that public education is of poorer quality than private.
CONTEXTUAL	Changes over time, location and across income levels.	Cultures of education provision change over time, in different locations and depend on income level, gender, race, disability, it is also connected to cultural and national senses of identities and belonging.
CONTRADICTORY	Different agents compete, or complement, to give content to the cultural systems, and these may push in contradictory directions e.g., narratives that encourage consumers to both spend and save.	Parents encouraged to take responsibility for their children's education, and at the same time expected to work longer hours to pay for education and so less time overall to monitor and regulate their learning, for example.
CHAOTIC	Choices and activities are inconsistent and shaped by feelings, complex reasonings that are always shifting and in flux.	Parental decision making around schools may be guided by feelings, that can changes, rather than based on evidence around related to the school.
CLOSED	Power relations mean that who shapes cultures is not equal across different strata of society.	Agents connected to education systems have different levels of power and influence. Poor parents living in rural areas do not have the same level of influence as rich parents in urban areas.
CONTESTED	"...agents will have an interest in projecting conflicting cultures, as orthodoxy comes into contact with resistance pushing for radical rethinks of cultural framings"	Pushback against private sector engagements in education systems and coordinated effort by CSOs, for example.

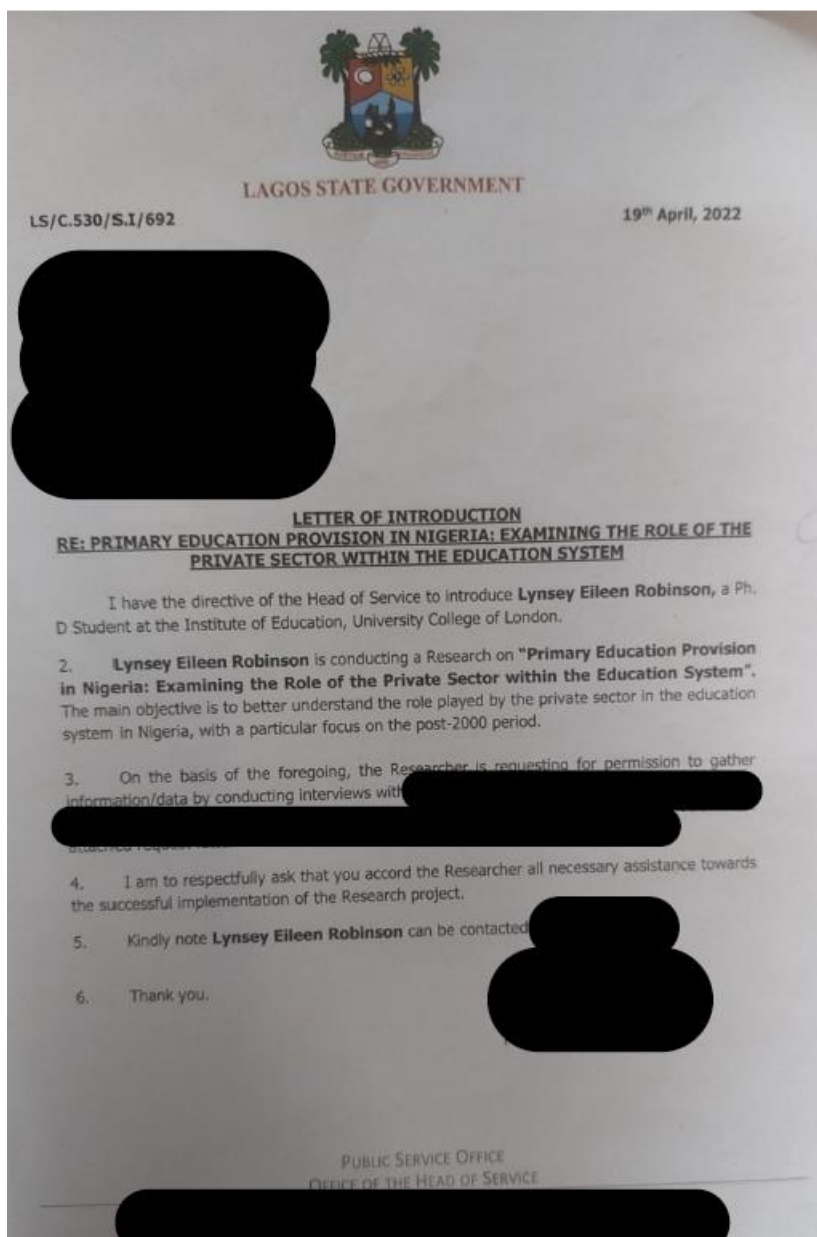
COLLECTIVE

Cultures are shaped by, and
operate at, the collective level.

Cultures attached to education
systems are shaped by the
collective.

Adapted from Bayliss and Fine (2020, 2022), education examples, author's own.

Appendix 2. Permission from the Lagos State Government for Conducting Research in Lagos, April 2022



Appendix 3. Consent Form

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Study: An intersectional analysis of inequalities in the Nigerian education system

Department: Education, Practice and Society, UCL Institute of Education

Name and Contact Details of the Principal Researcher:

Name and Contact Details of the UCL Data Protection Officer: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

I confirm that I understand that by ticking/initialling each box below I am consenting to this element of the study. I understand that it will be assumed that unticked/initialled boxes means that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study. I understand that by not giving consent for any one element that I may be deemed ineligible for the study.

		Tick Box
	*I confirm that I have read and understood the Information Sheet for the above study. I have had an opportunity to consider the information and what will be expected of me. I have also had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered to my satisfaction and would like to take part in an individual interview	
	*I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to 6 months after the interview	
	*I consent to participate in the study. I understand that my personal information (job title and position) will be used for the purposes explained to me. I understand that according to data protection legislation, 'public task' will be the lawful basis for processing.	

	<p>Use of the information for this project only</p> <p>I understand that confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, unless during our conversation I hear anything which makes me worried that someone might be in danger of harm, I might have to inform relevant agencies of this.</p> <p>Anonymity is optional for this research. Please select from the following 2 options:</p> <p>I agree for my real name and role/affiliation to be used in connection with any words I have said or information I have passed on.</p> <p>I request that my comments are presented anonymously but give permission to connect my role/affiliation with my comments (but not the title of my position).</p>	
	<p>I understand the potential risks of participating and the support that will be available to me should I become distressed during the course of the research.</p>	
	<p>I understand the indirect benefits of participating.</p>	
	<p>I understand that the data will not be made available to any commercial organisations but is solely the responsibility of the researcher(s) undertaking this study.</p>	
	<p>I understand that I will not benefit financially from this study or from any possible outcome it may result in in the future.</p>	
	<p>I agree that my pseudonymised research data may be used by others for future research. [No one will be able to identify you when this data is shared.]</p>	
	<p>I understand that the information I have submitted will be published as a report and I wish to receive a copy of it. Yes/No</p>	
	<p>I consent to my interview being audio/video recorded and understand that the recordings will be:</p>	

	Stored anonymously, using password-protected software and will be used for specific research purposes.	
	I hereby confirm that I understand the inclusion criteria as detailed in the Information Sheet and explained to me by the researcher.	
	I hereby confirm that: I understand the exclusion criteria as detailed in the Information Sheet and explained to me by the researcher; and I do not fall under the exclusion criteria.	
	I have informed the researcher of any other research in which I am currently involved or have been involved in during the past 12 months.	
	I am aware of who I should contact if I wish to lodge a complaint.	
	I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.	
	Use of information for this project and beyond I understand that other authenticated researchers will have access to my pseudonymised data and this data will be archived at the ReShare repository as per the Economic and Social Research Council funding guidelines.	

If you would like your contact details to be retained so that you can be contacted in the future by UCL researchers who would like to invite you to participate in follow up studies to this project, or in future studies of a similar nature, please tick the appropriate box below.

	Yes, I would be happy to be contacted in this way	
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No, I would not like to be contacted	
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Name of participant Date Signature

Researcher Date Signature

Appendix 4. Example Information Sheet
Information Sheet for Officials Associated with Education System

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Research title	An intersectional analysis of inequalities in an education System of Provision with shifting roles for the private sector
Research coordinator	Ms. Lynsey Robinson PhD Candidate, UCL Institute of Education
Research supervisors	Prof Elaine Unterhalter E: Dr Elisa Van Waeyenberge E:
Project funding	PhD fully funded by the Economic and Social Research Council
You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.	
About the project:	Since the 2000s, and particularly since 2010, there has been an increased focus in policy and research circles on the role of the private sector in education (both through public private partnerships and private schools catering to low-income families) on achieving the goals of education for all, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs.) In Nigeria, particularly in urban centres such as Lagos, it is well-documented that the private sector plays a key role in the provision of education, particularly at the primary level. My research aims to better understand the history of these interactions and the role played by the private sector in the education system since 1950, with a particular focus on the post-2000 period.
Why have I been chosen?	As someone directly connected with the basic education system in Nigeria, I believe that your knowledge and insight will be especially

valuable and I very much hope that you will be willing to undertake this interview.

Do I have to take part?

This is a voluntary interview, and you are under no obligation to take part in the research. If you do agree to take part, you will keep this information sheet and I will ask you to sign a consent form. If you no longer wish to take part in the research, after the interview has taken place, and would like to withdraw your consent, you can do this at any time without giving a reason. I will then ask what you would like me to do with your interview (data). However, once the research has been published you will no longer be able to withdraw your interview from the research.

What will happen if I take part?

We will agree on a place, date and time for the interview to take place. The interview will be recorded and is expected to take around one to two hours. The questions will be open-ended. I will ask you questions about the role of education in society, your view on inequalities in education, and the role of the private sector in the education system. You are free to stop the interview at any time or to decline to answer any question. You will be given a pseudonym and your real name will not be included in publications, your organizational affiliation will also be anonymized. After the interview, I will send you a note summarising our discussion and if requested, I will send a full transcript of the recorded interview. Due to the risks from Covid-19, I will wear face-covering during the interview and will take a rapid flow test before we meet. You will also be asked to wear a face-covering during the interview and we will try to find a well-ventilated space for the interview to take place.

Will I be recorded and how will the recorded media be used?

The audio and/or video recording of our interview made during this research will be used only for analysis and for illustration in research publications conference presentations. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

This research is not intended to cause any discomfort to you, and no disadvantages or risks are foreseen. However, if anything is disclosed during the interview that I think puts another individual at risk of harm then I might have to inform relevant agencies of this.

What are the possible benefits of taking part? Whilst there are no immediate benefits for participating in the research, it is hoped that this work will inform policy decisions around redressing inequalities within the basic education system in Nigeria.

What if something goes wrong? If something happens that you are uncomfortable with during or after the interview, and if I am unable to rectify this, please contact my PhD supervisor Prof Elaine Unterhalter in the first instance. In the event that this is not dealt with effectively or to your satisfaction please contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee – ethics@ucl.ac.uk

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential? All the information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. However, your job title will be disclosed in any ensuing reports or publications. On all documents relating to this project your name will not be used.

Limits to confidentiality Please note that confidentiality will be maintained as far as it is possible, unless during our conversation I hear anything which makes me worried that someone is in danger of harm. In which case I may have to inform relevant agencies.

What will happen to the results of the research? There are a number of ways that the findings of the research will be disseminated. Findings will be published in my PhD thesis. In addition, I will publish the findings in journal articles and present the findings at a number of relevant conferences.

Local Data Protection Privacy Notice

Notice: The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice [here](#). The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

The categories of personal data used will be as follows:

Name (Pseudonym)

Address

Organisation

The lawful basis that would be used to process your personal data will be performance of a task in the public interest.

The lawful basis used to process special category personal data will be for scientific and historical research or statistical purposes.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions about the above research project, wish to exercise your rights as a research participant, or wish to make a complaint, please send an email with details to the UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee on ioe.researchethics@ucl.ac.uk so that we can look into the issue and respond to you. You can also contact the UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee by telephoning +44 (0)20 79115449

Contact for further information

If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Appendix 5. Timeline of Fieldwork

Table 23 Timeline of Fieldwork

2021			
January	Introductory emails sent to key stakeholders in Lagos and Abuja	12th January: Benjamin, National	Online
February	Introduction to Research Assistant in Anambra by email and follow-up phone conversation and online ethics training. RA began to reach out to key stakeholders with an information sheet and an introductory letter.	10th February Shirley, Lagos 11th February Marg, Anambra 12th February Clara, Lagos 14th February Ronke, Lagos 15th February: Anna, Anambra 17th February Marsha, Anambra; Ruth, Anambra	Online
March	Introduction to Research Assistant in Kano by email and follow-up phone conversation and online ethics training RA began to reach out to key stakeholders with an information sheet and an introductory letter. Interviews scheduled for April 2024	4th March Paul, Anambra ; Esther, Anambra 17th March (Onyeka, Anambra Simon, National 24th March Grace, Lagos 25th March Sarah and Joy, Anambra	Online

		26th March Anthony, Lagos 28th March Rachel, Lagos 30th March Josef, Lagos	
April		6th April Kareem, Kano 7th April Isaac, Kano 8th April Becca, Kano 13th April Bashir, Kano Ibrahim, Kano 14th April Abigail, Kano Bilal, Kano 15th April Faisal, Kano Frank, National 16th April Mariam, Kano 19th April Sam, National	Online
May	Transcribing interviews		
June	Coding		
July			
August			
September	Transcribing interviews Coding and analysis	22nd September Ray, Lagos Donna, Lagos 21st September Dennis, Lagos	Online

		24th September Kamil, Kano	
October		28th October Dan, National	Online
November			
December			
2022			
January	COVID-19 Restrictions		
February	eased Planning for travel to Nigeria Updating ethics form		
March	Travel to Lagos at beginning of March 2021 Introduction to ActionAid Nigeria and HDI Nigeria Attend workshop organised by ActionAid Nigeria and HDI Nigeria Introduction to RA and ethics training	School visits 22nd March Red: Naomi and Joan, Area Two; AFED Proprietors (Chris, Sean, Sue) 23rd March Berry school visit, Area Two 31st March Apple, Orange, Banana school visits with RA (Area One) 31st March Hope School (ActionAid)	School visits and in- person interviews in Lagos
April	Visits to schools in Areas One and Two with RA and interviews with key stakeholders in Lagos and Abuja Obtained permission to visit public primary schools from Lagos State Government	1st April Kiwi, Lemon, Pineapple (Area One) 4th April Mango (Area One) 5th April Bon, Grace 9th April Bob, Area One	School visits and in- person interviews in Lagos and Abuja

		19th April Meeting with UBEC Quality Assurance 21st April Louise, Abuja 22nd April Akin, Abuja 23rd April John, Lagos 23rd April Kate (LGEA Lagos) 25th April Lois (NUT Lagos) 26th April Visit public schools in Area Two Grape LFPS, Area Two	
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Appendix 6. Example Interview Schedule

INSTRUMENT 1: Government officials in FCT, Lagos, Kano and Sokoto (FMoE, UBEC, MoE, SUBEB, LGEA)

Date	
Interviewer	
Data code	
Consent form signed	

Introduction

Thank you for your time and for your involvement in my study.

The aim of this interview is to contribute to my research into the role and influence of the private sector on inequalities in the education system. I am interested in your views on inequalities in the education system and the role of education in society. The purpose of this interview is to hear from you about your views on the expansion of the private sector in education, as well as on inequalities in education. The interview should take about 30-60 minutes.

As this interview is on the record, information gathered from this interview may be attributable to you. Your name will be pseudonymised, but you may be identifiable by location or a generalised description of your organisational affiliation. Before completing this interview, please read and sign the consent form, where I give you my assurances on this.

There are no correct or incorrect answers to these questions, and you may stop the interview at any time or choose not to answer the question.

Is this process clear? Is there something you want to ask me?

Male / Female (please circle)

What are some of the main challenges for [local/state/federal/UBEC] governments in the provision of basic education in Nigeria?

In your opinion, in which decade did the private sector begin to play an important role in the education system at [local/state/federal] level? And why do you think this is the case?

What role do you see for the private sector in the education system at the [federal/state/local] level? What are your reasons for this? What do you see as some of the main effects?

What do you know about how private sector actors deal with questions of gender, disability, ethnicity and religion? What experience, information, discussions have led you to draw these conclusions?

To what extent has the international community (World Bank, DFID etc) played a role in promoting the private sector in the education system? At what date did activities begin?

Is there anything further you would like to add?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 7. Letter of Introduction

Dear

I am a PhD candidate at the Institute of Education, University College London (UCL IOE), and I am contacting you concerning my research project.

My PhD research is a study of basic education in Nigeria with a focus on the role of private sector actors within the education system. The project title is: “An intersectional analysis of inequalities in an education System of Provision with shifting roles for the private sector”. I am interested in exploring the views of key stakeholders on changes that have taken place within the education system in relation to an increased role for the private sector and how inequalities (such as gender, ethnicity, religion and rurality) are understood and dealt with. My focus is on the post-2000 period, but I am also interested in exploring the longer history of changes that have taken place within the education system, from the post-independence period to the present, and the changing nature of private sector intervention in the education system over this period.

As someone who is directly connected with the education sector in Nigeria, I believe that your knowledge and insight will be especially valuable, and I very much hope that you will be willing to participate in my research.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best wishes,

Lynsey Robinson

PhD Candidate |

UCL Institute of Education, Bedford Way, WC1 2AE |

Appendix 8. Example of Anonymised Email Correspondence

I hope you're well. I just want to follow up on the below email. I would be very grateful if you could find some time in the coming days or weeks to meet with me to discuss my research.

Please do let me know if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Lynsey
Lynsey Robinson
PhD Candidate | UCL Institute of Education

On 13 Mar 2021, at 16:27, Robinson, Lynsey
[REDACTED] wrote:

I hope this email finds you well. I am a PhD candidate at the Institute of Education, University College London (UCL IOE), and I believe Dr Chidi Ezegwu mentioned to you that I would be in touch regarding my research.

My PhD research is a study of basic education in Nigeria with a focus on the role of private sector actors within the education system. The project title is: "An intersectional analysis of inequalities in an education System of Provision with shifting roles for the private sector". I am interested in exploring the views of key stakeholders on changes that have taken place within the education system in relation to an increased role for the private sector and how inequalities (such as gender, ethnicity, religion and rurality) are understood and dealt with. My focus is on the post-2000 period, but I am also interested in exploring the longer history of changes that have taken place within the education system, from 1960 to the present, and the changing nature of private sector intervention in the education system over this period.

Mail - Robinson, Lynsey - Outlook

I am hoping you might have some time in the coming weeks to meet, with the prospect of a formal interview at a suitable time for you.

I have also attached an information sheet which provides more details about the project.

Please do let me know if you have any questions, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best wishes,

Lynsey

Lynsey Robinson
PhD Candidate | UCL Institute of Education

Appendix 9. Coding Frame

	Description	Examples / Description	
Structures	Economic, political, social and cultural structures shaping relations between private and public agents in the primary education SoP		
	Subcategory 1: Economic structures shaping primary education provision, including government spending on education, taxation, and ownership structures.	SPENDING ON EDUCATION	Government budgets, allocations, and expenditures specifically for primary education.
		TAX AND REVENUE COLLECTION	Taxation policies and revenue collection methods that impact funding for primary education.
	Subcategory 2: Political structures shaping primary education provision at different levels of governance.	FEDERAL & COLONIAL	Laws, regulations, and government policies established by the national government regarding primary education.
		STATE & REGIONAL	Laws, regulations, and policies established by state-level governments.
		LOCAL	Laws, regulations, established by local governments.
	Subcategory 3: Social structures impacting primary education provision, including religion, gender, ethnicity, and regional differences.	RELIGION	Policies, practices, and cultural norms related to religious beliefs and practices within the education system.
		GENDER	Policies, practices, and cultural norms shaping experiences, opportunities, and outcomes based on gender identity.

		ETHNIC	Policies, practices, and cultural norms related to ethnic identities within the education system.
		REGIONAL	Regional differences and disparities in access to education, curriculum content, and resources.
Processes	Economic, political, social and cultural processes affecting how and by whom primary education is provided		
	Subcategory: Political	FEDERAL REGIONAL RELIGIOUS MILITARY	Political processes at the federal level and state that influence primary education provision and the role of the private sector in primary education. It includes policies, legislation, and decision-making by the national government related to education funding, curriculum development, or educational standards.
Relations	Relationships between agents and agencies (including contestations)		
		FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR	Relationships between the federal government and private sector actors in primary education provision, including policy engagement, financing and funding, and contestations.
		STATE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR	Relationships between state-level governments and private sector entities, including policy engagement, financing and funding, and contestations.

		LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR	Relationships between local governments and private sector actors, including policy engagement, financing and funding, and contestations.
		FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	Relationships between the federal, state and local governments (including SUBEB, LGEA and UBEC).
		GOVERNMENTS (FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL) AND TEACHERS	Relationships between all tiers of government and teachers, including teachers' unions and associations.
		GOVERNMENTS (FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL) AND PARENTS, COMMUNITIES	Relationships between government and parents and communities.
		SCHOOL OWNERS, TEACHERS, PARENTS	Relationships between teachers, school owners and associations.
Inequalities		GENDER	Unequal access to education, differential treatment, gender stereotypes, and barriers to participation or achievement based on gender.
		RELIGION	Inequalities stemming from religious beliefs or affiliations within the primary education system.
		ETHNICITY	Inequalities based on ethnic identities within the primary education system.
		DISABILITY	Inequalities faced by individuals with disabilities

			within the primary education system.
		RURAL / URBAN	Disparities between rural and urban areas within the primary education system.
		INCOME	Inequalities based on income level.
		REGION	Inequalities based on region.
Perspectives on the Role of the Private Sector in the Primary Education SoP		POSITIVE	Positive perspectives regarding the role of the private sector in primary education provision. It includes views that emphasise the benefits of private sector involvement, such as quality, efficiency and choice.
		NEGATIVE	Negative perspectives regarding the role of the private sector in primary education provision. It includes criticisms, concerns, and challenges associated with private sector involvement, such as equity, access, quality.
		PRAGMATIC	Pragmatic perspectives that acknowledge both the potential benefits and drawbacks of private sector involvement in primary education, including that the private sector is filling a gap.
Perspectives on the Role of the State in		POSITIVE	Positive perspectives regarding the role of the

<p>the Primary Education SoP</p>			<p>state in primary education provision. It includes views that emphasise the importance of state intervention and investment in education, such as ensuring equitable access, quality standards, and educational opportunities for all students.</p>
		<p>NEGATIVE</p>	<p>Negative perspectives regarding the role of the state in primary education provision. It includes criticisms, concerns, and challenges associated with state involvement, relating to inefficiency, and politicisation of education.</p>
		<p>PRAGMATIC</p>	<p>Represents pragmatic perspectives that acknowledge both the strengths and limitations of state involvement in primary education provision. It includes views that recognise the role of the state in setting policy frameworks, ensuring accountability, and providing support while also advocating for flexibility, decentralisation, and community involvement in education decision-making.</p>

Appendix 10. Overview of inequalities in education in Nigeria

Several studies investigate gendered attitudes toward education in Nigeria (Kazeem, Jensen and Stokes, 2010; Unterhalter et al., 2018). For instance, a study conducted in the states of Jigawa, Kano, Lagos, Rivers, and Sokoto "on teachers' knowledge and engagement with aspects of gender equality" (Unterhalter et al., 2018, p. 2) found that a large proportion of student teachers held beliefs and attitudes that reinforce gender inequality. In the study's first phase, data was collected through surveys of final-year students in 2014, with 4,524 respondents across 11 colleges and faculties of education in the five states. Survey respondents were asked about their views on women in leadership positions, gender equality, school participation, and sports for girls and boys (Unterhalter et al., 2018, p. 54). Only 16 percent of men strongly agreed that "a female president can be as effective as a male president," compared to 57 percent of women, and just 53 percent of men strongly agreed that "girls have the same right to go to school as boys", compared to 85 percent of women (Unterhalter et al., 2018, p. 54). However, there were variations in gender attitudes across states, with both men and women in southern states leaning more towards gender equality than those in northern states (Unterhalter et al., 2018, p. 57). Ezegwu and Cin's (2022) research also shows that gender formations differ across states. The study explores postcolonial masculinities and access to primary education in Nigeria, focusing on Anambra, Sokoto and Oyo. Drawing on data from 30 semi-structured interviews with five women and five men in each state "who did not complete their basic education" and were over 18 years old (Ezegwu and Cin, 2022, p. 4), the research sheds light on the impact of colonial and postcolonial dynamics on the formation of masculinities. In Anambra, young men felt pressure to start working and earning money, resulting in higher dropout rates (Ezegwu and Cin, 2022, p. 11). In Sokoto, respondents mentioned experiencing social pressure to marry early, particularly the case for young women (Ezegwu and Cin, 2022, p. 11). These studies highlight the importance of paying close attention to specific social, cultural, political, and economic formations across states to understand gendered educational dynamics.

Studies also show that household income level is key to understanding access to and progression through education in Nigeria (Lewin and Sabates, 2012; Unterhalter, 2012a; Mutisya, Muchira and Abuya, 2021). Lewin and Sabates' (2012) comparative study of DHS data across six African countries (Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia) between 1990 and 2003 investigating the effects of the post-Jomtien EFA commitments found that children from the poorest households in Nigeria not only "had a lower likelihood of access to school (estimated parameter 1.09)" but also that "this situation worsened" between 1990 and 2003 (Lewin and Sabates, 2012, p. 521). Similarly, children from the poorest households "were more likely to be over age [for their grade] by three or more years" in 2003 than in 1990 (Lewin and Sabates, 2012). Onwuameze (2013) provides an

analysis of the 2010 Nigeria Education Data Survey (NEDS) by comparing the influence of socioeconomic status, gender, and region on reading and numeracy skills using multivariate regression. The study found that socioeconomic status was the more important influence on learning outcomes. Similarly, Kazeem et al.'s (2010) analysis of data from the 2004 NEDS finds that the odds of children attending school from households in the richest income quintile are six times higher than those from the poorest households.

Research on religion and education in Nigeria has also highlighted the intersection of religion, gender, poverty, and location on political and economic exclusions (Hoechner, 2011, 2015b; Baba, 2012). Kazeem et al. (2010, p. 312) find that "Christian children are five times more likely to attend school than Muslim children". Other studies, however, highlight nuances associated with enrolment rates, notably participation in *Qur'ānic* schools that are only sometimes recognised by the state. Baba (2012) argues that despite attempts to integrate *Qur'ānic* schools into the formal education system by introducing secular subjects, significant change in state policy and support for these schools has been lacking. Further, the quality of education in *Qur'ānic* schools primarily relies on the individual malam, with limited regulatory oversight from the state or religious bodies (Baba, 2012). Hoechner (2015b, 2015a) explores how young men and boys, often from poor backgrounds attending *Qur'ānic* schools, use religious discourses to cope with feelings of exclusion and inadequacy. These studies contribute to understanding the complex dynamics of inequality in the Nigerian education system, considering factors such as socioeconomic status, gender, location, religion and ethnicity.

Appendix 11. Enrolments and Inequalities in the Primary Education SoP, 1945-1960

Between 1945 and 1960, the primary education SoP provided highly unequal access to education, with large disparities in enrolment rates within and between regions and by gender. The Northern region, which had a slightly larger share of the population than the combined southern regions, had a significantly smaller number of children enrolled in primary schools. Table 24 below shows official statistics from the Report of the Education Department, April 1 1945 to December 31 1946 (Government of Nigeria, 1947).⁴⁸ It shows that in 1946, just 54,000 children, roughly 10 percent of total enrolments, were attending primary schools in the Northern region compared to 228,000 (42 percent of total enrolments) in the Western region and 263,000 (48 percent of total enrolments) in the Eastern region (Government of Nigeria, 1947, p. 10). Intersecting with these regional inequalities were significant disparities in access to primary school based on gender, as Table 24 shows. In 1946, girls comprised just 19 and 20 percent of total enrolments across all areas (Government of Nigeria, 1947, p. 10). These figures are evidence of a primary education SoP that predominantly provided boys living in the southern regions access to primary school.

Table 24 Primary School Enrolment Rates in the Eastern, Western and Northern Regions/Provinces, 1946

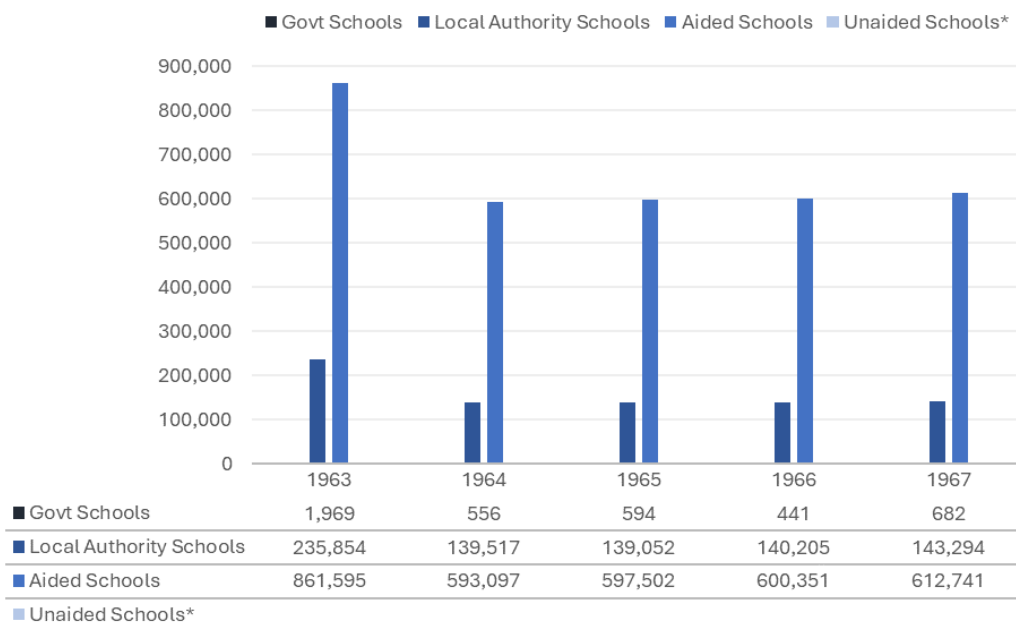
PROVINCE/REGION	BOYS	%	GIRLS	%	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLMENTS
WESTERN	182000	79.8	46000	20.2	228,000	41.8
EASTERN (INCL. CAMEROON)	214000	81.4	49000	18.6	263000	48.3
NORTHERN	44000	81.5	10000	18.5	54,000	9.9
TOTAL	440000		105000		545,000	

Source: Government of Nigeria (1947, p. 10)

⁴⁸ Laid on the Table of the Legislative Council as Sessional Paper No. 15 of 1947

Appendix 12. Enrolments and Inequalities in the Primary Education SoP, 1960s
 In the 1960s, in the Western region and Lagos, enrolments in all types of schools increased (Figures 18 and 21) (Federal Ministry of Education, 1968). Enrolments in LA schools in the Mid-Western region decreased between 1964 and 1967 (Figure 19) (Federal Ministry of Education, 1968). In the Eastern region, there was a slight decrease in enrolments in VA-aided schools and an increase in LA and Unaided schools (Figure 20) (Federal Ministry of Education, 1968).

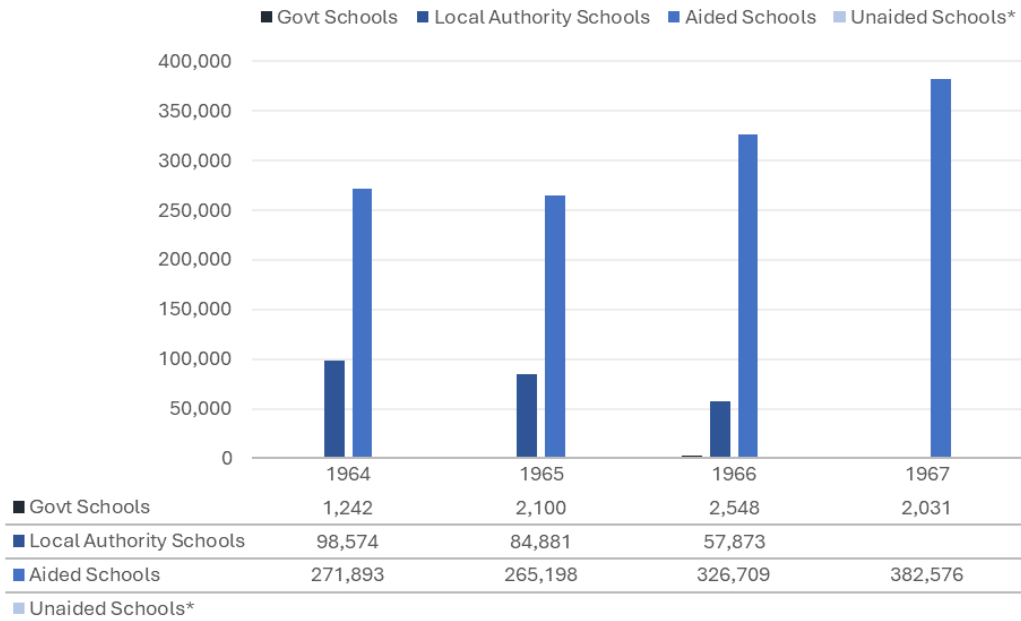
Figure 18 Primary School Enrolments by School Type, Western region, 1963-1967



*No data for Unaided Schools

Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1968, p. 10)

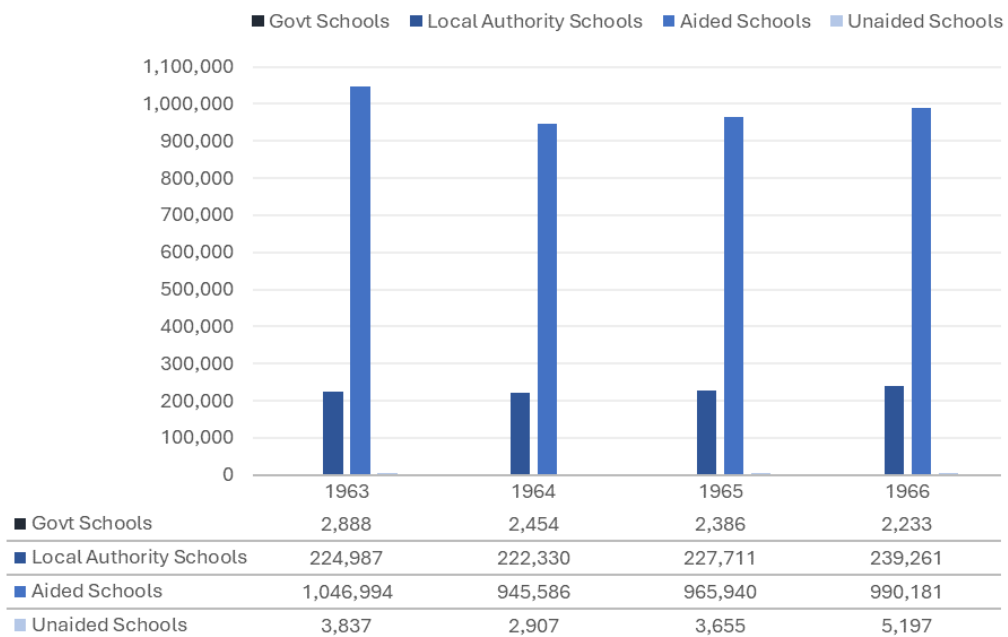
Figure 19 Primary School Enrolments by School Type, Mid-Western Region 1964-1967



*No data for Unaided Schools

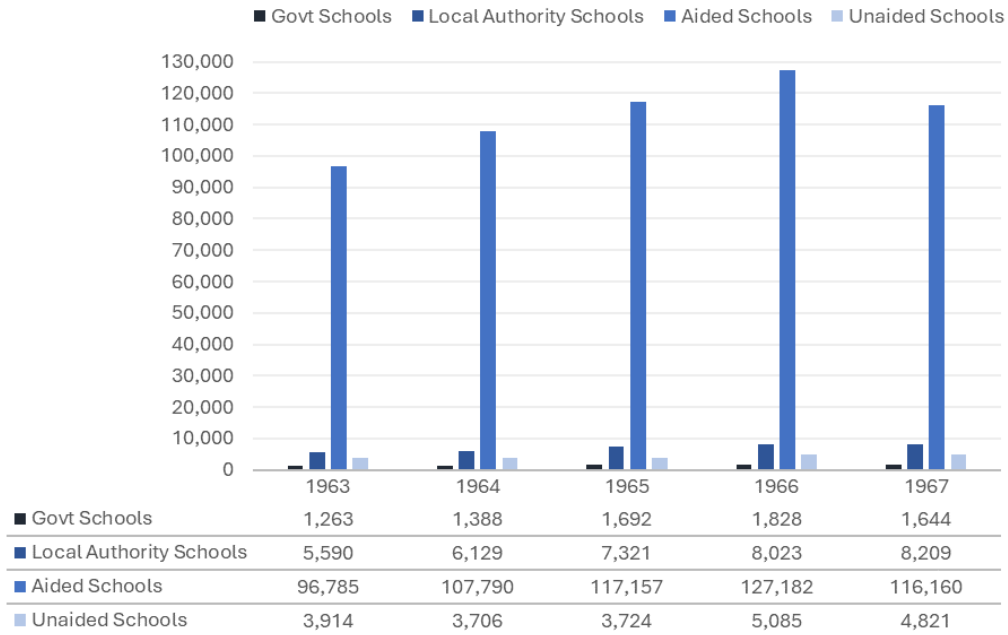
Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1968, p. 10)

Figure 20 Primary School Enrolments by School Type, Eastern Region, 1963-1966



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1968, p. 10)

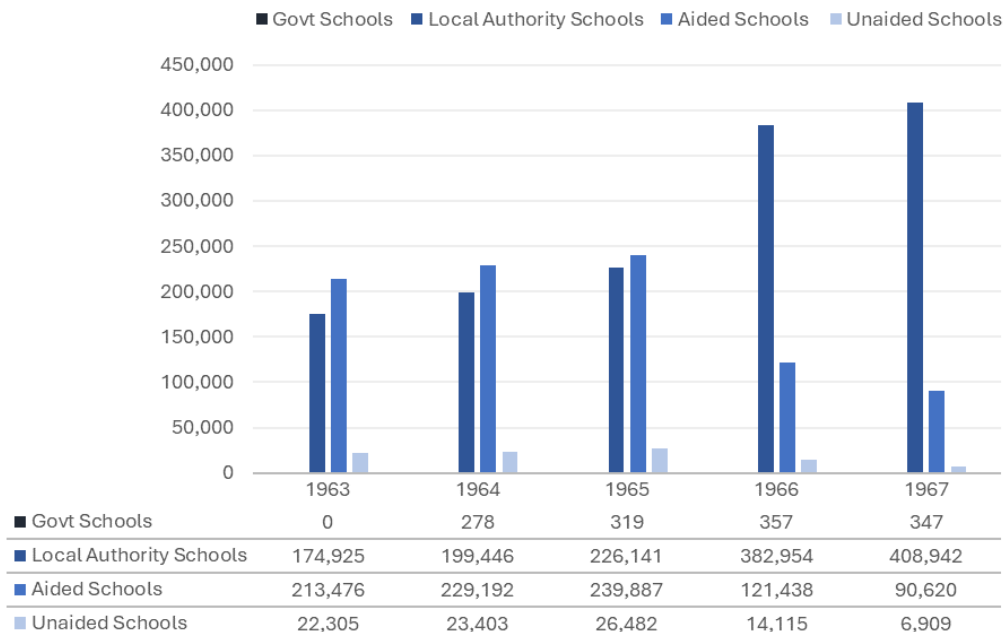
Figure 21 Primary School Enrolments by School Type, Lagos, 1963-1967



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1968, p. 10)

In the Northern region, enrolments in LA schools increased throughout the 1960s, while enrolments in aided schools decreased significantly, from just over 213,000 to just over 90,000 by 1967, as Figure 22 shows (Federal Ministry of Education, 1968, p. 10).

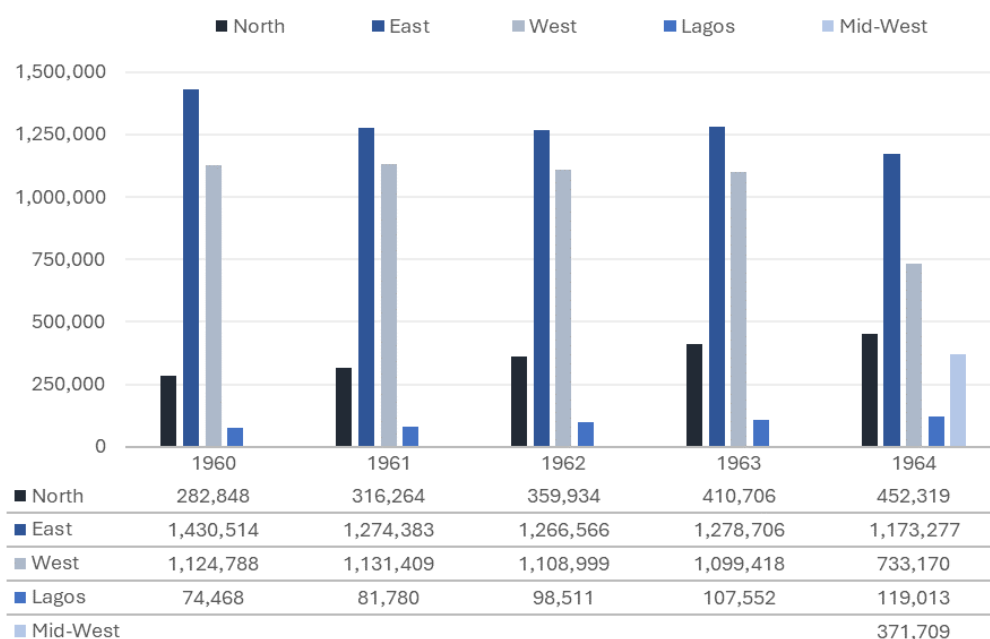
Figure 22 Primary School Enrolments by School type, Northern Region, 1963-1967



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1968, p. 10)

This patchwork of providers was far from providing universal primary education. UPE programmes implemented in the Eastern and Western regions in the 1950s meant the southern regions, with the majority Yorùbá and Igbo populations, had the highest number of children in primary school between 1960 and 1964, as shown in Figure 23 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1965, p. 9). In contrast, in the Northern regions, with majority Hausa and Fulani populations, less than 500,000 children were in primary school between 1960 and 1964.

Figure 23 Primary School Enrolments by Region, 1960-1964



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1965, p. 9)

These unequal enrolment rates are even more stark when taken alongside census figures. In 1963, out of a population of 56 million, almost 57.8 percent were from the largest ethnic groups (Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo) (Mustapha, 2006a, p. 23). However, as Table 25 shows, the combined Hausa and Fulani populations comprised the largest percentage, at just under 30 percent, followed by Yorùbá at around 20 percent, and Igbo at about 17 percent (Diamond, 1988, p. 22). Approximately 33.6 percent of the population were from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which are shown in Table 25.⁴⁹

Table 25 Ethnic Groups as a Percentage of the Total Population of Nigeria, 1963

⁴⁹ An important point, however, regarding the figures from the Census published in 1963, following the cancellation of the 1962 Census, is the highly contentious nature of this data (discussed in more detail below about political structures) (Diamond, 1988). The Census found that a higher percentage of the population lived in the Northern region, around 53 percent of the total population, than in the southern areas (Sklar, 1967).

Ethnic group	Percent of population 1963
Hausa	20.9
Fulani	8.7
Kanuri	4.1
Tiv	2.5
Nupe	1.2
Yorùbá	20.3
Edo	1.7
Igbo	16.6
Ibibio-Efik	3.6
Ijaw	2.0
Other	18.5

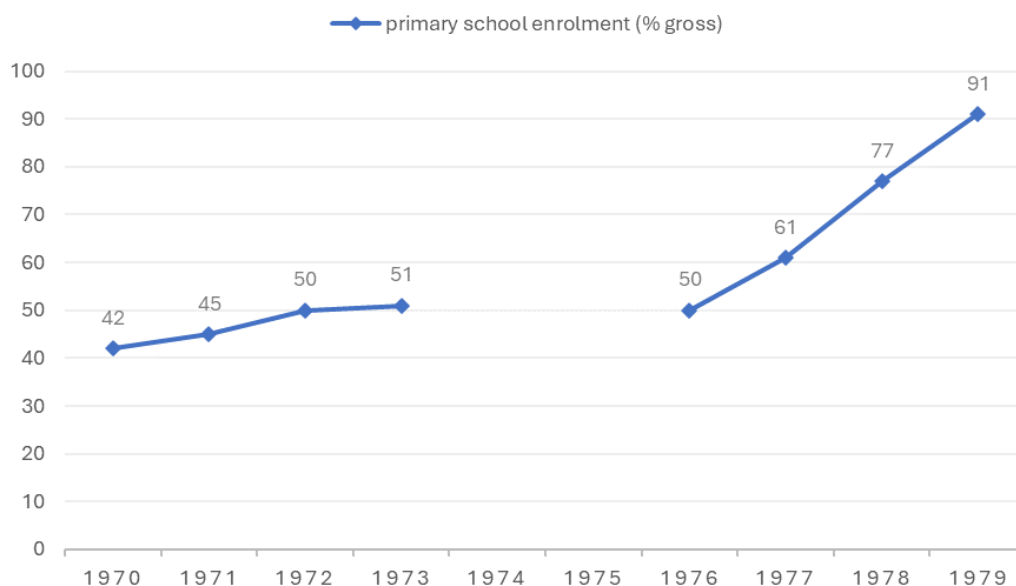
Source: Diamond (1988, p. 22)

These figures highlight two things: regional-ethnic and religious inequalities continued to structure enrolments in the primary education SoP, and despite UPE programmes, a large percentage of the primary school-aged population remained out of school in the 1960s.

Appendix 13. Enrolments and Inequalities, 1970s

Figure 24, below, shows that the primary school gross enrolment rate increased from around 42 percent in 1970 to over 90 percent by 1979 (World Bank, 2023a). An important caveat to the official figures cited here is the likelihood of some inflation of figures, as local government grants depended on enrolment rates (Bray, 1981). However, overall, there was a significant increase in enrolments.

Figure 24 Primary School Enrolments, (% gross), Nigeria, 1970-1979



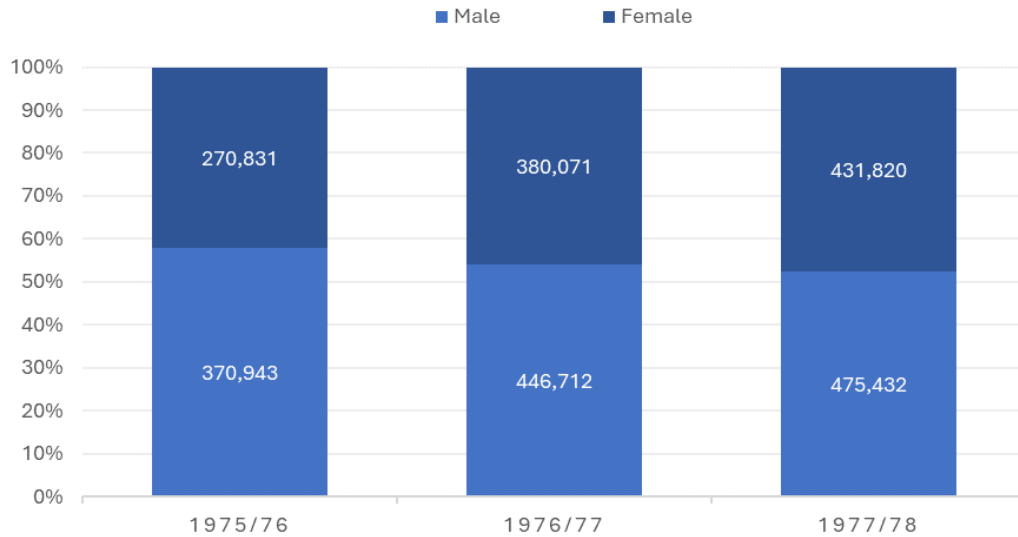
Source: World Bank (2023a) *Data not available for 1974-1975

In March 1977, there were 1,836 primary schools with 858,885 enrolments, increasing to 879,908 and 1,865 schools by March 1978. The number of primary school pupils substantially rose from 641,774 in 1975/76 to 911,377 in 1978/79 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 5).

In 1976, Anambra (Old Anambra State) was created out of the East Central State, and the UPE programme was (re)introduced in the same year. There was a significant increase in enrolments, as the following extract from the Anambra State Annual Education report, 1977-78, notes (Anambra State of Nigeria, 1979, p. 3), “The introduction of Universal Primary Education scheme brought in its trail population explosion in primary schools because children of both rich and poor turned out en masse to register.”

As the decade of the 1970s progressed, the enrolment rates of girls and boys became more equitable (Figure 25), so that by 1977/78, around 48 percent of total enrolments were girls, up from 42 percent in 1975/76 (author’s calculations from Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 5).

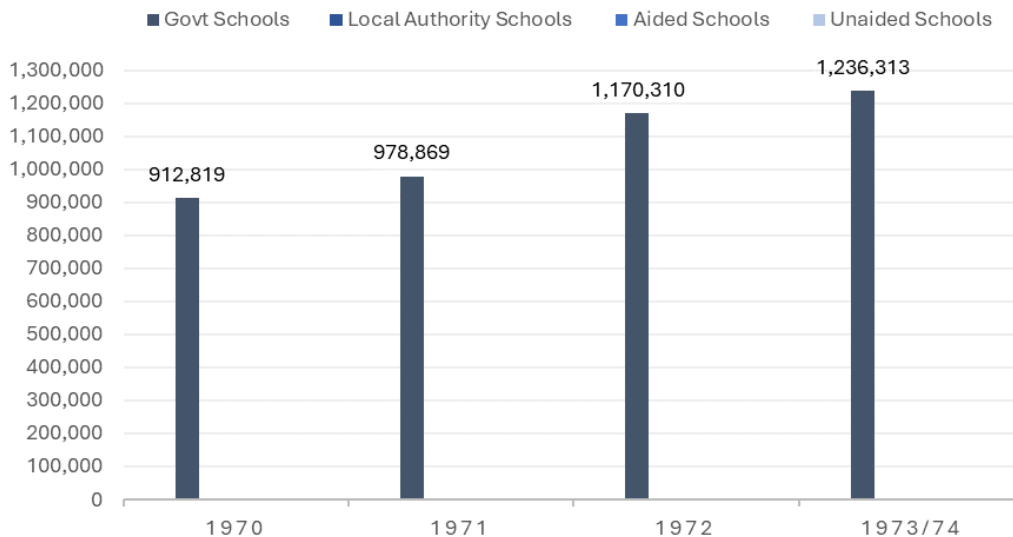
Figure 25 Percentage of Male and Female Primary School Pupils, Anambra, 1975/76-1977/78



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1985, p. 5)

The type of school attended also changed in this period. Figure 26 shows that after the war ended in 1970, all enrolments in the East Central State (including Anambra) were in government schools. No enrolments were in aided or unaided schools or LA schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975b, p. 26). This change occurred after the military administration announced the takeover of all schools as part of the post-war reconstruction efforts.

Figure 26 East Central Enrolments by School Type, 1970-1973

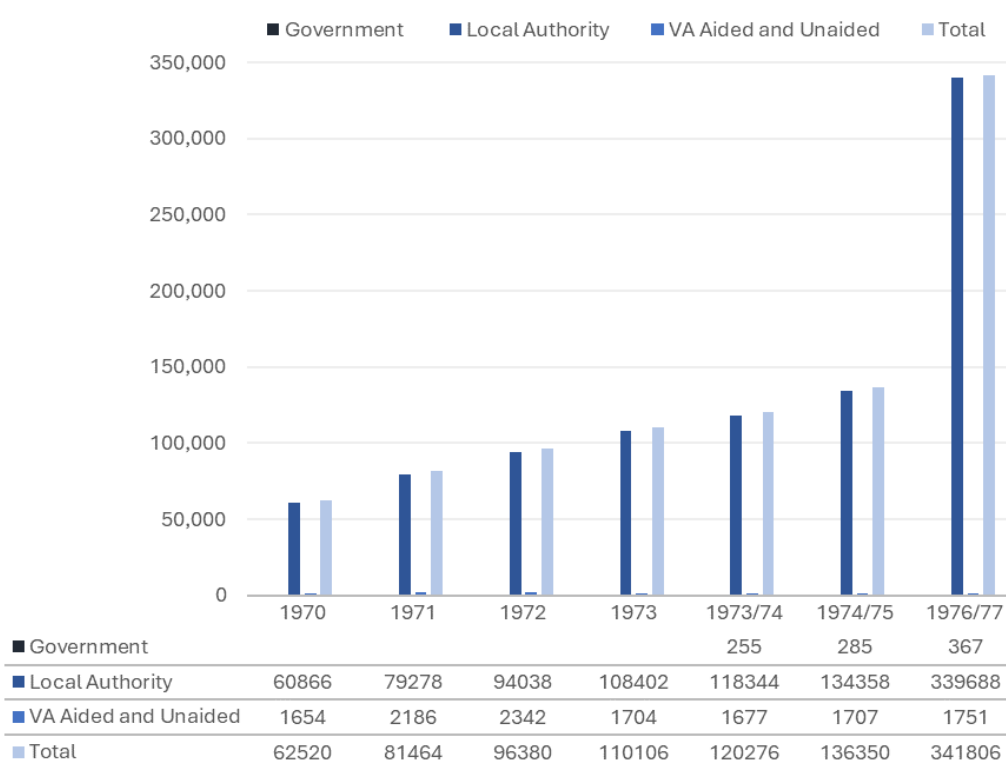


Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1975b, p. 26)

In contrast to Anambra, the war's end in 1970 did not lead to a fundamental shift in the ownership structure of primary education in Kano, as Figure 27 shows (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975b, p. 24; Kano State Ministry of Education, no date b-h). Most enrolments were in primary schools

managed and funded by Local Education Authorities rather than in non-state or private schools (VA aided and unaided) due mainly to colonial education policies (see Chapters 5 and 6). Figure 27 shows that after the introduction of UPE in 1976, enrolments in all types of schools increased from 62,520 in 1970 to 341,806 in 1976/77 and in Local Authority schools from 60,866 to 339,688 over the same period (Kano State Ministry of Education, no date h). Enrolments in VA aided and unaided increased from 1,654 in 1970 to 2,342 in 1972 but dropped to 1,751, less than one percent of total enrolments, in 1976/77 (Kano State Ministry of Education, no date b-h). An important point relating to this is that many non-state schools in Kano had catered to the significant Igbo population (Bray, 1981), many of whom were displaced before the war. The figures show that in the post-war UPE period, the expansion of the primary education SoP in Kano occurred through LEA Schools.

Figure 27 Kano Primary School Enrolments by School Type, 1970-1976/77

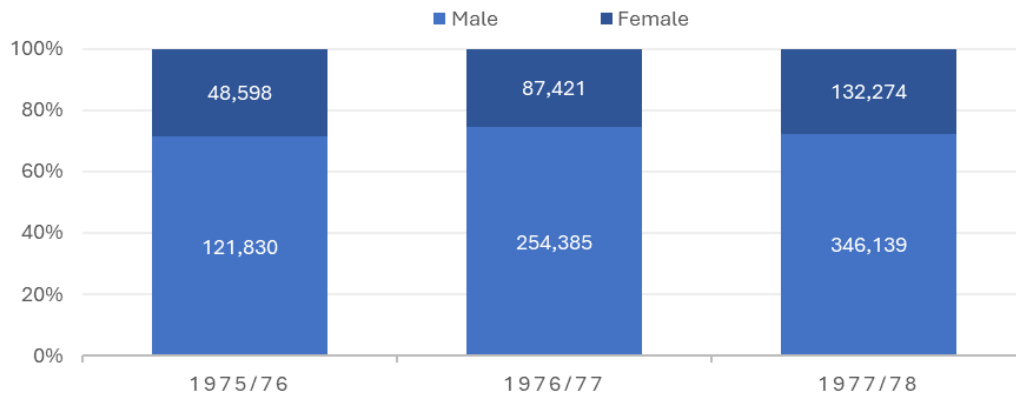


Sources⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Federal Ministry of Education (1975, p. 24)
 1976/77 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date h, p. Table 5)
 1975/76: data missing
 1974/75 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date g, p. Table 4)
 1973/74 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date f, p. Table 4)
 1973 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date e, p. Table 4)
 1972 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date d, p. Table 4)
 1971 figures: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date c, p. Tables 4 & 5)

Figure 28 shows that the number of girls enrolled in primary school increased from 48,598 in 1975/76 to 132,274 in 1977/78, but girls' enrolments as a percentage of overall enrolments did not increase and was 29 percent in 1975/76, 26 percent in 1976/77, and 28 percent in 1977/78 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7).

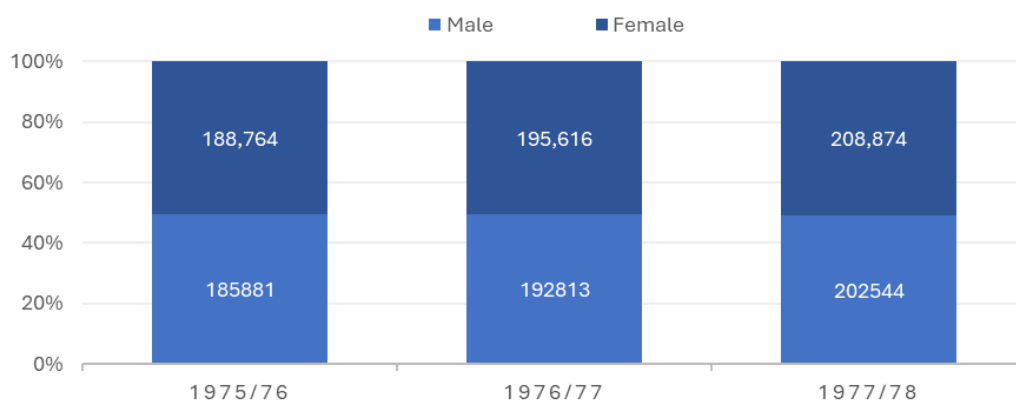
Figure 28 Total Male and Female Primary School Enrolments in Kano state, 1973/74-1977/78



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1985, p. 7)

In Lagos, Figure 29 shows an increase in enrolments following the introduction of UPE in 1976. It also shows that the number of girls enrolled in primary schools in the state was slightly higher than that of boys throughout the period (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7). The percentage of girls enrolled was 50 percent in 1975/76 and 51 percent in 1977/78 (author's calculations from Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7).

Figure 29 Total Male and Female Primary School Enrolments in Lagos State, 1973/74-1977/78

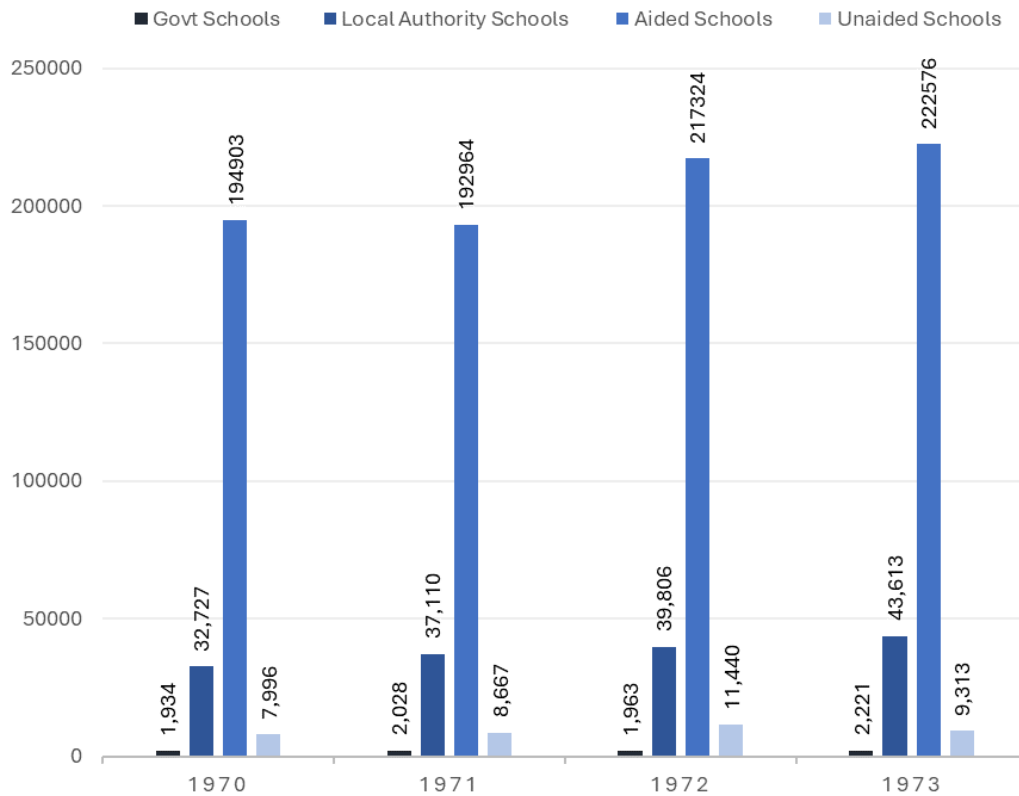


Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1985, p. 7)

Similar to Kano, data for Lagos shows that the war did not fundamentally shift the ownership structure of primary schools and the majority of children were enrolled in non-state schools (VA or aided primary schools) between 1970 and 1973 (similar to the situation in earlier decades), as shown

in Figure 30 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1975b, p. 26). Although figures following the introduction of UPE in Lagos are not given here, the change in ownership from non-state VA-mission managed to the state only occurred at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s and is discussed in Chapter 8.

Figure 30 Lagos Enrolments by School Type, 1970-1973/74



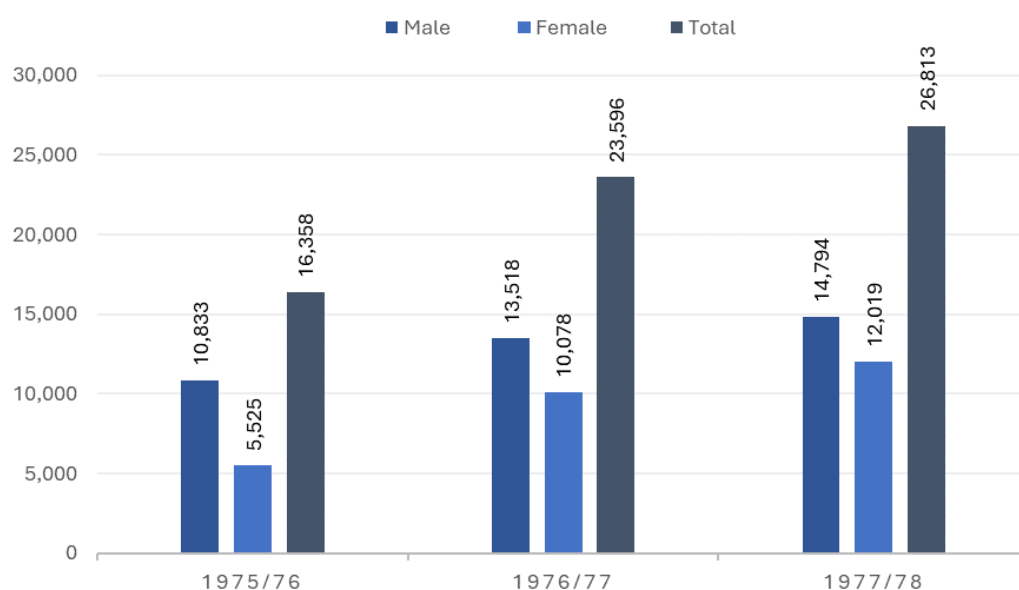
Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1975, p. 26)

This data show that following the introduction of UPE, there was a large increase in primary school enrolments throughout Nigeria, including an increase in the number of girls enrolled, leading to more gender-equitable enrolment figures in Anambra but not in Kano. In Lagos, girls' and boys' enrolments in primary education were already equitable before the introduction of UPE and remained this way.

Appendix 14. Gender and Teachers, 1970s

Figure 31 shows that in Anambra, the number of women in the teaching profession increased from 5,525 to 12,019 between 1975/76 and 1977/78 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 5). As a percentage of the total teaching workforce, women constituted 34 percent in 1975/76, increasing to 45 percent in 1977/78 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 5). These figures highlight the changing composition of the teaching profession along gender lines in the period following the war and the introduction of UPE. The figures for Anambra are given from 1975/76 following the creation of the state out of the East Central State in 1976.

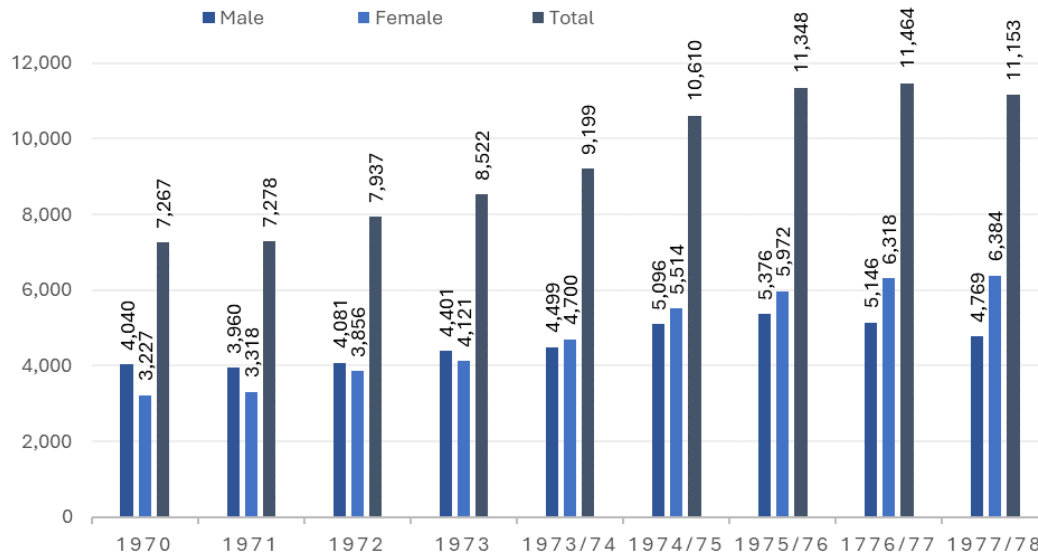
Figure 31 Male and Female Primary School Teachers, Anambra, 1975/76-1977/78



Source: Federal Ministry of Education (1985, p. 5)

Similarly, in Lagos, the gender composition of teachers also changed between 1970 and 1977/78, as shown in Figure 32 (Lagos State Ministry of Education, no date, p. 4). Over this period, the number of women employed as primary school teachers increased from 3,227 to 6,384, so that as a percentage of the overall teaching force, women comprised 57 percent in 1977/78, up from 44 percent in 1970 (Lagos State Ministry of Education, no date, p. 4). Teaching went from a male-dominated profession to a female-dominated profession in eight years.

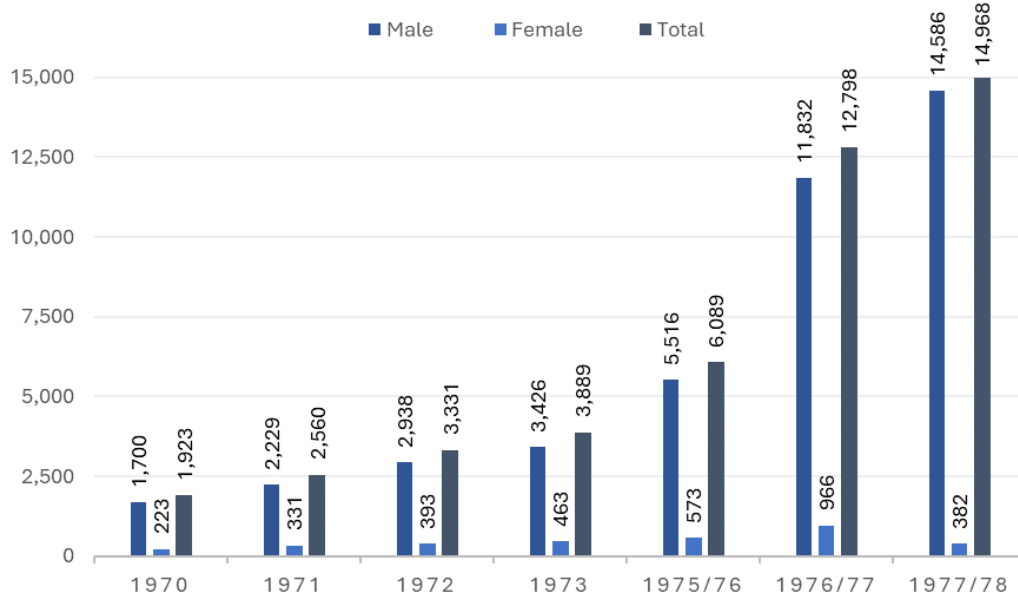
Figure 32 Male and Female Primary School Teachers, Lagos, 1969-1977/78



Source: Lagos State Ministry of Education (no date, p. 4)

The situation in Kano followed a similar pattern of an overall increase in the number of women teaching between 1970 and 1977/78, from just 223 women in 1970 increasing to 966 in 1976/77 (although dropping to 382 in 1977/78, the reasons for which are unclear), as shown in Figure 33 (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7, no date, p. 7). However, as a percentage of the total teaching workforce in Kano the proportion of women actually dropped between 1970 and 1977/78, from 12 percent to three percent (eight percent in 1976/77) (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985, p. 7, no date p. 7). In Kano, the expansion of the primary education SoP in the 1970s did not lead to a more equitable workforce.

Figure 33 Male and Female Primary School Teachers, Kano, 1975/76-1977/78



Sources: 1970-1973: Federal Ministry of Education (no date, p. 7)

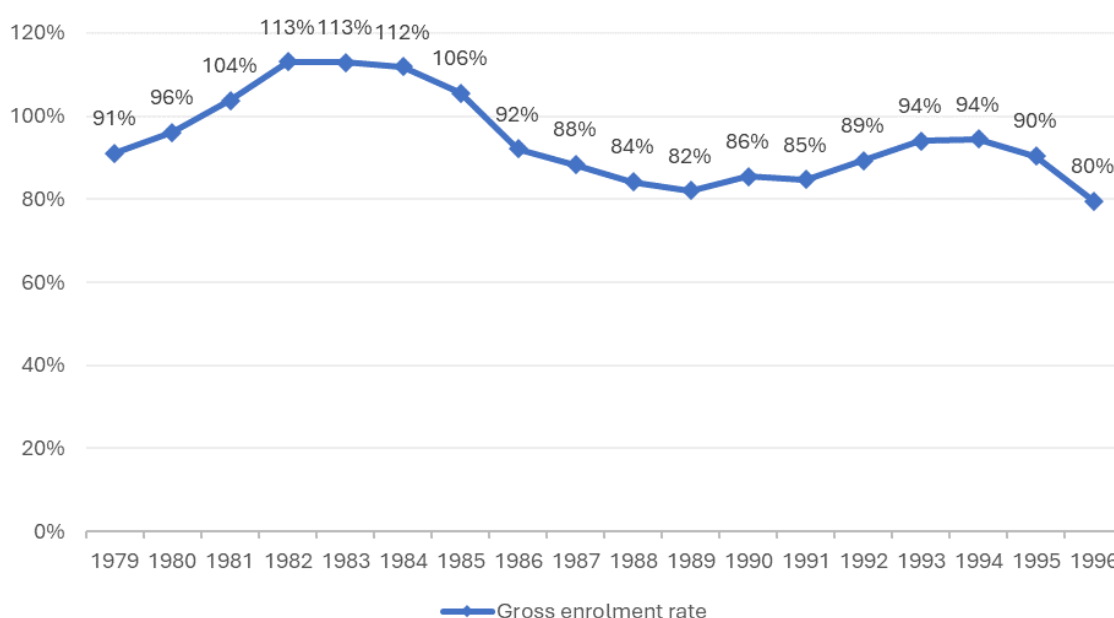
Data missing for 1974-1975

1975/76-1977/78: Federal Ministry of Education (1985, p. 7)

Appendix 15. Agents and Access to Primary Education: Primary School Enrolments, 1979-1999

The gross enrolment ratio (GER)- the ratio of total enrolment (regardless of age and type of school where enrolled) to the population of the primary school age group –is shown in Figure 34. The Figure shows that between 1979 and 1998, the GER increased from 91 percent in 1978 to 113 percent in 1983 and 1984 before declining over the next decade to 80 percent in 1996 (World Bank, 2023a). Further, between 1982 and 1985, the number of primary school teachers declined from 384,000 to 303,000, and the number of schools decreased from 38,000 to 35,000 (World Bank, 1989, p. 17). In other words, the percentage of primary school-aged children enrolled in school decreased from the middle of the 1980s, coinciding with economic and political crises, as discussed in Chapter 8.

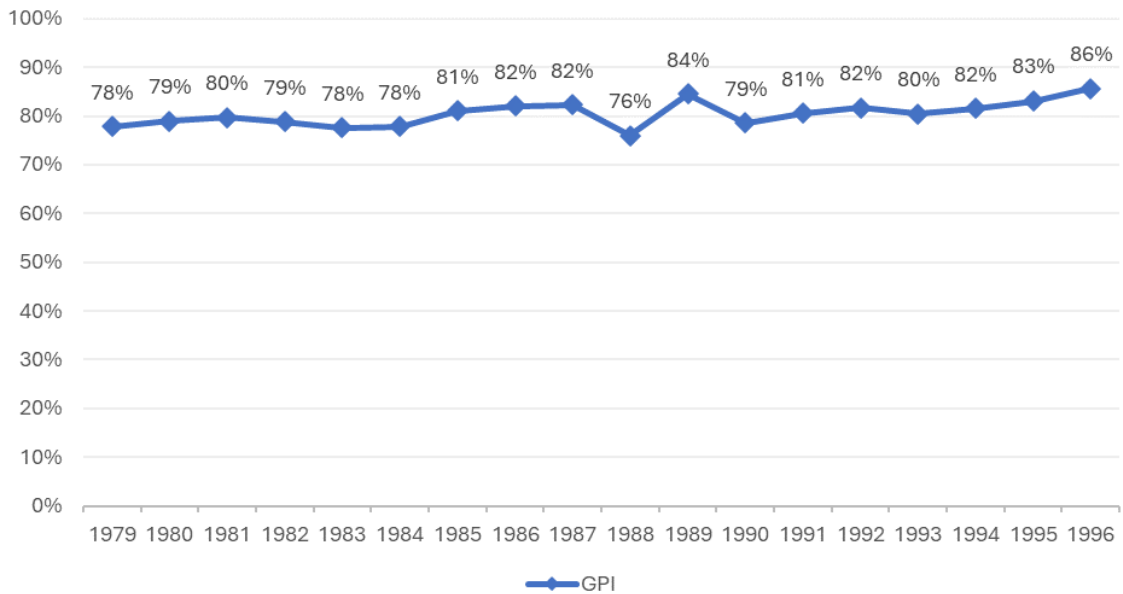
Figure 34 Primary School Enrollments, (% Gross), 1978-1996



Source: World Bank (2023a)

Figure 35 shows the gender parity index (GPI) for the gross enrolment ratio in primary education – the ratio of girls to boys enrolled at primary school levels – between 1979 and 1996 at the national level (World Bank, 2023b). It shows that the GPI in 1979 was 0.78 and in 1996 was 0.86. In terms of enrolment (or access), the primary education SoP became more gender equitable during the 1980s and 1990s. However, it also indicates that at the end of the 1980s, when the effects of the economic crisis were being felt most severely by the population, the GPI dropped to 0.76 (World Bank, 2023b). The correlation between gender inequality in enrolment rates and economic and political crises are discussed in Chapter 8.

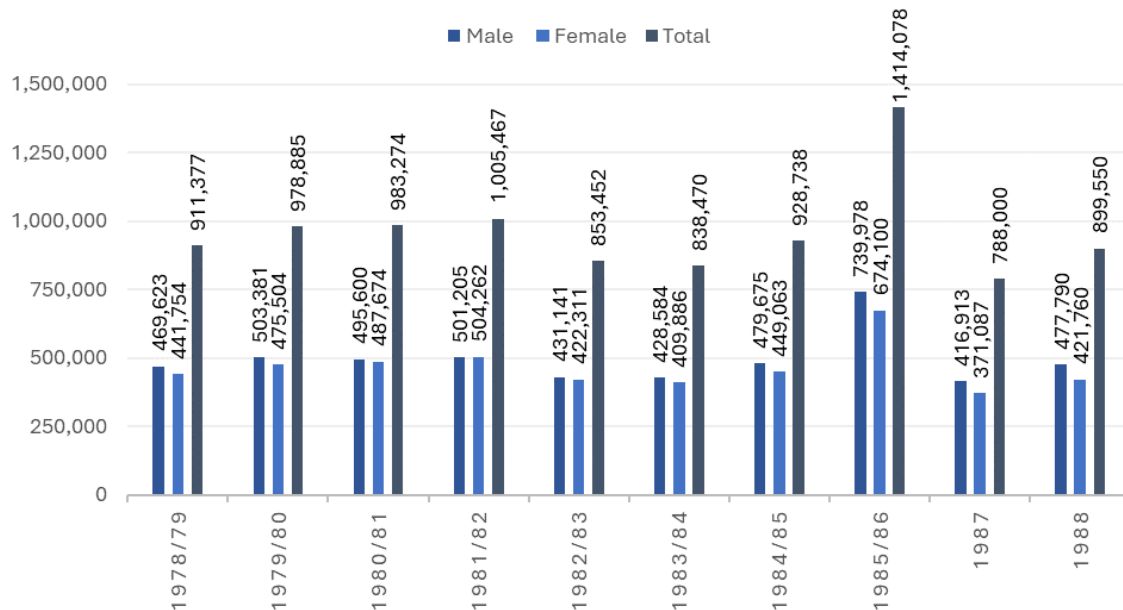
Figure 35 Primary School Enrollment (% Gross), Gender Parity Index, 1978-1996



Source: World Bank (2023b)

Figure 36, taken from the Government of Anambra Ministry of Education statistics report, shows primary school enrolments in Anambra between 1979/80 and 1988. It indicates that in 1978/79, 911,377 children were enrolled in public primary schools in the state, increasing to over one million in 1981/82 but dropping to 788,000 in 1987 (although in 1985/86, there was an increase to 1.4 million enrolments) (Government of Anambra State Ministry of Education, no date, p. 13). In other words, fewer children attended primary school at the end of the 1980s than at the start.

Figure 36 Total Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, Anambra, 1978/79-1988



Source: Government of Anambra State Ministry of Education (no date p. 13)

Table 26 shows that the rate of girls enrolled, as a percentage of total enrolments, was 48 percent in 1978/79, 50 percent between 1980/81 and 1981/82, and dropped to 47 percent in 1988 (Government of Anambra State Ministry of Education, no date, p. 13). As the decade of the 1980s progressed, the primary education SoP in Anambra became less gender equitable, indicating that fewer girls attended school than boys.

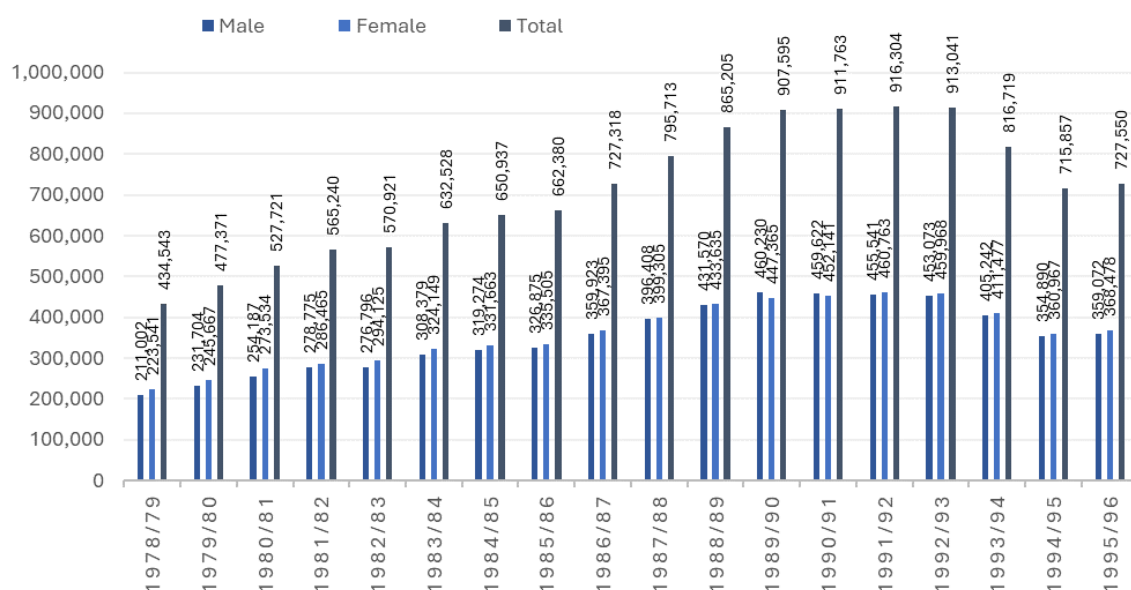
Table 26 Total Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, Anambra, 1978/79-1988

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE ENROLMENTS
1978/79	469,623	441,754	911,377	48
1979/80	503,381	475,504	978,885	49
1980/81	495,600	487,674	983,274	50
1981/82	501,205	504,262	1,005,467	50
1982/83	431,141	422,311	853,452	49
1983/84	428,584	409,886	838,470	49
1984/85	479,675	449,063	928,738	48
1985/86	739,978	674,100	1,414,078	48
1987	416,913	371,087	788,000	47
1988	477,790	421,760	899,550	47
AVERAGE	494,389	465,740	960,129	49

Source: Government of Anambra State Ministry of Education (no date, p. 13)

Figure 37 shows primary school enrolments in the Lagos state primary education SoP. It indicates that between 1978/79 and 1995/96, enrolments in public primary schools increased from 434,543 to 727,550, reaching 916,304 enrolments in 1991/92 (Lagos State Government Ministry of Education, no date, p. Table 2). However, given that the population of Nigeria increased in the period (Gandy, 2005), it would be expected that enrolments in public primary schools would likewise increase (Olukoju, 2003, p. 9). Figure 37, however, shows that in Lagos state, public primary school enrolments began to fall from around 1990 until 1995/96 and expanded throughout the 1980s (Lagos State Government Ministry of Education, no date, p. Table 2).

Figure 37 Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, Lagos State, 1978/79-1995/96



Source: Lagos State Government Ministry of Education (no date, p. Table 2)

Figure 37 and Table 27 also show the total enrolments in the primary education SoP disaggregated by gender between 1978/79 and 1995/96. Table 27 shows that between 1978/79 and 1995/96, the average number of girls enrolled was slightly higher (around 51 percent) than the average number of boys (Author's calculations from the Lagos State Government Ministry of Education, n.d.).

Table 27 Total Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, Lagos State, 1978/79-1995/96

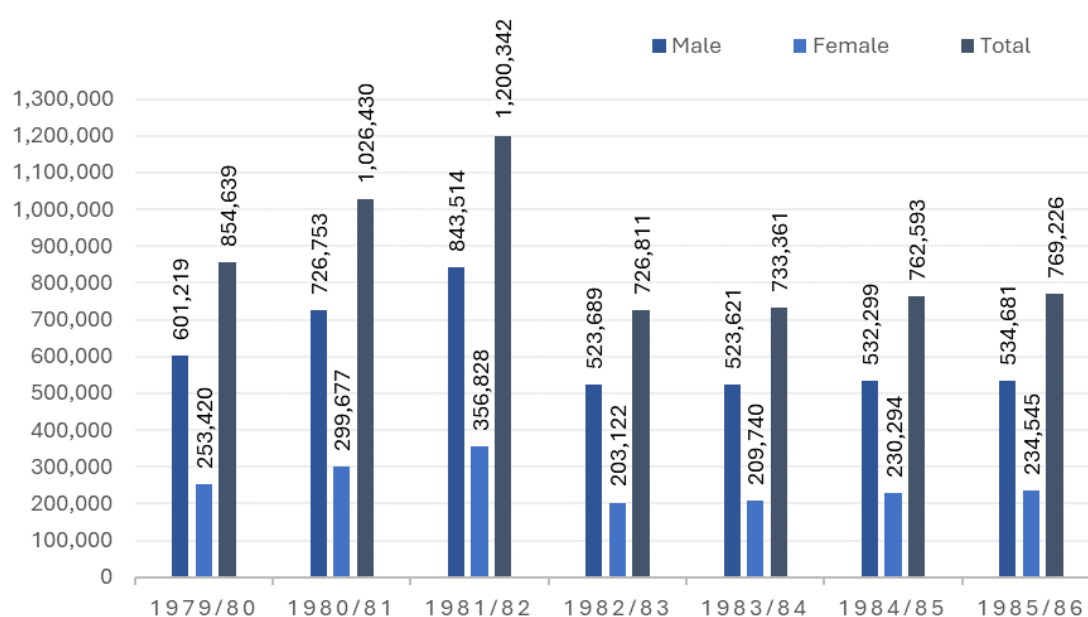
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE ENROLMENTS
1978/79	211002	223541	434543	51
1979/80	231704	245667	477371	51
1980/81	254187	273534	527721	52
1981/82	278775	286465	565240	51
1982/83	276796	294125	570921	52
1983/84	308379	324149	632528	51
1984/85	319274	331663	650937	51
1985/86	326875	335505	662380	51
1986/87	359923	367395	727318	51
1987/88	396408	399305	795713	50
1988/89	431570	433635	865205	50
1989/90	460230	447365	907595	49
1990/91	459622	452141	911763	50
1991/92	455541	460763	916304	50

1992/93	453073	459968	913041	50
1993/94	405242	411477	816719	50
1994/95	354890	360967	715857	50
1995/96	359072	368478	727550	51
AVERAGE	352364.6	359785.7	712150.3	51

Source: Lagos State Government Ministry of Education (no date, p. Table 2)

Figure 38 shows Kano state public primary school enrolments between 1979/80 and 1985/86 (Kano State Ministry of Education, no date a, p. 11). Total enrolments reached over one million between 1980 and 1982 but dropped to 769,226 in 1985/86.

Figure 38 Kano State Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, 1979/80-1985/86



Source: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date a, p. 11)

Figure 38 and Table 28 also show enrolments by gender in the Kano primary education SoP. In 1981/82, 356,828 girls were enrolled in primary schools compared to 843,514 boys; this meant just 29 percent of total enrolments were girls in 1981/82, as shown in Table 28 (Kano State Ministry of Education, no date a, p. 11). In 1985/86, 234,545 girls enrolled in the primary education SoP and 534,681 boys; this meant that between 1979/80 and 1985/86, there was no increase in the proportion of girls enrolled in public primary schools in the state. These statistics highlight the continued gendered inequalities in accessing the primary education SoP in Kano, with boys having greater access than girls throughout the 1980s.

Table 28 Kano State Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, 1979/80-1985/86

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF
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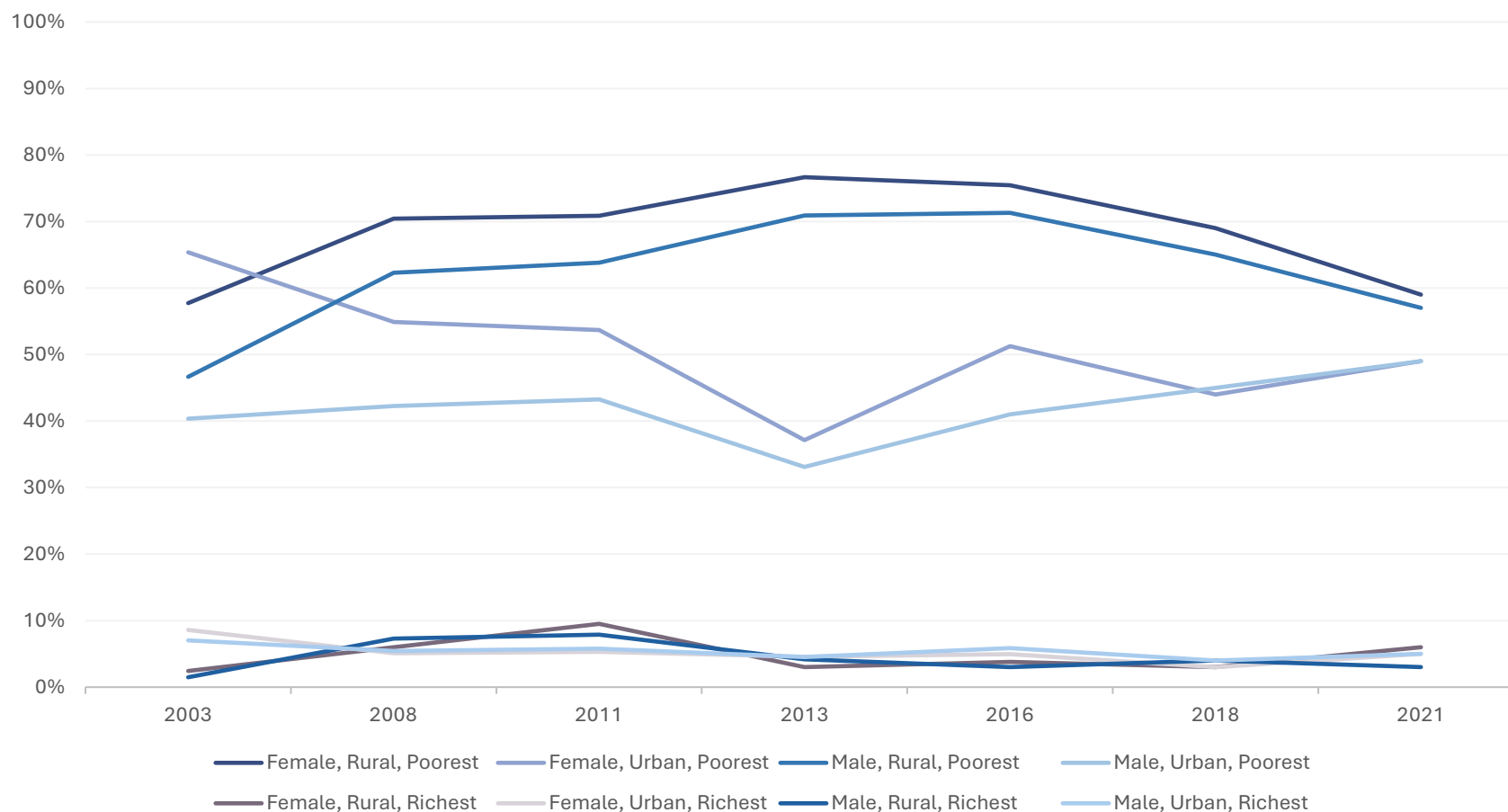
	FEMALE ENROLMENTS (%)			
1979/80	601219	253420	854639	30
1980/81	726753	299677	1026430	29
1981/82	843514	356828	1200342	30
1982/83	523689	203122	726811	28
1983/84	523621	209740	733361	29
1984/85	532299	230294	762593	30
1985/86	534681	234545	769226	30
AVERAGE	612254	255375	867629	29

Source: Kano State Ministry of Education (no date a, p. 11)

Appendix 16. Agents and Access to Primary Education: Primary School Enrolments, 1999-2023

Primary education in the 2000s and 2010s saw uneven enrolment rates. Figure 39, taken from the UNESCO World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE) and Nigeria's DHS and MICS data between 2003 and 2021, shows primary school out-of-school rates by gender, rural and urban location, and wealth (richest and poorest). It shows that throughout the period, girls living in rural areas from the poorest wealth quintile were the least likely to be in primary school (other than in 2003). On average, 68 percent were out of school, whereas, on average, only four percent of boys in the richest wealth quintile living in rural areas were out-of-school over the same period. Less than 10 percent of the richest girls and boys living in urban and rural areas throughout the period were out of school, compared to more than 50 percent of the poorest girls in urban and rural areas and the poorest boys living in urban areas.

Figure 39 Out-of-School Rates (%), primary, by Sex/Gender, Wealth and Location, 2003-2021

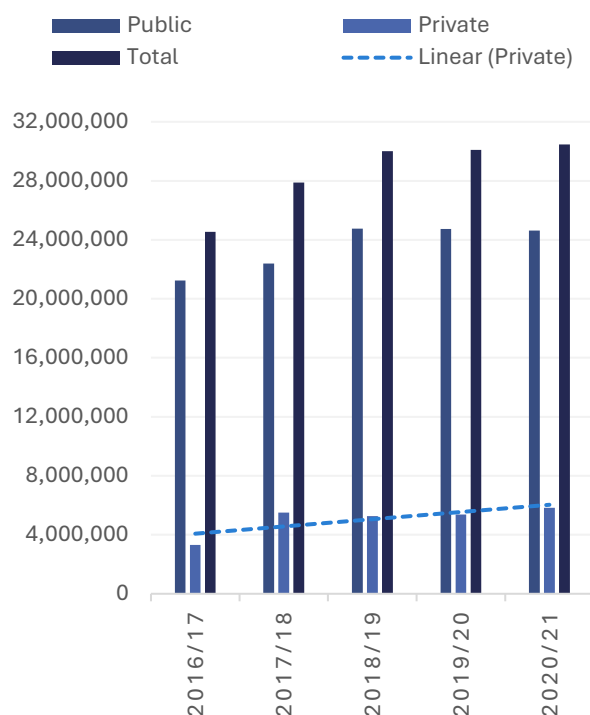


Sources: Data from UNESCO WIDE taken from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) for Nigeria (2003; 2008; 2013) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) for Nigeria (2011; 2016; 2021). Available at: [World Inequality Database on Education - Nigeria - Out-of-school children - Gender \(education-inequalities.org\)](https://education-inequalities.org)

Of the children able to access primary education, most were enrolled in public primary schools at the national level in this period (1999-2023) (Figure 40). Private primary school enrolments increased over the same period. While official statistics show a rise from five to eight percent between 2005 and 2010 (GEM, 2016, p. 187), other survey data estimates that the share of enrolments increased from 13 percent in 2004 to 24 percent in 2015 (GEM, 2016, p. 187). Private primary school enrolments increased from 3.3 million to 5.8 million between 2016/17 and 2020/21, as shown in Figures 40 and 41 from the Federal Ministry of Education Management and Information System data. Figure 40 presents total enrolments, and Figure 41 shows the percentage of private and public primary school enrolments. The percentage of private primary school enrolments, as a percentage of total primary school enrolments, also increased over this period, from 13 to 19 percent. However, between 2017/18 and 2020/21, the share of private primary school enrolments remained relatively consistent.

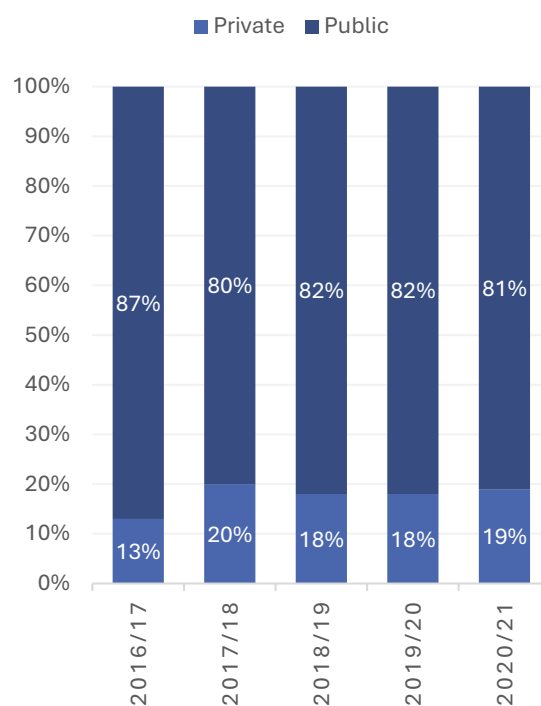
Although surveys and official statistics on private schooling in Nigeria arrive at different figures, the increase in enrolments in private primary schools throughout the 2000s and into the 2010s is evident.

Figure 40 Enrolments in Public and Private Primary Schools, 2016/17-2020/21



Source: Nigeria Education Management Enterprise Resource Planning (2022, p. 34)

Figure 41 Enrolments in Public and Private Primary Schools, 2016/17-2020/21 (%)

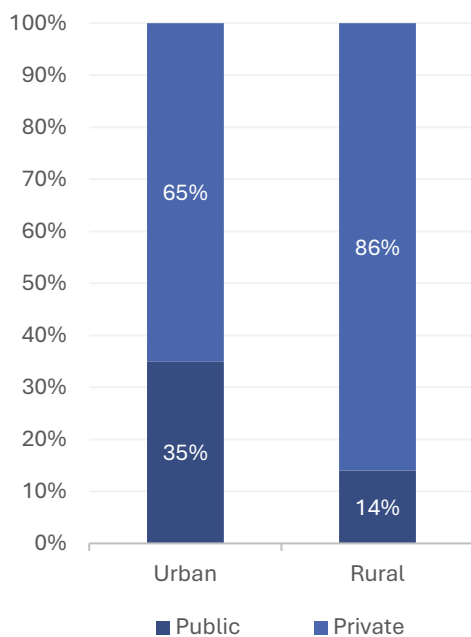


Source: Nigeria Education Management Enterprise Resource Planning, p. (2022, p. 34)

Private school enrolments vary significantly by location. The analysis of the 2015 NEDS data reveals that the South West region had the highest percentage of enrolments in private primary schools, at 40 percent (USAID, Federal Ministry of Education (FME), National Population Commission, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016a). The North East and North West, with the largest population of out-of-school children, had the lowest enrolments in private schools, at six and seven percent, respectively (USAID et al., 2016a).

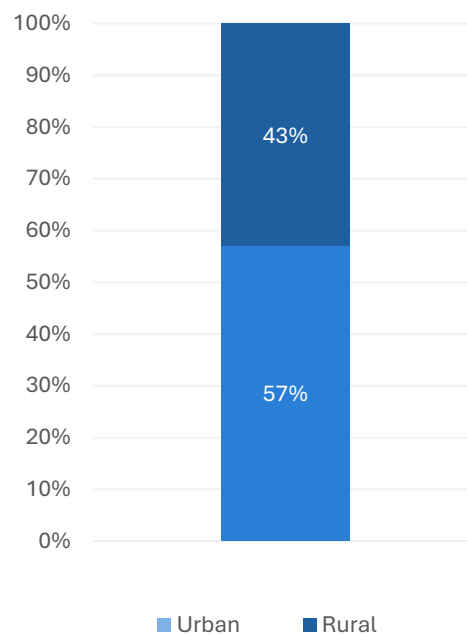
Private schools have a higher percentage of enrolments in urban areas than in rural, as shown in Figure 42. The 2018 National Personnel Audit Report on public and private schools in Nigeria also found lower enrolments in private primary schools in rural areas than in urban areas, as shown in Figure 43, i.e., 57 percent of private school enrolments were in urban areas (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2019, p. 54). A finding backed up in a study by Härmä (2016) on enrolments in LFPS in rural Kwara state that highlighted the lower coverage of private schools in rural areas.

Figure 42 Distribution of Primary School Enrolments by School Type and Location, 2015



Source: USAID et al. (2016a)

Figure 43 Distribution of Private Primary School Enrolments by Location, 2018

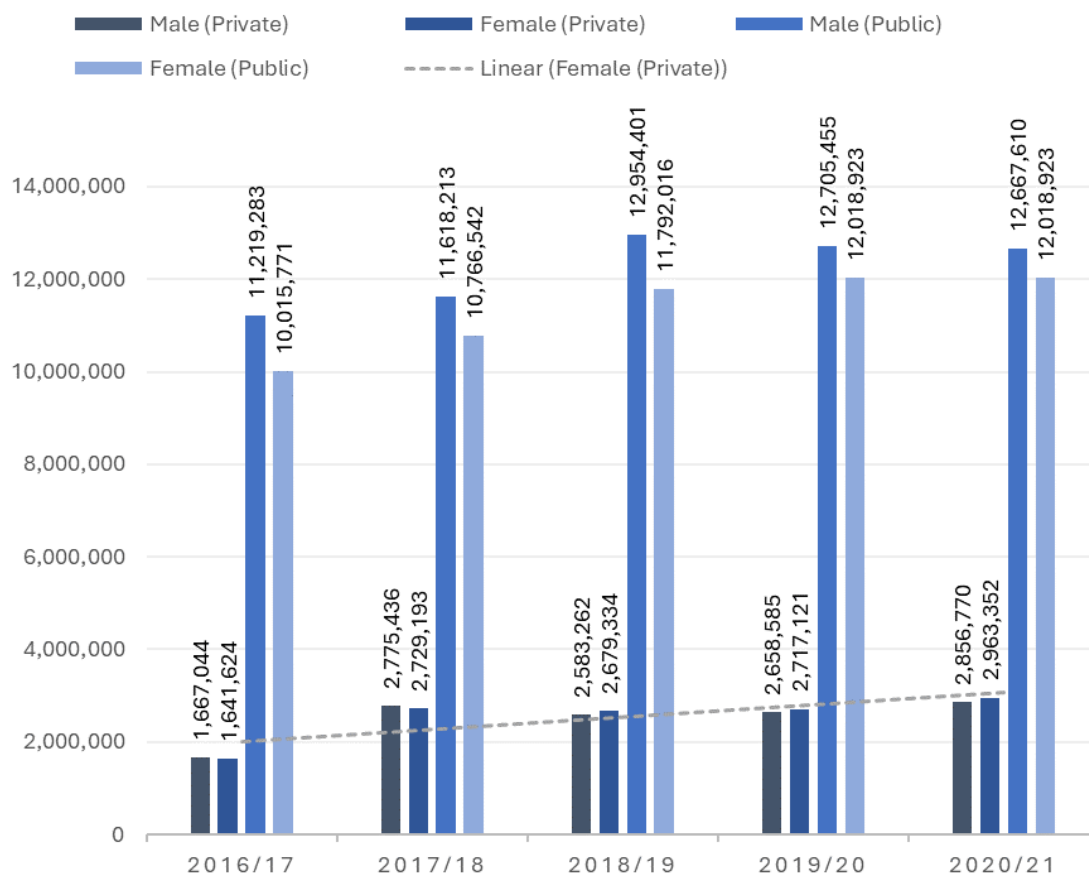


Source: Universal Basic Education Commission, p. (2019, p. 54)

Enrolment data from 2016/17 to 2020/21 indicates that the percentage of girls enrolled in public and private primary schools increased, as shown in Figure 44 (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022, p. 34). From 2018/19 until 2020/21, slightly more girls were enrolled in private primary schools than boys, at 51 percent (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022, p. 34), while between 47 and 49

percent of all enrolments were girls in public primary schools between 2016/17 and 2020/21 (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022, p. 34).

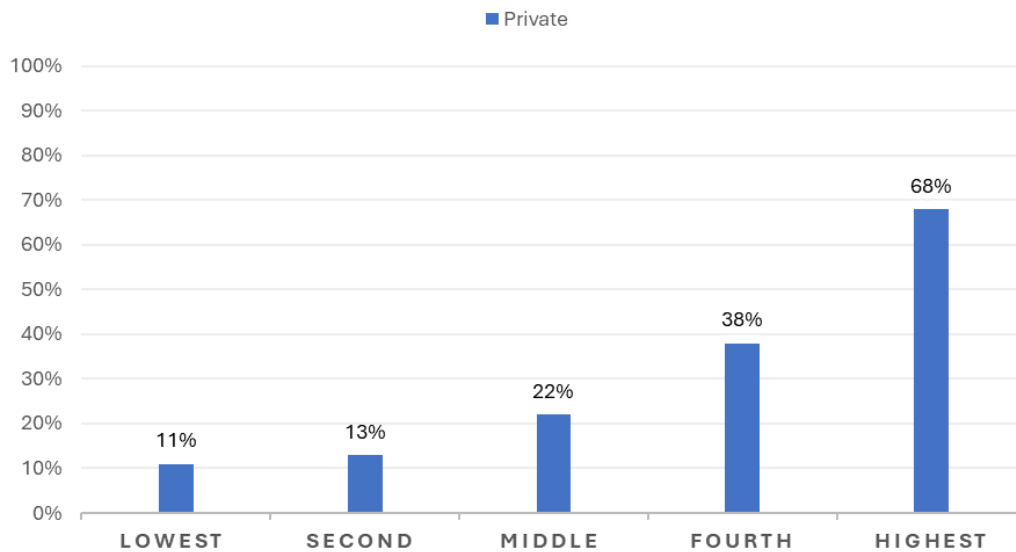
Figure 44 Public and Private Primary School Enrolments by Sex/Gender, 2016/17 -2020/21



Source: Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning (2022, p. 34)

Enrolment rates in private primary schools are largely determined by household income. Figure 45 shows that just 11 percent of children in the lowest wealth quintile attend private schools, compared to 68 percent in the highest wealth quintile (USAID et al., 2016a). In 2015, the average annual household spending on private schools per child was N34,786, compared to N6,425 for public schools (USAID et al., 2016a).

Figure 45 Percentage of Children Attending Private Primary Schools by Wealth Quintile, 2015



Source: USAID et al. (2016a)

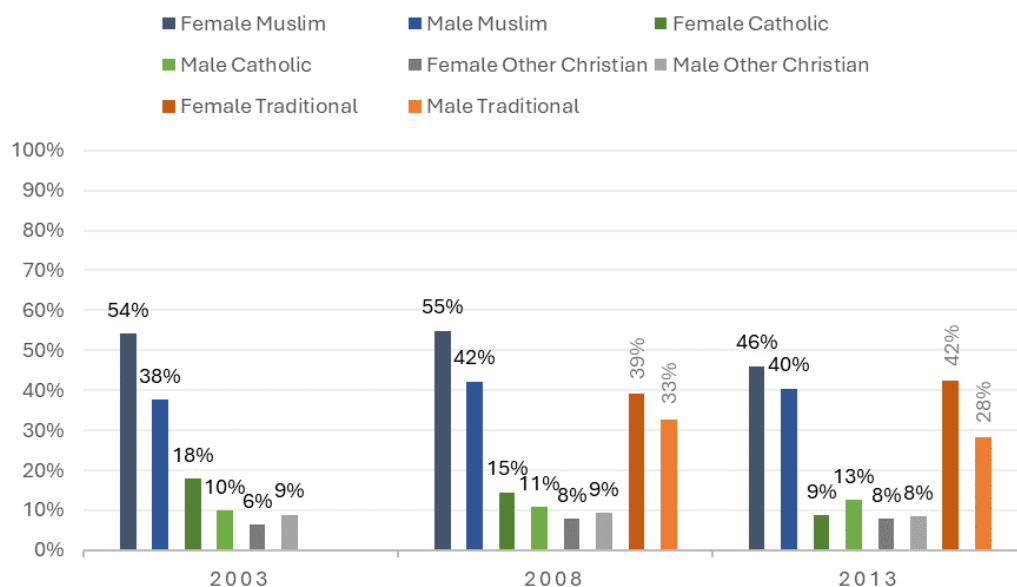
This overview of enrolment patterns depicts a primary education SoP with high rates of access to private schools for some children who tend to be from high income households, living in urban areas in southern states.

Religion shapes the primary education SoP, influencing the type of school a child attends and whether they will be in school. Analysis of the 2015 NEDS data shows that 91 percent of children in the North West, including Kano, and 85 percent of children in the North East are from Muslim households, compared to just two percent in the South South and 0 percent in the South East, including Anambra (USAID, Federal Ministry of Education (FME), National Population Commission, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016b).

According to data from the DHS and MICS data (taken from UNESCO-WIDE) between 2003 and 2013, children from Muslim families have a higher likelihood of being out of school than children from Christian families. Figure 46 below shows that in 2003, 54 percent of girls from Muslim families were out of school, decreasing to 46 percent in 2013, and for boys from Muslim families, this was 38 percent and 40 percent over the same period. In contrast, 18 percent of girls from Catholic families were out of school in 2003, dropping to nine percent in 2013, and for boys, this was 10 percent, increasing to 13 percent over the same period. For other Christian denominations, for both boys and girls, less than ten percent were out-of-school over the same period. For traditional religions in 2008, 39 percent of girls were out of school, increasing to 42 percent in 2013; for boys, this was 33 percent and 28 percent. In summary, the primary education SoP produces wide variation in access to schooling based on religious affiliation, with Christian boys and girls much more likely to be in school

than those from Muslim and traditional religious backgrounds and girls from Muslim households the least likely to be in primary school.

Figure 46 Out-of-School, Religion and Sex/Gender, 2003-2013

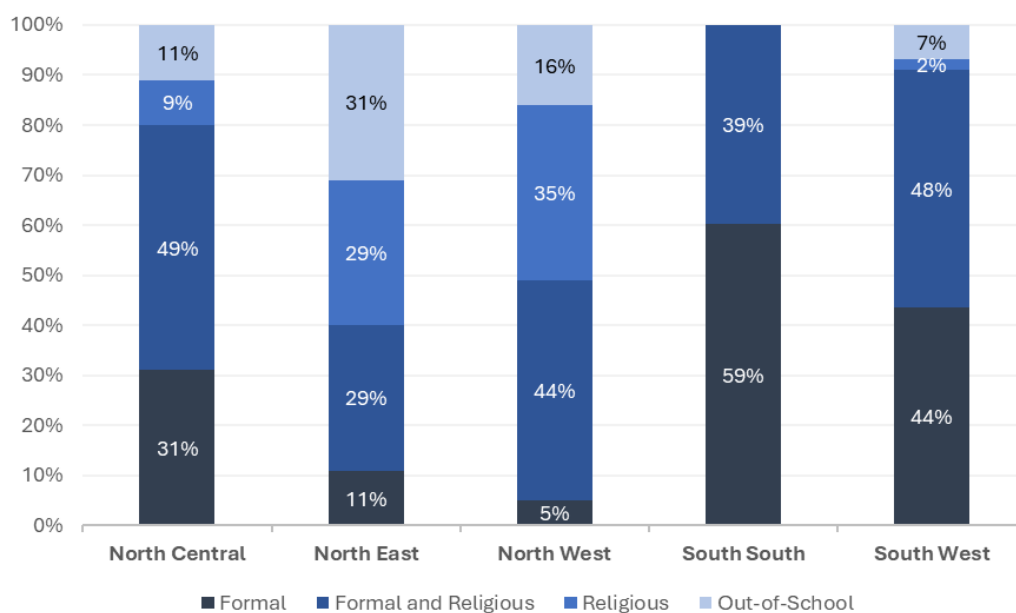


Sources: Data from UNESCO WIDE taken from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) for Nigeria (2003; 2008; 2013) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) for Nigeria (2011; 2016; 2021). Available at: [World Inequality Database on Education - Nigeria - Out-of-school children \(education-inequalities.org\)](http://education-inequalities.org)

There are also variations in the type of school attended by children from Muslim and non-Muslim households: 95 percent of children from non-Muslim households attend "formal" schools, compared to just 17 percent of children from Muslim households (USAID et al., 2016b). However, 43 percent of children from Muslim households were enrolled in schools providing both "formal" and religious education (USAID et al., 2016b).

Figure 47 shows the breakdown of enrolments for children from Muslim households by school type in each region. In the North West, just five percent of children from Muslim households were enrolled in schools providing "formal" education only, compared to 44 percent enrolled in schools providing both religious and "formal" education, and 35 percent were enrolled in schools providing religious education only (USAID et al., 2016b). In the South West, 44 percent of children from Muslim households were enrolled in schools providing "formal" education only and 48 percent in schools providing "formal" and religious education, compared to just two percent in schools providing religious education only (USAID et al., 2016b).

Figure 47 Schooling Status of Children from Muslim Households, 2015



Source: USAID et al. (2016b) *Data for the South-South adds to 98 percent, and for South West adds to 101 percent

There are variations in the type of religious school children from Muslim households attend. Seven percent of enrolments were in *Tsangaya* schools, and 41 percent were in *Qur'ānic* schools (USAID et al., 2016b). *Tsangaya* and *Qur'ānic* schools are associated with *Almajirai* students. *Tsangaya* schools are not integrated into the public school system as they do not follow the state curriculum, focusing on religious instruction instead (Ministry of Education Kano State, 2008b, p. 3). Sixty-three percent of children attending this type of school are from the lowest wealth quintile and predominantly from rural areas (87 percent) (USAID et al., 2016b). Boys are also more likely to attend them (66 percent of enrolments in 2015) (USAID et al., 2016b).

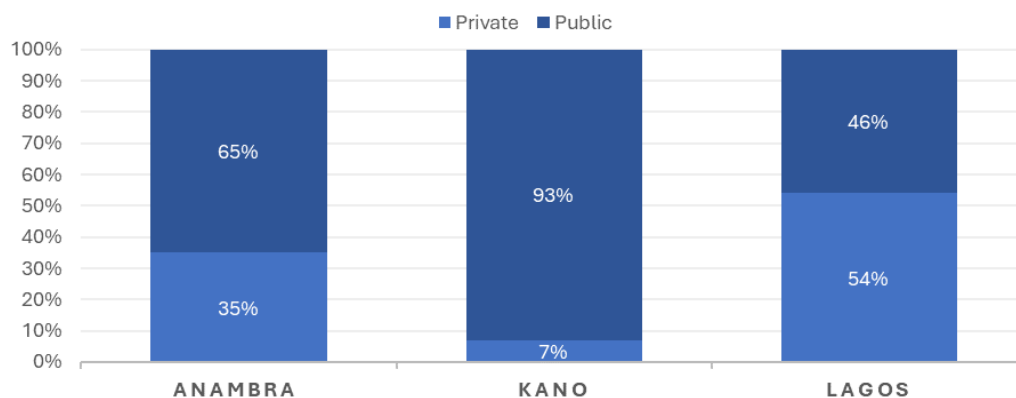
Fifty-two percent of enrolments were in *Islamiyah* schools (USAID et al., 2016b), which "provide a broader Islamic education" and are more likely to include some aspects of the state curriculum, allowing them to register with the state education boards (Ministry of Education Kano State, 2008b, p. 3). Children attending *Islamiyah* schools also tend to be enrolled in schools providing "formal" education (74 percent) (USAID et al., 2016b).

Although some Islamic schools charge fees, these are much lower than those of private schools: the average household spending in *Qur'ānic* schools was 8,066 NGN, in *Islamiyah* schools 6,093 NGN, and just 838 NGN in *Tsangaya* schools (USAID et al., 2016b).

Enrolment rates in private primary schools differ significantly across Anambra, Kano and Lagos. Private and public primary school enrolments in the three states are shown in Figure 48 (Universal

Basic Education Commission, 2019, pp. 68–70). The Figure shows that in Kano, just seven percent of primary school enrolments were in private primary schools in 2018, compared to 35 percent in Anambra and 54 percent in Lagos (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2019, pp. 68–70).

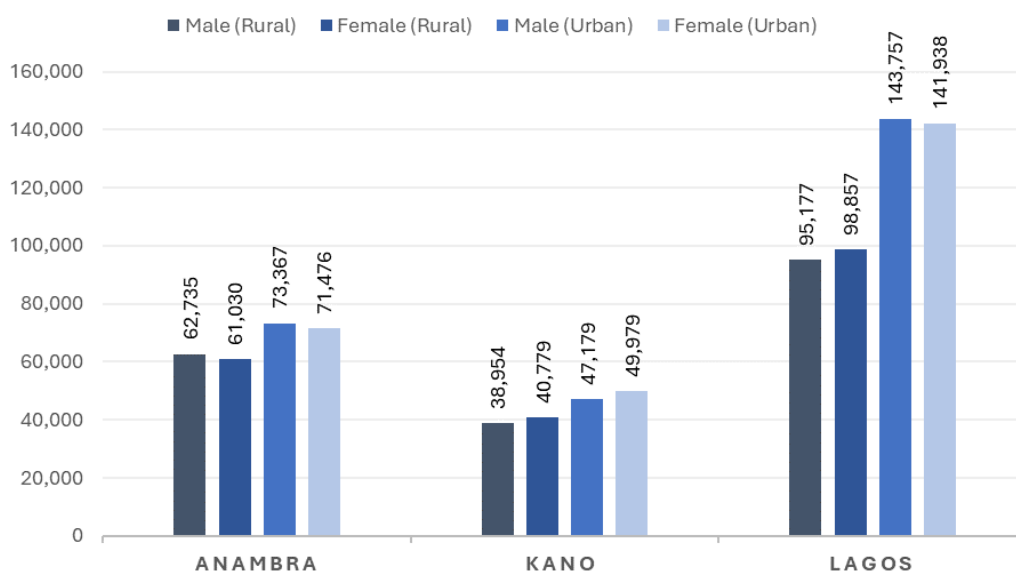
Figure 48 Public and Private Primary School Enrolments, Anambra, Kano, Lagos (%), 2018



Source: Universal Basic Education Commission (2019, pp. 68–70)

Enrolments in public and private primary schools by gender and location (rural, urban) for the academic year 2020/21 in Anambra, Kano, and Lagos are shown in Figure 49 (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022, p. 37). In all three states, private school enrolments were higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Girls comprise around 51 percent of enrolments in private schools in Kano and rural areas of Lagos. In urban Lagos, this is 50 percent; in urban and rural Anambra, this is 49 percent of enrolments (Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, 2022, p. 37).

Figure 49 Enrolment in Private Primary Schools in Anambra, Kano and Lagos by Location (Rural/Urban) and Gender 2020/2021



Source: Nigeria Education Management Information Enterprise Resource Planning, p. (2022, p. 37)

Table 29, from the 2021 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and National Immunization Coverage Survey (NICS), shows the adjusted NAR for Anambra, Kano and Lagos. Lagos, with the highest rates of private school enrolments, has the highest NAR at 92.9, indicating high rates of attendance in primary schools and relatively similar rates for boys and girls. Kano has the lowest NAR at 63.5 but similar attendance rates for boys and girls. The NAR in Anambra is slightly higher than in Kano, at 75.7, but with significant differences in attendance rates by gender, and the NAR for boys was 17.4 percent higher than for girls.

Table 29 Primary Schools Net Attendance Rate (Adjusted) by Sex in Anambra, Kano and Lagos, 2021

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
ANAMBRA	84.9	67.5	75.7
KANO	63.8	63.2	63.5
LAGOS	93.4	92.4	92.9

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), p. (2022, p. 232)

Higher NARs in Lagos and Anambra correlate to higher levels of private school enrolments, whereas in Kano, with lower private school enrolments but greater engagement from Islamic organisations has a lower NAR.

Appendix 17. Bridge International Academies and NewGlobe

The founders of the school chain, Bridge International Academies, Jay Kimmelman, Shannon May and Phil Friel opened their first school in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2009, aiming to scale up operations and establish a "network of schools supported by a strong central headquarters" (Rangan and Lee, 2010, p. 2). A case study on Bridge for the Harvard Business School in 2010 described the Bridge model as a "School in a Box" that provides the following (Rangan and Lee, 2010, p. 8):

standardized instruction by providing lesson plans and scripts for teachers, and standardized the daily operations of the school by providing the School Manager with a detailed manual which outlined how to manage the school's finances and personnel as well as how to interact with students and parents. Additional components of the "School in a Box" included a central payroll and expense processing system and standardized assessment and evaluation tools for students, staff, and for the schools themselves.

This highly standardised education model was expected to revolutionise the education sector in low- and middle-income contexts, with the founders aiming to scale up operations throughout Africa (Rangan and Lee, 2010, p. 13). The reliance on pre-scripted lesson plans has also meant that unqualified teachers can be employed in these schools who gain certification after an intensive 235-hour training course at the Bridge Training Institute, and studies have found that teaching staff are often paid significantly less than public school teachers (Riep and Machacek, 2020; Riep, 2017).

Since the start of the 2020s, Bridge has undergone a significant transformation. While it continues to operate its private schools, it is now more commonly known as the parent company, NewGlobe (NewGlobe, 2023a, 2022). In this new phase, NewGlobe has been functioning as a technical partner with governments, introducing its technology and education model into public school systems (NewGlobe, 2022). In Nigeria, NewGlobe has formed partnerships with several governments, including those in Bayelsa, Edo, Kwara, and Lagos (Edo SUBEB, 2023; NewGlobe, 2023b, 2023c).