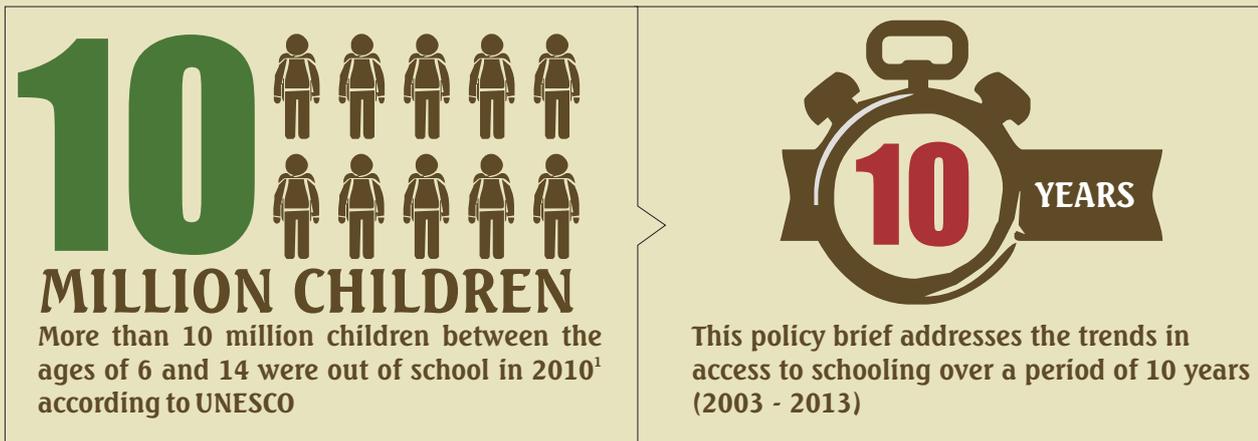


INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO SCHOOLING: WHAT ARE THE TRENDS IN NIGERIA?



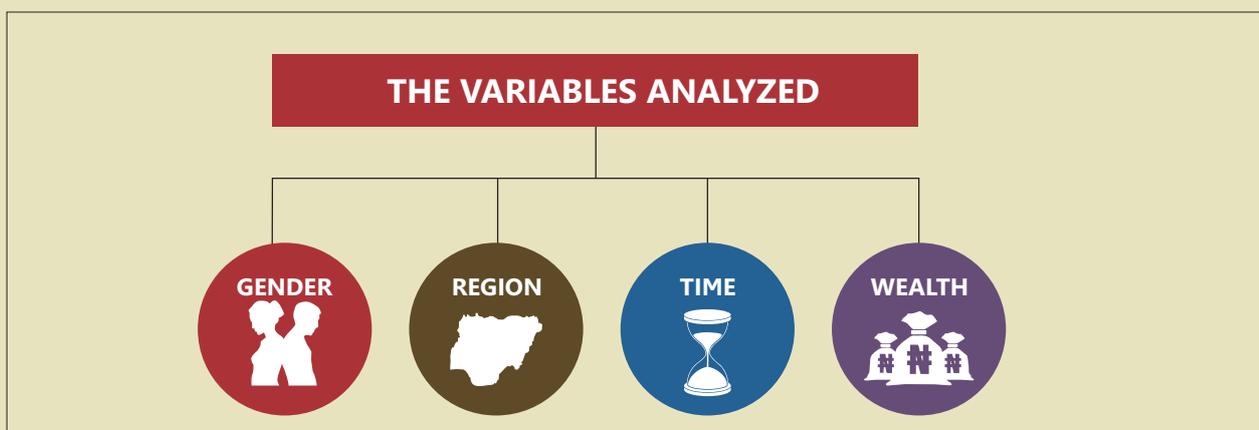
INTRODUCTION

Nigeria faces challenges in enabling all children to access education. UNESCO estimates more than 10 million children, between the ages of 6 and 14, were out of school in 2010. This policy brief addresses the trends in access to schooling over a decade, noting in particular how inequalities in access have changed. There is a long history of global and Nigerian studies showing unequal access to schooling due to household wealth, gender and geographical region. These inequalities, particularly between income groups, remain a significant issue in Nigeria today. EDOREN has studied changes at a National and Regional level over time.



METHODOLOGY

The study analyses successive rounds of the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey datasets, for 2003, 2008 and 2013. The datasets are nationally representative household surveys that account for a wide range of indicators. Access to schooling is measured by whether a child between 6 and 15 is attending school, and whether a child is older than the appropriate age for his/her level. We conducted a multivariate analysis to see how wealth, gender, region, time and other variables affect access to schooling. The approach used is similar to that used by Lewin and Sabates in a 2011 study². Household and individual characteristics are controlled for, allowing us to obtain marginal effects and predicted probabilities of being out of school or in school and above the appropriate age. The main findings are summarised below.



1. UNESCO (2012). Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. Nigeria Country Study. Conducted within the Conceptual and Methodology Framework (CMF).

2. Lewin, K. and Sabates, R. (2011). Changing Patterns of Access to Education in Anglophone and Francophone Countries in Sub Saharan Africa: Is Education for All Pro-Poor? CREATE Pathways to Access Series, Research Monograph Number 52. (2011) 1-60. ISBN 0-901881-59-7.

WEALTH

Despite the introduction of free Universal Basic Education, school attendance status remains closely related to household wealth. Children from the poorer segments of the population are more likely to be out of school than richer households.

PREDICTED PROBABILITY OF BEING OUT OF SCHOOL



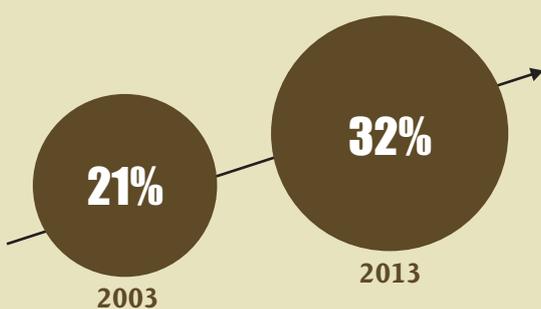
A child from the poorest quantile in Nigeria has a predicted probability of being out of school varying³ between 42% and 48% making them worse off.



A child from the richest quantile in Nigeria has a predicted probability of being out of school of between 16% and 21% making them better off.

WIDENING WEALTH INEQUALITY

Wealth inequalities in access to schooling have been widening since 2003



The gap in predicted probabilities of being out of school between the poorest and richest quantiles increased from 21% in 2003, to 32% in 2013

At the national level, while children from the middle and upper wealth quantiles are less likely to remain out of school now than they were ten years ago, this is not the case for children from the poorest 20%. In fact, At the national level, the average predicted probability of being out of school appears to have increased from 42% to 48% rather than decreased for the poorest 20% of Nigerians.

The poorest

21%
nationwide

had an increase in their predicted probability of being out of school

2003 **42%**

2013 **48%**

This trend in the role of household wealth can be observed in the North Central region and Southern regions.

NORTHERN HOUSEHOLD WEALTH

68%

predicted probability of staying out of school for the poorest 20% in North East/North West

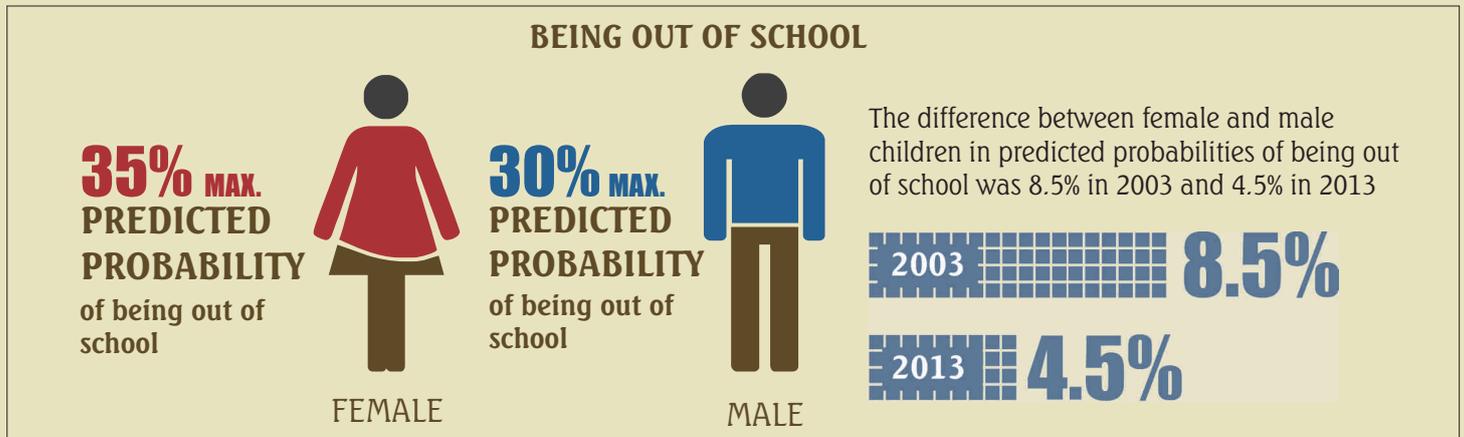
In the North East and North West regions, the predicted probability of staying out of school for the poorest 20% of the population has stagnated but remains high at around 68%.



3. The range of probabilities correspond to the three datasets.

GENDER

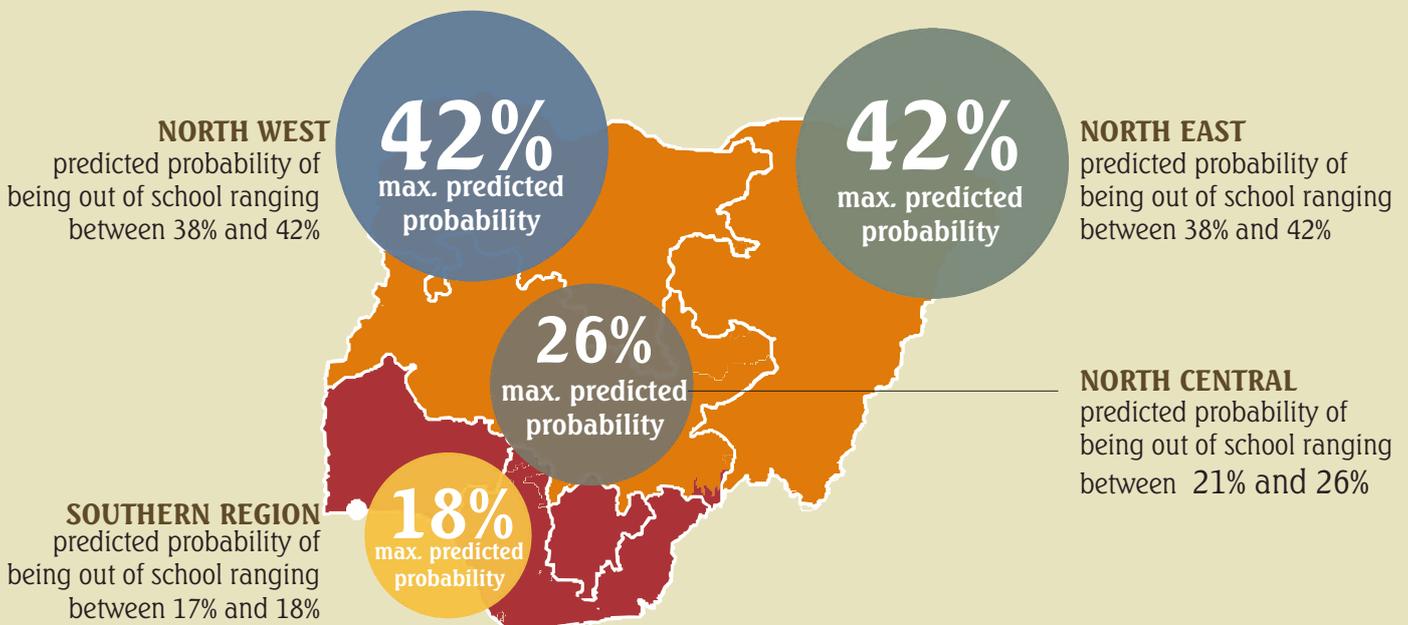
Overall, female children are more likely to be out of school compared to male children. Female children have a predicted probability of staying out of school ranging between 32% and 35%, whereas male children have a predicted probability of staying out of school ranging between 28% and 30%.



While a gender gap still persists, it has been closing over the past decade. The difference between female and male children in predicted probabilities of being out of school was 8.5 percentage points in 2003 and 4.5 percentage points in 2013. This pattern is observed in particular in the North West and North East regions. In the Southern region the predicted probability of not being in school has remained at a similarly low level for both girls and boys.

REGION

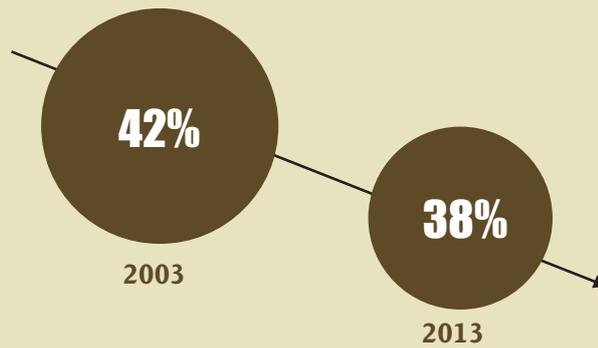
There is a strong North-South divide in access to education -which has also been found in other studies and reports.



The multivariate analysis suggests a positive trend in access for the North East and North West regions, the most disadvantaged regions in Nigeria, in terms of slowly improving the chances of children getting into school. This is despite the fact that wealth inequalities in access to education have increased in these regions.

Children in the North East/North West

In 2003 children in the North East and North West regions had a predicted probability of being out of school of 42%, and this has decreased to 38% in 2013.



CHILDREN OLDER THAN APPROPRIATE AGE FOR HIS/HER SCHOOL LEVEL

**SINCE
2003**

There has been a
DECREASE
in the proportion of children
who are over-age

The multivariate analysis shows that this trend can be observed across poorer as well as richer population groups, among girls as well as boys.



The data shows that the slight increase in the proportion of over-age children in the North Central region, is more than offset by an improvement in the North East and North West regions, and stagnation on the Southern regions.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

A policy implication suggested by this study is that the initiatives taken in 2000-2012 to overcome the wealth barrier to education have not yet taken effect.

**FREE BASIC
EDUCATION
IS RARELY FREE
OF CHARGE TO HOUSEHOLDS.**



The Nigeria Education Data Survey showed that virtually all households with children in primary school still report education-related expenditure and these remaining costs of schooling probably remain a significant barrier to poorer households sending their children to school.

The study recommends further support to the “Free Basic Education” initiative, ensuring that education is actually free for all independent of the child’s background. This will go a long way in decreasing the gap in access to education between the rich and the poor in Nigeria.

EDOREN is a consortium of leading organisations in international development and education managed by Oxford Policy Management (OPM) and includes the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex. EDOREN is supported by UK Aid. Also visit our website, www.nigeria-education.org, to subscribe to reports, articles and other materials.

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