

# Primary School Completion Rates in Rivers State, Nigeria (2008 -2014): Implications for Millennium Development Goals

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**Abstract** This study assessed Primary School Completion Rates in Rivers State, Nigeria (2008 -2014): Implications for Millennium Development Goals Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 942 primary schools from which a sample size of 94 primary schools was drawn using the proportionate stratified sampling technique. The instrument that was used for the study was a document analysis. Data for the study were analysed using percentages, which were presented in bar charts. The findings of the study revealed among others that the aggregate completion rates for a full course of primary education for boys and girls in the 23 local government areas of Rivers State was 69%. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended among others that the government and educational stakeholders should make effort to boost access to education and retention of pupils in schools by providing conducive learning environment.

**Keywords:** Completion, rates, education, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

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## 1. Introduction

The importance of education to man cannot be overemphasized. Education is of a great importance to the development of every nation. There has been a firm belief that without education, development cannot occur because it is viewed as a key that unlocks poverty. At the family, community, state, federal government levels, education is discussed. The Nigerian government categorically affirms that "education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans..." ([3], p.8). Ijaduola [4] asserts that it has been generally conceived that only educated population can command the skills necessary for sustainable economic growth and a better quality of life. Hence, education has a cure for all societal ailments: be it poverty, ignorance, diseases, unemployment, improvement in agricultural practices, science and technological development, inventions and discovery, [7]. The relationship between education and development is well established such that education is a key index for development.

Education and particularly, primary education, is a powerful tool for attaining all the Millennium Development Goals. Primary education is central to inclusive growth, equity, social transformation and sustainable development. By improving literacy rates, human capital will be enhanced, which will lead to a nation's development. Bruns and Alain [2] support this assertion by emphasising that more equitable distribution of education is correlated

with lower poverty and inequality and faster economic growth. Compulsory education for girls has strong positive impacts on the health of infants and children, immunization rates, family nutrition and the next generations' schooling attainment [9]. Education; hence brings all positive change one can think of. Ultimately, education builds what Action Aid [1] calls "Human Capabilities" - the essential and individual power to reflect, make choices, seek a voice in society and enjoy a better life.

There are lots of international human rights' instruments that uphold education as a fundamental human right. These include: the Universal Declaration of Human Right (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right (1966), the African Charter on Human and People's Right (1981), Declaration of the World Conference on Education for All (1990), Millennium Development Goals (2000), among others. All these International Bodies advocate for access to basic education for every citizenry at least. In a bid to achieve the education goals, 189 world leaders of the United Nations met and endorsed the Millennium Declaration as a follow-up meeting to the Education for All (EFA), where new sets of goals were set to be attained by the year 2015 [8]. Meanwhile, it has been documented across the globe that there are inequalities in educational access and achievements as well as high levels of absolute educational depreciation of both children and adults [6].

However, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has one of the eight goals (Goal 2) devoted to access to education. The Goal 2 is: to achieve universal primary

education. Its target is: to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary school while the indicators, which measure the attainment are: enrolment in primary education and completion of primary education. Thus, the thrust of this study revolves around “completion of primary education.” Over the years, Nigeria has expressed a commitment to education with the belief that overcoming illiteracy and ignorance will form bases for accelerated national development. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched in Nigeria on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1999 and was passed into law in 2004 as one of the strategies aimed at implementing the educational components of the MDGs. The UBE replaced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme which was launched nationwide in 1976, even before the world leaders established it as one of the MDGs. However, Nigeria like other countries, is striving to ensure that all children have unfettered access to education through the implementation of the universal basic education programme and comprehensive education reforms.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

When a nation is confronted with a myriad of problem, it quickly runs to its schools to gather ideas on how to solve it. Education is the best gift a nation can offer to its citizenry. This explains why Nigeria was one of the countries of the world that endorsed the Millennium Declaration and ever since, it has been committed to ensuring that it attains at least the Goal 2, which is very critical in achieving other Millennium Declaration Goals. Despite the efforts, Nigeria has been categorised among the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries that are still lagging behind in the attainment of the MDGs. To crown it all, the MDGs Report [5] reflects that performance on the MDGs has varied by country and region; some regions are closer to meeting the targets, while others such as Africa are not as close. Thus, the degree of pessimism underlying these predictions, coupled with the fact that 2015, the target date of attaining the MDGs, has ended, have compelled the researchers to assess the completion of a full course of primary education (2008-2014) in Rivers State. It is believed that if Rivers State makes remarkable progress, Nigeria will be gearing towards achieving the MDGs because if Nigeria fails to attain these goals, it means that Africa has failed given that 20% of Africa's people are Nigerians. Again, all the efforts including the resources Rivers State government has been putting in, to ensure that the goals are attained will be a futile one.

## 3. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the Completion of a Full Course of Primary Education (2008-2014) in Rivers State, Nigeria: A Searchlight on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Specifically, the objectives seek to:

1. determine the rate of completion of a full course of primary schooling for boys within the last six years in Rivers State education system;
2. highlight the rate of completion of a full course of primary schooling for girls within the last six years in Rivers State education system;

3. assess the completion rate of a full course of primary schooling for both boys and girls within the last six years in Rivers State education system;

## 4. Research Questions

1. What is the rate of completion of a full course of primary schooling for boys in Rivers State education system within the last six years?
2. What is the rate of completion of a full course of primary schooling for girls in Rivers State education system within the last six years?
3. What is the completion rate of a full course of primary schooling for both boys and girls in Rivers State education system within the last six years?

## 5. Methodology

The design for this study is a descriptive survey. Three research questions guided the study. The population consisted of all the 942 primary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample size of 94 primary schools was drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique, which represents 10% of the population. The research instrument that was used to gather information for the study was a document analysis. Data for the study were analysed using percentages, which were presented in bar charts.

## 6. Data Analyses

### 6.1. Research Question One

#### **What is the Rate of Completion of a Full Course of Primary Schooling for Boys in Rivers State Education System within the Last Six Years?**

Going by the progression rates of boys who were enrolled into Basic (1) in primary schools of the 23 local government areas of Rivers State for 2008/2009 school year in Appendix 5, it could be seen that of the enrolled 173 boys in LGA (1), the number of boys that progressed into Basic 2 for the 2009/2010 school year was 68, revealing a short fall of 105 boys (61% decrease). By the time these boys progressed into Basic 3 in 2010/2011 academic session, the number of this class increased by 16, bringing the number of boys to 84 (24 % increase ). By the time these 84 boys were expected to progress into Basic 4 for the 2011/2012 academic session, 4 (5%) of them had somehow fallen out of this class leaving only 80 boys to go on to Basic 4. The number of boys that progressed to Basic 5 for the 2012/2013 academic year dropped to 64 with a decrease of 16 boys (20%). By the time the boys could get into Basic 6 for the 2013/2014 academic year, there was a tremendous increase of 85, which brought the number to 149 (57%). Thus on the whole, of the 173 boys who started a course of primary schooling, in spite of the sporadic increase and decrease in the course of the six year course, only 149 boys or 86% of them completed a full course of primary schooling in LGA (1).

For LGA (2), the number of boys that enrolled to begin primary education in their schools in the 2008/2009 school year was 121. By the time these pupils could progress to the next class (Basic 2), their number reduced to 78 showing a short fall of 43 (36%). Only 76 of them progressed into Basic 3 in the 2010/2011 academic year revealing another decrease of 2 or 3% of the boys. As they advanced into Basic 4 in the 2006/2007 school year, their number was increased to 97 by 21 (28%) of the boys and

then decreased by 15% (15 boys) to 82, as they progressed to Basic 5. The number further reduced by one boy as they moved on to Basic 6; thereby, bringing the number of the boys to 81. Thus, whereas, 121 boys started the course in 2008/2009 (Basic 1), by the time this set had gone through a full course of primary education in 2013/2014 academic session, the number of boys at this point had declined from the initial 140 to 81 boys – overall decrease of 67%.

**Table 1. Summary of Completion Rates in Percentages (%)**

LGAs	Column 1 (for RQ5)	Column 2 (for RQ6)	Column 3 (for RQ7)
	Male Completion Rates (MCR)	Female Completion Rates (FCR)	Aggregate Completion Rates (ACR)
1	46%	76%	81%
2	67%	72%	69%
3	44%	59%	50%
4	38%	45%	42%
5	43%	58%	50%
6	54%	55%	54%
7	72%	66%	69%
8	43%	67%	56%
9	44%	52%	48%
10	66%	65%	66%
11	75%	92%	84%
12	91%	105%	97%
13	119%	133%	125%
14	81%	82%	82%
15	94%	90%	92%
16	63%	59%	61%
17	48%	46%	47%
18	71%	76%	73%
19	61%	67%	64%
20	23%	54%	38%
21	88%	134%	109%
22	107%	92%	99%
23	41%	39%	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>69%</b>

**LEGEND:**

- 100% and above = A very high completion rate.
- 100% = A perfect completion rate.
- 80-99% = A normal completion rate.
- 70-79% = A fair completion rate.
- 51-69% = A poor completion rate.
- 50% or less = A very poor completion rate.

One hundred and seventy-two boys were enrolled for Basic 1 in the primary schools of LGA (3) for 2008/2009 school year. By the time this set progressed into Basic 2, (2009/2010) their number had decreased by 56 (33%) to 116 boys. Of these 116 boys, only 93 of them (20%) progressed to Basic 3. Out of this number there was a further 25% decrease (23 of the boys) in the number that had gone on to Basic 4 (70 boys). There was a further decrease by the time this group had progressed to Basic 5, their number reduced from 70 to 66 boys. However, an increase occurred as the group progressed into the final class for a full course of primary education. They boys slightly increased to 76 (15%) showing an addition of ten more boys. Even this increase was still lower than the number of this group when they began the course in 2008/2009 academic year (Basic 1). Therefore, the number that completed the full course was only 76 as against the 172 boys that started at the beginning of the course. This yielded an overall 44% decrease.

For the schools of LGA (4), only 29 boys enrolled for Basic 1 during the 2008/2009 academic session. All these

29 boys made a 100% into Basic 2 in the 2009/2010 school year, but decreased to 22 boys as they progressed to Basic 3. The downward trend continued as the group progressed to Basic 4. The number, once again fell to 17 with a short fall of 5 boys. As the group went on into Basic 5, there was an addition of 8 boys, which brought the number to 25 boys (47%). Only 11 boys progressed into the final class (Basic 6) to complete the full course - an overall 38% decrease.

The Data show that the schools of LGA (5) enrolled 202 boys for the period under study in Basic 1. Only 139 of these boys (a decrease of 63 or 31%) progressed into Basic 2 in the next school year (2009/2010). The downward trend continued the next two years. Thus, for the 2010/2011 year (Basic 3), the number went down from 139 to 127, a decline of 12 or 9% of the boys; for Basic 4 (2011/2012) the number further fell from 127 to 115, a decrease of another 12 boys. However, the number escalated to 154 in Basic 5, revealing an increase of 39 boys. By the time the group of boys could progress into Basic 6, there was a sharp decline in their number, which

brought them to 86 boys that eventually completed the full primary school course. This represents an overall decline from the initial registration of 202 boys from Basic 1 to 138 boys in Basic 6; an overall decrease of 43%.

For the schools of LGA (6), 26 boys were enrolled in Basic 1 in 2008/2009 academic year. As they progressed into Basic 2, their number dropped to 18 boys (31%). These 18 boys dropped drastically by 50% (half of the boys) as they progressed into Basic 3. The number slightly increased by additional 2 boys, bringing the number to 11 boys in Basic 4. As they got into Basic 5, their number increased by another 4 boys (36%) to 15 boys. These 15 boys progressed into Basic 6 for the completion of the full primary school course. A 54% decrease from the 26 boys that initially enrolled into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year.

The schools of LGA (7) enrolled only 60 boys for Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year. There was an additional one boy as they progressed to Basic 2. As the group was to progress into Basic 3 in the 2010/2011 school year, there was another increase of 5 boys (8%) bringing the number to 66 boys. These 66 boys progressed into Basic 4 in 2011/2012 with an additional 9 boys, making them 75 boys. However, as they moved to Basic 5 in 2012/2013 school year, there was a drastic drop of 29 boys (39%). The number further dropped by 3 boys as they progressed into Basic 6 for a full course of primary education. This represents an overall decline from the initial registration of 60 boys from Basic 1 to 43 boys in Basic 6 – a 72% overall.

The primary schools of LGA (8) enrolled only 21 boys for Basic 1 in the first year of the period under study. Their number dropped to 17 boys as they progressed into Basic 2 (a 19% decrease). The number rose to 24 boys as they advanced to Basic 3. Only 22 of these boys got on to Basic 4, a decrease of 2 boys. There was a marked increase of 6 boys or 21% as 28 boys progressed into Basic 5 only for this number to drastically fall to 9 boys (less than 19 boys or 68%) who progressed into Basic 6 for completion of the full course; giving a short fall of 12 boys from the initial 21 boys that were enrolled for the primary education course. This yielded 43% completion rate.

The primary schools of LGA (9) enrolled 282 boys into Basic 1. Of this number, only 143 of them advanced into Basic 2 at the beginning of their second year with a decrease of 139 boys or 49%. As this group was to move into Basic 3, there was another sharp fall of 14 boys as they progressed into Basic 3 giving a total number of 129 Basic 3 boys. For the fourth year, an additional 71 boys (36%) were enrolled in Basic 4 giving a total of 200 boys. But 65 of them dropped, revealing a decline of 135 boys (33%) that progressed into Basic 5. Their number further dropped to 123 boys as they progressed into Basic 6. Thus, while 282 boys enrolled at the beginning of the full course, only 123 boys completed the full six year course, a 44% decrease.

The schools of LGA (10) enrolled 82 boys into Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 school year. 19 boys (20%) left from this number as they progressed to Basic 2, bringing their number to 63 boys. The number increased to 84 boys as the group advanced into Basic 3 in the 2010/2011 school year. As they progressed to Basic 4, their number decreased by 15 boys, bringing them to 69 boys. The

number further dropped to 60 boys as they moved to Basic 5. This last year, 2013/2014 witnessed another decrease of 6 boys. This number declined from 60 for the previous year to 54 boys. This means that of the 82 boys that began the course in the 2008/2009 school year, only 54 boys, completed the full course while 66% of them actually completed the full course.

A total of 97 boys were registered for Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (11) for the 2008/2009 school year. Only 83 of them moved on to Basic 2 in their second year of study, a decrease of 17% or 14 boys. Additional 3 boys (86) advanced into Basic 3 the following year. Basic 4 witnessed another increase of 4 boys making them a total of 90 boys. For the next two years till full completion, their number continued to decrease as the classes progressed toward full completion. There was a decrease of 9% or 8 of the boys and only 82 boys from Basic 5 went on to Basic 6 (a decrease of 11% or 9 boys). Considering the fact that the 97 boys that began the six-year course of primary schooling in the schools of this LGA, only 73 of them stayed to complete the course, showed a decrease of 24 boys or 75% of them that completed the full course.

For LGA (12), 140 boys were admitted into Basic 1 after which only 119 boys (less 21 or 18%) moved on to Basic 2 in the second year. As they advanced to Basic 3, there was a further drop of 12 boys (10%) from their number, bringing them to a total of 107 boys. In the fourth year of the 2011/2012 academic year, additional 6% or 7 boys moved on to Basic 4 with a total of 114 boys. This number further decreased by 2 making it 112 boys that progressed into Basic 5 by the beginning of the 2012/2013 school year. However, as the group progressed into Basic 6, the number increased by 12% or 15 boys to the 127 boys that completed the full six-year course. Thus, going by the 140 boys that embarked on the journey in the first year, the number that ended up completing the full course was reduced by 13 boys giving a 91% male completion rate.

The schools of LGA (13) enrolled 80 boys in Basic 1 for the six-year under study. All these moved 80 boys duly progressed into Basic 2 in the 2009/2010 school year. As they advanced to Basic 3, this number decreased to 69 boys. In the beginning of Year 4 (2011/2012), an additional 7 boys or 9% making it 76 boys that moved on to Basic 5 at the end of which, yet additional 21 boys or 22% (95 boys) progressed into Basic 6. Thus, from the 80 boys that started Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year to the 95 that completed the course in the 2013/2014 school year, it could be seen that 5 more boys completed the course with an overall 119% - a very high completion rate.

For the schools in LGA (14), 167 boys were enrolled in Basic 1 for the six year primary education course. The number that progressed into Basic 2 in the second year drastically dropped to 141 boys, showing a short fall of 26 boys. The number further decreased with a 4% of the 141 boys to 135 boys that moved on to Basic 3 in the 2010/2011 school year after which the number shot up by an increase of 28 boys or 17% to the 163 boys that advanced to Basic 4. This number kept decreasing in the last two academic sessions. The number reduced to 159 boys as they progressed into Basic 5 after which a further decrease of 24 boys (15%) to the 135 boys that advanced to Basic 6 in the 2013/2014. This represents a decrease of

32 or 81% in the number that started the course in Basic 1, six years earlier.

The primary schools of LGA (15) registered 415 boys in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 school year. Of this number, 375 boys (less 40) of them duly moved on to Basic 2 in the next school year. As the group advanced to Basic 3, the number escalated to 436 boys, making for an additional 61 boys that joined the stream. The next class, Basic 4, experienced another increase of 5 boys who brought the number to 441 boys. However, by the time the group could get into Basic 5, there was a sharp fall of 28 boys, bringing them to 413 boys. The number which advanced to the final year class was declined by 23 boys to 390 boys that completed the full course of schooling. This represents a decrease of 25 boys of the 415 boys that enrolled into the course from Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year with a 91% completion rate.

The schools in LGA (16) registered 183 boys in the 2008/2009 school year. By the second year, this number had risen to 192 boys (more 9 boys) that moved on to Basic 2. For the next four years till full completion, their number continued to decrease as the classes progressed towards full completion. In 2010/2011, there was a decrease by 22 or 11% of the 192 boys to the 170 that progressed into Basic 3. There was another drop of 29 boys making the number 141 boys that advanced into Basic 4. The next two years still witnessed a steady decline of the number that moved on to the last two classes of Basic 5 (a decrease of 7 to 134 boys) and Basic 6 (a further decrease of 19 to 115 boys). This approximates a decrease of 68 boys or 63% of the initial 183 boys that started the course from Basic 1.

Boys' enrolment for Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (17) during the 2008/2009 school year was 31. By the time this group progressed to Basic 2 in 2009/2010 academic session, they were 16, a short fall of 15 boys. The number that advanced into Basic 3 in the next school year shot up to 30 with an additional 14 boys. As they progressed to Basic 4, the number fell back to 19 (less 11 boys or 37%). One more boy joined this number as they advanced to Basic 5 making them 20 boys. In the next school year, Basic 6, the number further reduced to 15 boys (less 5 boys). This represents 16 less than the initial 31 boys that enrolled in Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (17), revealing a decrease of 48% that completed a full course of primary schooling.

For the schools of LGA (18), of the 78 boys that were enrolled in Basic 1 in the session of the six-year primary school course, 30 boys dropped drastically, bringing the number to just 24 boys that moved to Basic 2. There was a slight increase of 4 boys as they progressed into Basic 3. The number that progressed to Basic 4 fell back to 25 boys, but rose to 29 (by an additional 4 or 14%) boys as the group moved on to Basic 5. As the group advanced to Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 session, there was a sharp increase of 33 boys (more 4 boys). This portrays a group that is 21 less than the initial 54 boys that began the six-year programme way back in the 2008/2009 school year with an overall 71%.

The number of boys enrolled into Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (19) for the 2008/2009 academic session was 79 boys. This number dropped to 42 boys as they progressed to Basic 2 in the second year of study. The number continued to decrease in the next two classes. It reduced to

37 boys in Basic 3 and fell back again to 36 in Basic 4. However, there was an additional 5 boys that brought the number to 41 boys in Basic 5. This number dropped again to 18 boys (less 23 boys) that moved on to Basic 6 to complete the full six-year course (less 18 or 13.3 % of the initial group of the 90 boys that began the six-year course in Basic 1).

For the schools of LGA (20), 42 boys were enrolled into Basic 1 for the first year of primary education. But only 38 or less than 4 (9.5%) of these 42 boys moved on to the second year of study (Basic 2), for the number that moved to Basic 3, the following year, there was an additional 6 (15.8 %) boys increasing it to 44, only for the number to drop (less 2 or 4.5%) to 42 boys that duly progressed to Basic 4 in the 2007/2008 school year. However, only 30 (less 8 or 19.0%) of the boys moved on to Basic 5. In the end, only 26 of these 30 boys (less 4 or 13.3% of them) moved on to the final year class of Basic 6, a decrease of 16 or 38.1% of the original 42 boys that initially enrolled for the six year programme way back in the 2004/2005 school year. Hence, the number that completed the full course was only 18 as against the 79 boys that started at the beginning of the course. This yielded an overall 23% decrease in the completion rate.

For the schools of LGA (21), 33 boys embarked on the academic journey in the 2008/2009 session. This number decreased to 28 boys as they progressed into basic 2 with a short fall of 5 boys. In Basic 3, the number rose to 33 boys with an additional 5 boys in the stream. For the next three years till full completion, their number kept declining as the classes advanced toward full completion. Hence, the number of the boys that passed out of the programme after the six-year primary schooling was 29 as against the 33 boys that were enrolled earlier. This represents 88% completion rate.

For schools in LGA (22), 152 boys were admitted into Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 school year. By the second year, this number had risen to 182 boys with an additional 30 boys. As they progressed to Basic 3, 38 more boys increased the number to 182 boys. As the group moved to Basic 4, there was a sharp fall in the number (less 62 or 28% boys), bringing the number to 158. This number increase by 7 to 165 boys as the group moved on to Basic 5 and to get another decrease by 5 of these 165 to 162 that eventually moved into Basic 6 to complete the six year course. This approximates a 107% high completion rate. Thus, 152 boys were originally enrolled for the course in the first year of the six year programme while 162 boys completed the race.

For the schools of the last of the 23 LGAs, that is LGA (23), 93 boys initially enrolled into the first year of the programme in 2008/2009. 68 of this number (less 25 or 27% of them) advanced into Basic 2 after the first year. This number increased by 12 boys or 15% of them as the group progressed to Basic 3. As they progressed to Basic 4, the number fell back again to 52 boys, showing a short fall of 28 boys. This number rose slightly by 14 more boys as they moved to Basic 5 after which the drastically dropped to 38 boys as they progressed to Basic 6 to complete the primary schooling. On the whole, for the schools of LGA (23), only 41% (100 boys) of the initial number of boys that commenced the six year primary school programme completed the course.

Hence, the completion rates that emerged from the year by year progression rates of the six years of primary school boys in each of the 23 local government areas are displayed in column 1 of [Table 1](#) ((Male Completion Rates). In the light of the foregoing, interpretation of the data that met the demands of Research Question 2 are as follow:

1. Eight out of the 23 local government areas had very poor completion rates for boys.
2. Five of the LGAs in Rivers State had poor completion rates for boys.
3. Three of the LGAs had fair male completion rates.
4. Five of the LGAs had normal completion rates for boys.
5. There was no LGA that had a perfect completion rate for boys in Rivers State.
6. Two out of the 23 LGAs had very high completion rates for boys.

Consequently, the aggregate completion rate for a full course of primary school for boys in Rivers State was 66%.

## 6.2. Research Question Two

### What is the Rate of Completion of a Full Course of Primary School for Girls in Rivers State Education System within the Last Six Years?

The data derived from the year by year progression rates for girls in the full course of primary schooling year by year for the six-year programme in the schools of the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) are well detailed in Appendix 5. In LGA (1), 173 girls were registered into the programme (Basic 1) for the 2008/2009 academic session. As this number of girls progressed into Basic 2, there was sharp drop of 89 girls! (More than half of them dropped, bringing the number to just 84 or 51% girls. The same trend of decrease was also experienced as they advanced to Basic 3. 18 (21%) of them left the stream making the total 66 girls. However, as the group 66 girls advanced into Basic 4, there was an additional 21 girls that brought the number to 87 girls. There was a further decrease by 13 girls as they moved to Basic 5. As these 74 girls were progressing into Basic 6, their number shot up to 131 girls (more 57 or 39%) completed the full course of primary schooling in the 2013/2014 session. Thus, these 131 girls is a far cry from the 173 of them that commenced the course in Basic 1, a decrease of 42 girls. This represents an overall 74% of female completion rates in for LGA (1).

A further look at Appendix 5 shows that for LGA (2), 108 girls were admitted into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year. From the initial enrolment of 108 girls in Basic 1, the number dropped to 85 girls as the group moved to Basic 2 (a decrease of 23 or 21% of the girls). The number increased slightly by 11 girls to the 96 girls that advanced to Basic 3. This number fell back again to 70 (less 26 or 27%) girls that progressed into Basic 4. The number that advanced to Basic 5 further rose by 16 girls or 23% to 86 girls. From this number, only 78 of them (less 8 or 9% of the girls) progressed into Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 session. This shows that less than 30 girls or 72% of the initial 108 girls completed the primary schooling in LGA (2).

For LGA (3), of the 109 girls that were enrolled into Basic 1 in 2008/2009, only 96 (less 13 or 12%) of them

moved on to Basic 2 in the next school year. For the next three years till full completion, their number continued to decline as the classes progressed toward full completion. Hence, of the 96 girls, only 84 (less 12 or 13%) of them progressed into Basic 3. The number further decreased by 17 to 67 girls as they moved on to Basic 4. The number still reduced to 61 (less 6 or 9%) as the class advanced to Basic 5. However, the number increased by 3, bringing the number that advanced to Basic 6 to only 64 girls that completed the full course of primary schooling. This portrays a decrease of 45 (59%) girls from the initial 109 girls that commenced the programme in Basic 1.

For schools in LGA (4), only 33 girls were enrolled in Basic 1 for the first year of the six-year primary school programme. This number witnessed a short fall of 6 girls, which brought their number to 27 girls as they advanced to Basic 2. The next two years also witnessed drastic drop. The 27 girls dropped to 21 girls as they progressed into Basic 3. There was a further decrease by 1 girl to 20 girls as the group moved to Basic 4. There was a slight increase as they moved to Basic 5. An additional 7 girls joined the stream, which made it 27 girls. There was a further drop of 12 girls from the 27 girls, bringing the number that completed the full-six year course down from the initial Basic 1 enrolment of 33 to the 15 girls that completed the six-year course (a decrease of 18 girls or 45%).

In LGA (5), the number of the initial 191 girls that were enrolled into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 academic session dropped to 125 girls as the class progressed to Basic 2 in the second school year. These 125 girls increased in number by 6 (5%) more girls to the 131 that moved on to Basic 3 in the third year of study, and then dropped again to 110 (less 21 or 16%) of the girls as the class moved to Basic 4. There was a slight increase of 4 more girls in the number as they advanced to Basic 5. The 114 girls were later decreased to 111 girls as the class moved to Basic 6, the last of the six year programme, an overall decrease of 80 girls or 58% of the 191 girls that initially commenced the programme.

The schools in LGA (6) registered a total of 11 girls in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 session. This number increased to 21 (more 10 or 48% girls) as the class moved to Basic 2 in the next school year. The number decreased by 2 girls (10%) as only 19 of them advanced to Basic 3 in their third year. There was a further drop in the number by 7 girls as only 12 of them moved to Basic 4. This same number was retained in Basic 5. However, there was a sharp fall of 50% (less 6 girls), which brought the number that completed a full course of schooling to just 6 girls! Thus, represents an overall decrease of 55%.

A further look at Appendix 5 shows that only 62 girls were enrolled into Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (7). This number fell to 53 (less 9 or 15% of the girls) as the class moved on to Basic 2, and still decreased by 2 (4%) to 51 as the class moved on to Basic 3. These 51 girls that advanced to Basic 4 in the 2011/2012 session, increased by 22 or 30% of the girls bringing the number that progressed into Basic 4 to 73 girls. As they were advancing to Basic 5, the number fell back again to 54 girls that advanced to Basic 5, and then drastically reduced to the 41 (less 13 or 24%) of the girls that progressed to Basic 6. Hence, this shows completion rate of 66% of the number that commenced the programme in 2008/2009 school year.

The schools of LGA (8) enrolled a total of 27 girls in their primary schools in Basic 1 for the first year of the same period under study. The number dropped by 50% to 18 girls as the class moved on to Basic 2 in the next school year. There was a slight increase by 6 girls to 24 girls that moved into Basic 3 in their third school year and 1 more girl as they advanced to Basic 4 in the following school year, and then further increase by 8 girls (24%) to 33 girls that advanced to Basic 5. By the time the class moved on to Basic 6, their number had decreased by 15 girls; thereby leaving only 18 girls in Basic 6; an overall decrease (by 9 or 67%) of the number that completed the six-year programme.

The 258 girls that were admitted into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 session by the schools of LGA (9) progressed to the full 6 years course as follows: This number decreased by 60% or 155 girls to 103 as the class progressed into Basic 2; it increased as the group moved to Basic 3 (by 31 girls or 23%) to 134 girls, and further increased (more 67 or 32%) to 201 girls as the class got on to Basic 4. The number that advanced into Basic 5 was drastically dropped by 35 to 166 girls and then further dropped by 31 or 19% girls leaving only 135 girls to progress into Basic 6 - an overall decrease of 123 or 52% of the number (258) that commenced the six-year programme from Basic 1.

75 female pupils commenced the six-year primary school programme in LGA (10). More than this initial number (1 more girl) 76 moved on to Basic 2. The number escalated to 88 girls as they moved on to Basic 3 in the 2010/2011 school year. This number fell back to 76 (a decrease of 12 or 14%) of the girls as the group advanced to Basic 4, and further decreased by 19 to 57 girls as they moved on to Basic 5 in the next school year. The number that progressed into Basic 6 plummeted back from these 57 (less 8 ) of the girls to only 49 of them, a steep fall from the 75 (less 26) to the 49 girls that completed the programme; an overall shortfall of 65% of the girls.

From the 100 female pupils that were admitted into Basic 1 for LGA (11) for the six year programme, 95 girls or 5% of this class moved on to Basic 2 in their second school year, and increased (more 8 or 8% of the class) to 103 as the group moved on to Basic 3 and further decreased (less 6) to 97 girls as the class advanced to Basic 4. The class further dropped to 89 girls in Basic 5, but increased to 92 girls as the group moved on to Basic 6; an overall reduction of 8 girls from the 2008/2009 Basic 1 classes of 100 girls. In fact, this represents a completion rate of (92%).

The schools of LGA (12) admitted 128 female pupils into its Basic 1 programme. This number reduced by 5 (4% of the class) to 123 for the second year class (Basic 2), and the same number (100%) was retained in Basic 3. It further decreased by 4 girls or 13% of them to 119 for Basic 4, then down to 105 (less 14 or 13% of the girls) for Basic 5. As they progressed into Basic 6, the number shot up to 134 (29 or 22% more) girls for Basic 6. This approximates to an overall increase of 6 or 105% of the initial 128 girls that commenced the programme from Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 session.

The schools of LGA (13) enrolled 63 girls into Basic 1 of the 2008/2009 school year. Additional 14 girls joined the class as they moved into Basic 2 and then these 77 girls decreased by 1 to 76 girls in Basic 3. The progression

pattern of the pupils were similar in Basic 4 and 5 classes because there was a yearly increase into each new class such as 91 girls (15 more girls or 16%) moved from Basic 4 to 5, and then 22 or 19% more girls brought the number to 113. The number that moved from this class to Basic 6 decreased to 84 (less 29 or 26%) girls, an overall increase of 21 or 133%. This represents a high completion rate for girls in LGA (13).

The schools of LGA (14) enrolled 147 female pupils in its Basic 1 for the six-year primary school programme who progressed towards Basic 6 as follows: only 136 of the 147 girls (less 11 or 7% of them) progressed into Basic 2 while the number of girls that moved from Basic 3 sharply increased to 162 (26 or 16% more) girls that previously moved into Basic 2. The number fell back again to 155 girls as they progressed into Basic 4. There was another sharp decrease (24 or 15% of the 155 of the Basic 4 girls) to only 131 of them progressed to Basic 5, with a further decrease to 121 (10 or 8%) of the girls that moved on to Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 session. Thus, these 121 Basic 6 girls were less than the 147 girls that embarked on the course in 2008/2009 by 26 or 82%.

The progression data of the 460 females enrolled into Basic 1 of the primary schools of LGA (15) shows that there was a reduction of 5 girls as the group moved to Basic 2 in their second year of study. The number further dropped to 449 by 6 girls as the class moved on to Basic 3 for the next school year. This group experienced a remarkable increase with an additional 82 or 15% of the girls bringing the number into Basic 4 to 531 girls. For the last two years, there was a reduction in their progression pattern as follows: the 531 girls reduced to 473 by 58 girls or 11% in Basic 5 and then fell back to 412 with a short fall of 61 girls who left the stream as the class progressed to Basic 6. Hence, out of the 460 female pupils who embarked on the course, only 412 (a short fall of 48 or 90%) girls completed a full course of primary schooling in LGA (15).

The primary schools of LGA (16) registered 208 female pupils into Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 school year. This number increased to 211 (additional 3) girls as the group moved on to Basic 2 and then decreased to 157 (less 54 or 26%) of the girls that moved on to Basic 3. For the next three years, the progression pattern was the same in that their number continued to decline. The 35 girls decrease by 19 to 16 girls as they advanced to Basic 4, dropped to 14 girls in Basic 5 and still fell back to 13 girls who completed the course in Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 academic year. This shows a shortfall of 86 girls (59%) from the 208 female pupils that began the six-year course in Basic 1 six years then.

The primary schools of LGA (17) admitted 28 girls in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 session. The number was decreased by 11 or 39% to 17 girls as they moved on to Basic 2. The number that advanced from this class to Basic 3 was increased by 18 girls (51%) to 35, but only 16 (less 19 or 54%) advanced into Basic 4, with a further decline to only 14 of them that moved on to Basic 5, only to further decrease to 13 girls that transited to Basic 6. This represents 15 or 46% of the initial 28 girls that commenced the programme from Basic 1. The 80 girls that were enrolled to start Basic 1 for the first year of the six-year primary school education in LGA (18) were increased by 14 additional girls (15%) to 94 as the class

moved on to Basic 2 in 2009/2010 school year. There was a further increase to 108 girls (more 14 or 13%) as the group once again moved on to Basic 3, and then the number decreased to 86 (less 22 or 20%) of the girls as they transited to Basic 4. The number further decreased by 4 or 5% of the girls to 82 as the class progressed to Basic 5. However, only 61 or less 21 (26% of the 82 Basic 5 girls) advanced to Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 school year. This is as against the 80 girls that were initially enrolled for the six-year programme from Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year, a decrease of 19 or 76% female pupils that originally began the six-year course.

Fifty-four female pupils were enrolled into the primary schools of LGA (19) in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 session. Only 36 of these girls (less 18 or 33%) of them moved on to Basic 2 in the next year while 35 girls moved on to Basic 3 in the following year. Whereas, those that duly progressed to Basic 4 in the fourth year of their course decreased from the previous year 35 to 40 girls. This group proceeded into Basic 5 with a short fall of 8 girls to 32 girls while only 36 of these 32 female pupils (more 4 or 11%) advanced into Basic 6 in the 2013/2014 school year. This represents 67% completion rate.

The primary schools of LGA (20) registered 78 female pupils into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 session, who at their second year, only 45 (less 33 or 42%) of them duly progressed into Basic 2. There was an additional 3 girls as they moved on to Basic 3. At the beginning of the 2010/2011 school year, this number further increased by one girl, bringing the number to 49 girls in Basic 4. As the group moved on to Basic 5, the number fell to only 45 (less 4 or 8% of them) and to further reduce by 2 to 42 girls as they progressed into Basic 6. This group was 36 or 54% less than the 78 girls that were initially admitted into Basic 1.

The numbers of girls enrolled into the Basic 1 classes of the primary schools of LGA (21) were 29. After the first year, there was an additional 6 girls who brought the number to 35 girls as they advanced to Basic 2. In the beginning of the third year of the study, the number that moved on to Basic 3 from this group further increased by an additional 2 or 5% to 37 girls. The number fell back to 30 girls with a reduction of 7 girls in Basic 4 and the same number (100%) moved on to Basic 5 and further increased by 9 more girls to 39 girls who transited to Basic 6. This shows a high completion rate of 134% girls of the number (29) that were originally admitted into the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the six-year programme.

The LGA (22) admitted 152 girls in their primary schools in the 2008/2009 academic session. There was an additional 31 girls (17%) that brought the group to 183 girls as they advanced to Basic 2. There was a remarkable increase in their number as they moved on to Basic 3 (more 72 or 28%). These 255 girls fell back to 209 girls (less 46 or 18%) as they progressed to Basic 4, increased to 238 girls in Basic 5 only to fall back to 140 girls in Basic 6. This shows an overall 92% completion rate for girls in LGA (22).

In the first year of the study period, the primary schools of LGA (23) enrolled 94 girls into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 session. There was a continual decrease as the group progressed to different classes. Only 91 of the girls advanced to Basic 2 and there was a sharp fall as they moved on to Basic 3. The 91 girls dropped by 22 to 69

girls. The number slightly increased by 4 to 73 girls in Basic 4. Thereafter, the group that progressed from Basic 4 to Basic 5, fell back again to 69 girls. There was a further reduction of 32 girls as they progressed into Basic 6 to complete the full course of primary schooling. The group of 37 female pupils that moved on to Basic 6 are fewer than the initial 94 girls that were enrolled into Basic 1 at the commencement of the six-year full course of primary schooling for the schools of LGA (23) by 57 or 39% decrease.

Thus, the female pupils' primary school completion rates between 2008/2009 and 2013/2014 academic sessions in the primary schools of the 23 LGAs of Rivers State have been summarized local government by local government for the primary schools of the LGAs and displayed in column 2 of [Table 1](#) ((Female Completion Rates). In the light of the foregoing, interpretation of the data that met the demands of Research Question 3 are as follow:

1. Three out of the 23 local government areas had very poor completion rates for girls.
2. Ten of the LGAs in Rivers State had poor completion rates for girls.
3. Three of the LGAs had fair female completion rates.
4. Four of the LGAs had normal completion rates for girls.
5. There was no LGA that had a perfect completion rate for girls in Rivers State.
6. Three out of the 23 LGAs had very high completion rates for girls.

Consequently, the aggregate completion rate for a full course of primary schooling for girls in Rivers State was 71%.

### 6.3. Research Question Three

#### **What is the Rate of Completion of a Full Course of Primary Schooling for Both Boys and Girls in Rivers State School System within the Last Six Years?**

A detailed overall year by year progression rate of completion of full course of primary schooling for both boys and girls in all the 23 local government areas of Rivers State from 2008/2009 academic sessions to 2013/2014 academic year are displayed in Appendix 5. The data that were gathered revealed that a total of 346 pupils (173 boys and 173 girls) were enrolled to start Basic 1 in LGA (1) schools. As the pupils progressed into Basic 2, they dropped to 152 (a short fall of 194 pupils or 56% of them). The number further dropped by 2 to 150 pupils in Basic 3. As they advanced into Basic 4 in the 2011/2012 school year, the number slightly increased by 17 pupils (11%), bringing the number to 167 pupils. As they moved on to Basic 5, the number fell back again by a decrease of 29 (17%) pupils and increased by 142 as they got to Basic 6, leaving just 280 pupils (149 boys and 131 girls) to complete the full course of primary schooling in 2013/2014 school year. The number of pupils at this point had dropped from the initial 346 to 280 pupils, a decrease of 66 or 81% of the pupils.

For LGA (2), the number of pupils that were enrolled to begin Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year was 229 pupils (121 boys and 108 girls). However, 163 of the pupils progressed into Basic 2 in the next school year, a

decrease 66 or 29% of the pupils. As they progressed into Basic 3, their number increased to 172 by additional 9 (6%) of the pupils and dropped to 167 pupils by 5 as they progressed into Basic 4. The number increased by an additional 1 pupil as they got into Basic 5, which brought the total number of the pupils to 168. By the time they got into Basic 6, their number decreased again to 159 pupils; thereby revealing a decrease of 9 (5%) pupils. Thus, 229 pupils started the course of primary education in 2008/2009 school year, by the time the set had gone through a full course of primary schooling in 2013/2014 sessions, the number of the pupils dropped to 159 (81 boys and 78 girls), a decrease of 70 or 69% pupils.

The number of boys and girls that embarked on the primary education journey in 2008/2009 session was 172 and 109 respectively, which yielded a population of 281 pupils for LGA (3). As the course of primary schooling progressed, there were gradual fall from Basics 2 to 5 for both genders. Thus, in Basic 2, the number (281) was reduced to 212 (a decrease of 69 or 25%); in Basic 3, the number still reduced from 212 to 177 (a decrease of 35 or 17%); in Basic 4, there was a further decrease to 137 by 40 or 23% and another fall to 127 by 10 or 7% as they progressed into Basic 5. However, as they moved into Basic 6, the number rose from 127 to 140, an increase by 13 additional pupils (9%). Hence, the number of pupils (boys and girls) that completed the full course of primary education dropped from the initial number 281 to 140 (76 boys and 64 girls) pupils – a decrease of 141 or 50% pupils.

In LGA (4) schools, the number of boys that were enrolled for Basic 1 were 29 while girls were 33, giving a total of 62 pupils for the 2008/2009 academic session. As they progressed into Basic 2, the number fell to 56 (a decrease by 6 or 10%), there was a further reduction in the number as they got into Basic 3 by 13 or 23%; thereby, representing a total of 43 pupils. As they advanced into Basic 4, the number fell back again to 37, a decrease of 6 or 14% pupils. The number slightly increased by 15 or 41% pupils to 52 pupils. By Basic 6, their number once again fell sharply to 26 (a decrease by 26 or 50%). Thus, the initial number, 62 pupils that started Basic 1 dropped by 36 (42%) pupils by the time the group got to Basic 6 in 2013/2014 academic session. This represents an overall decline from the initial registration of 62 pupils to 26 pupils who completed the full course of primary education.

The schools of LGA (5) admitted 393 pupils (202 boys and 111 girls) into Basic 1, the first of the six-year primary education. For the next four years till full completion, their number continued to decrease as the classes progressed towards full completion. These are as follows: the number, 393 in Basic 1 drastically reduced by 129 (33%) to 264 for the second year class (Basic 2), it further reduced by 6 or 3% pupils to 258 for Basic 3, and then dropped again by 33 pupils (13%) in Basic 4. As they progressed to Basic 5, the number increased by 43 (19%) to 268 pupils and at the end of the primary course, the number declined to 197 by a decrease of 71 or 26% pupils. This approximates to an overall decrease of 196 or 50% of the initial 393 pupils that started the programme from Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 academic session.

For the schools of LGA (6), 26 boys and 11 girls (37) pupils were registered into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 school year. As they went on to Basic 2, the number

increased to 39 pupils and decreased to 28 by 11 or 28% pupils for Basic 3. As the pupils progressed into Basic 4, the number reduced further to 23 by a reduction of 5 or 18% pupils. It rose again to 27 by additional 4 pupils and still dropped to 20 by a decrease of 7 (26%) pupils at the end of the programme in Basic 6; thereby, representing a decrease of 17 pupils (54%). Thus, whereas 37 pupils started the course in 2008/2009 (Basic 1), by the time the set had gone through a full course of primary education in 2013/2014 school year, the number had decreased from the initial 37 to 20 pupils.

In LGA (7) schools, 60 boys and 62 girls which yielded a population of 122 pupils, enrolled for Basic 1 in 2008/2009 academic session. Only 114 of the pupils moved to Basic 2 (a decrease of 8 or 7%) of the pupils. An additional 3 making it a total of 117 pupils went on to Basic 3; the number that advanced into Basic 4 shot up to 148, an increase of 31 pupils. However, there were gradual fall as they progressed to Basic 5 and 6. Thus, 100 of these pupils (less 48 or 32%) advanced into Basic 5 from Basic 4 and only 84 from Basic 5 went on to Basic 6 (a decrease of 16% or 16 of them). Hence, from the 122 pupils that began the six-year course of primary schooling in the schools of this LGA (7), only 84 of them (43 boys and 41 girls) stayed on to complete the course. This shows a decrease of 38 or 69% of the pupils that completed the full course of primary education.

For the schools in LGA (8), only 48 pupils (21 boys and 27 girls) enrolled into Basic 1 for the six-year primary education course in 2008/2009 school year. The number that progressed into Basic 2 in the next year reduced to 35 by a decrease of 13 or 37% pupils. As they moved on to Basic 3, the number rose again to 48 pupils (more 13 or 27%) and dropped again to 47 pupils by 1 as they progressed into Basic 4. In Basic 5, the number rose slightly by addition of 14 (23%) pupils into the stream to 61 pupils but as they got to Basic 6, the final class, it was further reduced by 34 pupils or 56%, leaving just 27 (9 boys and 18 girls) pupils to complete the full course. This approximates to a decrease of 21 (56%) pupils from the initial 48 pupils that started Basic 1 in 2008/2009 school year.

A total of 540 pupils (282 boys and 258 girls) were registered in Basic 1 in the schools of LGA (9) for the 2008/2009 school year. There was a drastic short fall of 294 or 54% (more than half of the pupils) from the number as they moved on to Basic 2. As they advanced into Basic 3, the number increased slightly by 17 to 263 pupils and then shot up to 401 (an increase of 138 or 52% pupils) in Basic 4. As they progressed to Basic 5 and 6, the number of pupils continued to decline as follows: the number further decreased from 401 to 301 (less 100 or 25%) for Basic 5 and then dropped again from 301 to 258, a decrease of 43 or 14% as they progressed into Basic 6 – an overall reduction of 282 (48%) pupils (123 boys and 135 girls) from the 2008/2009 Basic 1 classes of 540 pupils.

From the 157 pupils (82 boys and 75 girls) that were admitted into Basic 1 for LGA (10) for the six-year programme, 18 pupils or 12% decreased from the number as they moved on to Basic 2 in their second year. These 139 pupils shot up to 172 by an additional 33 pupils as the set moved to Basic 3. For the next three years till full completion, their number continued to decrease as the

classes progressed towards full completion. As the pupils transitioned to Basic 4, they sharply dropped to 145; they further reduced to 117 pupils (a reduction of 28 or 19%) of the pupils as they moved on to Basic 5, and then still fell back to 103 (less 14 or 12%) pupils, an overall reduction of 54 or 66% of the initial 157 pupils that started Basic 1.

The progression rates' data of the 197 pupils enrolled into Basic 1 of the primary schools of LGA (11) show that there was a reduction in the size as the pupils progressed into Basic 2 by 19 (10%) who left the streams for only 178 pupils in the second year of study. However, the number escalated again to 189 by an addition of 11 (6%) pupils. The data show that there were steady falls as they went on to Basics 4, 5 and 6. Thus, the number decreased to 187 by 2 or pupils in Basic 4; it dropped again from 187 to 171 (less 16 or 9%) for Basic 5 and further declined by 6 or 4%, leaving just 165 (73 boys and 92 girls) pupils to complete the race. This represents a reduction of 32 pupils (84%) from the initial 197 pupils that started Basic 1.

For the schools of LGA (12), an overall total of 268 pupils (140 boys and 128 girls) were enrolled into Basic 1 for the first year of the six-year primary school programme. Of these 268 pupils, only 242 pupils (less 26 or 11%) went on to Basic 2. As they went on to Basic 3, the number further reduced from 242 to 230 by a decrease of 12 pupils. This number increased by 3 to 233 pupils in Basic 4. The number fell back again by 16 (7%) as they moved on to Basic 5, leaving 217 to 261 pupils by an increase of 44 pupils (17%) as they progressed into Basic 6. This approximates to a decrease of 7 (97%) to the initial number of 268 pupils that started Basic 1 in 2008/2009 school year.

The 143 pupils (80 boys and 63 girls) that were admitted into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 session by the schools of LGA (13) progressed to the full six-year course as follows: this number increased by 14 pupils (9%) to 157 as the class progressed into Basic 2, it dropped as the group moved on to Basic 3 by 12 pupils (8%) to 145 pupils; it escalated to 167 by 22 more pupils in Basic 4; the number further shot up to 187 by an additional 20 pupils as they got to Basic 5, and then dropped by 8 (4%) to 179 pupils as they got to Basic 6, an overall increase of 36 or 125% of the initial pupils who started Basic 1. Thus represents a very high completion rate of pupils in LGA (13).

Three hundred and fourteen (314) pupils (167 boys and 147 girls) commenced the six-year primary education programme in the schools of LGA (14) during the 2008/2009 school year. Thirty-seven pupils or (12%) less than the initial number (314) moved on to Basic 2; as they advanced to Basic 3, the number increased to 297 by more 20 pupils and this number (297) sky-rocketed to 318 by 21 additional pupils (7%) as they got to Basic 4. In Basic 5, the number fell back again to 290 with a decrease of 28 (9%) pupils and still reduced by 34 pupils as the set got to Basic 6, leaving 256 pupils (135 boys and 121 girls) to complete the full course in the 213/2014 school year; hence, an overall decrease of 58 or 82% pupils from the initial number.

The primary schools of LGA (15) admitted 875 pupils (415 boys and 460 girls) in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 academic session. There was a reduction in this number by 45 to 830 pupils as they moved on to Basic 2. This group proceeded into Basic 3 with an additional increase of 55

pupils, giving it a total of 885 pupils and still shot up to 972 pupils with 87 more pupils joining the stream. However, as they progressed into Basics 5 and 6, their number kept declining as follows: from 972 in Basic 4, the number decreased by 86 pupils in Basic 5 and further reduced to 802 from 886 – a decrease of another 84 pupils as they advanced into Basic 6. This represents an overall decrease of 73 pupils (92%) of the initial 875 pupils that started Basic 1.

The 391 pupils (183 boys and 208 girls) that were enrolled to start Basic 1 for the first year of the six-year primary school education in LGA (16) in 2008/2009 session were increased by 12 pupils to 403 as the pupils moved on to Basic 2 in 2009/2010 school year. The next four sessions witnessed a gradual decrease in the number of the pupils as follows: there was a decrease to 327 (less 76 or 19%) in Basic 3; a further decrease by 40 (12%) to 287 pupils as they progressed into Basic 4; the number fell back again to 275 in Basic 5 and then finally dropped by 38 to 237 pupils (115 boys and 122 girls) as they got to Basic 6. This approximates to a reduction of 154 or 61% pupils from the initial 391 pupils that began Basic 1 in 2008/2009 academic session.

Fifty-nine pupils (31 boys and 28 girls) were enrolled into the primary schools of LGA (17) in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 session. The number decreased by 26 (44%) to 33 pupils as the pupils moved on to Basic 2. Additional 32 pupils (49%) joined the streams as they moved on to Basic 3, bringing the number to 65 pupils. Out of these 65 pupils, only 35 (less 30 or 46%) went on to Basic 4, with a further decline to only 34 of them that moved on to Basic 5 (a decrease of 1) and only to further decrease by 6 or 18% to 28 pupils as they advanced to Basic 6. This represents 31 or 47% decrease of the initial 59 pupils that commenced the programme of a full course of schooling in 2008/2009 session.

The 158 pupils (78 boys and 80 girls) that were enrolled to start Basic 1 for the first year of the six years primary school education in LGA (18) in 2008/2009 school year were increased by 34 additional pupils (18%) to 192 as the pupils moved on to Basic 2. There was a further increase by 1 to 193 pupils as the group once again got to Basic 3. Then there was a sharp fall in the number as the group went on to Basic 4 to 174 (less 19 or 10%) pupils. It further decreased to 165 by 9 or 5% pupils as they got to Basic 5. As they progressed into Basic 6, the number still dropped from 165 to 116 pupils (less 49 or 30%), an overall decrease of 42 pupils (73%) to the initial 158 pupils that started Basic 1 in 2008/2009 school year.

The number of pupils enrolled into Basic 1 in the primary schools of LGA (19) in 2008/2009 session was 108 pupils (54 boys and 54 girls). After the first year, only 60 of them (less 48 or 44%) advanced on to Basic 2. As they progressed into Basic 3, the number increased to 63 (more 3 or 5%) and in the beginning of the fourth year of study, the number that moved on to Basic 4 still increased by an additional 2 or 3% to 65 pupils. As these pupils progressed into Basic 5, the number dropped again from 65 to 61 by a decrease of 4 or 6%, and then rose to 69 with an additional 8 pupils; thereby, representing an overall decrease of 39 or 64% of the initial 108 pupils that embarked on the journey in 2008/2009 school year.

In the first year of the 2008/2009 academic session, 157 pupils (79 boys and 78 girls) enrolled for Basic 1 in the

primary schools of LGA (20). As the group moved on to Basic 2, the number drastically decreased to 87 by 70 or 45% pupils that left the stream. There was a continual reduction in the sizes as they progressed through Basics 3, 4, and 6. Only 85 out of the 87 moved on to Basic 3 (a decrease of 2) and in Basic 4, this number was retained; the number witnessed a slight increase by an additional 1 pupil, bringing the number to 86 pupils that moved on to Basic 5. However, there was another fall that reduced the size to 60 (less 26 or 43%) pupils as they got to Basic 6. This group that progressed to Basic 6 was fewer than the initial 157 pupils that were enrolled into Basic 1 at the commencement of the six-year full course of primary education for the schools of LGA (20) by 97 or 38% alarming decrease. This shows a very poor completion rate for pupils in LGA (20).

The schools of LGA (21) registered a total of 62 pupils (33 boys and 29 girls) in Basic 1 for the 2008/2009 session. This number increased to 63 pupils as they advanced to Basic 2. It further increased by 7 (10%) to 70 pupils for Basic 3; and then further decreased by 8 pupils or 11% to 62 for Basic 4; then it went down again to 61 pupils that left the streams in Basic 5 and in the end, shot up to 68 ( more 7 or 10%) pupils for Basic 6. This approximates to an overall increase of 6 or 109% of the initial 62 pupils that commenced the programme from Basic 1 in 2008/2009 school year.

From the 304 pupils (152 boys and 152 girls) that were admitted into Basic 1 for LGA (22) in 2008/2009 academic session, there was an additional 61 pupils that made up the number to 365 pupils that advanced to Basic 2 in 2009/2010 session. There was a remarkable increase in the number from 365 to 475 (more 110) pupils as they progressed through Basic 3. As they got to Basic 4, there was a short fall in the number. The number dropped from 475 to 367 (less 108 or 23%). It rose again by 36 to 403 pupils in Basic 5 only to fall back by 101 or 25% to 302 pupils as they advanced to Basic 6; thereby, representing an overall decrease of 2 (99%) from the initial 304 pupils that started Basic 1 in 2008/2009 academic session.

The primary schools of LGA (23) registered 187 pupils (93 boys and 94 girls) into Basic 1 in the 2008/2009 academic session. This group in their second year reduced to 159 (a decrease of 28 or 15%) pupils as they progressed into Basic 2. The number further decreased to 149 by 10 or 6% pupils that left the stream in Basic 3 and then dropped again as they got to Basic 4 to 125 pupils (less 24 or 19%). However, as they advanced through Basic 5, there was a slight increase in their size. Thus, the number rose from 125 in Basic 4 to 135 by an addition of 10 or 7% pupils for Basic 5, and drastically dropped by 60 pupils, bringing the number to a total of 75 pupils (38 boys and 37 girls) that completed Basic 6 in 2013/2014 school year. This shows that there was a decline in the initial number of 187 pupils; an overall alarming decrease of 112 or 40% pupils for the schools of LGA (23).

Thus, the overall primary schools percentage completion rates of pupils in the 23 local government areas of Rivers State between 2008/2009 and 2013/2014 academic sessions are summarized in the third column of **Table 1** (Aggregate Completion Rates (ACR)). However, in the light of the foregoing, interpretation of the data that met the demands of Research Question 4 are as follow:

1. Seven out of the 23 local government areas in Rivers State had very poor completion rates for boys and girls.
2. Seven of the LGAs in Rivers State had poor completion rates for boys and girls.
3. Only one LGA had a fair completion rates for boys and girls.
4. Six of the LGAs had normal completion rates for boys and girls.
5. There was no LGA that had a perfect completion rate for girls in Rivers State.
6. Two out of the 23 LGAs had very high completion rates ranging from 109% to 125% for boys and girls.

Consequently, the aggregate completion rate for a full course of primary schooling for boys and girls in Rivers State was 69%.

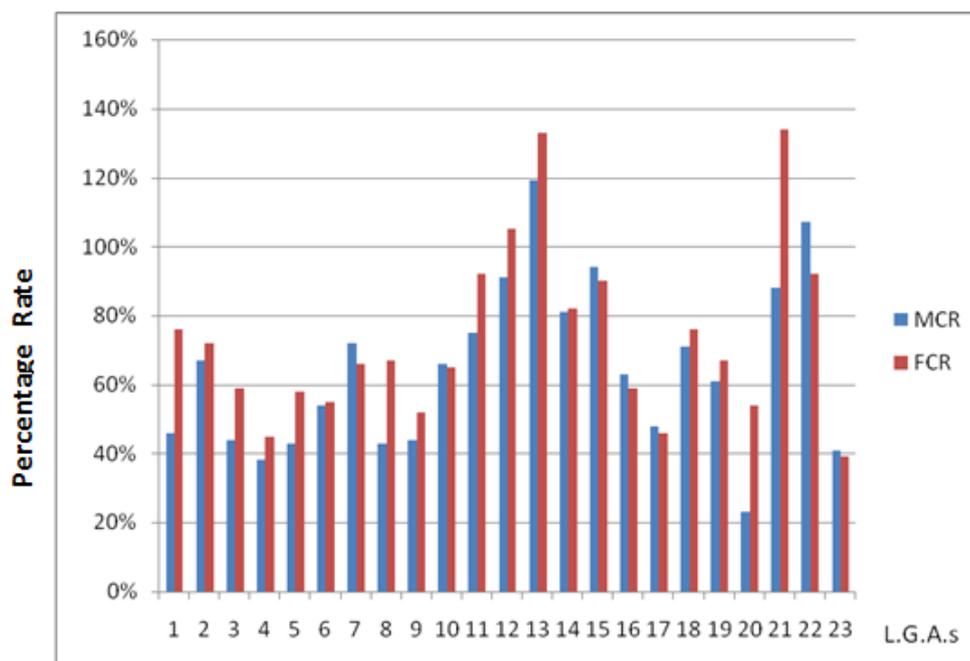


Figure 1. Bar Chart Representation of Completion Rate among Boys and Girls in Percentages

## 7. Discussion

The findings of this study have revealed that the aggregate completion rates for a full course of primary schooling for boys and girls in the 23 local government areas of Rivers State was 69%. As the trends of the pupils' full course of primary schooling were being understudied, it was observed that the progression rates at which a local government attains a full course of primary schooling were similar among all the 23 local governments under study. However, the overall picture created by the progression rates of this study showed that the number of pupils that were registered at the beginning of every academic session were often less than the numbers that progressed into new classes. In fact, the trends have shown dwindling progress in the primary school completion rate. This could be as a result of internal migrations from one local government area to the other or children who live in conflict or flood affected areas; it was observed to be more in the rural areas. The reason for this undulating progression rates according to Action Aids (2003), include: costs of schooling, illness and hunger, opportunity costs, dilapidated building, limited economic costs of education and low quality of schooling. The cost of schooling include: the cost of books, stationery and basic equipment, uniforms, admission fees, registrations and examination fees, contribution towards building and maintenance fund, construction fees, transportation, mid day meals, Parents/Teachers Association (PTA) fees, sports fees, library fees and extra tuition fees. The implication is that low quality of schooling particularly with regards to poor physical infrastructures, lack of motivated staff, poor utilization of resources, content of curriculum, nature of teaching methods and relationships of the teachers and pupils can make pupils withdraw from going to school. This is also in line with Subrahmanian [6] who maintains that there are inequalities in educational access and achievements as well as high levels of absolute educational depreciation of both children and adults (2002).

## 8. Conclusion

This study has been able to establish the fact that the Millennium Development Goal 2 has not been fully attained in Rivers State of Nigeria given that the targets for this goal as specified in the MDG Outline is 100% by the year 2015. Education is a precondition for promoting sustainable development and building good governance. Until attrition rates are addressed in our schools, it will be

impossible to build the knowledge necessary to eradicate poverty and hunger, combat disease and ensure environmental sustainability. Hence, if the recommendations of this study are followed judiciously, Rivers State will be on the right track during the era of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## 9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government and the stakeholders should make effort to boost access to education and retention of pupils in schools by providing conducive learning environment.
2. Teachers should improve on their pedagogical skills by making learning fun, exciting and interesting for the learners in order to maintain their retention rates in schools.
3. Government should provide employment opportunities to graduates so as to motivate the pupils because high rate of youth unemployment can discourage them from going to school.

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