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EFFECTS OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR ON PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN FORMER EAST CENTRAL STATE: A DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

by D. S. Obikeze

Abstract

Proper social planning depends on the availability of some reliable information or a body of data. Successful educational planning requires, among other things, a body of reliable demographic data. The absence of such data explains why in the past we have had, at best, partial success in carrying out any planned programmes.

The purpose of this study is (a) to identify the essential characteristics and trends in the post-civil war primary school enrolments in the former East Central State through a demographic analysis of the existing data and (b) to attempt an assessment of the adequacy of 1963 census of Nigeria as a basis for educational planning.

The study covered the period from 1970-1974 and the data were derived from *Education Statistics* of the former East Central State.

Analysis was prefaced by an important distinction between the terms "school enrolment"; "total school intake"; "admission-age intake" and "over-age or late intake".

The data showed annual fluctuations in both total and admission-age intakes over the period. These were attributed to disruptive effects of the Nigerian crisis and subsequent civil war on school enrolment and on births. These disruptive effects appeared to have been felt more in Imo than Anambra State. Further, there was a larger but fast decreasing proportion of male than female intakes and the rate of decrease was greater in Imo than in Anambra State. This trend implied that education authorities should in future expand facilities for female pupils at a faster rate than those of males at both primary and secondary levels.

Late intake was another important feature of the school system. A number of reasons were adduced for its existence. Finally while the data were found too scanty for a definite statement on the adequacy of the 1963 population census as basis for social planning, they showed that the impact of the civil war on the population was so great that any successful planning must take them into account.

Introduction: The Problem

The first Free Primary Education scheme to be planned in Nigeria was by the former Western Nigeria Government in 1955. Unfortunately, this grandiose "plan" encountered many problems. It was found that the number of children who enrolled for the scheme was far in excess of what the Government had expected; what the available facilities could support; and what the financial resources of the Government could carry.

Put in another way the apparent reason for the failure of this and many a grand programme designed by other African countries may be summed up by the phrase "planning without facts".

One important lesson that all developing nations stand to learn from the failure of the former Western Nigeria Free Primary Education scheme, therefore, is that a fairly accurate population data is a *sine qua non* for the success of all social planning. Population data in this context includes information on not only the share magnitude but also the relevant compositional properties of the population. As Young (1971) has said, everyone can draw up plans but only if one knows the numbers and characteristics of the population to be expected. The question is to what extent has this lesson been heeded by those concerned?

Up till now, no official figures of the number of lives lost during the 1966-1970 political crisis in Nigeria have been released. Estimates of such losses from a variety of sources range widely from 5,000 to over 2,000,000 (Nnoli, 1972; Collins 1970). Whatever the correct figures might be, it seems certain that the massive population movements that took place in Nigeria in 1966 and the subsequent thirty-month civil war were bound to produce some demographic impacts on the population of the country as a whole and of the war-affected states in particular.

The present study attempts an assessment of the impact of these related events. Specifically, the study undertakes a demographic analysis of the structure and trends in primary school enrolment in the former East Central State of Nigeria¹ — now Anambra and Imo States — from 1970 to 1974 in order to isolate the probable effects of the civil war on births during that period.

The official primary school admission-age in the former East Central State, as in the rest of the country, is six years. This means that children born in 1964 became eligible for enrolment in 1970 and those born in 1968 became due for enrolment in 1974. It follows that given the number of births the survival rate up to admission age, and primary school enrolment rate, and assuming that the National Census of 1963 was correct it is possible to estimate fairly accurately the number of new entrants (*intake*) into the primary school system in any given year.

Definitions and Assumptions :

(i) *Enrolment/Intake :*

It is conventional to define school enrolment rate as the proportion of all children in school to all persons of school-age in the population. Thus defined, primary school enrolment in Nigeria was officially estimated at 30% by 1970 (Fapohunda and Mott, 1974).

However, this conceptualization of school enrolment appears too global, lacks specificity, and as Jones (1975) has pointed out, it has many weaknesses as a tool for educational planning. In this study, therefore, a distinction is made between the terms intake and enrolment in a given school system. The *primary school total intake* refers to the number of all first year (i.e. elementary 1) enrolments in a given year; and the total intake rate is the percentage of all persons enrolled in elementary 1 to the number of admission-age (6 years old) persons in the population.

The term *over-age intake* or *late intake* refers to the number of persons over six years old currently enrolled in elementary 1. This includes repeaters. Over-age intake rate is the percentage of over-age intake to school total intake in any given year.

The term *Primary School Enrolment* refers to the sum of all persons of whatever age currently enrolled in the primary school system; and primary school enrolment rate is the percentage of primary school enrolment to all persons of school age (6–12 years in Nigeria) in the population.

The calculation of some of the rates defined above requires some detailed information on the demographic characteristics of the population. In the case of Nigeria, this means a number of explicit assumptions:

(ii) *Number of Births: Child Mortality/Survival Rate*

In the absence of an official birth register for the country, the number of births in a given year is estimated from the 1963 census. Unfortunately the published census result for the East Central State does not specify the 0–1 age category — the lowest age category given is "under 2 years". Under the circumstances, the number of births in a given year is obtained by applying the national crude birth rate of 50 per thousand to the total population (Fapohunda and Mott, 1974). The number of births in subsequent years is projected from the base year using a 2.5% annual growth rate (Fapohunda and Mott, 1974). Table 1 shows the estimated number of births for Anambra, Imo and East Central States based on the 1963 census.

Table 1

Estimate of Births in Anambra, Imo and the former East Central State, 1964–1968 (in 000's)

	POP 1964	ESTIMATED BIRTHS				
		1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Anambra	3,686.5	184.3	188.9	193.6	198.5	203.4
Imo	3,795.4	189.8	194.5	199.4	204.3	209.5
E.C.S.	7,481.9	374.1	383.4	393.0	402.8	412.9

Source: *Statistical Digest 1970*. East Central State Ministry of Economic Development, Enugu, Table 1,2.

No reliable life-table has been constructed from the Nigerian 1963 population census. The mortality rate utilized in this study is derived from the age-specific mortality rate calculated from the 1965–66 Rural Demographic Sample Survey of Nigeria carried out by the Federal Office of Statistics, Lagos (1968).

The estimated survivorship up to school admission-age (6 years) is obtained by applying the age-specific mortality rate to the estimated number of births (Table 1 above).

Table 2

*Estimated Survivorship at Age Six, by Sex,
Anambra, Imo and East Central States, 1970-74 (in 000's)*

		1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Anambra	M.	72.2	73.9	75.8	77.8	79.7
	F.	71.4	73.2	75.0	76.9	78.8
	Both	143.6	147.1	150.8	154.7	158.5
Imo	M.	74.3	76.2	78.0	80.1	82.0
	F.	73.5	75.4	77.2	79.1	81.2
	Both	147.8	151.6	155.2	159.2	163.2
East Central	M.	146.5	150.1	153.9	157.9	161.7
	F.	145.0	148.6	152.3	156.0	160.0
	Both	291.5	298.7	306.2	313.9	321.7

Sources: (a) Rural Demographic Sample Survey, 1965-66. Federal Office of Statistics, Lagos, 1968.

(b) Table 1 above.

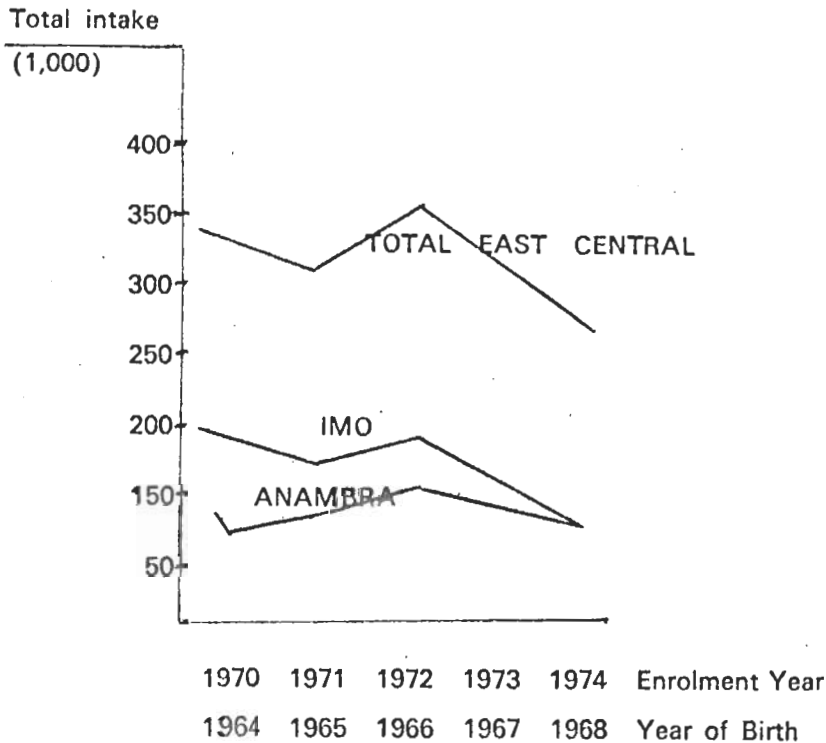
The Data:

Data on actual primary school enrolments/intakes in Anambra and Imo States or the former East Central State are obtained from *Education Statistics* published annually by the former East Central State Ministry of Education, Enugu.

Fig. 1 presents a summary of the primary school total intake trend in the former East Central State from 1970 to 1972 and 1974. In general, there is a slight drop in total intakes in 1971 over the previous year; some increase in 1972 and a considerable drop again in 1974. This pattern is repeated in both Anambra and Imo States but the fluctuation rate is higher in Imo than in Anambra State.

Fig. 1

Primary School Total Intakes, Anambra, Imo and East Central States 1970-72, 1974



Sources: *Education Statistics and Graphs 1970, 1971, 1972*. East Central State Ministry of Education, Enugu; *Primary School Enrolment Statistics 1974*, (unpublished draft) Anambra State Ministry of Education.

It would appear that the 1970 total intake was swollen by a back log of late entrants (over-age intake) into the system resulting from the civil war. This is borne out by the fact that there is an unusually large increase in total primary school enrolment in 1970 over the pre-war figures in the former East Central State area (See Table 3).

Table 3

*Primary School Enrolment in the Former East Central
State Area, 1964-1967 and 1970 (in 000s)*

Year	Enrolment	% age increase
1964	758.0	—
1965	767.0	1.2
1966	797.0	3.9
1970	914.0	13.3

Sources: (i) Eastern Nigeria *Annual Statistical Digest 1965*. Official Document No. 21 of 1966, Edition 3, p.9.

(ii) Ministry of Education *Annual Report 1970*, East Central State Official Document No. 9 of 1973, Chart 11

For instance while the pre-war enrolment increased at a mean annual rate of 2.1% between 1964 and 1967, the 1970 (post war) enrolment registered a 13.3% increase over that of 1967.

This being the case, the slight drop observed in 1971 total intake as shown in Table 4 below, may be regarded as part of a normalization process. The increase in 1972 total intake is accounted for by the fact that in 1966 there was immigration into this region from other parts of the country during the political crisis of that year. Children born in 1966 reached admission-age in 1972, hence the slight increase in total intake that year. On the other hand, the sharp drop in 1974 intake reflects the depressive effect of the civil war on births as children born in 1968 reached school age in 1974. Following the above explanations, one is led to the conclusion that the disruptive effects of the 1966-1970 Nigerian crisis were felt in Imo than in Anambra State (See Figure 1).

Table 4 shows the total intake and total intake as a percentage of survivors up to admission age from 1970 to 1972 and 1974.

Over the period, the total intake rate exhibits a fluctuating trend corresponding closely to the total intakes. In Anambra, Imo and the East Central State; and for both sexes the total intake rate dropped in 1971, rose slightly in 1972 and dropped rather sharply again in 1974.

Perhaps, the most striking feature of this Table is that between 1970 and 1972 the total intake (especially for males) far exceeded the number of six-year-old children in the population in all the states. This suggests a preponderance of over-age intakes in the school system. The

Table 4

Primary School Total and Percentage Intake in Anambra, Imo and East Central States by Sex, 1970-72, and 1974

State	Sex	1970		1971		1972		1974	
		(000's)	%	(000's)	%	(000's)	%	(000's)	%
Anambra	M	89.8	124.4	89.0	120.4	95.4	125.8	75.8	95.1
	F	50.5	70.1	51.8	70.8	59.1	78.8	57.0	72.3
	Both	140.3	97.7	140.8	95.6	154.5	102.4	132.8	83.8
Imo	M	110.3	148.4	103.2	135.4	113.8	145.9	70.1	85.5
	F	83.8	114.0	79.0	104.8	88.0	114.0	62.3	76.7
	Both	194.1	131.3	182.2	120.2	201.8	130.0	132.4	81.1
E.C.S.	M	200.1	136.6	192.2	128.0	209.2	135.9	145.9	90.2
	F	134.3	92.6	130.8	88.0	147.1	96.6	119.3	74.6
	Both	334.4	114.7	323.0	108.1	356.3	116.4	265.2	82.4

- Sources: (i) Education Statistics and Graphs, 1970, 1971, 1972, East Central State Ministry of Education, Enugu.
(ii) Primary School Enrolment Statistics 1974 (unpublished Drafts) Anambra State Ministry of Education.

total intake rate for males in 1970 is 124.4% for Anambra, 148.4% for Imo and 136.6% for the East Central State. This means that in the former East Central State of Nigeria, the number of boys (of all ages) enrolled in elementary 1 in 1970 exceeded the total population of admission-age males in that state by as much as 37%. In Anambra State the excess was 24% while in Imo State it was as high as 48%. Among females for the same year, total intake exceeded the admission-age population (14%) only in Imo State.

Throughout the period (1970-1974) and for all states, the female intake rate is significantly lower than the male. However, it is generally higher in Imo than in Anambra State. The difference between male and female total intake rates for Anambra and Imo States is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Sex Differential (Male-Female) in Total Intake-Rates:
Anambra and Imo States, 1970-72 and 1974

	1970	1971	1972	1974
Anambra	54.3	49.6	47.0	22.8
Imo	34.4	30.6	31.9	8.8

Source: Table VI above.

The Table shows that in both states the trend is towards bridging the gap between the male and female intake-rates. In this respect, Imo State is ahead of Anambra State although the latter appears to progress at a somewhat faster pace. To illustrate, between 1970 and 1974, the Imo State achieved a 25.6% reduction in the gap between male and female intake rates while the Anambra State achieved 31.5% reduction in the gap over the same period.

At this juncture it is pertinent to look into the sex ratio of primary school total intakes for the two states.

Table 6

Sex Ratio of Primary School Total Intake in Anambra and Imo States, 1970-72, and 1974

	1970	1971	1972	1974
Anambra State	177.8	171.8	161.4	132.9
Imo State	131.6	130.6	129.3	112.5

Source: Table VI.

Table 6 presents the number of males per 100 females enrolled in elementary 1 in Anambra and Imo States during the period under consideration. Both states show consistent decreases in their total-intake sex ratio with Imo State registering a lower sex ratio in every case. If the observed trend is continued, one would expect Imo State to achieve a total-intake sex ratio of 100 by 1977.

One broad inference may be drawn from the preceding analysis of the structure and trends in primary school intakes, namely, that the Imo State is generally more "progressive" than the Anambra State with regard to female primary education.

The structure of admission-age intake in the former East-Central State may now be considered. Unfortunately, the data for this crucial variable are available for only two years, 1972 and 1974. For reasons already given (see Note 2), the 1973 data are considered inadequate and therefore omitted. Table 7 summarises the available information for Anambra, Imo and East Central States.

Table 7

Primary School Admission-Age Intake by Sex, Anambra, Imo and East Central States, 1972 and 1974 (in 000's)

	Anambra State			Imo State			East Central State		
	M	F	Both	M	F	Both	M	F	Both
1972	38.6	22.8	61.4	51.1	38.9	90.0	89.7	61.7	151.4
1974	31.8	23.7	55.5	34.3	29.1	63.4	66.1	52.8	118.9

- Source: (i) *Education Statistics and Graphs 1972*, Ministry of Education East, Central State, Enugu.
(ii) Primary School enrolment statistics (unpublished).

Except in the case of female intake for Anambra State, there is a general decrease in admission-age intakes in 1974 over those of 1972. This is attributable to a fall in the number of 1968 births in the two states as a result of the civil war.

The admission-age intake in Imo state exceeded that of Anambra State by nearly 30,000 in 1972, thus contributing approximately 59% of the admission-age intake in the former East Central State. In 1974 on the other hand, admission-age intake in Imo State exceeded that in Anambra State by only 8,000 and accounted for 53% of admission-age intake in the former East Central State. This suggests that a greater depression in births occurred in Imo than in Anambra State in 1968, thus confirming an earlier observation that Imo State appears to have experienced a greater disruption in births during the civil war.

Table 8

*Sex Ratio in Primary School Admission-Age Intake
Anambra, Imo and East Central States, 1972 and 1974*

	1972	1974
Anambra State	169.3	134.2
Imo State	131.4	117.9
E.C.S.	145.4	125.2

Source: Table 7

Sex ratios of the admission-age intake in Anambra, Imo and the East Central States are slightly higher than those of the total intake although both follow the same general pattern (see Table 8 and 7). The trend toward bridging the gap in the proportions of male and female intakes is still observable in table and Imo State continues to maintain the lead towards intake sex equalization. Besides, Table 8 demonstrates that sex differential in primary school intake (in favour of males) is a common feature of both admission-age intake and over-age intake in primary schools in the former East-Central State.

Table 9 presents the admission-age intake as a percentage of all admission-age children in each state. In both Anambra and Imo States,

Table 9

*Primary School Admission-age Intake Rate by Sex:
Anambra, Imo and East Central States, 1972 and 1974 (Percentages)*

Anambra State			Imo State			East Central State		
M	F	Both	M	F	Both	M	F	Both
50.9	30.4	40.7	65.5	50.4	58.0	58.3	40.5	49.4
39.9	30.0	35.0	41.8	35.8	38.8	40.9	33.0	37.0

Sources: Table 7

and for both sexes, there is a reduction in admission-age intake rate between 1972 and 1974. In Anambra State, the female intake rate is more or less constant at 30% (a drop of 4%) while the male intake fell by 11% from 50.9% to 39.9%. In Imo State on the other hand, both the male and female intake rates dropped considerably between 1972 and 1974.

Summary and Conclusions

The foregoing analysis has revealed some rather interesting features of post-civil war primary school system in the Anambra and Imo States.

There has been a considerable drop in both primary school total intake and admission-age intake between 1970 and 1974 in Anambra and Imo States. This is attributable to the depressive effects of the Nigerian civil war on births between 1967 and 1969.

The drop in primary school intakes is sharper in Imo than in Anambra State indicating that the depressive effects of the civil-war on births were felt more in the former than in the latter state. Primary school intakes show a sex differential in favour of males but there is a clear and consistent trend towards sex equalization (i.e. a sex ratio of 100). In this respect the Imo State is maintaining the lead.

The conclusion that may be drawn from the data presented here is that the Nigerian civil war has demonstrable demographic effects on the population of the former East Central State — now Anambra and Imo States — and any social planning in respect of this area which fails to take full account of such effects runs a high risk of failure.

NOTES

- 1 In 1976, the former twelve states of Nigeria were reconstituted into 19 states. By this decree, the former East Central State was divided into two states namely, Anambra and Imo States. This study therefore covers the present Anambra and Imo States.
- 2 The year 1973 is omitted in this Table (and subsequent ones) because of incomplete data. Due to the change in the commencement of

the school year from January to September/October which took place in 1973, there were two school years in that one Calendar year — one running from January to June 1973 and the other from September 1973 to June 1974. This brought some confusion in school enrolment records for that year and the accuracy of figures given could not be guaranteed.

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