



# **Politics of School Mapping: Evaluation of Spatial Distribution of Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria**

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## **Author's contribution**

*The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

School mapping in secondary education has witnessed a lot of distortion in Nigeria largely because the allocation of educational resources is embedded in politics of education. Consequently, the paper examined trends in the politics of school mapping and spatial distribution of secondary schools in Rivers state. Three research questions guided the study. The document analysis research method was utilized which involved extensive analysis of records and documents. Data collected were descriptively analysed. Findings revealed spatial imbalance in the distribution of public secondary schools, and neglect of population factor in siting secondary schools in Rivers State. Recommendations aimed at enhancing even distribution of public secondary schools were proffered. The paper concluded that school distribution system that ignores basic school mapping process could undermine the overall educational development in Rivers State.

*Keywords: Politics; school mapping; evaluation; distribution; secondary schools; public.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The politics of school mapping has to do with the use of political power in the distribution of school facilities in various schools in a state or country [1]. Nevertheless, the overall development of education in any given society to a large extent depends on the level to which there is an equitable distribution of educational resources and opportunities. School mapping is a planning tool applied by educational planners and policymakers to ensure that schools, teachers, and facilities needed for the promotion of quality education are provided and distributed equitably across the state or country. The application of school mapping is, however, embedded in the politics of education in Nigeria. The political class appears to have the final say on which part of a state or country should have more schools, what type of schools, at what level, and when they are to be established [2].

The purpose of school mapping includes, but not limited to the following

- It assists in analyzing the existing pattern of distribution of educational facilities among different geographical areas to identify locations for new schools. Thus, without school mapping schools would be haphazardly located without consideration for the needs of the populace [3].
- School mapping examines the facilities available in existing schools and determines if there are existing imbalances between school requirements and planning in an area. In this regard, school mapping helps to identify areas that have an excess number of schools and areas not yet covered. This implies that if school mapping is professionally applied, it will save the government from the unnecessary expenditure of investing in the construction of schools where there are no real needs for them.
- School mapping is an assertive tool in the rationalization of schools and educational facilities [4]. To this end, it helps the government and other stakeholders in the prudent allocation and use of scarce educational resources.
- The purpose of school mapping is to set up a school network, that will meet in the most efficient and equitable manner the present and future demands of education. Thus, school mapping when properly applied eliminates disparities in geographical

areas, taking into consideration the school size, pupil-teacher ratio, transition rates, enrolment rates and promotion rates [5].

- School mapping ensures that educational institutions are sited at their most advantageous locations. That is, advantages from the point of accessibility to the students and full utilization of educational resources [6].

Arising from the above, it is obvious that school mapping is a dynamic process of planning the distribution, size, and spacing of schools and facilities needed. Furthermore, it is an essential planning tool, to address possibilities of spatial inequalities in the provision of educational facilities.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

School mapping more than ever before has become a critical aspect of educational management in Rivers State. This is because errors in school mapping could result in a serious imbalance in the educational development of Rivers State [7]. Rivers State is the fifth most populous State in Nigeria, with a population figure of 5,185,400 [8]. It is also the most dynamic State in Nigeria, having the advantage of the heavy presence of oil and gas related industries. Accordingly, there is an increase in the influx of people into the State from neighbouring States and outside Nigeria. Thus, with the increase in population, the demand for secondary education is very high.

In spite of the existence of 245 public secondary schools in Rivers State there are palpable concerns that the existing schools are seemingly not evenly distributed across the State to accommodate the demand for secondary education. To this end, it is important for educational managers, political authorities, and other stakeholders to have a clear understanding of what school mapping entails. Moreover, the central aim of school mapping is to ensure equitable distribution of educational resources in a state or country. The study, therefore, is an attempt to investigate the extent to which public secondary schools are evenly distributed among Local Government Areas in Rivers state.

### 1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study evaluated the spatial distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State,

Nigeria. However, the study was aimed at the following specific objectives:

1. Determine the distribution pattern of public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Determine the distribution of public secondary schools in upland and riverine geographical areas in Rivers State.
3. Determine the role of population size in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **1.2.1 Research questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the distribution pattern of public secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. How are public secondary schools distributed in upland and riverine geographical areas of Rivers State?
3. What is the role of population size in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State?

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This aspect of the paper presents review of related literature as follows:

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study is anchored on the social demand approach to educational planning. The social demand approach is the aggregate popular demand for education, meaning the sum total of individual demands for education at a given place and time under prevailing cultural, political and economic circumstances [9]. The social demand approach is the most popular approach among educational planners [10]. Politicians resort to this approach as they find other models of education planning politically difficult to defend. Nwankwo [11] affirms that social demand approach favours those who recommend free and compulsory education as a means for egalitarian and permissive society. According to him, politicians who respect public opinions or regard satisfaction of public demand as a key to political advancement prefer this approach. The social demand approach provides that access to all levels of education should be available to all those wishing to gain admission. Thus, it is based on the principle that everyone who qualifies by ability and attainment should pursue full time course in education [12].

According to Uwazuruike [6] social demand approach has two dimensions, one is determined by government policy, for instance in Nigeria, the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes of the 1950s and 1976 represented public demand. To this end, demand for education was high and determined along demographic and social considerations. The educational policy of compulsory school attendance for pupils of a given age cohort does not represent private or voluntary demand for education, which is the other dimension. Factors that affect private demand for education relates to the cost of education to students and parents, not merely the cost implications, but the opportunity costs of income forgone (Coombs, 1970).

Relating social demand approach to the study. Politicians utilizing the social demand approach, which holds that access to all levels or types of education should be available to all those who are qualified for it and express willingness to acquire it, establish some schools on political grounds to meet the expectations of the people. Thus, rather than site schools based on school mapping criteria, schools are often sited based on political sentiments. The result is that schools could be over concentrated in certain localities to the detriment of others. What is more, there could be more schools in operation than the real need of the people. Corroborating this view, Arinze [13] noted that many primary and secondary schools arbitrarily established in Nigeria proved to be unviable in the long run, and had to be phased out or reorganized by successive governments.

### **2.2 The Concept of School Mapping**

School mapping is an essential tool to the micro-planning of school locations, and originated from France [14]. School mapping is often confused or interchanged with school map. It is pertinent to note that school mapping is not the same as a school map. More, than simply being a tabular, graphical, or cartographical representation of a place, school mapping is used to investigate and ensure the equitable distribution of educational resources within and between school systems [15,14]. School mapping has also been described as the process of setting a school network, that will meet the present and future educational demands of the society in a most efficient manner [16]. Hallack [17] described school mapping as part and parcel of the educational planning process for determining where schools should be sited in order to provide

the greatest benefit to the society. It is a process of planning the location and spacing of educational institutions taking into consideration the demographical, pedagogical, geographical, and economic and manpower factors [18,19]. The main objective of school mapping is to identify the most appropriate locations of schools, and to ensure the efficient and equal distribution of resources within and between school systems, especially in times of large scale reforms or a major expansion of an educational system [14]. Thus, school mapping is an essential planning tool to overcome possibilities of lopsided distribution of educational resources across regions. Also, it aims at the identification of locations for the construction of school facilities and optimization of the use of human and material resources in education.

### **2.3 Factors to Consider in School Mapping**

School mapping is an educational planning tool aims at setting up a school network that meets in the most efficient and equitable manner the future demand of education. In determining the future school map, it will be necessary to consider some factors as follows:

#### **2.3.1 Demographic factors**

These are factors that pertain to characteristics of population dynamics such as birth rate, mortality rate, social structure, migration and immigration rate, school drop outs and retention rates. School mapping makes use of demographical data to redefine the school network.

#### **2.3.2 Pedagogic factors**

These factors relate to consideration of the normal period of utilization of school buildings or sites, weekly timetable, class sizes, the possibility of double shifts, consideration for availability or suitability of the area for special teaching facilities. For instance, it may be relevant to establish a department of fisheries in a riverine location. In this manner, facilities for practical teaching can be easily available.

#### **2.3.3 Manpower factors**

These factors involve the consideration of teaching force or skills in a particular area. This implies that the type of occupation or skills predominant within an area can influence the type of school that may be located in that area.

#### **2.3.4 Social factors**

These relate to the use of school mapping to satisfy the social demand of education. This means that the socio-cultural outlook of a community should be considered. For instance, rapid migration of people from rural to urban areas. In this regard, the government could use its policy on school mapping to discourage rural-urban migration. This can be achieved by establishing social amenities especially schools in rural areas.

#### **2.3.5 Geographical factors**

These factors consider the possibilities of students having access to school, transportation system, road network, topography of the area. Government may also use its policy on school mapping to attract high population density into an area. For instance, the siting of Federal College of Education (Technical) in Omoku, Rivers State, has attracted a large number of people from within and outside Rivers state.

#### **2.3.6 Economic factors**

These factors have to do with the cost of establishing or maintaining a school. These factors require cost-effectiveness in running's schools and economic benefits that will accrue to such areas.

#### **2.3.7 Catchment area factor**

This factor relates to the geographical area from which the school gets learner or the geographical area it serves. The essence for the siting of schools with respect to catchment area is that there will be a school close to every learner's home and that the learner will by choice attend that school. Thus, if the catchment area is properly captured in school mapping the distance between home and school in each case will be short and could save time and expenses for learners and parents.

#### **2.3.8 Population factor**

Population distribution is a factor for school mapping. This factor relates to spatial pattern of population distribution. Applying school mapping principles schools should be located in areas with high population density in order to have enough school children [1]. If this factor is neglected in siting of schools, it may result into a situation where many schools exist but with few students. The implication is that school building and facilities are under-utilized.

## 2.4 Politics of School Mapping

A good school mapping concept ensures even distribution of schools. The even distribution of schools across regions, communities and states cannot be overemphasized as access to school and regular school attendance is improved upon [20]. Nevertheless, this distribution is hampered when politics is taken into consideration in siting new secondary schools. The result of politics in school mapping is over-concentration of institutions in some localities while in others schools are sparsely distributed. The over-concentration of schools in some places, may not be unconnected with political considerations, given rise to the location of schools close to the abode of politicians in control of power. In Nigeria like most other developing countries political parties and candidates use education and provision of school facilities as tools to woo prospective voters, but after winning election most schools are sited arbitrarily to suit their whims and caprices. Politics has had a great influence in the siting of schools in Nigeria. This is because educational policies are made and supervised by politicians. It is commonly observed that only areas or localities loyal to political parties are provided with meaningful educational facilities, or have existing facilities adequately maintained. The teaching workforce is not spared of politics, for example, the distribution of secondary school teachers in Rivers State is not devoid of political interference [21].

Thus, the problems in education in recent times could be associated with politics, ethnicity, and god fatherism factors in Nigeria. To this end , political considerations among others, determines who gets what, when and how [22], This ugly development in education affects fair distribution of educational resources in Nigeria. According to Nwadiani [23] the location of schools is an important aspect of education activity and not a mere political game as is presently the situation in Nigeria. According to him, when the basic factors to be considered in location of schools are ignored it could generate undesirable consequences such as:

### 2.4.1 Wastage of educational resources

When the topography of a learning institution is not considered, like the case of areas prone to flood or marshy terrains it may lead to the abandonment of such schools, with resultant wastage of educational resources.

### 2.4.2 Unequal access

Accessibility is usually hampered by time. This is because with time, human settlements develops and grows. Thus, in the event educational institutions are not sited to meet the need of population increase, the institutions that were not accessible before become accessible for some people, creating inequality in access.

### 2.4.3 Increase in cost of education

When the siting of educational institutions are well planned it tends to increase the cost of education on the part of the learner. For example, if the catchment area is not considered in siting schools, the learner will spend more getting to the school.

## 2.5 Challenges of School Mapping in Nigeria

School mapping in Nigeria has several challenges that include:

- **Political consideration:** Some schools both at primary and secondary levels are sited on the basis of political sentiments. For instance, some secondary schools are located in remote inaccessible areas merely to score cheap political points with the facilities in such schools grossly under utilized [24]. In a related development, Manga & Nakazalle (2015) observed that some state governments such as Kebbi State, sited a University of Science and Technology at the Governors village at Aliero, despite contrary advice.

Also, his successor moved the Kebbi State Polytechnic from the State capital to his village in Dakin Gari, probably for re-election bid. The same arbitrary school mapping procedure appears to be the norm in other states in Nigeria.

- **Inadequate database:** The use of data that is reliable and accessible is the bedrock of school mapping. However, for political reasons educational statistics are prone to manipulation [6]
- **Lack of consultative forum:** Political office holders in most states of Nigeria hardly engage in wide consultations with relevant stakeholders, whose input is supposed to contribute to effective school mapping. According to Castaldi [25] wide

consultations in school mapping activities minimize the tendency for errors and wrong decisions.

- **Lack of principle of equity:** A major aim of school mapping is to ensure even distribution of educational resources across the states. This principle seems to be ignored or thrown into winds, resulting in lopsided distribution of educational facilities across and within regions [21]. The implication is that some communities have more schools to the detriment of others.
- **Statistical constraint:** Nigeria has not completely resolved the problem of a national census figure, despite efforts in the past ranging from 1963 to present. The issue of accurate census figure is still contentious. School mapping requires reliable statistical data bank, in which planning must be based. False population figures could affect projections, and thus a major constraint to school mapping in Nigeria.

## 2.6 The Constraint of Manual Operations

School mapping activities in Nigeria is dominated by the use of manual methods of operation. The use of modern management information system (MIS) and integration of geographical information system (GIS) are yet to gain grounds. Computerized information facilitates the work of planners in data processing, storage and retrieval. Yako (2001) noted that school mapping in Bangkok emphasize the applications of geographical information system (GIS). This means that school mapping in Nigeria should go beyond chalk and pencil programming.

### 2.6.1 The planning process constraint

There is tendency for school mapping plan to be inverted or adjusted to suit the implementers, when this happens the original intent of the planners may be affected to the detriment of effective realization of school mapping objectives [12]. Politicians often deliver manifestoes promising laudable projects and services to the people even when not sure of sources of fundings such projects. These politicians on winning election try to implement some of their electioneering promises, and in the process, they interfere with the original objectives of educational plans. Poor plan implementation often leads to the failure of education plans [10].

### 2.6.2 Manpower constraint

Nigeria like most third world countries lack qualified educational planners. Often times untrained planners carry out the functions of professionally trained educational planners in government establishments. (Uwazurike, 1991). This development distorts the focus of the school mapping process. Thus, a well-conceived school mapping task may fail, if the right type and quantity of manpower are not available to implement the plan.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized document analysis research method. The study employed document analysis because it was a systematic, carefully planned and objective examination of current records or documents as sources of data [26]. Also, content or document analysis is a research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the materials [27]. To this end, the researcher collected data from the Rivers State Ministry of Education, National Population Commission and library resources. Based on the data collected and analyzed inferences and conclusion were drawn. The study was carried out in Rivers State, a State located in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. The State covers a land area of 11,077 km<sup>2</sup> and has its capital in Port Harcourt. It has upland and riverine geographical areas with 45% of the State riverine. Rivers State has a population figure of 5, 185, 400, 23 Local Government Areas, 4442 poll units, 319 wards , 3 Senatorial Districts , 13 Federal Constituencies and 32 State Constituencies [8]. The state has about 245 public secondary schools [7].

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Research Question One

What is the distribution patter of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Analysis shows that Emohua & Etche local Government Areas (LGAs) have 19 public secondary schools each, representing 7.76% respectively of the total number of public secondary schools in Rivers State. Also, Oyigbo and Bonny Local Government Areas have 4 public secondary schools each, representing 1.63% respectively of the total number of public secondary schools in Rivers state. The analysis equally indicates that the total number of public secondary schools in five Local Government Areas, namely, Ogu/Bolo (3-schools, 1.22%),

Bonny (4 schools, 1.63%), Omuma (3 schools, 1.22%), Opobo/Nkoro (3 schools, 1.22%) and Oyigbo (4 schools, 1.63%) are less than the number of secondary schools in one LGA, namely, Khana Local Government Area (22 schools, 8.98%). Thus, a wide disparity exists among the Local Government Areas in the distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State.

#### 4.2 Research Question Two

How are public secondary schools distributed in upland and riverine areas of Rivers State?

Table 2, reveals that are 15 local Government Areas in upland, and 8 local Government Areas in the riverine areas of Rivers State. From the data presented in Table 2, there are 190 public secondary schools in upland areas, and 55 public secondary schools in riverine Local Government Areas in Rivers State. Further analysis indicates that 77.55% of public secondary schools are sited in upland local Government Areas of Rivers state , while 22.45% are sited in riverine Local Government Areas of the State. Thus, 190 public secondary schools corresponding to 77.55% are located in upland local government Areas of the State, while 55 public secondary schools representing 22.45% are sited in the riverine LGAs of the State.

#### 4.3 Research Question Three

What is the role of population size in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3 Shows that Port Harcourt LGA ranks first as the most populous Local Government in Rivers State with a population of 541,115 and 15 schools, while Khana Local Government Area has a comparatively smaller population of 294,217, but with more schools (22). Tai Local Government Area has a population of 117, 797 with 10 schools, while Andoni has a higher population of 211,009 with the same number of schools (10). Akuku-Toru Local Government Area has a population of 56,006 and 6 schools, while Okrika Local Government Area has a larger population of 222,026 with also the same number of schools (6). Abua/Odual local Government Area has a population of 282, 988, and 11 schools, while Etche Local Government Area has a comparatively smaller population of 249, 454 but with more schools (19). Ahoada East has a population of 166,747 and 12 schools, while Gokana Local Government Area has a larger population of 228,828 but with the same number of schools (12). Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area has a population of 74,683 and 3 schools, while Opobo/Nkoro Local Government Area has the same number of schools (3), but with a larger population of 151,511.

**Table 1. Distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State by Local Government Areas**

S/no	LGA Names	N=245. no of schools	Ranks Order	%
1	Abua/Odual	11	7 <sup>th</sup>	4.49
2	Ahoada East	12	6 <sup>th</sup>	4.88
3	Ahoada West	13	5 <sup>th</sup>	5.31
4	Andoni	10	8 <sup>th</sup>	4.08
5	Asari-Toru	11	7 <sup>th</sup>	4.49
6	Bonny	4	10 <sup>th</sup>	1.63
7	Degema	12	6 <sup>th</sup>	4.88
8	Eleme	6	9 <sup>th</sup>	2.45
9	Emohua	19	2 <sup>nd</sup>	7.76
10	Etche	19	2 <sup>nd</sup>	7.76
11	Gokana	12	6 <sup>th</sup>	4.88
12	Ikwerre	13	5 <sup>th</sup>	5.31
13	Khana	22	1 <sup>st</sup>	8.98
14	Obio/Akpor	16	3 <sup>rd</sup>	6.53
15	Ogu/Bolo	3	11 <sup>th</sup>	1.22
16	Okrika	6	9 <sup>th</sup>	2.45
17	Omuma	3	11 <sup>th</sup>	1.22
18	Ogba/Egema/Ndoni	15	4 <sup>th</sup>	6.12
19	Opobo/Nkoro	3	11 <sup>th</sup>	1.22
20	Oyigbo	4	10 <sup>th</sup>	1.63
21	Port Harcourt	15	4 <sup>th</sup>	6.12
22	Tai	10	8 <sup>th</sup>	4.08
23	Akuku-Toru	6	9 <sup>th</sup>	2.45
	Total	245		

**Table 2. Distribution of public secondary schools by upland and Riverine local Government Areas**

S/n	Upland LGAs	N=2.45 no. of schools	%	Rank order	Riverine LGAs	No of schools	%	Rank order
1	Abua/Odual	11	4.49	7 <sup>th</sup>	Andoni	10	4.08	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Ahoada East	12	4.88	6 <sup>th</sup>	Asari-Toru	11	4.49	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	Ahoada West	13	5.31	5 <sup>th</sup>	Bonny	4	1.63	5 <sup>th</sup>
4	Ogba/ Egbema/ Ndoni	15	6.12	4 <sup>th</sup>	Degema	12	4.88	1 <sup>st</sup>
5	Eleme	6	2.45	9 <sup>th</sup>	Ogu/Bolo	3	1.22	6 <sup>th</sup>
6	Emohua	19	7.76	9 <sup>th</sup>	Okrika	6	2.45	4 <sup>th</sup>
7	Etche	19	7.76	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Opobo/Nkoro	3	1.22	6 <sup>th</sup>
8	Gokana	12	4.88	6 <sup>th</sup>	Akuku-Toru	6	2.45	4 <sup>th</sup>
9	Ikwerre	13	5.31	5 <sup>th</sup>				
10	Khana	22	8.98	1 <sup>st</sup>				
11	Obio/Akpor	16	6.53	3 <sup>rd</sup>				
12	Omuma	3	1.22	11 <sup>th</sup>				
13	Oyibo	4	1.63	10 <sup>th</sup>				
14	Port Harcourt	15	6.12	4 <sup>th</sup>				
15	Tai	10	4.08	8 <sup>th</sup>				
	Total	190	77.55			55	22.45	

From the preceding analysis it is obvious that population factor was not considered in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State.

## 5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It was found that:

1. A wide disparity exists among Local Government Areas in the distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. The upland local government areas (LGAs) have a total of 190 public secondary schools representing 77.55% of the total number of public secondary schools in Rivers State, while the riverine Local Government Areas have 55 public secondary schools representing 22.45% of the total number of secondary schools in the state. This implies that the upland Local Government Areas have more than twice the number of public secondary schools in riverine areas of Rivers state.
3. The population size of local Government Areas was not taken into consideration in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The study revealed wide disparity in the distribution pattern of public secondary schools among the 23 local Government Areas in Rivers State. For instance, Khana local government Area (LGA) alone has 22 secondary schools,

while a combination of five Local Government Areas namely, Ogu/Bolo (3 schools), Omuma (3 schools), Oyigbo (4 schools), Bonny (4 schools) and Opobo/Nkoro (3 schools) have a total of 17 schools, a number less than the number of schools sited in Khana local Government Area.

Also, Emohua local Government Area has 19 schools while Akuku-Toru Local Government Area has 6 schools. Furthermore, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area has 16 schools, while Eleme Local Government Area has 6 schools. These findings indicate lopsided distribution of public secondary schools Rivers State, some local Government Areas have twice as much schools than others. This finding contradicts the principles of equity in school mapping which is to ensure even distribution of resources across regions, state and country [5]. Thus, ignoring the equity principles in siting schools means that some communities will have more schools, while others will have barely enough to meet their needs. In this regard, Castaldi (1977) observed that wide consultations with relevant stakeholders in school mapping activities minimize the tendency for errors or wrong decisions in school mapping.

The study also revealed that upland local Government Areas (LGAs) in Rivers State, have a total of 190 public secondary schools, while riverine Local Government Area have a total of 55 public secondary schools. The implication is that the upland local Government Areas and communities have more than twice the number of

**Table 3. Population of rivers state by local government Areas and number of schools**

S/n	Name of LGA	No of schools	Population	Rank order	Area (KM)	Administrative capital
1	Port Harcourt	15	541,115	1 <sup>st</sup>	109	Port Harcourt
2	Obio/Akpor	16	464,789	2 <sup>nd</sup>	260	Rumuodumanya
3	Okrika	6	222,026	9 <sup>th</sup>	222	Okrika
4	Ogu/Bolo	3	74,683	22 <sup>nd</sup>	89	Ogu
5	Eleme	6	190,884	14 <sup>th</sup>	138	Ogale
6	Tai	10	117,797	20 <sup>th</sup>	159	Sakpenwa
7	Gokana	12	228,828	8 <sup>th</sup>	126	Kpor
8	Khana	22	294,217	3 <sup>rd</sup>	560	Bori
9	Oyigbo	4	122,687	19 <sup>th</sup>	248	Afam
10	Opobo/ Nkoro	3	151,511	18 <sup>th</sup>	130	Opobo
11	Andoni	10	211,009	12 <sup>th</sup>	233	Ngo
12	Bonny	4	215,358	11 <sup>th</sup>	642	Bonny
13	Degema	12	249,425	7 <sup>th</sup>	1,011	Degema
14	Asari-Toru	11	220,100	10 <sup>th</sup>	113	Buguma
15	Akuku-Toru	6	156,006	5 <sup>th</sup>	1,443	Abonema
16	Abua/Odual	11	282,988	5 <sup>th</sup>	704	Abua
17	Ahoada West	13	249,425	7 <sup>th</sup>	403	Akinima
18	Ahoada East	12	166,747	16 <sup>th</sup>	341	Ahoada
19	Ogba/ Egbema/ Ndoni	15	284,010	4 <sup>th</sup>	969	Omoku
20	Emohua	19	201,901	13 <sup>th</sup>	831	Emohua
21	Ikwerre	13	189,726	15 <sup>th</sup>	655	Isiokpo
22	Etche	19	249,454	6 <sup>th</sup>	805	Okehi
23	Omuma	3	100,366	21 <sup>st</sup>	170	Eberi.
	Total	245	5,185,400			

public secondary schools in riverine Local Government Areas and communities in Rivers State. This finding equally indicates imbalance in siting schools across Rivers State. This disparity in the number of schools between the upland and riverine Local Government Areas and communities in Rivers State, could be attributed to geographical factors and political considerations. A major consideration in school mapping is the possibilities of students having access to school, transportation system, and road network [18,19]. In this wise, the riverine areas appear not very advantageous for the siting of schools. Corroborating this view, Uwazuruike [6] noted that school mapping ensures that educational institutions are sited at their most advantageous locations. This means advantageous from the point of accessibility to the students and full utilization of educational resources. Nevertheless, political considerations could step in relation to the use of school mapping to satisfy the social demand of education. This implies that the socio-cultural configuration of a community should be considered. For instance, rapid rural to urban migration. According to Varghese & Bisval [4] the government or the political authority could use its policy on school mapping to discourage rural-urban migration, through the establishment of social amenities especially school in rural areas.

Based on this premise, educational resources including siting of schools could be evenly distributed across regions, state, and country.

Furthermore, the study revealed that population size of local government areas (LGAs) was not considered in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State. For instance, Port Harcourt Local Government Area is the most populated Local Government in Rivers State with a population figure of 541,115 and 15 schools, while Khana Local Government Area with comparatively lower population figure of 294,217 has as much as 22 schools. Also, Okrika Local Government Area has a population figure of 222,026 and 6 schools, while Akuku-Toru Local Government Area with a lower population of 156,0006 has the same number of schools (6) as Okrika Local Government Area. Further findings indicate that Gokana Local Government Area has a population figure of 228,829 and 12 schools, while Ahoada East Local Government Area with a comparatively lower population figure of 166,747 has the same number of schools (12) as Gokana Local Government Area. In the same vein, Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area has a population figure of 74,683 and 3 schools, while Opobo/Nkoro Local Government Area with a relatively larger population figure of 151,511 also has equivalent number of schools (3) as

Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area. These findings contradict the position of Nwakpa (2015) who observed that schools should be located in areas with high population density in order to have enough school children. This means that neglecting population factor in siting schools could result into a situation where many schools exist, but with few students. In the same vein, Arinze [13] noted that many primary and secondary schools arbitrarily established in Nigeria proved to be unviable in the long run and had to be phased out or reorganized by successive government. Politics of school mapping could give rise to a situation where there could be more schools in certain localities more than the actual need of the people in such locality. According to Nwadiani [23] this could result into waste of scarce educational resources.

## 7. CONCLUSION

From the preceding study politicization of education has had a profound influence on school mapping processes. The primary objective of school mapping is the sustenance of a good educational programme. Thus, it is very imperative to locate educational facilities and resources in such a manner that would meet the educational programmes they are meant to serve. School mapping from all indications has not been given the attention it deserves in Rivers State. This calls for equitable distribution of public secondary schools to ensure even educational development of Rivers state.

Based on the study the following recommendations were made:

1. To entrench school mapping principles in the allocation of educational resources in Rivers State, educational planners should be involved in the process of school mapping.
2. The Rivers State Ministry of Education should commission a study on the development of mapping activities in Rivers State. The availability of a database will enhance equitable allocation of educational resources and scientific school mapping in River State.
3. The principle of equity in the allocation of educational resources should be given prime consideration by the political class to ensure balanced educational development of Rivers State.

4. In furtherance to the principle of equitable distribution of public secondary schools, the Rivers State Government should redistribute existing schools or establish additional secondary schools in some local government areas (LGAs) with relatively low number of public secondary schools. The Local Government Areas include Bonny, Omuma, Opobo/Nkoro, Oyibo and Eleme.
5. There are a total of fifty-five (55) public secondary schools in riverine local government areas against one hundred and ninety (190) in the upland local government Areas. This gross imbalance calls for redistribution or establishment of new schools in riverine local government areas of Rivers State.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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