

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

**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.**

**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 (Nwakpa, 2015). 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

28 facilities needed for the promotion of quality education are provided and  
29 distributed equitably across the state or country. The application of school mapping  
30 is, however, embedded in the politics of education in Nigeria. The political class  
31 appears to have the final say on which part of a state or country should have more  
32 schools, what type of schools, at what level, and when they are to be established  
33 (Boles, 1995).

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

- 35 • It assists in analyzing the existing pattern of distribution of educational  
36 facilities among different geographical areas to identify locations for new  
37 schools. Thus, without school mapping schools would be haphazardly  
38 located without consideration for the needs of the populace (Albert, 1991).
- 39 • School mapping examines the facilities available in existing schools and  
40 determines if there are existing imbalances between school requirements and  
41 planning in an area. In this regard, school mapping helps to identify areas  
42 that have an excess number of schools and areas not yet covered. This  
43 implies that if school mapping is professionally applied, it will save the  
44 government from the unnecessary expenditure of investing in the  
45 construction of schools where there are no real needs for them.

- 46 • School mapping is an assertive tool in the rationalization of schools and  
47 educational facilities (Varghese & Bisval ,1999). To this end, it helps the  
48 government and other stakeholders in the prudent allocation and use of  
49 scarce educational resources.
- 50 • The purpose of school mapping is to set up a school network, that will meet  
51 in the most efficient and equitable manner the present and future demands of  
52 education. Thus, school mapping when properly applied eliminates  
53 disparities in geographical areas, taking into consideration the school size,  
54 pupil-teacher ratio, transition rates, enrolment rates and promotion rates  
55 (Oyedeji, 1998)
- 56 • School mapping ensures that educational institutions are sited at their most  
57 advantageous locations. That is, advantages from the point of accessibility to  
58 the students and full utilization of educational resources (Uwazuruike,  
59 1991).

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

64

65 **Statement of the problem**

66 School mapping more than ever before has become a critical aspect of educational  
67 management in Rivers State. This is because errors in school mapping could result  
68 in a serious imbalance in the educational development of Rivers State. Rivers State  
69 is the fifth most populous State in Nigeria, with a population figure of 5,185,400  
70 (National Population Commission, 2006). It is also the most dynamic State in  
71 Nigeria, having the advantage of the heavy presence of oil and gas related  
72 industries. Accordingly, there is an increase in the influx of people into the State  
73 from neighbouring States and outside Nigeria. Thus, with the increase in  
74 population, the demand for secondary education is very high.

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

84 **Purpose of the Study**

85 This study evaluated the spatial distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers  
86 State, Nigeria. However, the study was aimed at the following specific objectives:

- 87 1. Determine the distribution pattern of public secondary schools in Rivers  
88 State.
- 89 2. Determine the distribution of public secondary schools in upland and  
90 riverine geographical areas in Rivers State.
- 91 3. Determine the role of population size in siting public secondary schools in  
92 Rivers State.

93

94 **Research Questions**

95 The following research questions guided the study

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

101

102        **Review of Related Literature**

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

104        Theoretical Framework

105        The theoretical framework of the study is anchored on the social demand approach  
106        to educational planning. The social demand approach is the aggregate popular  
107        demand for education, meaning the sum total of individual demands for education  
108        at a given place and time under prevailing cultural, political and economic  
109        circumstances (Coombs, 1970). The social demand approach is the most popular  
110        approach among educational planners ( Adesina , 1981) . Politicians resort to this  
111        approach as they find other models of education planning politically difficult to  
112        defend. Nwankwo (1981) affirms that social demand approach favours those who  
113        recommend free and compulsory education as a means for egalitarian and  
114        permissive society. According to him, politicians who respect public opinions or  
115        regard satisfaction of public demand as a key to political advancement prefer this  
116        approach. The social demand approach provides that access to all levels of  
117        education should be available to all those wishing to gain admission. Thus, it is  
118        based on the principle that everyone who qualifies by ability and attainment should  
119        pursue full time course in education (Akubue, 1991).

120 According to Uwazuruike (1991) social demand approach has two dimensions, one  
121 is determined by government policy, for instance in Nigeria, the Universal Primary  
122 Education (UPE) programmes of the 1950s and 1976 represented public demand.  
123 To this end, demand for education was high and determined along demographic  
124 and social considerations. The educational policy of compulsory school attendance  
125 for pupils of a given age cohort does not represent private or voluntary demand for  
126 education, which is the other dimension. Factors that affect private demand for  
127 education relates to the cost of education to students and parents, not merely the  
128 cost implications, but the opportunity costs of income forgone (Coombs, 1970).

129 Relating social demand approach to the study. Politicians utilizing the social  
130 demand approach, which holds that access to all levels or types of education  
131 should be available to all those who are qualified for it and express willingness to  
132 acquire it, establish some schools on political grounds to meet the expectations of  
133 the people. Thus, rather than site schools based on school mapping criteria, schools  
134 are often sited based on political sentiments. The result is that schools could be  
135 over concentrated in certain localities to the detriment of others. What is more,  
136 there could be more schools in operation than the real need of the people.  
137 Corroborating this view, Arinze (1991) noted that many primary and secondary  
138 schools arbitrarily established in Nigeria proved to be unviable in the long run, and  
139 had to be phased out or reorganized by successive governments.

## 140 **The Concept of School Mapping**

141 School mapping is an essential tool to the micro-planning of school locations, and  
142 originated from France (Caillods & Heyman, 1982). School mapping is often  
143 confused or interchanged with school map. It is pertinent to note that school  
144 mapping is not the same as a school map. More, than simply being a tabular,  
145 graphical, or cartographical representation of a place, school mapping is used to  
146 investigate and ensure the equitable distribution of educational resources within  
147 and between school systems ( Ibara, 2011, Caillods, 1983). School mapping has  
148 also been described as the process of setting a school network, that will meet the  
149 present and future educational demands of the society in a most efficient manner  
150 (Oyebade, 2009). Hallack (1977) described school mapping as part and parcel of  
151 the educational planning process for determining where schools should be sited in  
152 order to provide the greatest benefit to the society . It is a process of planning the  
153 location and spacing of educational institutions taking into consideration the  
154 demographical , pedagogical, geographical, and economic and manpower factors  
155 (Igwe, 1998; Vargnese, 1997). The main objective of school mapping is to  
156 identify the most appropriate locations of schools, and to ensure the efficient and  
157 equal distribution of resources within and between school systems, especially in  
158 times of large scale reforms or a major expansion of an educational system  
159 (caillods, 1983). Thus, school mapping is an essential planning tool to overcome



160 possibilities of lopsided distribution of educational resources across regions. Also,  
161 it aims at the identification of locations for the construction of school facilities and  
162 optimization of the use of human and material resources in education.

### 163 **Factors to consider in school mapping**

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

#### 168 **Demographic factors**

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

#### 173 **Pedagogic factors**

174 These factors relate to consideration of the normal period of utilization of school  
175 buildings or sites, weekly timetable, class sizes, the possibility of double shifts,  
176 consideration for availability or suitability of the area for special teaching facilities.

177 For instance, it may be relevant to establish a department of fisheries in a riverine  
178 location. In this manner, facilities for practical teaching can be easily available.

### 179 **Manpower factors**

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

### 183 **Social factors**

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

### 190 **Geographical factors**

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

196 **Economic factors**

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

200 **Catchment Area factor**

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

207 **Population factor**

208 Population distribution is a factor for school mapping. This factor relates to spatial  
209 pattern of population distribution. Applying school mapping principles schools  
210 should be located in areas with high population density in order to have enough  
211 school children (Nwakpa, 2015). If this factor is neglected in siting of schools, it  
212 may result into a situation where many schools exist but with few students. The  
213 implication is that school building and facilities are under-utilized.

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215

216 **Politics of school mapping**

217 A good school mapping concept ensures even distribution of schools. The even  
218 distribution of schools across regions, communities and states cannot be  
219 overemphasized as access to school and regular school attendance is improved  
220 upon (Adaja & Osagie, 2015). Nevertheless, this distribution is hampered when  
221 politics is taken into consideration in siting new secondary schools. The result of  
222 politics in school mapping is over-concentration of institutions in some localities  
223 while in others schools are sparsely distributed. The over-concentration of schools  
224 in some places, may not be unconnected with political considerations, given rise to  
225 the location of schools close to the abode of politicians in control of power. In  
226 Nigeria like most other developing countries political parties and candidates use  
227 education and provision of school facilities as tools to woo prospective voters, but  
228 after winning election most schools are sited arbitrarily to suit their whims and  
229 caprices. Politics has had a great influence in the siting of schools in Nigeria. This  
230 is because educational policies are made and supervised by politicians. It is  
231 commonly observed that only areas or localities loyal to political parties are  
232 provided with meaningful educational facilities, or have existing facilities  
233 adequately maintained. The teaching workforce is not spared of politics, for  
234 example, the distribution of secondary school teachers in Rivers State is not devoid  
235 of political interference ( Ibara, 2006).

236 Thus, the problems in education in recent times could be associated with politics,  
237 ethnicity, and god fatherism factors in Nigeria. To this end , political  
238 considerations among others, determines who gets what, when and how (Olaniyan  
239 & Anthony, 2013), This ugly development in education affects fair distribution of  
240 educational resources in Nigeria. According to Nwadiani (2010) the location of  
241 schools is an important aspect of education activity and not a mere political game  
242 as is presently the situation in Nigeria. According to him, when the basic factors to  
243 be considered in location of schools are ignored it could generate undesirable  
244 consequences such as :

#### 245 **Wastage of educational resources**

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

#### 249 **Unequal access**

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

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256 **Increase in cost of education**

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

261 **Challenges of school mapping in Nigeria**

262 School mapping in Nigeria has several challenges that include :

263 • **Political consideration**

264 Some schools both at primary and secondary levels are sited on the basis of  
265 political sentiments. For instance, some secondary schools are located in  
266 remote inaccessible areas merely to score cheap political points with the  
267 facilities in such schools grossly under utilized (Ibara, 2008). In a related  
268 development, Manga and Nakazalle (2015) observed that some state  
269 governments such as Kebbi State , sited a University of Science and  
270 Technology at the Governors village at Aliero, despite contrary advice.

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

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276 • **Inadequate database**

277 The use of data that is reliable and accessible is the bedrock of school  
278 mapping. However, for political reasons educational statistics are prone to  
279 manipulation ( Uwazuruike , 1991)

280 • **Lack of consultative forum.**

281 Political office holders in most states of Nigeria hardly engage in wide  
282 consultations with relevant stakeholders, whose input is supposed to  
283 contribute to effective school mapping. According to Castaldi (1997) wide  
284 consultations in school mapping activities minimize the tendency for errors  
285 and wrong decisions.

286 • **Lack of principle of equity**

287 A major aim of school mapping is to ensure even distribution of educational  
288 resources across the states. This principle seems to be ignored or thrown into  
289 winds, resulting in lopsided distribution of educational facilities across and  
290 within regions (Ibara, 2006). The implication is that some communities have  
291 more schools to the detriment of others.

292

293 • **Statistical constraint**

294 Nigeria has not completely resolved the problem of a national census figure,  
295 despite efforts in the past ranging from 1963 to present. The issue of

296 accurate census figure is still contentious. School mapping requires reliable  
297 statistical data bank, in which planning must be based. False population  
298 figures could affect projections, and thus a major constraint to school  
299 mapping in Nigeria

### 300 **The constraint of manual operations**

301 School mapping activities in Nigeria is dominated by the use of manual  
302 methods of operation. The use of modern management information system  
303 (MIS) and integration of geographical information system (GIS) are yet to  
304 gain grounds. Computerized information facilitates the work of planners in  
305 data processing, storage and retrieval. Yako (2001) in Manga & Nakazalle  
306 (2015) noted that school mapping in Bangkok emphasize the applications of  
307 geographical information system (GIS). This means that school mapping in  
308 Nigeria should go beyond chalk and pencil programming.

### 309 **The planning process constraint**

310 There is tendency for school mapping plan to be inverted or adjusted to suit  
311 the implementers, when this happens the original intent of the planners may  
312 be affected to the detriment of effective realization of school mapping  
313 objectives (Akabue, 1991) . Politicians often deliver manifestoes promising  
314 laudable projects and services to the people even when not sure of sources of  
315 fundings such projects. These politicians on winning election try to



316 implement some of their electioneering promises, and in the process, they  
317 interfere with the original objectives of educational plans. Poor plan  
318 implementation often leads to the failure of education plans (Adesina, 1981).

### 319 **Manpower constraint**

320 Nigeria like most third world countries lack qualified educational planners.  
321 Often times untrained planners carry out the functions of professionally  
322 trained educational planners in government establishments. (Uwazurike,  
323 1991). This development distorts the focus of the school mapping process.  
324 Thus, a well-conceived school mapping task may fail, if the right type and  
325 quantity of manpower are not available to implement the plan.

### 326 **Methodology**

327 The study utilized document analysis research method. The study employed  
328 document analysis because it was a systematic, carefully planned and objective  
329 examination of current records or documents as sources of data. (Okeke, 1995).  
330 Also, content or document analysis is a research method applied to written or  
331 visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the  
332 materials (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2012). To this end, the researcher collected  
333 data from the Rivers State Ministry of Education, National Population  
334 Commission and library resources. Based on the data collected and analyzed  
335 inferences and conclusion were drawn. The study was carried out in Rivers

336 State , a State located in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria . The State covers a  
337 land area of 11,077km<sup>2</sup> and has its capital in Port Harcourt. It has upland and  
338 riverine geographical areas with 45% of the State riverine. Rivers State has a  
339 population figure of 5,185,400 , 23 Local Government Areas , 4442 poll units ,  
340 319 wards , 3 Senatorial Districts , 13 Federal Constituencies and 32 State  
341 Constituencies ( National Population Commission , 2006 ) . The state has about  
342 245 public secondary schools (Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2010) .

343 **Results**

344 Research question one

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

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352 Table 1: Distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State by Local  
 353 Government Areas

<b>s/no</b>	<b>LGA NAMES</b>	<b>N=245. NO OF SCHOOLS</b>	<b>RANKS ORDER</b>	<b>%</b>
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		

354  
 355 Analysis shows that Emohua and Etche local Government Areas ( LGAs ) have  
 356 19 public secondary schools each , representing 7.76% respectively of the total  
 357 number of public secondary schools in Rivers State. Also, Oyigbo and Bonny

358 Local Government Areas have 4 public secondary schools each, representing  
359 1.63% respectively of the total number of public secondary schools in Rivers  
360 state. The analysis equally indicates that the total number of public secondary  
361 schools in five Local Government Areas, namely, Ogu/Bolo (3-schools,  
362 1.22%), Bonny (4 schools, 1.63%), Omuma (3 schools, 1.22%), Opobo/Nkoro  
363 (3 schools, 1.22%) and Oyigbo ( 4 schools, 1.63%) are less than the number of  
364 secondary schools in one LGA , namely , Khana Local Government Area (22  
365 schools, 8.98%). Thus, a wide disparity exists among the Local Government  
366 Areas in the distribution of public secondary schools in Rivers State

#### 367 Research Question Two

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

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375 Table 2: Distribution of Public Secondary Schools by Upland and Riverine  
 376 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	

377  
 378 Table 2, reveals that are 15 local Government Areas in upland, and 8 local  
 379 Government Areas in the riverine areas of Rivers State. From the data presented  
 380 in table 2, there are 190 public secondary schools in upland areas, and 55 public  
 381 secondary schools in riverine Local Government Areas in Rivers State. Further

382 analysis indicates that 77.55% of public secondary schools are sited in upland  
383 local Government Areas of Rivers state , while 22.45% are sited in riverine  
384 Local Government Areas of the State. Thus, 190 public secondary schools  
385 corresponding to 77.55% are located in upland local government Areas of the  
386 State, while 55 public secondary schools representing 22.45% are sited in the  
387 riverine LGAs of the State.

388 Research Question Three

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

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398 Table 3: Population of Rivers State by local Government Areas and number of  
 399 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	77 <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			

401 **Table 3** Shows that Port Harcourt LGA ranks first as the most populous Local  
402 Government in Rivers State with a population of 541,115 and 15 schools, while  
403 Khana Local Government Area has a comparatively smaller population of  
404 294,217, but with more schools( 22) . Tai Local Government Area has a  
405 population of 117, 797 with 10 schools, while Andoni has a higher population  
406 of 211,009 with the same number of schools ( 10 ). Akuku-Toru Local  
407 Government Area has a population of 56,006 and 6 schools, while Okrika Local  
408 Government Area has a larger population of 222,026 with also the same number  
409 of schools ( 6 ). Abua/Odual local Government Area has a population of 282,  
410 988, and 11 schools , while Etche Local Government Area has a comparatively  
411 smaller population of 249, 454 but with more schools (19) . Ahoada East has a  
412 population of 166,747 and 12 schools, while Gokana Local Government Area  
413 has a larger population of 228,828 but with the same number of schools (12).  
414 Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area has a population of 74,683 and 3 schools,  
415 while Opobo/Nkoro Local Government Area has the same number of schools  
416 (3), but with a larger population of 151,511.

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

419



420 **Summary of findings**

421 It was found that:

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

433 **Discussion**

434 The study revealed wide disparity in the distribution pattern of public secondary  
435 schools among the 23 local Government Areas in Rivers State. For instance,  
436 Khana local government Area (LGA) alone has 22 secondary schools, while a  
437 combination of five Local Government Areas namely, Ogu/Bolo (3 schools),  
438 Omuma (3 schools), Oyigbo (4 schools), Bonny (4 schools) and Opobo/Nkoro (3

439 schools) have a total of 17 schools, a number less than the number of schools sited  
440 in Khana local Government Area.\

441 Also, Emohua local Government Area has 19 schools while Akuku-Toru Local  
442 Government Area has 6 schools. Furthermore, Obio/Akpor Local Government  
443 Area has 16 schools, while Eleme Local Government Area has 6 schools. These  
444 findings indicate lopsided distribution of public secondary schools Rivers State,  
445 some local Government Areas have twice as much schools than others. This  
446 finding contradicts the principles of equity in school mapping which is to ensure  
447 even distribution of resources across regions, state and country ( Oyedeji, 1998).  
448 Thus, ignoring the equity principles in siting schools means that some communities  
449 will have more schools, while others will have barely enough to meet their needs.  
450 In this regard, Castaldi (1997) observed that wide consultations with relevant  
451 stakeholders in school mapping activities minimize the tendency for errors or  
452 wrong decisions in school mapping.

453 The study also revealed that upland local Government Areas (LGAs) in Rivers  
454 State, have a total of 190 public secondary schools, while riverine Local  
455 Government Area have a total of 55 public secondary schools. The implication is  
456 that the upland local Government Areas and communities have more than twice the  
457 number of public secondary schools in riverine Local Government Areas and  
458 communities in Rivers State. This finding equally indicates imbalance in siting

459 schools across Rivers State. This disparity in the number of schools between the  
460 upland and riverine Local Government Areas and communities in Rivers State,  
461 could be attributed to geographical factors and political considerations. A major  
462 consideration in school mapping is the possibilities of students having access to  
463 school, transportation system, and road network. (Igwe, 1998 & Varghese, 1997).  
464 In this wise, the riverine areas appear not very advantageous for the siting of  
465 schools. Corroborating this view, Uwazuruike (1991) noted that school mapping  
466 ensures that educational institutions are sited at their most advantageous locations.  
467 This means advantageous from the point of accessibility to the students and full  
468 utilization of educational resources. Nevertheless, political considerations could  
469 step in relation to the use of school mapping to satisfy the social demand of  
470 education. This implies that the socio-cultural configuration of a community  
471 should be considered. For instance, rapid rural to urban migration. According to  
472 Varghese and Bisval (1999) the government or the political authority could use its  
473 policy on school mapping to discourage rural-urban migration, through the  
474 establishment of social amenities especially school in rural areas. Based on this  
475 premise, educational resources including siting of schools could be evenly  
476 distributed across regions, state, and country.

477 Furthermore, the study revealed that population size of local government areas  
478 (LGAs) was not considered in siting public secondary schools in Rivers State. For

479 instance, Port Harcourt Local Government Area is the most populated Local  
480 Government in Rivers State with a population figure of 541,115 and 15 schools,  
481 while Khana Local Government Area with comparatively lower population figure  
482 of 294,217 has as much as 22 schools. Also, Okrika Local Government Area has a  
483 population figure of 222,026 and 6 schools, while Akuku-Toru Local Government  
484 Area with a lower population of 156, 0006 has the same number of schools (6) as  
485 Okrika Local Government Area. Further findings indicate that Gokana Local  
486 Government Area has a population figure of 228,829 and 12 schools, while  
487 Ahoada East Local Government Area with a comparatively lower population  
488 figure of 166,747 has the same number of schools (12) as Gokana Local  
489 Government Area. In the same vein, Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area has a  
490 population figure of 74,683 and 3 schols, while Opobo/Nkoro Local Government  
491 Area with a relatively larger population figure of 151,511 also has equivalent  
492 number of schools (3) as Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area. These findings  
493 contradicts the position of Nwakpa (2015) who observed that schools should be  
494 located in areas with high population density in order to have enough school  
495 children. This means that neglecting population factor in siting schools could  
496 result into a situation where many schools exist, but with few students. In the same  
497 vein, Arinze (1991) noted that many primary and secondary schools arbitrarily  
498 established in Nigeria proved to be unviable in the long run and had to be phased

499 out or reorganized by successive government. Politics of school mapping could  
500 give rise to a situation where there could be more schools in certain localities more  
501 than the actual need of the people in such locality. According to Nwadiani (2010)  
502 this could result into waste of scarce educational resources.

503 **Conclusion**

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

512 Based on the study the following recommendations were made:

- 513 1. To entrench school mapping principles in the allocation of educational  
514 resources in Rivers State, educational planners should be involved in the  
515 process of school mapping.
- 516 2. The Rivers State Ministry of Education should commission a study on the  
517 development of mapping activities in Rivers State. The availability of a

518 database will enhance equitable allocation of educational resources and  
519 scientific school mapping in River State.

520 3. The principle of equity in the allocation of educational resources should be  
521 given prime consideration by the political class to ensure balanced  
522 educational development of Rivers State.

523 4. In furtherance to the principle of equitable distribution of public secondary  
524 schools , the Rivers State Government should redistribute existing schools or  
525 establish additional secondary schools in some local government areas  
526 (LGAs) with relatively low number of public secondary schools. The Local  
527 Government Areas include Bonny, Omuma, Opobo/Nkoro, Oyibo and  
528 Eleme.

529 5. There are a total of fifty-five (55) public secondary schools in riverine local  
530 government areas against one hundred and ninety (190) in the upland local  
531 government Areas. This gross imbalance calls for redistribution or  
532 establishment of new schools in riverine local government areas of Rivers  
533 State.

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