

Perception of Business Studies Teachers on the Influence of Large Class Size in Public Secondary Schools in Yobe State, Nigeria

Mrs Jummai Mamman
E-mail: jmjirgi@gmail.com
A. T. B. U, Bauchi

Mrs Aishatu Mohammad Chadi
E-mail: Mchadi@yahoo.com
A.T.B.U, Bauchi

Ibrahim Jirgi
PhD Student, Kampala International University
Kampala – Uganda

Abstract

This is a survey study conducted to determine the perception of business studies teacher's on the influence of large class size in Yobe state public secondary school. Three research questions were raised to guide the study. The population comprised of one hundred and twenty (120) business studies teachers from one hundred and five (105) Secondary schools in Yobe state. A sample of ninety (90) Business studies teachers from seventy five (75) secondary schools were selected through a random sampling. Structured Questionnaire was used for data collection and the data was analyzed using mean. The findings of the study revealed that large class size has negative effect on Business studies teacher's as it affect their performance. It is therefore recommended that more schools and classrooms should be build and more teacher's be employed to ease teacher's activities for improved performance.

Keywords: Perception, Teachers, Large class size

Introduction

Class size is an instrument used in education to describe the average number of students per class in a school setting. It is the total number of students in a class at a given period of time. Aina, (2009) explained that fiscal constraints and increased in population have resulted to an increase use of larger classes for teaching and learning particularly in the public schools where they experience a high increase in students enrolment. Majority of the Public Schools today are overcrowded as pupils enrolment continues to increase without corresponding increase in the number of facilities both material and human. This shows that there is a quantitative growth and qualitative decline in the public secondary school system due to large class size as noted by Aliyu et al (2008), they explained that during the 70's, students enrolment was 25-30 student per class and for an average class size is between 35-40 students, whereas a class that is considered large has a number of 40 students and above; which is now practicable only in the private schools, but Richard (2005) defined small classes as having fewer than 70 students as large classes above 70.

Dean (2003), compared the class size of teaching Business Studies with the class size of other field and concluded that in the Public Schools student of Business Studies and other disciplines ranges from 100-150, and fewer than 20 students in Business statistics class Kamuche (2011) whereas most of the private schools are likely to have a population of 40 and below students' per class. Few students per class are uneconomical as they do not occupy the space in the class but noted that higher population in a class leads to lost of classroom control by the teacher and inefficient utilization of instructional materials. Idu, (2009) explained that large class size affect the environment especially if accommodation and other facilities are inadequate.

Larger classes reduce the level of personal interaction between the students and teachers, but improve on the interaction depending on the situation. Richard (2005) stated that student in smaller classes perform and learn better than those in larger classes in the attainment of higher order academic skill such as problem solving, critical thinking and written expressions. Smaller classes provide more opportunities for feedback and discussion than large classes Eunice (2013), believed that learning occur in proportion to class size as teacher's find it difficult to manage large classes effectively. In a study conducted on Chinese rural school teachers, titled 'The function of class size perceived by Chinese rural teacher's they found that small classes as a beneficial factor not directly related to student achievement, but facilitate class room management, a better learning atmosphere, the teacher's also believe that quality teaching is also possible in larger classes and concluded that they did not see any link between class size and student achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The twentieth century has witnessed a historical expansion in the educational system all over the nation, this expansion had reach such an alarming rate to make many educationist began to fear that the educational system were on the verge of total collapse. Aliyu et al (2008), Opined that, looking at the Public Secondary Schools today it is obvious that the number of student per class has grown up significantly. The average class ranges from 80-90 students per class while large class size were having a population that ranges between 100 students and above per class of one teacher in Nigeria (Yobe state inclusive).

Lawal (2011), related the massive failure of student in the West African Examination Council (WAEC 2011) Examination and National Examination Council (NECO 2011) to large class size among other things, then possible answer could be provided through investigation on the perception of Business Studies teachers on the influence of large class size in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria, this form the basis of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to ascertain the level of perception on business studies teacher's on the influence of large class size in teaching Business Studies in Yobe State, Nigeria..

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- Determine the effect of large class size on the teacher's of Business Studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria.
- Identify the effect of class size on teaching Business Studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria.
- Determine the measures to be taken to improve performance of Business studies teacher in public secondary schools in Yobe State Nigeria.

Research Questions

- What are the effects of large class size on teacher's of Business Studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria?
- What are the effects of large class size on teaching of business studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria?
- What are the measures to be taken to improve business studies teachers' performance on large class size in public secondary schools in Yobe state, Nigeria?

Methodology

The design for this research work is a survey type. The population of the study covered one hundred and twenty (120) Business Studies teacher's from one hundred and five (105) public secondary schools in Yobe State. Stratified random sampling was used to select ninety (90) Business Studies teachers in seventy five (75) public secondary schools for the study. A well structured four point Likert scale questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the field of business management, and was administered by two research assistants; the entire questionnaires distributed to business studies teachers were retrieved. The data gathered were analysed using mean scores, where a mean score of 3.00 is considered as disagree, 3.20, as strongly disagreed, 3.40 as 3.60 as agreed and below 3.60 as strongly agreed.

Results

Table one shows teachers' responses on the effect of large class size on the teacher's in public secondary schools in Yobe State. The respondents have agreed with four items with the mean responses of 3.65 to 3.85 while disagreed with item number five with response of 3.38. The effects of class size on teachers of Business Studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria.

Table 1.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Mean		Decision
1	Class size that tent to be large prevent Teacher's from delivery the lesson as expected.	3.85	S	agreed
2	Large class size affects teacher students interaction.	3.70	S	agreed
3	A class of many students can affects the well being of the teacher's as time goes on.	3.87	S	agreed
4	Large class size affects proper evaluation of the students by the teacher's.	3.65	S	agreed
5	Large class size is affected by hot weather.	3.38		Strongly disagreed

Table 2. shows teacher's responses on the effect of class size on the teaching of business studies. Respondents had agreed with all the items as possible effects of large class size, as responses ranges from 3.68 to

3.75.

The effects of large class size on teaching of business studies in public secondary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria.

Table 2.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Decision
6	Large class size prevents proper class room management by the teacher's.	3.75	S agreed
7	Large class size prevents proper understanding toward the attitude of the students by the teacher's.	3.72	S agreed
8	Large class size creates confusion on the teacher were instructional material are inadequate.	3.68	S agreed
9	Large class size creates stressed to the teacher's.	3.74	S agreed
10	Large class size gives room for students' cheating during examination therefore creating unfavourable environment for the teachers during supervision.	3.68	S agreed

Table 3. shows teachers' responses on the measures to be taken to improve the performance of business studies teachers in public secondary schools in Yobe state Nigeria. Respondents had agreed with all the items as part of the measures to be taken for tackling the problem of large class size. Responses were between 3.67 to 4.00

Measures to be taken to improve business studies teachers' performance in order to ease their activities in large class size in public secondary schools in Yobe state, Nigeria?

Table 3.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Mean	Decision
11	Provision of more class room blocks to reduce the over crowded classes.	3.90	S agreed
12	Employing more business studies teachers to man the crowded classes.	3.67	S agreed
13	Teachers taking large classes should be motivated for improved performance.	4.00	S agreed
14	Teachers should inculcate the spirit of self discipline and respect.	3.67	S agreed
15	School authority should ensure that school rules and regulation were strictly followed.	3.87	S agreed

Discussions of the Findings

Findings of the study revealed that, Large number of students per class has negative effect on the teacher's of business studies in public secondary schools in Yobe state Nigeria, it also revealed that large class size affects teacher student-interaction, classroom management as to the provision of necessary attention to students and creates a lot of stress to the teacher's, this is in line with the findings of (Ndomi, 2006) who found that large class creates confusion to the students and increased teachers activities, as teachers spend most of their time in controlling and monitoring students activities instead of focusing on teachings the subject matter this affect the performance of the student and the teacher achievement of objective.

In their findings (Osafehinti 1986, Shehu 2003, and Aliyu et-al 2008), lamented that large class size affect the rate of learning and individual attention as the teachers found it difficult to control the class effectively. Lawal, (2011) also explained that favourable atmosphere for learning is a preliquisite for child learning and development which in turn a credit to the teacher's.

The finding also revealed that provision of more classroom blocks, employing more business studies teacher's and motivating the existing business studies teachers as part of the measures that would reduce large class size problems. Similarly Adelabu (2003), opined that building of more classroom not only decongest the class room but also assist in the development of students character, moral training and spirit of self discipline which ease the teachers activities. Ehiametalor (2001) found that teachers having large class size with little or no motivation make them pay less attention to the students' problems.

The findings futher revealed that teacher's in a large class find it difficult to assesses and evaluate students learning outcome and provide their actual performance because cheating easily occur in larger classes. School authority should ensure that rules and regulation were strictly followed.

In an investigation conducted by Lawal (2011) who lamented that in a conducive atmosphere students not only work well but also enjoy the work and benefit from what they are doing, as favourable atmosphere for learning helps to build in them the right attitude towards themselves, their work, friends, and the society as a whole therefore making it possible for the teacher's to perform their functions effectively.

Conclusion

Conclusively large class size can strongly affect business studies teacher's as they found it difficult to interact with their students effectively in the public secondary schools in Yobe state Nigeria. Students' backwardness in Business studies is directly related to the number of students enrolled annually especially in the public secondary schools, this overcrowding creates an unfavourable atmosphere for learning to both the students and the teachers' as effectiveness and efficiency could not be achieved; students' actual academic performance could also not be achieved because reliable evaluation is impossible as teacher hardly performed their task..

Recommendations

In the light of the above findings and conclusion the following suggestion are made for improved teachers' performance:

1. In order to improve the performance of business studies teachers', more schools and classes should be built to decongest the classes in all public secondary schools in Yobe state, Nigeria. Class size of 50-70 should be maintained because of high rate of population growth in the country among other thing.
2. More Business studies teacher should be trained and employed to man the decongested classes.
3. Business studies teacher's should be motivated by both state and federal government so that they can contribute meaningfully to the students training of both character and knowledge; and the production of useful citizens to the nation.
4. School authorities should ensure that school rules and regulations are fully understood and strictly followed by students as to ease stress to the teacher's who spent most of their time trying to manage and control the class instead of delivering the subject matter.

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