

## Impact of Class Size on Teaching and Learning of Social Studies in Abuja Municipal Area Council, FCT-Abuja, Nigeria.

\*Olaitan Titilayo Akinola<sup>1\*</sup> Abiodun Adesope Fadiya<sup>2\*</sup>, Ibukun Faith Akeredolu<sup>3\*</sup> Funmilola Helen Okunade<sup>4\*</sup>,

1. Department of Educational Foundations Faculty of Education, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti.
2. Department of Adult Education, Faculty of Education, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti .
3. Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti .
4. Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti.

E-mail of the corresponding author: [olaitan.akinola@fuoye.edu.ng](mailto:olaitan.akinola@fuoye.edu.ng)

### Abstract

The study investigated the impact of class size on teaching and learning of social studies in Bwari Area Council, FCT-Abuja. The study adopted descriptive design of the survey type. The sample size was 200 teachers drawn from 10 wards in Bwari Area Council using multi-stage sampling procedure. One validated instrument was used for data collection. Self-design 25 items questionnaire was used titled "Teachers' Class Size Questionnaire" (TCSQ). The questionnaire has two sections; section A contained respondents' bi-data while B contained items on class size. All items are on 4-point scale namely; strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (3), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). Both reliability and validity of the instrument was ensured. One general question and research hypotheses were formulated and answered. Data were analyzed using simple percentage and chi-square. The result showed that there was a significant difference in the teaching and learning of pupils in small and large classes. It was recommended that policy makers and government should ensure that more classrooms are built and number of pupils in a class should not be more than 30. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), philanthropists and other charitable organizations are also implored to compliment the effort of the government to boost the teaching and learning of social studies by building more classrooms and buildings.

**Key words:** class size, teaching, learning, social studies.

**DOI:** 10.7176/JEP/14-19-06

**Publication date:** July 31<sup>st</sup> 2023

### Introduction

The national policy on Education revised (2013) recommended an average of 40 students per class as the standard class in Nigeria. According to Yusuf (2015), classrooms are used as appropriate places for seeking and acquiring education usually from a teacher to the learners.

Two class sizes are normally distinguishable in the educational sector. Today class size has bloated due to explosion of population of children of school age. There is a limit to which a teacher can effectively control anything more than their will affects the achievement of school objectives. A large class falls within 41 and above learners to one teacher while small class size is within 15-40 learners to one teacher.

Class size is a popular concept in educational research defined as the average number of pupils/ students per class, calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled by the number of classes. Adeyemi (2008) expressed it as an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class. It is often simply considered as the respective population of student in each class.

Social environment of schools is the quality of relationships among the students and between students, teachers, other staff and school leadership. These forms of social communication can also affect health and wellbeing and are an important part of the school culture. The term social environment according to Szocs (2013) is classroom environment influences or supports the interactions that occur among young children, teachers and family members.

Teaching is also engagement of learners to enable their understanding and application of knowledge, concepts and processes. Teaching and learning is a process that includes many variables. These variables interact as learners work toward their goals and incorporate new knowledge, behaviours and skills that add to their range of

learning experiences.

However, social studies is defined as an eclectic field of study which has to do with how man lives and interacts with his environments and how science and technology help him to cope approximately with the ever changing environment.

Social studies is a programme of study which a society uses to transmit their cherished values from one generation to another. It is also a process by which an individual acquires values, attitudes, skills and knowledge which will make him/her useful to himself or herself and the society at large.

Overtime, students' performance in both external and internal examinations had been used to determine excellence in teachers and teaching. The output of teachers generally depends on the performance of the aftermath of teaching and learning in a class. Whether small or overcrowded class. Teachers always feel the pang of large class to teach because of the class control and management in class, while small classroom is for the benefits of teacher as well.

The relationship between class size and teaching and learning poses a challenge to educators. Studies have found that the social environment, class overcrowding and teaching methods are all variables that affect students' achievement. Also, we have class size and school population (Bascia, 2010). Since the academic success of students depends largely on the school environment, it is imperative to examine the impact of class size on teaching and learning in primary school. These factors can include; school structure, class management by teachers among others.

According to Wikipedia (2015), Learning is the act of acquiring new or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviours, skills, values or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. Also, teaching is one with learning outcomes that affect changes in knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes and mind-set. It is an active process in which one person shares information and with others to provide them with the information with a resultant change in behavior.

Mokobia and Okoye (2011) highlighted that educators universally identify class as a desirable attribute of the educational system. Thus, this has raised widely reported debate among educational stakeholders such as academics, parents and policy makers over the educational consequences of class size. Class size refers to as students to teacher ratio per class (Ayeni & Olowe 2016). Class size according to Adeyemi (2008) referred to as an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school. Ikolo (2011) stated that class size equally means group which is a set of persons among whom there exist a definable or observable set of relations. Kedney (2013) described class size as a tool that can be used to measure performance of the education system. Dror (2009) noted that class size has become a phenomenon often mentioned in the educational literature as an influence on students socializing pattern and academic performance, quality of instruction, administration and school budgets. The scholar added that class size is an administrative decision which teachers have little or no control. Imoke (2006) remarked that optimum class size in a school system implies rational coordination of educational infrastructures, subject to available number of students in order to attain high level of productivity.

Ogunyemi and Hassan (2011) maintained that the issue of small or large class size can be counterproductive. In remote and even local areas, classes are found to be over-congested which is indeed an indication of the dearth of educational facilities in schools. The issue of large class sizes and the associated consequences is paramount. Sesugh (2012) discovered that there is tremendous increase in the enrolment in schools. The large class size in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions is of great concern. Class size is almost an administrative decision over which teachers have little or no control. Class size refers to an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school (Adeyemi, 2008). There are large and small sizes in school. The smaller the class, the greater the likelihood is that a teacher will spend more time with individual pupils to all stakeholders in Nigeria. Yara (2010) in his study on class size and academic achievement of students in mathematics in Southwestern Nigeria found out that the performance of students in large class size was very low (23%) compared to those students in smaller classes (64%). There was difference in the performance of male and female students in either group. He therefore recommended that policy makers and government should ensure that more classrooms are built and number of students in a class should not be more than 30. Also, Jacob, Olawuyi & Jacob (2016) in their work found out that there is a relationship between class size and teaching and learning of secondary schools in Yagba West of Kogi State.

In view of the geometrical increase in pupils' enrollment in our primary schools with corresponding arithmetic

increase in the staff strength, the study want to find out can the teacher cope and manage to teach many pupils effectively. Do teachers in large and small classes differ in time spent on teaching or instructional activities overall, time in individual attention from teacher. Can teacher in large and small classes differ in more qualitative dimensions of teaching and concentrating? In teaching and learning in Primary schools student-teacher ratio have to be considered, student-teacher ratios are a general way to measure teachers workloads and resources as well as the amount of individual attention a student receive from the teacher because it involves skills acquisition subjects. This study will look into the impact of large class size in the teaching and learning of social studies education.

Blachford, Basset & Braines (2011) found that there was no statistically significant difference between class sizes for most teachers activities, and teachers did not alter the proportion of time spent interacting with whole class, with groups or with individual. This conflicted with teachers' own experiences and there was, therefore, a gap between professional judgment and observational research findings.

Effect of classroom size on classroom processes tend to fall into two main camps according to them. First, there are those concerned with teachers to pupils interactions, it seems likely that bigger classroom will decrease the amount of time that can be spent on instruction and dealing with individual child. This concede with teachers view (Blatchford, Moriarty, Edmords and Martin 2002, Bruhwiler & Blatchfold, 2011) and Slavin (1989) in Blachfold et al 2011) supported the view that the effects of class size reductions on teaching are minimal. The second sets of factors related to class size differences concerns pupils classroom engagement.

There is underlying assumption, in many studies of teaching, of a direct model, with teaching affecting pupils' achievements and learning in a causal way. But teachers do not meet pupils out of context, and class size, or the number of children in the classroom life, which plays a part in affecting the behavior of teachers and pupils. Class size is positioned as one such context factor on teaching. It was found that more teaching took place overall in smaller classes but this was restricted to the youngest age group studied.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Class size, being an important factor, during teaching-learning process is a major factor affecting learning. Thus, researchers always find ways to resolving it. It seemed that class size affects pupils in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council (A.M.A.C), FCT-Abuja. Therefore, this study would investigate impact of class size on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council FCT-Abuja.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate impact of class size on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council. Other specific objectives were to:

1. Determine the impact of class size on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council FCT-Abuja.
2. Find out the relationship between class size and teachers' job performance.
3. Determine the relationship between class size and social studies learning.

### **Research Question**

1. What is the impact of the size of classes on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council?

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant relationship between class size and teacher's job performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between class size and social studies learning.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive design of the survey type. The sample size was 200 teachers drawn from 10 wards in Abuja Municipal Area Council using multi-stage sampling procedure. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The self-design 25-items questionnaire was used titled "Teachers' Class Size Questionnaire" (TCSQ). The questionnaire has two sections; section A contained respondents' bio-data while B contained items on class size. All items are on 4-point scale namely; strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (3), Disagree (D), Strongly

Disagree (SD). Both reliability and validity of the instrument were done to ensure the reliability of the instrument. One general question and two research hypotheses were formulated and answered. The collected data were analyzed using mean, percentages and chi-square.

**Research Question 1:** What is the impact of the size of classes on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council?

**Table 1: Mean analysis showing impact of the size of classes on teachers' job performance in primary schools in FCT**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1.	Small class size encourages and motivates effective and efficient teachers' job performance in class	111	56	18	15	3.32	Agreed
2.	Small class-size helps teachers to have good control of their classes.	121	58	14	7	3.47	Agreed
3.	Large class size encourages and motives effective and efficient teachers' job performance in class	37	43	50	70	2.24	Disagreed
4.	Large class size helps teachers to have good control of their classes.	35	45	50	70	2.23	Disagreed
5.	Large or small class sizes encourages to be innovative and use of appropriate methods of teachings	112	55	17	16	3.32	Agreed
6.	Grouping of students and use of small groups for pupil to pupil support mentoring	121	54	13	12	3.42	Agreed
7.	Deploying team teaching and shift instruction to engage each group	109	49	30	12	3.28	Agreed
8.	Giving incentives to most teachers to handle large class effectively	123	66	9	2	3.55	Agreed
9.	Use of volunteers and appropriate instructional materials for effective class teaching	24	43	89	44	2.24	Disagreed
10.	Developing teachers' capacity to deploy different teaching methods in large classes	25	42	88	45	2.24	Disagreed
						2.93	Agreed

**Scale Mean 2.50**

Table 1 showed that questionnaire items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with mean scores of 3.32, 3.47, 3.32, 3.42, 3.28 and 3.55 respectively showed an agreement. Questionnaire items 3, 4, 9 and 10 with means scores of 2.24, 2.23, 2.24 and 2.24 respectively showed a disagreement. In conclusion, the overall mean score of 2.91 showed that the impact of small class sizes include encouraging and motivating effective and efficient teachers' job performance, helping teachers to have good control of their classes, and encouraging teachers to be innovative in the use of appropriate teaching methods.

**Hypotheses Testing**

**Research Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between class size and social studies teaching and learning.

**Table 2: Chi-square test of the influence of class size on social studies learning**

Options	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	Level of Sig.	$\chi^2_{cal}$	$\chi^2_{tab}$	Decision
Not significant	32 (25%)	64.0 (50%)	1	0.05	87.69	3.84	significant
Significant	96(75%)	64.0 (50%)					

( $\chi^2 = 87.69$ , df. = 1,  $p < 0.05$ )

Table 3 shows the results of the chi-square test of significant relationship between class sizes and teaching and learning in primary schools in FCT. The calculated  $\chi^2$  value was 87.69, while the t-table was 3.84. The p-value was 0, which is less than 0.05 level of significance, with degree of wisdom (df) = 1. Based on this the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies by the finding of the study that a significant relationship exists between class sizes and teaching and learning in the classroom.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between class size and job performance of social studies teachers.

**Table 3: relationship between class sizes and class**

Opinions	Observed frequency	Expected frequency	DF	Level of Sig.	$\chi^2_{cal}$	$\chi^2_{tab}$	Decision
Not Significant	64(35%)	100.0(50%)	1	0.05	87.69	3.84	Significant
Significant	126(65%)	100.0(50%)					

Value in parentheses are percentages ( $\chi^2=87.69$ , df=1,  $p \geq 0.05$ ).

Table 3 shows chi-square calculated value of 98.79 was greater than the chi-square table value of 3.84 checked at 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that class size has significant relationship on job performance of social studies teachers.

## Discussion

Analysis of findings as reflected on table 1 indicates that the average class size in secondary schools in FCT is between 51-60 pupils. This size could affect teacher's job performance. The findings agree with the study of Adeyemi (2008) which affirms that in large class situations, only students in the front row can benefit from the teacher. This also in line with Michaelowa (2001) who discover that as class size increases, student learning decreases. Adeyemi, (2008) also agrees that teachers teaching in small class size achieve better results than those in a large class size.

Analysis of the findings as reflected on table 2 indicated that the impact of small class sizes on teachers' job performance including and motivation effective and efficient teachers job performance, helping teachers to have good control of their classes. Also, smaller class sizes encourage teachers to be innovative in the use of appropriate teaching methods. Which affirms Adeyemi (2008) also agrees that teachers teaching in small class size achieve better results than those in a large class.

Also, the test of hypothesis indicated that a significant relationship exists between class sizes and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in FCT. This implies that the smaller the class size, the better the job performance of teachers, while large class sizes discourages teachers' job performance. This agrees with Benbow (2007) and king (2007) regarding teacher's performance.

## Conclusion

The study had shown that class size had impact on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Abuja Municipal Area Council, FCT-Abuja. Thus, the researcher concludes that class size affects teaching-learning process in the sampled schools.

## Recommendations

Based on the result of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policy makers and government should ensure that more classrooms are built and number of pupils in a class should not be more than 30.
2. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), philanthropists and other charitable organizations are also implored to compliment the effort of the government to boost the teaching and learning of social studies by building more classrooms and buildings.

## REFERENCES

- Adeyemi, T. O. (2008). The Influence of Class on the Quality of Output in Secondary Schools in Ekiti State. *American-Eurasian Journal of Scientific Research*, 3(1), 7-14.
- Ayeni, O. G. & Olowe, M. O. (2016) The Implication of Large Class Size in the Teaching and Learning of Business Education in Tertiary Institution in Ekiti State. *Journal of Education and Practice*. 7(34) 65-69.
- Bascia, N. (2010). Reducing class size: What do we know? Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Retrieved 05/01/2019 from [www.Wikipedia.com](http://www.Wikipedia.com).
- Bruhweiler, C. & Blatchford, P. (2011) Effects of Class Size and Adaptive Teaching Competency on Classroom Processes and Academic Outcomes. *Learning and Instruction* 21(3) 95-108.
- Dror, Y. (2009). School locations as a function of uniqueness, autonomy intergrated and comprehensiveness: An historical model with current implication. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 27(1), 35-50.
- Ikolo, V. L. (2011). Effect of Classroom Size on Students Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Kosofe Local Government Area of Lagos. Unpublished Med Dissertation Lagos State University Ojo.
- Imoke, F. (2006). Class Size and Academic Success among Adolescent Nigerians. Ile-Ife: Obafemi University Press Ltd.
- Jacob, A. O, Olawuyi, B. A. & Jacob, A. J. (2016). Relationship between Class Size and Discipline of Secondary School Students in Yagba West of Kogi State, Nigeria. *Sky Journal of Education* 4 (1), 8-13.
- Kedney, R. J. (2013). Performance Measurement in Non-advanced further Education: the use of Statistic, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Lancaster, United Kingdom.
- Mokobia, M. O. & Okoye, N. S. (2011). Effects of Class Size on the Teaching and Learning in Secondary School in Delta State Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Policy*, 3(1), 1-7.
- National Policy on Education revised 2013.
- Ogunyemi, A. O, & Hassan, F. M. (2011). Academic Self Efficacy Study. *Study of Education Issues*, 4(1), 3-11.
- Sesugh, S. (2012). The Class Size Debate: Is small better? Nigeria: Open University Press.
- Szocs, L. (2013). The effects of the socio-economic status on the academic achievement. PhD Thesis, Cluj, Napoca.
- Yara, P. O. (2010). Class size and students' Mathematics Achievement of senior secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. *The Social Science Journal (TSS)*, 5(2), 108-112.

Yusuf, H. (2015). Effect of Class Size on Listening Skills of Primary (5) Pupils in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Unpublished M.Ed Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Wikipedia (2015). [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com).