

Psychological implication of Large Class Size on Academic Staff and Students Performance in Nigeria Tertiary institutions.

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ABSTRACT

Large class size is a challenge to the realization of education objectives. Large class is a problem that is facing many tertiary institutions globally. So, this study investigated the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff job performance and student' academic performance in tertiary institutions. A total sixty-five online publications and print materials were collected for this study. The literature resources were subjected to content analysis and elimination method to assemble only those that fit into the topic and line of the study. Thirty-seven online journals and reports on the subject matter were finally reviewed and used for the study. After critical review and selection only insignificant number of them; 7 papers representing 17.88%, indicated that large class size does not affect academic staff and their job performance and students' and their academic performance while the majority, pooling 42 reviewed papers representing 82.22% indicated that large class size to an extent has psychological effects on academic staff and their job performance and student' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions. This implies that large classes reduces the quality of tertiary education since it affected implementation of teaching and learning in the classes.

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education is the last stage of education according to (Ogunode & Odo 2023) that is tasked with the production of manpower to boost the country's social, economic and technological development. Tertiary institution is a sub-society cut off for the implementation of teaching, research and the provision of community service. Tertiary institutions is a micro-sub-set of the whole society set aside for the provision of academic services. Tertiary education is an education after post Basic education schools that includes; Monotechnics, Polytechnics, colleges of education, universities and other specialized institutions according to National Policy on Education (2013).

Tertiary education is an organized and well planned system meant for the development and transformation of the nation through the development of men and women and via teaching, learning, research and provision of community service. Tertiary education is an education given after the completion of secondary school education for the advancement of the nation through teaching, research and community service according to Ogunode, Edinoh and Okolie (2023).

Tertiary education in Nigeria appears to be characterized with large class size. Large class is a major problem in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. It is a situation where lecturers are lecturing above the minimum standard of number of students they are supposed to lecture normally. Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS) was formulated and designed by NUC for all Nigerian universities while other regulatory institutions did for other higher institutions too. For instance in the universities, the BMAS in Administration, 1:30, Art 1:30, Agricultural Sciences 1:15, Education 1:30, Environmental Science 1:15, Engineering 1:15, Law 1:30, Medicine 1:10, Management Science 1:30, Social Science 1:30, Pharmacy 1:15, 1:25 in Postgraduate Diploma In Education (PGDE), Veterinary Medicine 1:10 (NUC 2007; Arubayi 2009; Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria-TRCN (2010) and National Commission for Colleges of Education-NCCE 2012).

National Universities Commission, 2007; Arubayi, 2009; Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria, 2010; National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE], 2012).

Many investigations revealed that this BMAS for all academic programme in the universities of Nigeria have been poorly implemented and this has led to large classes in most of the universities and other tertiary institutions across the country. For instance, teacher-student ratio in tertiary institutions in Katsina state according to Bala (2013) is estimated to be 1:500 and in some Polytechnics and Colleges of Education, it has been reported that the demand for education has been high as a result of admission (Egu *et al.* 2014).

Egu, Ogbonna, Obike and Obiuto (2014) discovered that some Polytechnics academic staff in South-East identified overpopulation, shortage of facilities and poor teaching as problems. Also, teacher-student ratio was discovered to be 1:363 in National Open University, 1:122 in University of Abuja and Lagos state University 1:114 according to (NEEDS, 2013).

A study was carried out in United States of America by Watts and Robertson (2011) and it was discovered that academic staff in most of the sampled institutions had high student to teacher ratio and another study by Muhammad et al. (2021) revealed that majorities of higher institutions in Sub-Saharan African and Asian nations have teacher-student ratio that is high. For instance in Nigeria, survey revealed large class size of 1:40, and 1:100. Also, in South and East Asia's Afghanistan and Cambodia findings showed ratio of more than 1:55 large class size. Sub-Saharan Africa study indicated class size of 1:40 while in Ethiopia, Malawi and Congo have 1:70.

Based on this, the study is aimed to investigate the psychological implication of large class size on Academic staff and their job performance and Student' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff job performance and student' academic performance in tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study focus on;

1. To find out the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff and their job performance in tertiary institutions; and
2. To assess the psychological implication of large class size on students' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions .

Research Questions

The following are research questions formulated to guide the study;

1. What is the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff and their job performance in tertiary institutions?; and
2. What is the psychological implication of large class size on students and their academic performance in tertiary institutions?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Class size

Class size is an important aspect of school that deals with numbers of students to a teachers in the classroom. Class size entails the extent to which a teachers and students are numbered in the classroom for implementation of teaching and learning program. Class size as an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school (Adeyemi, 2008).

Class size is defined by Ayeni and Olowe (2016) as the total number of all enrolled students in a particular classroom or academic programme. It is also the total number of students a particular teachers is handling in a particular time in an educational institution or classroom. Class size is according to Yusuf, Onifade, and Bello (2016) has significant impact on the students' learning and attitude in secondary schools sampled. Lazear, (2001) opined that

smaller classes have less number of students to teachers aiding better engagement between teachers and students and leading to better learning on the students.

Class size is grouped into large, medium and small class size. Large class size is the class that is bigger than the expected number of students. Large classes in Nigerian educational institutions especially the tertiary institutions seems to be a big problem due to high population of enrolment yearly and government policy of increasing access to higher education (Ogunode & Ahaotu 2020a). Class size is key in education and it has a lot to do with teaching and learning outcome (Susilowati, 2013; Parks-Stamm, Zafonte, & Palenque 2017; Spahn, 1999; Bolton, 1988). Tertiary institutions in Nigeria appeal to have large classes but the formulation of the teacher-student ratio has helped to reduce the problem. Large class sizes remains a very big challenge in educational institutions in developing countries (Yelkpieri et al. 2012). Large class sizes have been established to be slowing down implementation of teaching and learning (Muhammad, Mohammed, and Fatihi 2021).

Academic staff job performance

Ogunode & Ibrahim, (2023) defined academic staff job performance refers to all activities and responsibilities of teaching, research and community service academic staff carried out and still carrying out in the environment where he or she work. Academic staff job performance is the total record of academic services executed in a particular time compare to the official assigned responsibilities in the institutions. Academic staff according to Ofoegbu & Alonge (2016) is the teaching and learning combined with the developmental resources and high impact of community service of an academic staff. ThankGod and Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022) viewed academic staff job performance as the all planned responsibilities expected of the academic staff to carry out within a given period of time in the institution. Ogunode, & Eimuhi (2023) also defined academic staff job performance as the abilities and capabilities of the staff to execute his or her responsibilities in the institutions.

Student's academic performance

Academic performance according to Bello (2006) refers to all things a learner achieves or acquires during and after undergoing some academic activities. He went further to state that the things a learner gain can be in the form of marks obtained from a test or an examination, new skills, new techniques, behavior acquired. Ogunode & Josiah, (2023) defined academic performance of students as the state of academic outcome or output in the school as a result of the knowledge and skills acquired in the school. Student academic performance is the standard which students should be able to know and be able to do and the students' level of attainment in the grade point average of courses offered in their yearly examination ((Ijaiya (2004; Abdul 2002). Ogunode & Edet (2023) viewed students' academic performance as all or sum of students' test scores in cognitive, affective and psychomotor test in educational institutions. Many factors determine students' academic

performance in school. In school, there many factors that influences students' academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Psychological implication of large class size on academic staff job performance and student' academic performance in tertiary institutions is a review paper that depends on secondary data for analysis. The secondary data were collected from both online publications and print resources. 65 journals on the topic were reviewed for the study and a total of 37 were finally used to support the position and assumption in the study.

DISCUSSION

Q1. What is the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff and their job performance in tertiary institutions?;

Large class size in tertiary institutions in Nigeria affects academic staff job performance. Academic staff job is teaching implementation in the lecture halls. Usi, Ngezack, Tswenji, & Ogunode (2024) noted that the implementation of teaching programmes in tertiary institutions in most institutions is affected by large class sizes. The teaching programme is the first cardinal programme of tertiary institutions. The teaching programme is described by Ogunode & Ahaotu (2020a) as all activities in tertiary institutions that involve imparting knowledge. The lecturers are saddled with the responsibilities of lecturing the students in the tertiary institutions. Teaching or lecturing large classes affects lecturer's health and also affects their job performance. Class size affected teachers' participation in teaching and impacted negatively on students learning. He recommended a class of 15 to 30 per teacher. (Parks-Stamm et al.2017). Farrell (2019), concluded that class sizes militate against effective implementation of teaching, teaching strategies and methods as normally been used in small sizes. Susilowati (2013) identified an unfavourable classroom environment as a major problem in teaching large classes because it limits teachers students interaction in the classroom.

Q2: What is the psychological implication of large class size on students and their academic performance in tertiary institutions?

Osim, et al (2012) noted that assessment, evaluation and feedback carried by teachers in secondary schools in classrooms have been influenced by class size. Wosyanju (2005) noted that teaching large class poses a lot of problem for the teachers and students that directly and indirectly frustrate feedback from students, poor quality of communication and stress of marking and managing the class. Result collected from project STAR on students/teachers achievement ratio revealed that students in small class and with less than 18 students performed better than those in larger classes according to (West & Woessmann, 2003). Study by Eboatu, & Ehirim, (2018) on perceived impact of class size in some junior secondary showed that large classes affected students' achievement in the classroom and limited teachers'

students' relationship. Large class affected teachers' job performance in classroom and also lead to poor students' academic achievement according to (Osim et al 2012)

The study revealed that large class size has psychological effects on academic staff and their job performance and on student' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions. This implies that large classes reduces the quality of tertiary education since it affected implementation of teaching and learning in the classes. This findings is in line with the conclusion of Wosyanju (2005); Yara, (2010); Yelkpieri, Namale, Esia-Donkoh, & Ofosu-Dwamena (2012) and Usi C., Ngezack, Cletus & Ogunode (2024) that large class size affects the job performance of lecturers and students' academic performance in the schools. Also, Harold (1958) and Kolawole (1982) established negative in the relationship between class size and students' academic achievement (Sitkei (1968) and Walberg 1969).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was designed to investigate the psychological implication of large class size on academic staff job performance and student' academic performance in tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study focus on; to find out the impact psychological implication of large class size on academic staff and their job performance in tertiary institutions; and to assess the impact of psychological implication of large class size on students' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions.

The study concluded that large class size to an extent has psychological effects on academic staff and their job performance and student' and their academic performance in tertiary institutions. This implies that large classes reduces the quality of tertiary education since it affected implementation of teaching and learning in the classes.

Based on this findings, the study hereby recommended that the government should increase funding of tertiary institutions to enable managers provide more infrastructure facilities in the various institutions. Regulatory institutions should ensure tertiary institutions only admit students according to their quota and carrying capacity.

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