



# **Impacts Of Overcrowded Classroom On The Teachers' Performance In Some Selected Public Junior Schools In Gashua, Bade Local Government Area Of Yobe State, Nigeria**

<sup>1</sup>Mohammed Liman; <sup>2</sup>Ishaya Jalam Jibir & <sup>3</sup>Adamu Shuaibu Hassan

<sup>1</sup>Department of Economics,  
Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Christian Religious Studies,  
Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Business Education,  
Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out on the evaluation of the effects of overcrowded rooms on teachers' performance among students in junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area.. Descriptive Survey Research Design was adopted for the study. The target population of the study was the entire teachers in randomly selected two junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area. Stratified Random Sampling Technique was adopted to select twenty (20) teachers from the two junior secondary schools to constitute the sample size of the study. Structure Questionnaire was the major instrument used to collect data for the study. The data collected was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation for the questionnaires. The findings of the study revealed that, inability of teachers to paid attention to individual students that need special attention, lack of classroom control and management at overcrowded classroom and teachers found it difficult in conducting effective continuous assessment in classroom are some of the problems faced by teachers in teaching and learning in overcrowded classrooms in junior secondary schools Gashua, Bade local Government Area. The study concluded that overcrowded classes affected the efficiency of teaching and learning process in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State; and recommended that there should be adequate provision of conducive classrooms in all junior secondary school in the state to reduce the negative effect of overcrowded classroom.

**Keywords:** Classroom, Overcrowded, Teaching, Learning, Students Performance

## **INTRODUCTION**

Government secondary schools in Nigeria are overcrowded because of increased population, limitation of the economic resources and budget constraints. A combination of an increasing population and a decrease of funding have caused class size to soar. Again, following the innovations brought about by the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), enrolment in junior secondary schools in Nigeria, the number of students in both primary and junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government

Area of Yobe State has increased without a corresponding increase in the number of teachers and infrastructure to match it. As noted by Afolabi 2020, the present introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) will have similar effects of increasing the number of students in junior secondary schools. Those who attempt to apply them encounter a lot of difficulties because of the class size. Jaiyeola & Bayat (2020) made a research to get the proper provision for teacher-pupil ratio in class which is deemed appropriate for effective teaching and learning especially as it relates to classroom interaction in Nigerian schools. According to the policy, there is stipulated class-size in terms of teacher-students / pupils ratio for the various levels of educations. In primary school, one teacher should teach thirty-five students, in secondary school, one teacher should teach forty students, and in Technical Education one teacher should teach ten students. These stipulations are in recognition of the need for teaching and learning to be carried out in a classroom setting that allows adequate teacher-students relationship and to enables the teacher to give proper attention to students in both class work and in character formation.

The average number of students in most of classrooms in Yobe state and Gashua in particular ranges from 80 to 190. It creates many problems for both, teachers and students in teaching-learning process. Nuska (2012) revealed that perhaps overcrowded classroom causes a variety of problems and it seems that pupils in overcrowded schools and classrooms do not score as high on achievement tests and exams as pupils in non-overcrowded spacious classrooms.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The classroom is the most important area within a school. The students spend most of their time, hopefully in an environment conducive to learning. The entire design of classroom reflects the priorities, goals, philosophy, personality and teaching style of the student. Jaiyeola & Bayat (2020) made a research to get the proper provision for teacher-pupil ratio in class which is deemed appropriate for effective teaching and learning especially as it relates to classroom interaction in Nigerian schools. According to the policy, the stipulated class-size in terms of teacher-students / pupils ratio for the various levels of educations are: Primary School - 1:35, Secondary School-1:40, Technical Education-1:20, Special Education- 1:10. In many of the junior secondary schools in Gashua, the number of students in a class is over one hundred. In spite of this recommendation, public schools in Gashua operate on between 1:180 teacher-students ratio. In overcrowded classroom always there is poor interaction, poor class control, poor participation, difficulties in Class assessment and resource competition. The main goal of this study was to explore teachers' challenges when teaching in overcrowded classrooms in junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local government Area of Yobe State.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Overcrowded Classroom**

A classroom is said to be overcrowded in which the number of students exceeds the optimum level such that it causes hindrance in the teaching-learning process. Researchers argue that there is no exact definition of a large class. It differs from country to country and from one situation of teaching to another. Hayes (1997) states that there can be no quantitative definition of what constitutes an "overcrowded" class, as perceptions of this will vary from context to context. For example, some people hold that 50 would be large enough for a class; others would argue that a large class could have as many as over 100 or even 150 students. However, most teachers generally agree that a class with 50-60 or more is 'large' enough.

According to a research conducted by Mahlo (2015), 'an overcrowded classroom has more students assigned to a classroom- building than the number of students it was designed to accommodate'. When the capacity of the classrooms is exceeded, it places greater demand on the schools' existing resources and infrastructure that need to be used for effective learning.

### **General problems of overcrowded classes**

Accord to Asma (2015), certainly, there are certain problems that are related to all the large size business teaching classes and cannot be ignored at any time.

### **1. Discipline**

Teachers face difficulties in controlling their students, who make noise especially when they do activities or finish before the others, then the teachers cannot stop them. A disciplined class is an ideal field for a teacher to impart knowledge. Discipline is only possible if the strength of a class is normal. In a class of 40 students and more, it is impossible to maintain discipline. May be a teacher is very competent in his profession, his preparation is satisfactory, is smart and punctual; but will fail to control and maintain discipline in those large size classes. Hayes (1997) stated that: "...it is noisy, some students who aren't interested in class will disturb the others...when we have the activities in class, it will be difficult to control or to solve their problems." . We can say discipline problems are common in overcrowded classes in a way that the teacher should have enough proficiency on how to prevent those problems from occurring in his class.

### **2. Discomfort**

Many teachers, as well as students, may find themselves uncomfortable when teaching/learning in an overcrowded class; they might feel unhappy and hopeless. Hayes (1997) argues that: "Large makes me frustrated and tired and I feel hopeless to manage the class successfully." Thus, it is important that the class must be a comfortable place to gain successful interaction.

### **3. Individual attention**

Due to the large number of students as well as the shortage of time, teachers cannot pay attention to every individual student in the class. Teachers find it impossible to concentrate on all students and therefore not enough reinforcement will be made to encourage all to participate in not be in a different activities. Kennedy & Kennedy (1996) shared a similar view, as they believed it is difficult to overcome all of what occur in class when the number of students exceeds a certain limit.

### **4. Evaluation of students' progress**

It has been proved in various researches that is very difficult for the teachers to carry out proper evaluation in a class of large size. The teachers consider it very challenging task to supervise and give appropriate feedback to a class that exceeds forty students per class, in addition, it is hard to check all the exercises done by each student in the classroom. It is troublesome for the teacher to mark too many scripts of home assignments. However, all this evaluation is essential in the teaching system.

### **5. Teaching-learning process**

In a class that is overcrowded, the teaching-learning process gets very slow. There are many distractions and disturbances. The teacher is not audible to the students. Because of overcrowding, there is much noise in the class. The students find it easier to talk with each other than to ask the teacher and listening to him. As a result, the class lacks the proper teacher-student relationship and the teaching-learning process gets disturbed.

### **6. Teaching through lecture method only**

In large size classes, teachers are forced to depend on lecture method only. McKeachie (1980) notes that class size and method are almost inextricably intertwined. Thus, the research on class size and that on lecture vs. discussion overlap. Large classes are most likely to use lecture methods and less likely to use discussion than small classes.

Consequently, this leads to the question of how learning outcomes achieved by courses taught with the lecture method only in large class settings compare with outcomes achieved in smaller sized classes, where the discussion method is more likely to be employed. In fact, Lecture method is not appropriate for teaching junior secondary schools

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the 'acute stress response' known as the fight or flight response. The 'fight or flight response' term, first developed by Dr Walter B Cannon in 1915, assisted the researcher with comprehending the challenges teachers and learners face within an overcrowded classroom. Thompson and Haskins' (2014) statement emphasises the importance of considering the fight or flight response as a theoretical framework when investigating learning within the classroom:

The reason some children have trouble paying attention in the classroom, remembering and following instructions and focusing their thinking has more to do with the neurobiological effects of stress hormones than with their unwillingness to do what the teacher says. The fight or flight response is an important neurobiological reaction to stress that needs to be considered. According to Mash and Wolfe (2012), the fight or flight response refers to the immediate reaction of a person to protect themselves from potential harm, either by confronting the source of the danger (i.e. fight) or by escaping from the situation (i.e. flight). Stress can also be defined as ‘the reaction of an organism to any demand that they feel they cannot cope with’ (Lake 2012). The response to stress can have both a positive and a negative effect: normal stress (i.e. eustress) serves to increase learning and enhance memory. On the other hand, constant, chronic stress (i.e. distress) can have negative effects (Wolfe 2010). Unrelenting or continuous stress (i.e. a stressful classroom environment on a daily basis) leads to the release of too much cortisol which can have a damaging effect, such as causing hypertension, psychological problems and even a cognitive decline. Learners who struggle with stress can exhibit problematic behaviour such as a lack of attention, boredom, a lack of discipline, tendency to fight and even vandalism (Marais 2016). These types of behaviour and feelings can impede the learner’s cognitive ability to make academic achievements (Mash & Wolfe 2012). If a child experiences any neurological or cognitive dysfunction or stress symptom, it could lead to severe challenges and learning barriers. Stress may also cause cognitive disturbances in children, including interference with academic performance, academic delays, attention disorders and other cognitive errors (Mash & Wolfe 2012). According to the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study regarding childhood exposure to traumatic stressors and later-life health and well-being, certain childhood experiences (such as stressful events) are major risk factors of the leading causes of illness and death, as well as poor quality of life (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] 2016.).

#### **2.4 Empirical literature**

Okechukwu & Oboshi (2021) examined the influence of overcrowded classroom on pupils’ academic achievement in public primary schools in Idemili South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Result of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of head-teachers and other teachers on the influence of overcrowded classroom on pupils’ academic achievement. Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that class size is an important factor in determining pupils’ academic achievement in classrooms.

Shah and Inamullah (2012) found from their studies that over-crowded classes could have a direct impact on students’ learning. They not only affected students’ performance but the teachers had to face different problems such as discipline, behavioral problems, poor health and poor performance of students, put stress on teachers and increased in drop-out rate of students.

KERMA (2019) conducted research on The effect of overcrowded classrooms on teachers' performance in Algerian primary school the result revealed that classroom overcrowding has negative impact on the teaching and learning process. He consider that such problems impeding the implementation of effective instruction in primary schools and generate factors that slow down students’ performance.

Carlson (2000) reported that quality learning was not possible when large number of students were packed into small classrooms. He visited different schools but it was evident as a serious problem particularly in Unidad Divina School located in Florida, Santiago and in Taltas’ Escuela Hogar. He further reported that 40 plus children were stuffed into classrooms designed for no more than 35 kids.

Ijaiya (1999) found a weak positive correlation between the opinion of teachers and students. Findings showed that over crowdedness diminished the quality and quality of teaching and learning with serious implications for attainment of educational goals.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research design**

A quantitative research approach served this study best in view of the empirical inquiry that was launched to investigate a particular naturally occurring phenomenon such as overcrowded classrooms.

**Population of the Study**

The population for this study consists of all the teachers from all the selected two Junior Secondary Schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State. The two junior secondary schools selected are; Government Day Junior Secondary School Ramat, Gashua and Government Day Junior Secondary, Katuze, Gashua.

**Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The sample of the study includes 20 teachers from Government Day Junior Secondary School Ramat, Gashua and Government Day Junior Secondary, Katuze, Gashua. Random sampling technique was adopted to select ten teachers from each of the two randomly selected junior secondary schools.

**Data Collection Instrument**

The instrument employed for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “Overcrowded Classroom Questionnaire” OCQ, constructed by the researchers. Structured questionnaire was the major instruments to collect data for this study. The researcher designed the questionnaire titled “Evaluation of the Effects of Overcrowded classroom on teaching and learning of among students in junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area.” for the respondents to respond to four (4) likert’s types rating scales of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD) respectively. The items in the questionnaire were structured based on stated research questions.

**Validity**

The draft semi-structured questionnaire and other instruments were given in-house pretesting. This involves giving them to some experts (lecturers) in the school of education, Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State. Suggestions offered by them were used to improve the instruments.

**Reliability**

In order to ensure this, the research instruments were pretested among students of the two selected Junior Secondary School in Gashua. Five (5) respondents were selected in each of the schools and questionnaire was administered to them. The pretested questionnaire was cleaned, coded and entered into an SPSS computer package and a Statistical Reliability Analysis was conducted to test the reliability of the questionnaires. The value of the Alpha model of reliability obtained was 0.70 which showed a good degree of internal consistency.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaire design for this study was distributed to the selected teachers in junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade local government area of Yobe state. After respondents filled the questionnaires, the researcher then collected the filled questionnaire on-the-spot.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

The data collected for this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as statistical tools. A four (4) of points rating scale of likert’s types was used with assigned values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 as options to the items on the questionnaires.

These options are:

**Table: 1**

Strongly Agreed (SA)	4 points
Agreed (A)	3 points
Disagreed (D)	2 points
Strongly Disagreed (SD)	1 point

The mean of the above was determined by calculating the average.

$$X^- = \sum \frac{fn}{n}$$

Where,

X= mean

F= frequency

x= nominal value of option

∑= summation sign

n= number of the respondent

A cut- off point of 2.50 was used to determine the mean which is thus:

$$\frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4}$$

$$\frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

This means that any mean score equal to or greater than was considered as agreed response and any mean score less than (<) 2.50 was considered as disagreed responses.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### Result and Discussion

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the problems faced by teachers in teaching an overcrowded classroom in junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe state.**

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	No enough Space between the rows	13	17	8	2	3.02	0.86	Agreed
2	Inadequate light and ventilation system	20	16	3	1	3.37	0.74	Agreed
3	Ample seating arrangements for students	1	1	23	1 5	1.70	0.64	Disagreed
4	Inadequate accommodative classes	28	3	7	2	3.42	0.95	Agreed
5	problem in maintaining discipline	25	8	5	2	3.40	0.90	Agreed
6	Observe noise in the classroom	21	9	6	4	3.17	1.03	Agreed
7	Students do not follow rules and regulations	28	3	8	1	3.45	0.90	Agreed
8	Individual attention to students not possible	15	17	6	6	3.07	0.91	Agreed
9	Discouraged the students to participate in class activities	20	13	5	2	3.27	0.80	Agreed
10	Difficulty in listen to the students	25	12	2	1	3.52	0.71	Agreed
11	Inability to identify students weaknesses	25	13	1	1	3.55	0.67	Agreed
12	Difficulty in reading from blackboard	18	12	7	3	3.12	0.95	Agreed
13	Feedback from students is difficult	28	9	2	1	3.05	1.10	Agreed
14	Difficulty in checking assignments	20	7	8	5	3.05	1.10	Agreed
15	In ability to inform the parents about their child performance	20	16	3	1	3.37	0.74	Agreed
	<b>Grand mean</b>					<b>3.17</b>		

**Source:** Author's Computation 2023

Data on Table 2 revealed that all items fall within the agreed level of above 2.50 except item 3 that fall within the disagreed level with the means of 1.70. The grand means of 3.17 showed that all the teachers agreed that overcrowded classrooms caused physical, discipline, instructional and evaluation problems schools in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State leading to poor performance of the students in junior secondary schools in Bade, Gashua, Bade Local Government area of Yobe state.

### Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study revealed that;

- i. There was no enough space between the rows and no ample seating arrangements were made for the students.
- ii. There is inadequate light, ventilation system, accommodative classes in the study area.
- iii. Students were facing discipline problem and teachers were not able to control overcrowded classes
- iv. Students did not follow any rules and regulation made by the teachers in their classes.

- v. Teachers were not able to give individual attention to weak students, not easily listen to students, and do not receive any feedback from students and also were unable to identify students weaknesses
- vi. Overcrowded classroom do not give room to teachers to encouraged students to participate in class activities and students also find it difficult to read from blackboard.
- vii. Respondents agreed that because of a large number of students it was not possible for them to conduct test on monthly basis and they were not able to provide feedback to weak students as well as to informed parents about their children's performance

## CONCLUSION

The study aimed at analysing the effects of overcrowded classrooms in teachers' performance in some selected junior secondary schools in Gashua, Bade LGA of Yobe state. The result shows that large overcrowded classrooms have negative effects on teachers' performance leading to poor students' achievement. It can therefore be concluded that overcrowded classes affected the efficiency of teaching and learning process in Gashua, Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State. The overcrowded rooms does not provide conducive atmosphere for proper classroom management. It affects evaluation as it is difficult for the teacher to monitor individual students and take records of their performance accordingly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Admission of the students in junior secondary schools should be based on minimum standard as specified National Junior Secondary School Curriculum
- ii. Provision of modern teaching aids such as overhead projectors, power point presentation device that each and every individual student will view the content of the lesson in the classroom
- iii. Provision of adequate funds by the government for procurement and maintenance of teaching facilities for conducive learning by individual student
- iv. More provision of conducive classrooms in all junior secondary school under study to reduce the overcrowding in the classroom

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