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**CLASS SIZE INFLUENCE ON UPPER BASIC STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND SOCIAL INTERACTION IN SOCIAL STUDIES, OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Class size is one of the factors that determine the quality of teaching, instruction delivery and outcome of the classroom activities. Overcrowded classrooms have increased the possibilities for poor quality of teaching and mass failure of students. This study therefore examined the influence of class size on students' achievement and social interaction in junior secondary school in Ogbomosho north and south local government area of Oyo state. The study adopted a correlation design. A structured observation technique was used to assess class size and quality of teaching. A self-constructed questionnaire was used to assess students' achievement in Social Studies and social interaction. The data collected was analysed through percentage, mean, standard deviation and PPMC. The findings show that class size has an influence on students' achievement and social interaction in junior secondary schools and there is high significant relationship between class size, students' achievement and social interaction. The study, therefore, recommended that there is need for the provision of adequate facilities according to the number of students in a class and there should be periodic in-service training for all teachers on how to manage the classroom environment.*

**Keywords:** Class size, Students' academic achievement, Social interaction, Social Studies.

### **Introduction**

As the world is dynamic and progressive today, through the influence of so many factors militating and affecting her scope, these changes have led to concentration of attention to various sectors of the whole system, especially the human system, their concerns and their relationship in their ways of life (tradition and culture), as the action of one group member tells on the other; either positively or negatively, since human being as a social animal has instinctive reaction to specific trigger, hence there is a need to find a means of perceiving a problem with way out, however, education institution emerged as one of the prominent remedial institutions. Education is essential in the formation of character and is principally transmitting the culture of a society.

Indeed, every culture represents a network of social control evidenced in the societal norms and values which are internalized and shared through the process of socialization, education must be given a high priority in the society and must also be reviewed from time to time, since it has been adopted as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development.

Everywhere around the globe, more individuals are appreciating the importance of education because it has been regarded as a priceless asset of fundamental value to individuals. It develops their potentials and serves as a powerful tool for national development (Akinwumi, 2010). Sequel to this, Nigeria as a developing country has joined the league of developed nations who believe in education as the best legacy for younger generations. Many public discussions on education frequently focus on educational standards and this is because of disheartening occurrence in the system. While assessing the state of education in Nigeria, Ogunsaju (2012) stated that the academic standard in all Nigerian educational institutions has fallen considerably below societal expectations. It was planned to provide solution to the societal problems but it has not been functioning in accordance to the expected standard of the society. Students'

academic achievement in the domains of learning (cognitive, affective, psychomotor domain and psycho-social) has been very low.

This is evident in poor students' achievement as encountered at various levels of education, especially in the Junior Secondary Schools of Oyo State. Going by both international and national standards, the Nigerian educational system can be said to be in a state of confusion and disarray as a result of inconsistencies. Various factors among others are school infrastructural deficit, poor quality of teaching, class size, school climate, school structure and organization, government policies, teachers quality, curriculum and teaching philosophies are to be responsible for these ugly developments (Driscoill, Halcousis & Sony, 2013).

The Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Policy on Education (2004) asserted that no nation can achieve economic, social and technological progress and self-sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its achievement. What makes a good system of education depends on the quality of teachers available in the system, infrastructural facilities, class size, learning materials, emotional and mental intelligence of a child among others.

Therefore, Obadara (2015) emphasized that class size, quality of teaching, instruction delivery and overcrowded classrooms have increased the possibilities for poor quality of teaching and mass failure and thus making teachers to be frustrated, underrated, blamed, and also makes students to lose interest in school. This is because large class size does not allow individual student to get attention from the teacher which invariably leads to low reading scores, frustration and poor academic performance.

Hence, in order to have better understanding of the outstanding quality of teaching and the skill levels of students, it is necessary to evaluate factors affecting their function and performance. Therefore, large class size helps to break up teaching process and eliminate restlessness during lessons. And thereby brings about better social opportunities because it gives students a wider base in which to socialize and in a smaller class sizes, they have little choice when it comes to mingling with others. The relationship among the class size, quality of teaching, student achievement and social interaction

has been a perplexing one for educators (Ibukun, 2011).

The problems give rise to this study of the influence of class size on the quality of teaching, student achievement and social interaction arising from over population. Class size may be overpopulated or crowded when the numbers of students stipulated for class are against the required standard. Students' number in class has increased and thereby leads to overpopulated class size which further cause difficulty in control or management of the class size.

Therefore, Adeyemi (2013) defined class size as an educational tool that can be described as an average number of students per class in a school, while Hoffman (2013) described it as the number of students per teacher in a class. Kedney (2015) described it as a tool that can be measure performance of the education system. Class size is an important factor with respect to academic performance of students. There is a consensus among researchers and educational scholars that, student's achievement decreases as class size increases. The effect of class size on cognitive achievement has been debated and researched for many years, this has been inconclusive. It refers to educational tools that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school.

The issue of poor quality of teaching and poor academic performance in Nigeria has been of much concern to all and sundry. It has led to the decline in standard of education. Since the good quality of teaching and academic success of students depends largely on the school environment. The quality of a teacher is an important factor that determines learners' performance in various subjects. Teaching effectiveness can be described as the degree at which students' performance improves after a period of instruction in a manner consistent with the objectives and goals of instruction. An effective teacher is one who produces desired results in the course of his or her duty as a teacher (Oyinlola, 2014).

Teachers are regarded as effective when their teaching can lead to students' learning. In evaluating teacher effectiveness, Okpala, (2010) identified three areas; these are teacher's input, process and output. He contends that these three areas could further be broken down to specific components, and for in-depth evaluation

study of teaching effectiveness in schools, such specific aspect could be evaluated or a sub-component of it. An effective teacher should be committed to teaching, have good pedagogical knowledge and have good mastery of his subject matter.

Moreover, according to Ibukun (2011), the quality of human resource in form of teachers, often dictates the extent of effectiveness of educational programme. Effective teachers are therefore vital for the success of any educational programme. Every educational system at all level depends heavily on teachers for the execution of its programmes. Obadara (2015), views teachers to be highly essential for successful operation of the educational development goals. Without teachers with relevant attitudes, educational facilities alone cannot be used to facilitate academic performance of students.

Academic performance refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scott, 2012). Ward, Stocker and Murray-Ward (2006) asserts that academic performance refers to the outcome of education; the extent to which the student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. It is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate one's knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010). It is also the extent to which students have achieved mastery of the objectives of the subjects they are exposed to in school.

Social interaction is the way people talk and act with each other and various structures in society. It may include interactions such as a team, family or bureaucracy that is formed out of the need to create order within the interaction itself. It is the ways in which people act with other people and react to how other people are acting. Many researchers have worked on one variable related to this studies but no prior studies has worked to combine the variables together It is against this background that there is need for more investigative work to espouse and correlates the influence of class size on quality of teaching, students' achievement and social interaction in Ogbomoso north and south local government area of Oyo state, Nigeria.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. investigate whether there is significant relationship between class size and quality of teaching on junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria;
- ii. assess whether there is significant relationship between class size and students' achievement in junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State Nigeria;
- iii. ascertain whether there is significant relationship between class size and social interaction on junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State Nigeria; and
- iv. ascertain the pattern of relationship between class size and the quality of teaching, students' achievement and social interaction in the study area.

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested to guide this study.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between class size and quality of teaching in junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between class size and student's achievement junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between class size and social interaction in junior secondary school Social Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria.

## **Research Question**

Based on the problem identified and in line with the three hypotheses raised above, this research question was raised.

What is the pattern of relationship between class size and the dependent variable; quality of teaching, students' achievement and social interaction?

## Methods

The study adopts the descriptive survey design. The sample for this study consisted of 400 respondents selected from teachers and students in junior secondary schools in Ogbomosho North and South local government area of Oyo State. The sampling procedures for this study were in stages. Thus multi-stage procedure was used for this study. Ogbomosho community is comprised of two local government; Ogbomosho North and South. Five junior secondary schools were purposely selected from each local government areas while students were randomly selected from the five schools. The researcher instrument was a self-designed instrument titled "Questionnaire on the influence of class size on quality of teaching, students' achievement and social interaction QICQTSASI". The Instrument was divided into two categories; one for teachers and the other for student.

## Results

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between class size and quality of teaching Social Studies in junior secondary school.

**Table 1: The PPMC of class size and quality of teaching Social Studies**

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Class size</b>	<b>Quality of Teaching</b>
<b>Class size</b>	37.73	11.210	1.00	
<b>Quality of Teaching</b>	30.38	5.274	.534**	1.00

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 shows the correlation between class size and quality of teaching Social studies. Class size correlated significantly with quality of teaching ( $r=.534$ ;  $p< .05$ ). The hypothesis is hereby rejected.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between class size and Students' achievement in junior secondary school social studies.

**Table 2: The PPMC of Class Size and Students' Achievement in Junior Secondary School Social Studies**

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Class size</b>	<b>Students' Achievement</b>
<b>Class Size</b>	37.73	11.210	1.00	
<b>Students' Achievement</b>	19.52	3.532	.481**	1.00

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: The correlation between class size and students' achievement. Class size correlated significantly with students' achievement ( $r=.481$ ;  $p<.05$ ). The hypothesis is hereby rejected.

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between class size and social interaction of junior secondary school Social Studies students

**Table 3: The PPMC of Class Size and Social Interaction of Junior Secondary School Students**

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Class size</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>
<b>Class size</b>	37.73	11.210	1.00	
<b>Social Interaction</b>	35.79	5.686	.490**	1.00

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows that there is significant relationship between class size and social interaction ( $r=.490$ ;  $p<.05$ ). The hypothesis is hereby rejected.

**Research Question:** What is the pattern of relationship between class size and the dependent variable; Quality of teaching, Students' achievement and Social interaction?



**Table 4: Zero Order Correlation (Matrix Table) showing the relationship between Class Size and Quality of Teaching, Students' Achievement and Social Interaction**

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Class Size</b>	<b>Quality of Teaching</b>	<b>Students Achievement</b>	<b>Social Interaction</b>
<b>Class Size</b>	21.37	3.667	1.00			
<b>Quality of Teaching</b>	30.38	5.274	.534**	1.00		
<b>Students Achievement</b>	19.52	3.532	.481**	.489**	1.00	
<b>Social Interaction</b>	35.79	5.686	.490**	.554*	.614	1.00

Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2 tailed)

Table 4 shows the correlation co-efficient between all the subsets of the dependent variables; Quality of teaching ( $r = .536$ ;  $p < .05$ ); students' achievement ( $r = .481$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and social interaction ( $r = .490$ ;  $p < .05$ ) correlated significantly with class size. The three subsets of dependent variables correlated significantly among themselves as well as with independent variable.

### **Discussions**

The study assessed the influence of class size on quality of teaching, students' achievement, and social interaction in junior secondary school in Ogbomoso North and South local government area of Oyo state. The findings of this study with respect to the correlation matrix specify that none of variables have multicollinearity, indicating that all the variables can be correlated with class size. Hence, the result revealed that there is a high significant positive relationship between all the identified variables. The study agrees with the findings of Dimkpa (2015), on the conduct of teachers in line with the expected professional conduct as enshrined in the constitution of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. This research agrees with a study by Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2011), which investigated nine school quality factors that are likely to influence students' achievement in Mathematics in South-Western and North-Central Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The issue of class size, as it affects quality of teaching, students' achievement and social interaction cannot be over emphasized. Class size is an important determinant of students' achievement and that one can be directly determined by educational programmes and policies within a school system. Any attempt to increase class size beyond the required standard may spell doom for qualitative education. This may distort or harm teaching-learning process. It has been discovered that large class size has negative influence on quality of teaching, student achievement and social interaction in a Social Studies class.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion thus far, there is need to evaluate what works well in secondary education. There is need for the provision of adequate facilities; massive infrastructures and development of school environments so to make it conducive for learning. There is need for effective collaboration between the Federal and State governments, LGAs, PTAs, NGOs, and local communities in providing funds and other allocations for education at levels which must be properly channelled. Policy makers, education agencies and bodies should formulate policies that will ensure that the number of students in a class should not exceed a manageable ratio to teacher. This in turn will make the government to provide enough classrooms for the schools. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA), philanthropist and charitable organization are also implored to compliment the effort of the government to boost the performance of students in building more classes.

In this modern age, teacher must encourage right-directed thinking, creativity, and spontaneity. They should provide a creativity friendly environment for learners in order to make teaching-learning activities to be rich, interesting and imaginative to produce good quality in Social Studies. Government and other private school-owners should appoint high-quality professionals with degrees in Education to teach the students so as to ensure good students' academic performance. Teachers should be charged with the

responsibility of offering a rich and varied multicultural curriculum to accommodate the culturally diverse 21st century classroom. To sustain the standard of education, School management, government and even parents must ensure that there be quality assurance agency on schools that will monitor and evaluate schools' environment, teaching-learning process as well as students' interaction with one another. This will ensure all schools agents to discharge their duties optimally. School management should ensure that their educational establishments are supervised regularly. This will enable them to achieve educational goals and enhance teachers' growth.

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