

**THE EFFECT OF CLASS SIZE IN EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND  
LEARNING OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL  
(A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOL IN IJEBU ODE LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AREA OGUN STATE)**

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## **CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this technical report was carried out by **ASHIRU RAMOTA TAIWO** with Matriculation Number **18012222023** in Social Studies Department, School of arts and social science, Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun-State Nigeria.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to Almighty Allah, the beginning and the end, all knowing, all thanks, honour and glory to Him. I bless His name for sparing my life, providing me with knowledge and delivering me from all dangers encountered during my stay in the college. And to my lovely and caring parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ashiru

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate the effect of large class size on the teaching/learning of summary writing in senior secondary schools especially in Ijebu ode local government area ogun State. The large class size places a major barrier to the effective teaching and learning of summary writing in English language as a core subject in these senior secondary schools. The study was also done to determine the effect of school location and gender on the student's performance in summary writing. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the studies. The instrument used for data collection was test items drawn on comprehension and summary passages and face validation of the instrument was done by three expert in Language Education and Measurement and Evaluation from the selected secondary school in Ijebu ode local government area ogun state. A split- half method for single administration of instruments was used and the result of the test was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha to measure the consistency and reliability of the test. The sample for the test consisted of 400 senior secondary school students drawn from the selected schools in Ijebu ode which was the focus area for the study. One hundred and twenty students were drawn from urban school location and two hundred students from rural school locations. The major findings of this study were that, the students taught summary writing in small class setting performed better than those taught in large class setting. Location was also a significant factor, the findings revealed that students taught summary writing in urban school locations had a better performance than the ones taught in rural school locations. Gender as well played a major role, in that, the female students scored higher in summary writing taught them than their male counterparts. Based on the findings of this study, recommendations were made to senior secondary school teachers in the state to engage students in frequent writing exercise, not only in English Language subject but in other subjects as well so as to help develop in*

*them adequate writing skill. The text book writers and the curriculum planners are expected general. The limitations of the study were outlined and suggestions for further research were proposed.*

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The relationship between class size and academic performance has been a perplexing one for educators. Studies have found that the physical environment, ethnicity, socioeconomics, overcrowding and teaching methods are all variables that affect student achievement (Molnar, 2010). Other factors that affect student achievement are school population and class size (Gentry, 2016; Swift, 2012; Krueger and White Moore, 2017). The issue of poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has been of much concern to all and sundry. The problem is so much that it adds to the widely acclaimed fallen standard of education in Ogun state and Nigeria at large. In order to better understand the skill levels of students, it might be necessary to evaluate factors affecting their performance. These include: school structure and organization, teachers' quality, curriculum and teaching philosophy (Driscoll, Halcoussis and Svomy, 2018).

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. Class size refers to educational tools that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school. In emphasizing the importance of class-size to the learning teaching process, All Nigerian Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS) recommended a maximum of forty students per class for efficient and effective teaching.

The influence of class size on the quality of output in secondary schools revealed that schools having an average class size of 35 and below obtained better

results in Adeola Odutola College secondary school certificate examination (SSCE) than schools having more than 35 students per class (Adeyemi, 2018). Class size had a negative coefficient with students' academic examination performance (Oguntoye, 2011). Earthman (2012) revealed that comfortable classroom temperature and smaller classes enhance teachers' effectiveness and provide opportunities for students to receive individual attention, ask more questions, participate fully in discussion, reduce discipline problems and perform better than students in schools with larger classes. There is a gap in the quality of students in crowded classrooms, using inadequate and absolute equipment, disillusioned teachers. These combined deficiencies perhaps affected the student's academic performance (Fafunwa, 2010). Large class size is not conducive for serious academic work (Adeyela, 2000). Similarly, an alarming class size of 100 or more students in the secondary schools leave the teacher overworked and therefore unable to exercise patience and a positive attitude (Egede, 2015). They are also reluctant to offer extra time to build and help the intellectually ill students.

Overpopulation classrooms have increased the possibilities for at risk students, as well as others, to lose interest in school and do poorly on test. There identifies for specific problems regarding overcrowding, students not getting individual attention, low reading scores, frustration and stress felt by the teachers and the inability of students to concentrate or stay on task while in class. The problem identified can be that teachers are unable to give individual attention to students. Teachers' aides are not always available and sometimes students have to share textbooks. It can take the entire class time for students to find seats, make sure everyone has textbooks to look at and then explain the next assignment. This leaves no time for individual attention to explain assignment and answer questions. Thus, with teacher unable to help individual students, those who need extra help in

gaining or maintaining their reading skills get left behind. They are unable to keep up the reading or in class discussions because of many students in one class.

Overpopulation in schools and classes is a serious problem in many schools systems, particularly in the inner cities where space for new construction is limited. As a result, students find themselves trying to learn while jammed into spaces never intended as classrooms, such as libraries, gymnasiums, laboratories, lunch rooms and even closets. Although, research on the relationship between overcrowding and student learning had been limited, there are some evidence particularly in high poverty schools, that overcrowding can have adverse impact on learning. A study of overpopulation in schools found that students in such schools score significantly lower on both mathematics and reading exams than did similar students in underutilized schools. In addition, when asked, students and teachers in overpopulation schools agreed that overcrowding negatively affects both classroom activities and instructional technologies (Krueger and Whiteman, 2016).

Crowded classroom conditions not only make it difficult for students to concentrate on their lessons, but inevitably limit the amount of time teachers can spend on innovative teaching methods such as cooperative learning and group work or on teaching anything beyond the barest minimum of required materials. In addition, because teachers must constantly struggle simply to maintain order in an overpopulated classroom, the likelihood increase that they will suffer from burn out earlier than might otherwise be the case. Although, there is a significant amount of research analyzing students' performance (Matuga, 2014 and Casanova Arias, 2016), there is still a need for more concentrated test results. It is necessary to define the effects of environmental, psychological and sociological elements. This clarity will better enable school to provide a quality learning institution – organized and established public domain, with a sphere of knowledge influence and activity (Meram-Webster Dictionary).

The idea that school population and class size might affect students' performance is consistent with the growing literature on the relationship between public sector institutional arrangements and outcome. The purpose of this study is to further examine the relationship of class size, school population and student academic achievement.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

There has been a continued decline in the academic achievement of students in our secondary schools and this is triggered by the escalation in the number of students who fail or perform woefully in continuous assessment testing, promotional examinations and uncontrollable increases in class population. These problems also surface in external examinations such as the Junior Secondary Certificate examinations (JSCE) and the Senior Secondary Examinations (SSCE). Painfully, students are now failing subjects like Mathematics and English language, which are compulsory prerequisites to gain admission into any higher institution by the latter.

Due to these problems, most of the students have had to repeat a class and as in the case of the external examinations, they have to stay at home to wait for another year in order to re-sit for another examination. This issue has become a source of concern even to school administrators, parents, guardians, teachers, principals, district boards of education, the Ministry of Education, students themselves and the society at large.

The study therefore seeks to investigate the relationship between class size, school population and academic achievement. This study therefore looks at how class size, school population and ever population affect students' academic performance in secondary school.

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between class size, school population and students' achievement using Adeola Odutola grammar schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State as a case study. The specific objectives are to:

- (i) Examine the relationship between class size and academic performance of secondary students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.
- (ii) Examine the effects of class size and participation on the students' characteristics on academic performance
- (iii) Determined the perceptions of teachers and students on class size and participation and its effects on the academic performance secondary students

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What is the relationship between the class size and the academic performance of secondary students in Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of class size and participation on the students' characteristics on academic performance?
3. What are the perceptions of teachers and students on class size and participation and its effects on the academic performance Secondary students?

#### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant relationship between class size and academic performance of secondary students in Ijebu-Ode of Ogun State, Nigeria.

2. There is no significant difference between the students' participation and their academic performance in secondary schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.
3. There is no significance relationship between students' perception of class size and academic performance of secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.
4. There is no significance relationship between teachers' perception of class size and academic performance of secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

#### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This research work focuses on the relationship between class sizes, school population and students' achievement using Adeola Odutola grammar school in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State as a case study.

#### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study is important for several reasons. First, the findings will help teachers to identify the reason for the academic performance of students in large classes with high population and how they can address the problems.

Secondly, it will provide comprehensive information for educational planners, educators and parents on how they can assist students to cope in large classes.

Thirdly, this research work will lead to further in-depth study on the impact of class size and school population on the academic performance of students in Nigeria.

Lastly, it will serve as a contribution to knowledge in the subject area. In the regard, it will be useful for other researchers who might want to carry out research in related areas.

### **1.8. Definition of Terms**

**Academic Achievement:** knowledge attained or skills developed in school subject by test scores.

**Secondary School/High School:** is a term used to describe an educational institution where the final stage of schooling known as secondary education and usually compulsory up to a specified age taken place. It follows elementary or primary education, and may be followed by university (tertiary) education.

**Overpopulation:** This is when the numbers of students in a particular class exceed the standard of student-teacher ratio of 1:40

**Research Work:** Investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts or practical application of such new or revised therein or laws.

**Classroom:** A room where classes are taught in a school, college or university.

## **CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review**

This chapter reviews literature related to class size, emphasis will be on conceptual framework, theoretical review, empirical review and appraisal of literature.

## **2.1 Conceptual Framework**

### **2.1.1 Concept of Class Size and Academic Achievement**

According to Doyle (2014), in modern day education, the focus is on the needs, interest and comfort of the students. Thus, managing class size allows students to learn effectively without disturbing one another (Garret, 2018). While a number of studies have found support for the importance of class size on student achievement, others strongly disprove this claim concluding that class size has little or no impact on objective student outcomes. Copious studies have investigated the relationship between class size, school population and students' achievement. The devastating issue is that limited number of these studies has focused on elementary school effects of class size on student achievement (Altinok and Kingdon, 2012). The orthodox wisdom among parents, teachers, school administrators, and policy makers is that, smaller class size translates to improvements in student learning and outcomes. This orthodox wisdom, however, has not been universally supported by realistic evidence (Aturupane et al., 2013). It has been argued that increasing the intake of senior secondary school students in a large class has numerous benefits for the schools and the country as a whole. It helps to reduce the cost of building additional classrooms of which few schools as well as the country have the resources to fund additional classrooms and teachers. Also there is usually high energy, fun and excitement in large class size in public senior secondary schools. In addition, students learn to work well in groups since group work is a necessity in large class size (Azigwe et al., 2016; Owolabi et al., 2012).

In Nigeria however, the class size is becoming increasingly unmanageable, putting teachers in an impossible position of giving individual student required

attention. In Nigeria public schools, the teachers' eye contact with the students in class has become so reduced that some of the poorly motivated students can form number of committees at the back of the class while teaching is going on to engage in non-school discussion. Regular assignments and home works are dreaded by teachers considering the staggering number of books to mark and to record. A research by Bosworth (2014) revealed that, the correlation between class size and student achievement is complex with many disagreeing results. The study concluded that class size has tiny impact on student achievement. The findings were inconsistent with the results of Rubin (2012) in that the later indicated that as the class size increases, student achievement declines. Contributing to exiting studies, conclusion from a study by Allen et al. (2013) was that 62 students per teacher was a threshold number and once class size went beyond 62, learning effectively stopped. Thus, as the number of students in a class was more than 62, teachers find it difficult to teach effectively and efficiently leading to students not being able to also learn effectively since low participation of class activities were possible. Despite this finding, Allen et al. (2013) indicated that large class sizes do have moderate adverse effect on teaching and learning. The finding however contradicts the earlier studies and conclusions by Bosworth (2014).

From the social perspective, studies on large class size exist in developing countries but the results are often questionable. Aturupane et al. (2013) reviewed 96 studies that tried to link various educational inputs to student performance in developing countries and found out that nearly a third (31) of the reviewed studies specifically considered the effect of pupil-teacher ratio. Out of the investigation, only eight found reduction in class size to significantly explain improved academic achievement. This study is consistent with Stephens et al. (2014) study on learning competencies in five francophone sub-Saharan African countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal) which demonstrated that an inverse

relationship existed between class sizes and academic achievement. That is, student learning decreased as class sizes increased. This means that the higher the total number of students in a class, the lower the level of concentration which leads to poor performance of the students. Azigwe et al. (2016) revealed that students' engagement, behaviour, and retention are affected in so many ways by the size of the class. This conclusion was drawn when reviewing studies on the link between student engagement and class size conceptualized student engagement in two forms, namely, social engagement (how a student interacts socially with other students and teachers in either pro-social or anti-social ways) and academic engagement (students' attitude towards schooling and the learning process). The study indicated that when students are placed in smaller classes, they become more engaged, both academically and socially, and argue that with strong social academic engagement, academic achievement improves.

In spite of all these benefits, large class size may generate a lot of controversy due to the difficulty of teachers to work with large class size. These controversies may serve as thorns that crumble the performance of students at the senior secondary school level. Some of these problems may be; teachers may find it difficult to use varied teaching methodology in teaching, students may find it difficult to concentrate in the class, teachers may find it difficult to control the students in class and there may be insufficient teaching and learning resources. Hence the quality of teaching, assessment of students and quality of learning may be affected.

### **2.1.2 Problems Facing Class Size in Nigeria**

One of the biggest issues facing schools and teachers today is overcrowding. A combination of an increasing population and a decrease in funding has caused class sizes to soar. In an ideal world, class sizes would be capped at 15 to 20 students. Unfortunately, many classrooms now regularly exceed 30 students, and it

is not uncommon for there to be more than 40 students in a single class. Classroom overcrowding has sadly become the new normal. The issue is unlikely to go away anytime soon, so schools and teachers must create workable solutions to make the best out of a bad situation.

### **2.1.3 Problems Created by Overcrowded Classrooms**

Teaching in an overcrowded classroom can be frustrating, overwhelming and stressful. An overcrowded classroom presents challenges that can feel nearly impossible to overcome, even to the most effective teachers. Increasing class sizes is a sacrifice many schools have to make in order to keep their doors open in an era where schools are underfunded.

Overcrowded classrooms create a number of problems for modern school systems, including:

- i. There is not enough of the teacher to go around. Students perform better when the teacher is able to give one-on-one or small-group instruction on a regular basis. As classroom size increases, this becomes increasingly difficult to do.
- ii. Overcrowding increases classroom discipline issues. Large classes packed with students provide more opportunities for personality conflicts, tension, and general disruptive behavior. Even the best teachers find it difficult to manage an overcrowded classroom successfully and can find themselves spending more time managing their classroom than they do teaching.
- iii. Struggling students fall further behind. Average and below-average students will struggle to advance in an overcrowded classroom. These students need more direct instruction, one-on-one instructional time and minimal distractions to maximize their learning potential.

iv. Standardized test scores suffer. While many teachers would argue that there is an overemphasis placed on test scores especially in America's public schools, the chance of successfully improving proficiency on a standardized test decreases as the number of students in the classroom increases.

v. The overall noise level is increased. This is an expected result when you increase the number of students in the classroom. Louder classrooms translate to distractions making it more difficult for students to learn and for teachers to teach.

vi. Teacher stress is increased often leading to teacher burnout. More students translate to more stress. Many excellent teachers are opting to leave the profession because it is not worth the stresses they deal with on a daily basis.

vii. Overcrowding leads to less access to equipment and technology. Space is already at a premium for many schools and there often is not enough room to accommodate specialties such as science or a computer lab.

#### **2.1.4 District Solutions to Overcrowded Classrooms**

Increasing class sizes should be the last resort for any school district. It should never be a starting point. There are many other ways to trim a budget. If all other options are exhausted, then schools may be forced to enact what is known as a reduction in force, where teachers and staff are laid off for budgetary reasons and class sizes subsequently increase. Even with tight budgets, districts can take certain actions to ease overcrowding issues:

i. Take advantage of ability grouping. Schools should use benchmark assessments to determine student placement. Class sizes should be kept relatively small for those who perform unsatisfactorily. Students who are strong academically have less to lose in an overcrowded classroom.

ii. Provide teachers with an aide. Providing a teacher with an aide can help decrease the burden on the teacher. Aides receive a lower salary, so placing them

in overcrowded classrooms would improve the student/teacher ratios while keeping costs low.

iii. Lobby for more funding. Schools administrators and teachers should regularly lobby their state and local representatives for more funding. They should keep them apprised of issues overcrowding is causing. Administrators can also invite them to spend time at their school so that they can see the impact of overcrowding.

iv Solicit local donations. Private schools are able to keep their doors open due to tuition and to a large extent by soliciting donations. In tough financial times, public school administrators should not be afraid to solicit donations either. Teachers across the country have sought and used public donations for everything from technology upgrades to classroom basics like notebooks and paper. Every dollar counts and even garnering enough donations to hire an extra teacher or two each year can make a significant difference.

v. Apply for grants. There are thousands of grant opportunities made available to schools each year. Grants exist for almost everything including technology, supplies, professional development and even teachers themselves.

#### **2.1.5 Teacher Solutions to Overcrowded Classrooms**

Teachers in an overcrowded classroom must be exceptionally organized. They have to be well prepared every day. They must develop a fluid system through trial and error to maximize the time they have with their students. Teachers can generate solutions for overcrowded classrooms by:

i. Creating energetic and engaging lessons: Every lesson must be enticing, energetic and fun. It is easy for students in any class to be distracted and lose interest, but this is especially true in a large classroom. Lessons must be fast-paced, unique and full of attention grabbers.

- ii. Tutoring struggling students who need more time after school: There simply is not enough time to provide struggling students with the one-on-one time that they need. Tutoring these students two to three times a week after school gives them a better shot at being successful.
- iii. Assigning seats and rotating when necessary: With a large class, teachers must be structured, and this starts with strategically placed assigned seats. Students who are low academically and/or are behavior issues should be assigned seats toward the front. Students who are high academically and/or are well behaved should be provided seats toward the back.
- iv. Understanding that the dynamics in an overcrowded classroom will be different: It is essential that teachers understand that there are significant differences in a classroom of 20 students compared to a classroom of 30 or 40. Teachers have no control over how many students are in their classes, so they cannot allow themselves to become stressed due to things that are out of their control.

Teachers should understand that they are not going to be able to spend time with each student every day. They should understand that they will not get to know each student on a personal level. That is simply the reality in an overcrowded classroom.

Lastly, structure is very important in any classroom but especially so in a classroom with lots of students. Teachers need to establish clear rules and expectations on day one, and then follow through as the year progresses. Clear rules and expectations will help create a much more manageable class—where students know what they are required to do and when—especially an overcrowded one.

#### **2.1.6 Purpose of Class Size and Teacher Preparation**

The ultimate purpose of academic instruction is to help children acquire the skills that enable learning from understanding, and enjoyment of written language. Thus, reading comprehension is the most important ultimate outcome of effective instruction in reading and therefore no matter what ones personal preference for instructional method, the end goal is to help children comprehend written material at a level that is consistent with their general intellectual abilities (Torgesen, 1998). Based on this fact the teacher has to be adequately prepared to deliver instructions geared towards the achievement of this purpose.

Since teacher preparation is a key factor to teaching children how to read, learn from reading and enjoy reading, it is important especially at the pre-school level that the teacher identifies children who are at risk for poor reading outcomes early enough and therefore adopt a teaching pedagogy that addresses their needs (NCLD, 2011). Therefore, for children to learn how to read English, they must learn the connection between approximately 44 sounds of spoken English (phonemes) and the 26 letters of the alphabet. This is because individual letters are abstract and meaningless unless they are linked to phonemes, blended together and then pronounced as words.

### **2.1.7 Class Size Challenges Inhibiting Academic Achievement**

Teachers face difficulties with large classes in areas of class management, students control, marking, planning and assessment that require teachers to act hands on for meaningful learning to take place. This is quite overwhelming for a teacher manning such classes because an effective teacher should be able to spot problems and give immediate feedback, identify specific needs and gear teaching to meet them and set individual targets for pupils. While this is easily applicable to small class sizes, it poses a great challenge to teachers manning larger class sizes (Rhalmi, 2013).

Teacher's roles in academic achievement include diagnosing each student's reading skills to: ascertain the grade level of the material that the student can read, determine from a total list of skills the specific ones mastered, be aware of the reading demands and teaching strategies of the content areas so that such skills can be highlighted and reinforced. All these help to provide appropriate instructional skills depending on the level of difficulty (Higgins, 2015). Unfortunately, it is difficult to get a satisfactory knowledge of students' needs in large class size where teachers are already overwhelmed by the large number of students with differing abilities (Rhalmi, 2013). This is a major challenge to the teacher because of assignment grading.

Given the limited time available, teachers handling large classes and also have other school responsibilities may be stressed when organizing, planning and presenting lessons as students differ considerably in ability. This in turn leads to difficulties related to the learning process since it is not easy to engage learners actively in the learning process in a crowded class hence difficulty to measure effectiveness. In addition, large classes also give reluctant students a place to hide opposed to smaller size classes (Rhalmi, 2013), while at the same time shy students in small size classes may feel uncomfortable in participating.

Much as class size achievement is an option of improving of academic outcome, it always comes with a cost in terms of both physical and human resources. This makes it a very expensive undertaking to implement especially in Nigeria and other third world countries struggling with the poor economy (English club, 2016). Curbed with the challenges of provision of free basic education and the education policy of 50:1 as student's teacher ratio, the government of Nigeria would most likely consider class size achievement last. Thus, the teachers have to come up with engaging activities that keep all students interested and participating

in the lesson by adopting coping skills and activities that can be used to make their job easier (English club, 2016).

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

The theoretical framework for this study is the minimization of negative externalities (i.e., problematic behavioral and academic characteristics of students) achieved through the mechanism of smaller class size (Ready, 2008), which impacts student learning. The effectiveness of class size reduction (CSR) is based on the idea that reducing the number of students in a classroom alters the entire classroom environment, creating a more positive learning environment. Pritchard (1999) stated that the student teacher dynamic, student-student dynamic, and teacher parent dynamic are all improved in smaller classrooms. In addition, teachers have more time, resources, and incentive to create improved lesson plans with greater levels of differentiation. Pritchard (1999) stated that after being assigned into smaller classes, teachers reported that students received more individualized attention. Teachers got to know individual students better and kept track of individual student progress. In turn, students became more engaged because of this increased, personalized learning environment.

Additionally, teachers spent less time on classroom management, which offered additional instructional time for all students in the classroom. Din (1999) confirmed that in smaller classes, students received more individualized help from teachers. Blatchford, Bassett, and Brown (2011) conducted a study at both the primary and secondary school level and found that in larger classes, student interaction with teachers decreased, which resulted in a lower level of student engagement confirming Pritchard's theory. Englehart (2007) and Fan (2012) confirmed that in smaller classes, time spent on classroom management was decreased which led to improvement in academic achievement.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

Class size contributes to poor academic performance, it results to poor teaching methods, instructional materials are not used properly in a large class size because, it is very hard for the teacher to show the students the instructional material especially those at the back. Also most times the teacher always get tired after walking around the class once, Classroom management is always hard, National policy on education approved 40 to 45 students per class, Merging two classes (A and B) is not good and not be done in anyway, Supervisors are not interested in classroom size and number of students in the class, all they are after is the lesson note, inadequate learning environment and improper class size makes the students to lose concentration from the lesson.

Class size as defined by Adeyemi (2018), is an educational tool that can be described as an average number of students per class in a school, while Hoffman (2010) described it as the number of students per teacher in a class. Ogbu (2019) described it as a tool that can be used to measure performance of the education system. A lot of argument has gone on the impact of class size on performance, some fingering over-bloated class size as the main factor responsible for falling standard of education, most especially in the elementary or secondary level of education in Nigeria, however others see this as mere coincidence seeing other factors as being responsible. Effect of class size on the students' academic performance has been reported. However, it is expected that a strong relationship exists between students' attitudes and performance but the impact of class size on the former has not much been investigated.

## **2.4 Appraisal of Literature**

The review on class size and students' academic achievement, showed that smaller classes are more interactive than large ones, and that teaching and learning is more effective in smaller classes than in large ones. However according to

English club, a teacher handling a larger class can adopt coping skills and be equally effective. Thus, by carrying out this study the researcher was able to establish whether teachers handling small class sizes take advantage of the class size to produce better reading outcome and or, whether those in large classes are able to compete favourably with their counterparts.

On the other hand, the findings on class size and teacher preparation show that the size of the class determines how the teacher prepares for lessons delivery and outcome. In that, for large classes lecture method may be most preferred as opposed to more interactive methods of teaching and learning. By the end of this study, the researcher was able to find out whether class size has any effect on teacher preparation.

Finally, the review concludes by highlighting the challenges associated with class size and their impact on reading outcome. This research was able to establish whether there are similar challenges whether teachers have been able to overcome them in order to improve learning outcomes.

During the review, the researcher has identified and highlighted the major gaps that were filled by carrying out this study. Such gaps are the methods teachers use to engage students during reading lessons, the level of interaction with teachers and peers, teacher preparation and lesson delivery and establish the relationship between students' academic achievement and class size.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter dealt with the method applied by the researcher in carrying out this study, it covered the design for the study, population for the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, validity of instrument, reliability of instrument, data collection and data analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The descriptive survey method was use for this study.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population's of the study were students in Adeola Odutola Grammar school in Ijebu-Ode local government area, Ogun State.

### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents for the study. A total of 120 respondent were selected randomly from .S.S 1 to .S.S 3 in Adeola Odutola grammar school in Ijebu-Ode local government.

### **3.4 Research Instrument**

Research Instrument for this research was a researcher designed questionnaire name "relationship between class size, school population and students' achievement". The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section "A" contained background information of the respondents while section "B" contained the questions.

### **3.5 Validity of Instrument**

The questionnaire was be given to the project supervisor and experts in the department for appropriate screening. After necessary correction, the instrument was given a final modification before administering to respondents.

### **3.6 Reliability of Instrument**

The researcher carried out a pilot study through the process of administering the instrument to respondents in another local government. A two weeks' time lag was allowed before collection to determine the reliability of the instrument. A test-re-test reliability was done after the questionnaires are filled.

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaires for this research work were administered by the researcher with two field assistants on a hand to hand basis. The questionnaires were collected on the same day as soon as they were filled to save time and the material from getting lost.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed by the researcher using the simple percentage method and frequency count in interpretation of the result for various findings and questions listed in the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

In this chapter, the analysis of the data collected from the sampled school will be focus on for the result interpretation. The results of the data were presented by using simple percentage method of analysis.

## Data Analysis

### Analysis Based on the Respondent's Gender:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	58	48.3%
Female	62	51.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the table above, it show that number of participant from male is 58(48.3%) while for female is 62(51.7%).

### Analysis Based on their Class:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
S.S 1	28	23.3%
S.S 2	42	35%
S.S 3	50	41.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the table above, it show that the number of students that participated in S.S 1 was 28(23.3%), S.S 2 was 42(35%) while S.S 3 was 50(41.7%).

### Analysis Based on Participants of Age Range:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
12-14	32	26.7%
15-18	40	33.3%
19 and above	48	40%

<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>
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This table shows that the number of students between the ages of 12-14 who participated in the questionnaire was 32(26.7%), 15-18 was 40(33.3%) while 19 above was 48(40%)

#### 4.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

To what extent the relationship between the class size and the academic performance of secondary students in Adeola Odutola, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria

**Table I: Analysis of the Impact of Class Size and Students Academic Performance**

No.	STATEMENT	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
1	Students have the opportunity to cheat during class exercises, test and examination in large class size	60	50	38	31.7	17	14.2	5	4.1
2	Students can do other things like copying notes in large class when lecture is going on without the teacher noticing?	10	8.3	24	20	39	32.5	47	39.2
3	Students hardly see writings on the board	5	4.2	24	20	31	25.8	60	50

	when seated at the back in a large class								
4	Smaller class sizes allow more time for teachers to help students improve their intellectual skills toward academic performance?	55	45.8	37	30.8	20	16.7	8	6.7
5	Students are very active in large class size than in small class?	48	40	40	33.3	30	25	2	1.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>		<b>163</b>		<b>137</b>		<b>122</b>	

Table 1 presents detailed results on how class size affects the academic performance of the students. The result above shows that good number of the students agree that there is a high possibility of cheating during examination in a large class; this was confirmed by 50 percent of the respondents. This means that the true performance of the students cannot be ascertained since poor students stand to benefit from the act of cheating. Also, 60 percent of the students indicated that they can hardly see the writings on the board in a large class. However, this figure was contradicted by 4.2% of them who indicate that they can clearly see writings on the board in a large class. Additionally, it can be observed that large class makes it difficult to be active in class. This was revealed from 40 percent of the students. Furthermore, 45.8 percent of the total respondents agreed that smaller class sizes

allow more time for teachers to help students develop appropriate practical skills which can increase student's performance. This means that in large classes it would be difficult for teachers to help students to develop skills to increase their performance. The findings have largely demonstrated that large class size has negative effect on students' performance. Surprisingly, 47 percent of the respondents disagreed that they can do other things like copying notes in large class when lecture is going on without the teacher noticing them. This may be attributed to the fear of being punished when caught and the desire to pay attention in class due to its perceived ambiguity of the subject. There is a strong reason to conclude that large class size could negatively affect students' performance. Students are likely to lose concentration, focus and even attention from teachers. This confirms the assertion that some small class pedagogies which could include project work where students are individually monitored and provided with continuous feedback on investigative tasks are designed to develop higher order thinking skills (Altinok and Kingdon 2012; Bosworth 2014). Consistent with some earlier studies, it has been established in this study that small class size provides learning experiences that facilitate increased collaboration and communication among students, provide helpful learning opportunities and foster student metacognitive skills through the development of information discovering and help-seeking behaviors, Altinok and Kingdon (2012); Bosworth (2014), through practical orientation and class participation. The results further confirmed the study by Azigwe *et al* (2016) which indicated that in a large class teacher find it difficult to teach effectively and efficiently leading to students not being able to also learn effectively since low participation in class activities were possible.

#### **4.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO**

What are the effects of class size and participation on the students' characteristics on academic performance?

**Table II: Analysis on Effects of Class Size and Students' Characteristics**

<b>No.</b>	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Students like sitting at the back of the class to hide from the attention of the teacher in large class size?	29	24.2	21	17.5	30	25	40	33.3
2	Teachers are likely to give more class exercise to students in smaller class size than larger class size?	47	39.2	38	31.7	25	20.8	10	8.3
3	The use of audio-visual aids in large class would make lessons more interesting?	14	11.7	17	14.2	29	24.2	60	50
4	The atmosphere in large class size is always teacher-centered with passive students?	55	45.8	31	25.8	24	20	10	8.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>		<b>107</b>		<b>108</b>		<b>120</b>	

From Table 2, it could be observed that class size has some relationship with instructional strategy be it positively related or negatively related. The result above shows that teachers do not neglect the practical aspect of biology due to large class size. 33.3 percent of the students disagreed that the teaching of practical skills is neglected in large class size. This is consistent with the findings by Aturupane *et al.* (2013) which revealed that teachers are able to use teaching strategies that fit the large class size such as group work and working on projects rather than employing pedagogies like collaborative learning and the systems and structures needed for working effectively within the context of collaborative learning are embedded in the careful sequencing of activities that follow a specific design to promote learning. This means that in terms of instructional practicability and ways of teaching, class size has no significant relationship with respect to instructional strategy. The students revealed further that the use of audio-visual aids in large class size would not be appropriate and could not make lessons interesting and 50 percent of the students held this view. The findings further showed that 39.2 percent of respondents held the opinion that teachers are more likely to teach with very little or no class exercise in a large class size. Regular exercise is an important instructional strategy which helps increase academic performance of students (Hattie, 2009). Also, 45.8 percent of the total respondents accepted that in large classes, the atmosphere is teacher-centered with passive students. This is evidence that class size has implications on instructional strategy and students' academic performance but Stephens *et al.* (2014) stated that there is no guarantee that smaller classes will automatically lead to more productive works. Similar to the evidences found in this study, Amedahe (2016) noted that discussion time becomes scrappy among students in large classes and instructors may rely on passive lecturing, assign less written homework or fewer problem sets, and may not require written papers.

### 4.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

What are the perceptions of teachers and students on class size and participation and its effects on the academic performance Secondary students?

**Table III: Analysis of Perceptions of Teachers and Students on Class Size**

No.	STATEMENT	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
1	Student-Student interaction is mostly neglected in large class size?	9	7.5	22	18.3	55	45.8	34	28.3
2	Teacher-Student interaction is mostly neglected in large class size?	38	31.7	60	50	19	15.8	3	2.5
3	Teachers easily identify students who need extra tuition and attention during lesson period in small class size than in large class size?	42	35	55	45.8	16	13.3	7	5.8
4	Teachers find it difficult to remember students by name in larger class size?	45	37.5	49	40.8	20	16.7	6	5

5	Teachers are unable to notice students who are not serious with jottings and note copying?	64	53.3	29	24.2	18	15	9	7.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>		<b>215</b>		<b>128</b>		<b>59</b>	

Table 3 above shows the result of the responses on perceptions of teachers and students on class size. 45.8 percent of the respondents indicated that student-student interaction is very high in large class size. This means that in a large class size, student – student interaction which enhances inter-student relationship and creates good social bond is achieved. This contradicts the findings by Finn *et al.* (2003) which suggested that when students are placed in smaller classes, they become more engaged both academically and socially and further argued that with strong social academic engagement, academic achievement improves. The differences in the results may be attributed to differences in social settings of where Finn *et al.* (2013) conducted their study and the current study setting. Nigerian culture embraces large social settings and people feel good with others around. Moreover, majority of the students, 31.7 percent reported that teacher-student interaction is mostly neglected in large class size. This supports the earlier study by Altinok and Kingdon (2012). Altinok and Kingdon (2012) also found that it is difficult for teachers to spot problems during lessons and give corrections, identify specific needs of the students and gear teaching to meet them, set individual targets for students, and be flexible in the use of different approaches in teaching. 40.8 percent of students agreed that teachers easily identify students who need extra tuition and attention during lesson period in small class size than in large class size. Additionally, 40.8 percent of the students believe that teachers find it difficult to remember students by name in larger class size while another 53.3 percent indicate

that teachers are unable to notice students who are not serious with jottings and note copying and this invariably has an adverse effect on the progress of the students' academic performance.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 Summary

The evidence from this study confirms that class size has a negative effect on students learning achievement. The result on effect of class size on the achievement of students as presented in table I indicates that the mean score of students taught summary writing in large class setting is 32.93 with a standard deviation of 17.21, while the mean score of students taught in small class setting is 37.89 with a standard deviation of 19.59. The mean differences show that the students taught in small class setting performed better than those taught in a large class setting.

The findings of this study on effect of class size on the learning achievement of students is in agreement with Fabunmi, Abu and Adeniyi and also Oguntoye respectively. According to Fabunmi et al, (2017) large class brings reduction to students' learning achievement. Likewise Ijaiya (2019) in his own findings adds that the seating arrangement in large class can mar the lesson and instructional process and also increase examination malpractice.

The result of this study further tolls then line of Edoabasi (2017) and Tinto (2017) whose study findings reveal that large class situation brings a decline in intrinsic motivation for study and increase in attrition. This assertion stands side by side with Stanley and Peter (2012) whose research findings on large class presented a failed learning outcome.

The findings of this study on effect of class size on learning achievement of students in urban and rural location reveals that students in urban school locations

have an edge in learning achievement than those students in rural secondary schools.

The results obtained with regards to the effects of locations in summary writing as presented in Table 2 indicates that the mean score of students in urban schools is 38.35 with a standard deviation of 17.43; while the mean score of students in rural schools is 32.25 with a standard deviation of 17.43. The mean differences in the two groups of students show that the students in urban schools have better performance than the students in rural location settings. This notable difference can be linked to the research findings presented by Andrew (2018) and Ekpunobi (2015) which support that students in urban school settings perform better than those students learning in rural locations. The better performance of the urban school students can be attributed to adequate access to good infrastructure, learning materials and instructional supervisions provided in the urban schools. In the test of hypothesis, the difference in achievement scores between the two groups of students in summary writing is found to be statistically significant. The findings of this study are also in agreement with the findings of Umoh (2011), Ene (2012) and Uzoegwu (2011) indicate that the mean achievement scores of students in the urban schools are higher than that of students in rural locations. Also, in the research findings presented by Egbe (2019) on “Effect of Mnemonics on Nigerian Senior Secondary School students achievement in English stress pattern”, Egbe found out that students in rural schools outscore the students in urban schools with mean score of 40.59 and 38.73 respectively. Egbe’s research findings here run contrary to those of Ene, Umoh and Uzoegwu in that it was not found to be statistically significant.

### **The Mean Achievement Score of Male and Female Students in Summary Writing**

The findings of this study on effect of class size on achievement of male and female students in summary writing as presented in Table 3 indicate that female students perform higher in summary writing than the male students.

The mean score of male students in summary writing is 31.51 with a standard deviation of 16.57, while the mean score of female students is 32.96 with a standard deviation value of 18.00. From the findings, the mean differences reveal that the female students outscore the male students in summary writing; but the differences between the male and female performances is found to be statistically not significant in the test of hypothesis. Nash (2019) in the work of Akabogu (2012) is of the opinion that female students perform better in creative writing and reading comprehension, but Ekpunobi (2015) opposes this assertion in his own findings. According to him female and male students in experimental schools measure equal strength in writing and that there is no definite proof of difference. However, the findings of this study on achievement of female and male in summary writing agrees with the findings of Nash (2019) which reveals that female students are better in performance than male students in essay writing but the findings disagrees with that of.

This research finding also agrees with that of Egbe (2010) where the researcher presented the mean achievement score of female students at 42.64 relative to low achievement scores of male students which is 37.10.

In the same vein, Gass and Varonis (2019) Pica, Halliday, Lewis and Mongenthaler (2017) made investigation into Gender base differences and the discoveries of their investigation raised the possibility that language learning opportunities and experiences may not be quite the same for male and female students.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to investigate the relationship between class size, school population and students' achievement using Adeola Odutola Grammar school in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. Three areas of possible impacts were investigated: impact of class size on students' academic achievement; effects of class size and students characters and perception of teachers and students in class size. The study revealed that there is the opportunity for students to cheat during class exercises, test and examination in large class size. This translates that the actual performance of the students could not be seen or reflected in their class score and this could subsequently affect them adversely in any external examination. Other impacts of large class size were difficulty in following and seeing what has been written on the class room board; difficult on the side of the teachers to devote time to help students develop appropriate practical skills, hence this can impede students' performance. Large sized classes have negative impact on the academic performance of students. It is also concluded that class size has significant impact on the appropriateness of teachers' instructional strategies. With respect to the psychological impact of class size on students' performance, it was revealed that students' feel shy to speak in large class size and also find it really hard to express themselves in a large class; also, the atmosphere becomes noisy and stressful, thereby breeding the opportunity to miss lessons without the notice of the teacher in large class size. There is therefore enough reason to agree that large class size has psychological impacts on students' academic performance. Lastly, the social impact of class size on students' academic performance revealed that though student-student interaction is enhanced in large class, teacher – student's interaction is mostly neglected in large class size. Furthermore, it was observed that teachers are not able to identify students who need extra tuition and attention during lesson period in large class size.

The study demonstrated that large class size could have adverse impact on students' academic achievement. Therefore, where the class size cannot be reduced in a given time due to challenges beyond the control of the school authorities, it is concluded that teachers and management of the school should employ rotational students' group formation and study. These groups could identify common challenges and present it to teachers for support. Furthermore, as seen from the findings that some students who sit at the back of the class find it difficult to see what the teacher writes on the board, the use of technologies such as projectors are encouraged to address the issue. As a long term measure, Government should increase budget allocation to improve schools infrastructural facilities. The Ministry of Education, policy makers, parent - teachers association, old boys/students association and other non-governmental organizations, corporate bodies and religious organizations should contribute respectively to renovate dilapidated classrooms, build more classrooms to contain the growing enrolments in the schools and provide schools with the facilities they need to make teaching and learning easier and effective.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATION**

The following recommendations are put forward based on the findings of this study:

1. The popularity of smaller classes may make it politically difficult for policymakers to increase class size in order to sustain other investments in education, even in a time of recession. However, there is some evidence that teachers and the public in general may be open to modest increases in class size in order to allow for other investments.
2. More enlightenment and seminars should be organized by Ministry of Education and school owners on pupil interactions and pupil classroom engagement, classroom engagement and teacher to pupil interactions etc. in order

to equip the teachers with skills to effectively manage their classes, even in a large class.

3. Also, adequate classrooms and other learning facilities should be provided for schools to improve the productivity level of teachers in order to improve the academic performance of students.

4. Finally, the teaching and learning environment must be made conducive enough for teacher and students to facilitate effective teaching for better academic performance.

5. The results of the study provide suggestive evidence that some changes to existing class-size policies might be politically feasible.

6. Reducing class sizes will help to improve student outcomes, but ignores the impact that student load plays in how teachers structure their teaching. Reducing class sizes and the total number of students that a teacher is responsible for teaching in a term will lead to significant improvements in student performance.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Many class size studies have been concerned with the relationship between the number of students in the classroom and student achievement levels in different subjects (Larkin & Keeves, 2014). Yet most studies supporting small classes are concerned with factors other than raw achievement (Templeton, 2012). After more than 75 years of study and investigation, most researchers of class size should agree on the following:

1. Small classes result in increased student teacher contact.
2. Reductions in class size to less than 20 students without changes in instructional methods cannot guarantee improved academic performance.
3. No single class size is optimal for all grade levels and subjects.

4. Smaller classes appear to result in greater achievement gains for students with academic, economic, and/or social disadvantages.
5. Classroom management improves when class sizes are smaller.
6. Smaller classes result in higher teacher morale and reduced stress.
7. Individualization is more likely to occur in small classes.
8. Class size reduction does not necessarily lead to adoption of dramatically different instructional methods.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **TAI SOLARIN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, OMU-IJEBU, OGUN STATE.**

These questionnaires are designed to find out the response of people concerning the research of this project works “The effect of class size in

effective teaching of social studies in junior secondary, Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State”.

**Instruction:** Please kindly respond by sincerely marking (√) in the alternative response which best suit your opinion

**Section A: Personal Data**

**Sex:** Male ( ) Female ( )  
**Class:** J.S 1 ( ) J.S.2 ( ) J.S 3 ( )  
**Age:** 10-12 ( ) 13-15 ( ) 16-18 ( )  
 19-21 ( ) 22-24 ( ) 25 and above ( )

**SECTION B: Relationship between Class Size and Academic Performance of Students**

Please tick in the appropriate option of your choice.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D
1	Teachers are likely to give more class exercise to students in smaller class size than larger class size?				
2	Teachers easily identify students who need extra tuition and attention during lesson period in small class size than in large class size?				
3	Large class size contribute to low academic performance				
4	Smaller class size motivate students to be more engaged with academic activities				

5	My class size is above 30-35				
6	Smaller class size are easy to control than larger class size				

**SECTION C: Effects of Class Size and Students Participation**

7	Students have the opportunity to cheat during class exercises, test and examination in large class size				
8	Students can do other things like copying notes in large class when lecture is going on without the teacher noticing?				
9	Students hardly see writings on the board when seated at the back in a large class				
10	Students like sitting at the back of the class to hide from the attention of the teacher in large class size?				
11	The use of audio-visual aids in large class would make lessons more interesting?				
12	Student-Student interaction is mostly neglected in large class size?				

13	Teachers find it difficult to remember students by name in larger class size?				
14	Teachers are unable to notice students who are not serious with jottings and note copying?				
15	Inadequate teachers leads to an overcrowded classroom				

**SECTION D: Perception of Student on Class Size and Student**

**Performance on Academic Performance**

16	Smaller class sizes allow more time for teachers to help students improve their intellectual skills toward academic performance?				
17	Students are very active in large class size than in small class?				
18	The atmosphere in large class size is always teacher-centered with passive students?				
19	Teacher-Student interaction is mostly neglected in large class size?				
20	Students participate more in small class size				