TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON TEACHING LARGE CLASSES IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS:IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING.
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Introduction and Background.

- Among the problems facing the Nigeria educational system is large and poorly resourced classes. This has become a reality that educators must see as a challenge and must face squarely. The social -demand for formal education in Nigeria resulted into an upsurge increase in school enrolment with a dramatic increase in class size thereby resulting into high teacher – pupil rates (Onwu, 1998)Kolo& Ojo 2005),Ijaiya, 1999). Class size is a big factor in determining the attainment of educational goals and objectives. The recommended students population in a single classroom should not exceed 1: 30 or at most a maximum of 35(teacher: student ratio; 1:35) (UNESCO, 2000, FGN, 2006).In view of this principle which is generally affirmed by many people, one might expect strict adherence to this. But statistics from Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education shows that as at 1994, there were 360,782 teachers and 18,296,202 pupil (teacher- pupil ratio of about 1:50) in 39,221 primary schools. Likewise public secondary schools experienced this upsurge. As at 2005, students' enrolment in Nigeria public secondary schools were 5, 422,611 and 122,477 teachers given teacher – pupil ratio of about 1: 45. And this keeps escalating annually.
- Other related literatures were reviewed to guide the course of this study.

Research Questions.

Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

- What is the class by class enrolment in the sampled schools?
- What is the perception of teachers as regards teaching large and poorly resourced classes?
- Is there any significant difference between the male and female teachers' perception on teaching large and poorly resourced classes?
- Is there any significant difference between the old and young teachers' perception to teaching large and poorly resourced classes?

- **Methodology.**
Design.
   Descriptive survey research design was employed.
Sample.
   Odigbo Local Government Area Of ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria was used purposively to conduct the study. 10 schools were sampled using Simple random sampling technique from the existing sixteen secondary schools in the L.G.A. This gives a sample % of 67.
A total of 250 teachers were sampled out of 653 teachers in all the sampled schools using stratified random sampling techniques based on the following strata:
Old and young,
male and female. The criterion used for selecting the old and the young teachers was based on their teaching experience.

Two instruments were used.

A. The use of class registers to obtain the current students enrolment in the sampled schools.

- INSTRUMENTS.

A. A self developed instrument titled Teaching Large Classes Questionnaire (TLCQ) containing 15 items based on two points Likert scale of Agree (A) and Disagree (D).

The instrument was validated and found reliable with a reliability coefficient of 0.85 using test- retest method on five schools that were not part of the sampled schools with an interval of one month.

Data Analysis.
Data were analyzed using percentages, mean, standard deviation and t. test statistics
Result and Discussion.
Research Question 1.
What is the class by class enrolment in the sampled schools?
Table 1 revealed that all classes in the sampled schools were large except in SS1A in school D, E and H. It was found that these are science classes.
The finding revealed further that at the senior classes, commercial classes, arts and humanities, are larger than the science classes.

Research Question 2.
What is the perception of teachers as regards teaching large and poorly resourced classes?
Response Ratings of all the 15 items.

Items	Ratings.
1	73% and 27%
2	65% and 35%
3	67% and 33%
4	66% and 34%
5	67% and 33%
6	77% and 23%
7	64% and 36%
8	75% and 25%
9	66% and 34%
10	77% and 23%

On coping strategies as specified by item 11 – 15.

Items	Responses.
11.	77% and 23%
12.	78% and 22%
13.	80% and 20%
14.	70% and 30%
15.	40% and 60%

Research Question 3.
Is there any significant difference between the male and female teachers' perception on teaching large and poorly resourced classes?
Result:
No significant difference was found. The t. calculated value is 0.015 which is lower than the critical value t of 1.86.
Research Question 4.
Is there any significant difference between the old and young teachers' perception to teaching large and poorly resourced classes?
Result:
The finding revealed a significant difference. The t. calculated is 8.06 which is higher than the critical value t. of 1.96

Conclusion and Recommendations.
- From the findings of this study, one can conclude that large and poorly resourced classes are not a better preference for teachers in Nigerian secondary schools. The findings also cast some doubts on the skills of the teachers in dealing with the problem. E.g. the use of negative reinforcement like punishment is not educationally expedient.
  Based on the findings the following recommendations are hereby made:
- Shortage of classrooms and teachers in Nigerian secondary schools need to be treated as a national crisis worthy of the attention of both the federal and state governments.
- In the realities of large and poorly resourced classes teachers should shift from just teaching to doing their best in facilitating learning rather than just supplying information. The use group learning, debate, quiz and so on. should likewise be encouraged
- . Finally, seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers to sharpen their skills of teaching.

- **Implications of the study on qualitative Educational Planning.**
- Educational planners in Nigeria should be mindful of carrying capacity in each secondary school just as what is obtainable in our tertiary institutions when admitting students for education programme because there is general demand for information by parents, school teachers, school principals, provincial and state officials, and national officials in ministries of education who want to know more about student achievements, and the factors that affect it, at the level of the education system (that is, student, class, school, province/state, nation) for which they are responsible.
- One of the problems associated with attending to these enquiries is that it is not always the same factors that affect student achievements for all decision-making levels, for all subjects, for all age groups, for all regions of a country, or for all countries, hence the need for a complete reconceptualization of what information should be collected in order to assist with planning the quality of education.