

THE EFFECT OF TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO ON TEACHING- LEARNING PROCESS IN BAUCHI STATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper was to trace out the effect of Teacher-Pupil ratio on teaching-learning process in Bauchi State primary schools. The population of this study constituted sixty respondents both school heads and teachers drawn from six selected primary schools in the state. The outcome of the study revealed that primary schools are overcrowded and that overcrowded classes retard effective teaching- learning activities. Teachers were therefore facing instructional, physical and evaluation problems. However it was suggested that Government/Stakeholders should establish more schools as well as to recruit adequate qualify teachers so as to foster effective teaching-learning process. The launching of Universal Basic Education brought about a substantial increase in enrolment which in turn brings one important question to the fore. What are the effects of rapid enrolment on the teaching-learning process of pupils in primary school?

Keywords: Effect, Teacher- pupil ratio, classroom, overcrowded and Teaching- learning.

Introduction

The success or failure of UBE lies in the hand of the teacher. Unfortunately with the expected take-off of the UBE program, the problem that beseeched it is very much with us. One of the major problems confronting this program is inadequate number of teachers. Even without the UBE program, the number of teachers generally in Nigeria is inadequate. The UBE program therefore is going to aggravate the situation. Presently, government estimates that annually 300,000 Teachers are needed for the successful implementation of the program. Little wonder then that the participants at a two- day local level policy dialogue on UBE held in Bauchi, 5th – 6th April, 2000 noted that the present school facilities on ground such as Teachers are grossly inadequate for the take off of the program.

Related Literature

A Classroom

According to Advanced Learner's Dictionary third edition, "a classroom is a room in a school or college where groups of students are taught". In other words a classroom may be seen as a

place where group of pupils are put together for the purpose of collective instructions. Members of the class have common goals, interests, aptitudes and attainments. In a short way, we can say that a classroom consists of homogeneous group of pupils, who will work and progress together.

Teacher- pupil ratio

According to the training manual for teachers and school managers (2015) stated that the National Policy on Education emphasizes the pupils'- teacher at the basic level to be 1:35 for effective learning at primary school level, (1:15) one to a maximum of fifteen at Nursery level while, the policy provides for 1:40 ratio for post basic.

Overcrowded Classroom

A classroom is said to be overcrowded in which the number of students exceed the optimum level such that it causes hindrance in the teaching- learning process. The classroom is the most important area within a school. The students spend most of their time, hopefully in an environment conducive to learning. The entire design of classroom reflects the priorities, goals, philosophy, personality and teaching style of the student. Student learning behavior can be enhanced when teachers take time to create a classroom climate in which pupils feel comfortable with their teachers and mates. It is unfortunate that in our society classrooms are overcrowded.

Focusing on the effect of this very serious problem prevailing in our schools, one thing is very clear that teaching in such environments, where the number of school pupils is exceeding the acceptable limit, effective teaching-learning is drastically retarded.

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

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

Ijaiya (1999) found a weak positive correlation between the opinion of teachers and students. Findings showed that over crowdedness diminished the quality and quality of teaching and learning with serious implications for attainment of educational goals. It was felt that additional buildings and furniture should give priority in educational planning at all levels.

Overcrowded classroom is not only the problem of Pakistan but it has now become universal problem. Phillips (2011) submitted a report conducted by the teachers union which showed that the number of overcrowded classes in New York was the largest, in the last ten years as a result of attrition.

From the foregoing we can conclude that overcrowded classroom tend to be a global issue affecting most schools especially in developing and under developed countries. A teacher in the classroom is a main instrument for bringing about qualitative improvement in teaching and learning activities. Such quality is maximized where there are enabling and supportive environments where the pupils participate actively in the process and where pupils, teachers and schools have opportunities for institutional growth. The classrooms are grossly overcrowded.

Objectives

This study aimed at:

1. Tracing out teacher-pupil ratio in Bauchi State primary schools.
2. Determining the ways through which teacher- pupil ratio is maintained.
3. Proffering possible solutions and suggestion to the problems identified.

Research Questions

In view of the introduction, this paper was guided by the following three questions;

1. How overcrowded classrooms do affects the teaching-learning process?
2. How do teachers manage academic activities?
3. Which participatory strategies do teachers use in teaching-learning process?

Significance of the Study

The findings from this research paper were hoped to be of great significance in the following ways:

The findings from this paper should be of great importance to government, stakeholders, policy makers, teachers, and parents in taking appropriate measures toward curtailing overcrowding of pupils in schools.

To serve as a diagnosis for the problems of overcrowding in schools generally.

To put forward suggestions towards minimizing overcrowding in schools gearing towards improving the quality of primary school education in the society.

Scope of the Study

The main focus of this study is on the “Effect of Teacher-Pupil Ratio in teaching-learning process” of Primary School Education in Bauchi state- Nigeria. Due to lack of time and financial constraint the study sampled six (6) primary schools in the state as a case study.

Methodology

There are many methods of gathering data, but for the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted two methods which are thought to be suitable for this research, namely: Questionnaire and Interview. The target population of this research composes of primary school teachers and Head teachers in Bauchi state. Considering the size of the population and the time frame, six primary schools were selected for sampling, ten in each of the selected schools. They were randomly selected. A total number of 60 questionnaires were distributed with the help of some teaching staff. The researcher conducted verbal interview with the few purposively selected teaching staff who voluntarily participated in the exercise for further verification and confirmation of data. The data collected were then analyzed and presented using simple percentages.

Schools Sampled:

S/NO	SCHOOLS	NO OF QUE AD	NO RETURN	%
1	Kobi Primary School Bauchi	10	10	16.7%
2	Bayara Primary School	10	10	16.7%
3	Gyamzo Central Primary School Toro	10	10	16.7%
4	Kayauri Primary School	10	10	16.7%
5	Waziri Mazadu Central Pri School Dass	10	10	16.7%
6	Kuletu Primary School	10	10	16.7%
	Total	60	60	100%

Data Analysis and Discussion of Result

S/No	Variables	Yes	%	No	%
1	Both male & female children now have access to schooling	52	86.7%	08	13.3%
2	School fees have been abolished in primary schools	55	91.7%	05	08.3%
3	Primary schools have enough buildings & classrooms	27	45%	33	55%
4	Primary schools have adequate qualify teachers	15	25%	45	75%
5	Schools have enough instructional materials & libraries	13	21.7%	47	78.3%
6	Classrooms are overcrowded with school pupils	58	96.7%	02	03.3%
7	Teachers often use lecture method in teaching-learning	50	83.3%	10	16.7%

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8	School Pupils often get individual assistance from teachers	12	20%	48	80%
9	School pupils actively participate in teaching-learning proc	12	20%	48	80%
10	Teachers often give assigns &H/work, mark &return to pup	14	23.3%	46	76.7%

This section presents the result of the finding. On both male and female pupils now have access to schooling majority 52 (86.7%) respondents agreed while, a few 08 (13.3%) disagreed. This means that the enrolment figures in primary schools are perceived as a positive achievement as more children are now having access to schooling.

When the researcher asked the respondents on enrolment increases, they all pointed out that the number of pupils had doubled in all schools.

On whether school fees in primary schools have been abolished or not majority, 55 (91.7%) respondents indicated that schools fees have been abolished while a negligible, 05 (8.3%) indicated no. The school fees often forced poor families not to send their children to schools. Indeed, a school fee was a stumbling block for poor families to enroll their wards in schools to acquire education.

On whether primary schools have enough buildings and classrooms for teaching-learning process few, 27 (45%) respondents agreed while majority, 33 (55%) respondents disagreed. The result however revealed that primary schools don't have enough buildings and classrooms for teaching-learning.

On the availability of adequate qualify primary school teachers a few, 15 (25%) respondents indicated yes. Majority 45 (75%) respondents indicated no. government and the concern are advised to train and recruit more teachers so as to go hand in hand with the increased enrolment.

Item five above shows that primary schools lack adequate instructional materials that fosters effective teaching-learning activities, because majority of the respondents 47 (78.3%) approved that. Only 13 (21.7%) respondents agreed on the availability of instructional material. It is imperative to note that majority of the respondents agreed that the current situation was not impressive since most important resources both human and materials were not sufficient. These shortages in turn hamper the quality teaching-learning progress as well as quality education offered in schools.

As shown in item six on overcrowded classrooms 58 (96.7%) respondents indicated that classrooms are overcrowded. A few 02 (03.3%) disagreed. The above result however revealed that classrooms are overcrowded. Based on the National policy on education the Teacher- Pupil ratio is 1:35 pupils. Due to population boom there has been a substantial increase of pupils overweighing classrooms in place in all the visited primary schools in the state as a result of large numbers of pupils in classes others have to sit on the floor some very close to the chalkboard.

On the use of lecture method by primary school teachers majority 50 (83.3%) said yes only few 10 (16.7%) indicated no. This means that most teachers use lecture method while teaching. The study observed that most teachers employed the lecture teaching method; they rarely applied modern methods. Some of the respondents argued that the use of lecture method was attributed by several factors such as overcrowded classrooms, and lack of teachers' motivation.

On whether school pupils get individual assistance from teachers as well as pupils participation during teaching-learning process only few 12 (20%) agreed while majority 48 (80%) disagreed respectively. Based on the above results one may concluded that pupils did not get enough individual assistance from their teachers during teaching-learning process nor fully involved during the teaching-learning process respectively.

On whether teachers often give the pupils home work and assignments, mark and return them on time few, 14 (23.3%) respondents indicated yes while majority, 46 (76.7%) disagreed. When asked as to why they do not give the assignments and homework to pupils. They commented that it was due to overcrowdings and time limit for marking the works and return pupils' exercise books in time.

It is obvious that effective learning depends on academic qualification, application of teaching strategies, teaching materials and healthy school environments. All observed teachers were academically qualified and had teaching experience of more than five to seven years.

Suggestions

As the population/pupils' enrollment increases so also Government/Stakeholders should establish schools, equip them and recruit adequate qualify teachers for effective teaching-learning.

Government/stakeholders should create enabling conditions for locally initiated and designed quality improvement initiatives by identifying and re-distributing resources to schools that

are severely under-resourced, under-staffed and have large numbers of enrolled pupils in classrooms.

Government should design strategies that enhance teachers' capacity and interest to utilize available teaching-learning resources within and outside the school. These strategies should include organizing school-based training programs for teachers in the use of varied teaching-learning resources and teaching methods. Government should support teachers over infrastructures. Priority should be given to teachers. It is internationally recognized that, the most important thing in teaching and learning process is the interaction between motivated, competent teachers and their pupils. Government should therefore find the best way to motivate teachers in both career development and economic well being. Without motivated and competent teachers focused on pupil learning, all the reforms will not be achieved. If teachers are at the heart of education, they should also be at the heart of our educational policy and practice, budgets and political rhetoric as well.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to trace out the effect of Teacher-Pupil Ratio on teaching-learning process in primary schools in Bauchi State-Nigeria with reference to six selected primary schools to represent the entire state. The interest of the researcher was to evaluate hasty pupil enrolment in schools in relation to the quality of teaching-learning process. The general perception of respondents towards enrolment increase in primary schools was positive and has brought some improvements in access to education for boys and girls in the state. The main conclusion of this study is that the expansions of enrolments of pupils have negative effects on teaching-learning process in relation to quality of teaching-learning progress. Consequently, the massive enrolment of school pupils led to shortage of resources both human and material resources which constitute problems in the overall progress of teaching-learning process in primary schools. Pupils no longer participate actively in the process of teaching-learning most teachers ended up employing lecture method to the detriment of modern methods of teaching. Generally, based on the data gathered by this study, it is obvious that primary schools in Bauchi state are still far from meeting the millennium development goals targeted towards reducing illiteracy among school pupils and providing quality education for all.

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