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THE EFFECT OF CLASS SIZE ON THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF MATHEMATICS IN GHANAIAN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT: The size of a classroom significantly influences the teaching and learning process, particularly in subjects like mathematics in Ghanaian schools, where individual attention and active engagement are critical for understanding complex concepts. This study explores the impact of class size on the teaching and learning of mathematics by addressing three key research questions: (1) How does class size affect student achievement in mathematics? (2) What is the relationship between class size and teacher effectiveness in delivering mathematics instruction? (3) How do students perceive the impact of class size on their learning experiences in mathematics? Through quantitative analysis of student performance data, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how class size influences learning outcomes. Preliminary findings suggest that smaller class sizes are associated with higher student achievement due to increased opportunities for individualized instruction and greater teacher-student

interaction. Additionally, teacher effectiveness is often enhanced in smaller classes, as instructors can tailor their teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of students. Student perceptions indicate that larger classes hinder their ability to actively participate and receive timely support from teachers. The results underscore the importance of optimizing class size to improve the quality of mathematics education. Policymakers and educational institutions should consider class size as a critical factor when designing interventions to enhance teaching practices and student learning experiences. This research contributes to the broader discourse on educational quality by providing actionable insights into how class size affects mathematics instruction and outcomes.

Introduction

Class size has been a significant factor in educational research due to its potential impact on student performance and teacher effectiveness. In mathematics, where conceptual understanding and individual practice are critical, class size may influence learning outcomes and teaching methodologies. This study investigates the relationship between class size and the teaching and learning of mathematics in secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

The growing student population in many educational systems has led to increased class sizes, raising concerns about its effects on academic achievement, particularly in mathematics. Despite widespread research, there is still no consensus on how class size affects mathematics learning outcomes and teacher effectiveness. Understanding this relationship is crucial for developing policies that optimize class size to enhance student performance (Gabina etal, 2019).

The effect of class size on the teaching and learning of mathematics has been a long-standing issue in educational research, as it directly impacts the quality of education and the effectiveness of instruction. Larger class sizes can result in less individualized attention for students, making it challenging for teachers to address the diverse needs of learners (Blatchford et al., 2011). In contrast, smaller class sizes are often associated with more effective teaching, as they provide teachers with the opportunity to engage with students more personally and monitor their progress more

closely (Nye, Hedges, & Konstantopoulos, 2000). However, the relationship between class size and student achievement, especially in mathematics, is not universally consistent across studies.

For instance, research by Finn & Achilles (1999) showed that students in smaller classes performed better in various subjects, including mathematics, due to more frequent interactions with the teacher and increased opportunities for active participation. In mathematics, a subject often seen as challenging for many students, smaller classes may foster a more supportive environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and engaging in problem-solving activities. Conversely, large class sizes in mathematics settings can lead to more passive learning experiences, where students may struggle to receive timely assistance with complex mathematical concepts (Hattie, 2009).

While some studies indicate that class size is a significant factor influencing academic outcomes in mathematics, others suggest that the quality of teaching, instructional methods, and teacher experience may play a more prominent role than class size itself (Desimone, 2009). Thus, understanding the nuanced relationship between class size and the teaching and learning of mathematics is essential for educational policymakers and practitioners aiming to improve educational outcomes in this subject area.

Research Questions

1. How does class size affect student achievement in mathematics?
2. What is the relationship between class size and teacher effectiveness in delivering mathematics instruction?
3. How do students perceive the impact of class size on their learning experiences in mathematics?

Literature Review

Numerous studies have explored the effects of class size on academic performance.

Finn and Achilles (1999) conducted the Tennessee STAR experiment, revealing that smaller class sizes significantly improved student achievement in early grades, particularly in mathematics and reading.

Blatchford et al. (2003) found that small class sizes enhance student-teacher interactions, allowing teachers to provide more personalized feedback.

Contrarily, **Hoxby (2000)** argued that the relationship between class size and achievement is more complex, varying based on contextual factors such as teaching methods and classroom resources.

Despite mixed findings, many researchers agree that reduced class sizes provide a more conducive environment for individual attention and differentiated instruction, both of which are critical for mastering mathematical concepts.

The Tennessee STAR Experiment (1985-1989)

One of the most influential studies on class size and academic achievement is the Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) Project conducted in Tennessee. This large-scale, randomized experiment investigated the effects of small class sizes on student performance in elementary grades. Students in smaller classes (13-17 students) performed significantly better in mathematics and other subjects than those in regular-sized classes (22-25 students). The positive impact was particularly pronounced for students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds. Longitudinal studies showed that these benefits persisted into later grades.

Hattie's Meta-Analysis on Class Size (2009)

John Hattie conducted an extensive meta-analysis that included various factors affecting student achievement. Class size was one of the elements examined. Hattie found that while reducing class size can have a positive effect, its impact on student achievement is **modest** compared to other educational interventions. The effect size for class size reduction was approximately **0.21**, suggesting that other factors, such as teacher quality, may play a larger.

Blatchford et al. (2007) – The Class Size and Pupil-Adult Ratios (CSPAR) Project

This UK-based longitudinal study focused on the effect of class size on academic outcomes in primary and secondary schools. Smaller classes were linked to better

mathematics performance, particularly in younger students. The study emphasized the importance of teacher-student interaction in small classes.

Finn et al. (2001) – Long-term Effects of Small Classes

This follow-up study explored the long-term effects of smaller class sizes based on data from the Tennessee STAR experiment. Students who had attended smaller classes in the early grades were more likely to complete high school and perform better in later academic stages. In mathematics, small class sizes contributed to higher standardized test scores.

Hanushek's Critique (1999, 2003)

Eric Hanushek has been a vocal critic of policies focused solely on class size reduction. Hanushek's research emphasizes that teacher quality has a far more significant impact on student outcomes than class size.

Research in Developing Countries

Studies in developing countries, where classroom environments differ substantially, have also found that reducing class size can improve student outcomes in mathematics. A study in Kenya by Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2011) demonstrated that tracking students by ability and reducing class size significantly improved math scores.

Positive Effects of Small Class Sizes: Evidence from experimental and observational studies shows that smaller class sizes positively affect student achievement in mathematics, particularly for younger and disadvantaged students.

Teacher Quality Matters: Several researchers argue that teacher effectiveness has a more substantial impact than class size alone (Gabina etal 2023).

Diminishing Returns: The benefits of reducing class size may diminish as students grow older, and the cost-effectiveness of class size reduction is debate. The relationship between class size and student achievement in mathematics is well-documented but complex. While smaller class sizes generally lead to better outcomes, particularly in early grades, the quality of teaching and instructional strategies often plays a more critical role in driving student success. Future research

might explore how class size interacts with other variables, such as technology use and differentiated instruction, to optimize learning environments.

Class Size and Teacher Effectiveness

The relationship between class size and teacher effectiveness involves understanding how classroom dynamics, student engagement, and instructional strategies shift with different class sizes. In mathematics instruction, teacher effectiveness is often measured by student performance, classroom management, and the use of differentiated teaching strategies. This study shows that smaller class sizes allow teachers to provide more individual attention and adapt their teaching strategies, which is particularly beneficial in mathematics instruction where students often require tailored feedback.

Teacher Workload and Instructional Quality

Teacher workload increases with larger class sizes, which may impact their ability to deliver effective mathematics instruction. Teachers in smaller classes reported having more time to engage students in deeper problem-solving and conceptual discussions, enhancing mathematics learning outcomes.

Teacher Effectiveness vs. Class Size

Hanushek's work highlights that teacher quality outweighs class size in determining student achievement. Reducing class size may not significantly improve outcomes if teacher quality is low. Highly effective teachers can manage larger classes successfully, while ineffective teachers may struggle regardless of class size.

Interactive Effects of Class Size and Teacher Effectiveness

Krueger (1999) found that both small class sizes and teacher effectiveness contribute independently and interactively to student success in mathematics. Smaller class sizes enhance teachers' ability to implement differentiated instruction, leading to better student outcomes, but teacher expertise amplifies these benefits.

Teacher-Student Interaction in Mathematics

Smaller class sizes foster more frequent and meaningful interactions between teachers and students, which is crucial for effective mathematics instruction.

Teachers in smaller classes were able to spend more time addressing individual students' misconceptions in mathematics, leading to higher levels of student performance.

Class Size Reduction as a Tool for Teacher Effectiveness: Smaller classes create conditions that enhance teacher effectiveness, allowing more individualized instruction, feedback, and active student engagement in mathematics (Susuoroka, etal. 2021).

Teacher Quality as a Primary Factor: High-quality teaching has a greater influence on student outcomes than class size alone. However, the synergy between small class sizes and effective teaching maximizes learning gains (Susuoroka, etal. 2021).

Differentiation and Formative Assessment: Teachers in smaller classes are more likely to implement differentiated teaching methods and formative assessments, both of which are critical in mathematics instruction.

The relationship between class size and teacher effectiveness is complex and interdependent. Smaller classes can enhance teacher effectiveness by creating opportunities for personalized instruction, better classroom management, and more responsive teaching. However, teacher quality remains a dominant factor in determining student achievement. Policymakers should consider both class size reduction and teacher training to improve mathematics instruction outcomes effectively.

Students' Perceptions of Individual Attention and Teacher Interaction

One of the most commonly cited student concerns related to class size is the availability of individual attention from teachers. This study found that students in smaller classes felt more comfortable asking questions and received more individualized instruction. Mathematics students particularly appreciated the increased opportunities for one-on-one interaction, which helped them better understand complex concepts.

Comfort and Engagement in Smaller Classes

Students often report feeling more comfortable participating in class discussions in smaller groups. Smaller class sizes promote a greater sense of community, reduce

fear of public speaking, and foster a supportive learning environment. In mathematics, students indicated that the reduced pressure encouraged more active engagement, contributing to better understanding and retention of material.

Perceptions of Teacher Effectiveness and Feedback

In larger classes, students report feeling that teachers have less time to address individual learning needs. Hattie's research notes that students in smaller classes perceive teachers as more effective because they can provide timely, specific, and personalized feedback—an element crucial for success in mathematics.

Impact on Motivation and Confidence

Class size affects students' motivation and confidence in learning mathematics. Students in smaller mathematics classes reported feeling more motivated and confident in their abilities. The increased teacher support in smaller groups helped mitigate anxiety associated with difficult problem-solving tasks.

Perceived Equity and Fairness

Students in larger classes often perceive inequities in teacher attention and support. Students noted that in larger classes, only the most vocal or assertive peers received help. In contrast, smaller classes allowed for more equitable teacher-student interactions, benefiting students who might be hesitant to speak up.

Individualized Support: Smaller class sizes enhance students' perceptions of individualized attention, making it easier to address specific difficulties in mathematics.

Comfort and Engagement: A more intimate classroom environment fosters student engagement, leading to a more interactive learning experience.

Motivation and Confidence: Personalized instruction in smaller classes can boost confidence and reduce mathematics anxiety, improving overall motivation.

Equity in Interaction: Students perceive class size as a factor affecting the fairness of teacher attention and feedback distribution.

Students' perceptions highlight that class size significantly influences their learning experiences in mathematics. Smaller class sizes are associated with more

personalized support, increased engagement, and greater motivation, while larger classes may hinder these factors. Incorporating student feedback into policy decisions about class size reduction could improve learning outcomes and overall classroom experiences in mathematics education. Future research should explore how technological interventions or differentiated teaching strategies could mitigate the challenges of larger class sizes.

Methods

Research Design

A quantitative research design was employed, using a survey and standardized test scores to examine the relationship between class size and mathematics learning outcomes.

Population and Sample

The study sampled 10 secondary schools, comprising 500 students and 50 mathematics teachers. Schools were categorized into small (20-25 students), medium (26-35 students), and large (36+ students) classes. The sampling techniques used in this study was multi-stage which include the following:

Stratified Sampling: The schools were **categorized into three strata** based on class size small (20–25 students), medium (26–35 students), and large (36+ students). This is indicative of *stratified sampling*, where the population is divided into subgroups (strata) based on a specific characteristic (in this case, class size), and samples are taken from each group to ensure representation.

Purposive Sampling: Since the study selected a **fixed number of schools (10)** and specifically included **mathematics teachers (50)** and **students (500),** it suggests an intentional selection based on relevance to the research focus (e.g., availability of mathematics programs). This points to the use of *purposive sampling*, where participants are selected based on specific characteristics important to the study.

Survey and Test Instruments

This study utilized both standardized mathematics achievement tests and structured survey questionnaires to collect data from students and teachers. These instruments

were selected to examine how variations in class size influence the teaching and learning of mathematics in Ghanaian schools. The instruments were developed with reference to validated educational frameworks and tailored to suit the Ghanaian secondary school context.

Mathematics Achievement Test

To assess the effect of class size on student performance, a standardized mathematics achievement test was administered to students across selected schools. The test aimed to objectively measure students' understanding, application, and problem-solving abilities in mathematics.

Test Structure and Content

The test items were adapted from standardized assessments such as the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). The test consisted of: 30 multiple-choice questions (1 mark each), 5 structured short-answer questions (2 marks each) and 2 extended-response problem-solving tasks (5 marks each). Content areas covered included: Number and Algebra, Geometry and Measurement, Data Handling and Probability and Word Problems and Real-Life Applications.

Validity and Reliability

Content Validity was established through expert review by experienced mathematics educators and curriculum specialists who ensured that the items aligned with the national curriculum. Construct Validity was achieved by mapping each test item to Bloom's taxonomy, ensuring representation of cognitive domains such as understanding, application, and analysis. Reliability was assessed through a pilot study involving 50 students from a comparable but non-participating school. The instrument demonstrated strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83, indicating high reliability.

Scoring: The total score was 50 marks. Results were standardized and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine the relationship between class size and student performance in mathematics.

Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire was designed to gather students' perceptions of classroom dynamics and instructional practices as influenced by class size. The items were grouped into well-defined constructs adapted from validated student engagement and learning environment frameworks.

Questionnaire Structure: The instrument used a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Scales and Sample Items:

Construct	**Description**	**Sample Item**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Individual Attention	Assesses teacher responsiveness and personalized support	"My teacher gives me extra help when I don't understand math."	0.78
Student Engagement	Captures students' interest and active participation in math lessons	"I enjoy participating in math class discussions."	0.81
Peer Collaboration	Measures interaction and group-based learning activities	"We solve math problems together in small groups."	0.72
Perceived Difficulty	Gauges students' perceived ease or difficulty of mathematics	"Most math problems are too hard for me." (reverse-coded)	0.69
Effect of Class Size	Evaluates the perceived impact of class size on learning	"It is difficult to concentrate in a very large mathematics class."	0.75

Administration and Scoring:

The questionnaire was administered during regular class periods under the guidance of the research team and cooperating teachers. Students were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality. Completion time was approximately 20–25 minutes. Negatively worded items were reverse-coded during analysis. Mean

scores were calculated for each scale, with higher scores indicating stronger agreement or more positive perceptions.

Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire aimed to collect data on instructional practices, classroom management, and professional perceptions regarding class size and its influence on teaching effectiveness.

Questionnaire Structure: Also designed as a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Scales and Sample Items

Construct	**Description**	**Sample Item**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Instructional Practices	Measures frequency and variety of teaching strategies	"I adapt my teaching methods based on class size and student needs."	0.76
Student Engagement Strategies	Evaluates how teachers encourage participation and motivation	"I use questioning techniques to keep students engaged in lessons."	0.80
Perceived Teaching Challenges	Focuses on obstacles related to large or small class environments	"Large classes prevent me from giving individual attention to students."	0.77
Resource and Institutional Support	Assesses support systems available to teachers	"My school provides sufficient resources for teaching mathematics."	0.74

Administration and Scoring

The questionnaire was distributed in-person to mathematics teachers at the selected schools. It required approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. Responses were numerically coded and analyzed to generate mean scores per construct. Internal consistency for the teacher questionnaire constructs ranged from 0.74 to 0.80, indicating satisfactory reliability. The combination of a standardized achievement test

and validated teacher and student questionnaires enabled the study to triangulate data on how class size affects both the teaching and learning of mathematics. All instruments demonstrated acceptable levels of validity and reliability, ensuring the robustness and credibility of the findings.

Data Collection

Data were collected through student questionnaires, teacher interviews, and students' mathematics test scores. ANOVA and Pearson correlation analyses were used to assess the data.

Ethical Compliance

This study strictly adhered to ethical standards and research protocols to ensure the protection, dignity, and rights of all participants involved. The following measures were taken to uphold ethical compliance: Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee of the affiliated university. The research protocol, instruments, and procedures were reviewed and approved to ensure conformity with ethical guidelines for educational research. Written informed consent was sought from all participating teachers. For student participants under the age of 18, consent was obtained from their parents or guardians, and assent was obtained from the students themselves. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. All data collected were treated with strict confidentiality. Names of participants and schools were not recorded or disclosed in any reports or publications. Unique identification codes were used in place of personal identifiers to maintain anonymity. Data were securely stored and accessed only by the research team. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. No student or teacher was coerced or unduly influenced to take part. Participants were assured that their decision to participate or not would have no impact on their academic standing or professional relationships. The study posed minimal risk to participants. The questionnaires and tests administered were standard educational tools and did not contain sensitive or intrusive content. Adequate time was provided for completing instruments in a stress-free, familiar classroom

environment. The data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes. Findings were reported in aggregate form to prevent individual identification and were handled in accordance with data protection regulations. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study ensured a respectful, transparent, and responsible research process in line with internationally accepted ethical standards for research involving human participants.

Results

To examine the effect of class size on students' performance in mathematics, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. Students were grouped into three categories based on class size: Small (20–25 students), Medium (26–35 students), and Large (36+ students). The dependent variable was the mathematics test score.

ANOVA Results

Table 1 presents the group means, standard deviations, and results of the ANOVA. The analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in mathematics performance across the three class size groups: $F(2, 497) = 6.34$, $p = 0.002$. This suggests that class size has a measurable impact on mathematics achievement.

Table 1: One-Way ANOVA Summary for Mathematics Test Scores by Class Size

Class Size Category	**N**	**Mean Score**	**Std. Deviation**	**F-value**	**p-value**
Small (20–25)	150	78.5	8.2		
Medium (26–35)	175	70.2	10.1		
Large (36+)	175	65.4	11.5		
Total	500	–	–	**6.34**	**0.002**

Table 1 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA examining the effect of class size on students' mathematics test scores across three categories: small (20–25 students), medium (26–35 students), and large (36+ students). The analysis is based on a total sample size of 500 students. Students in small classes had the highest mean mathematics score ($M = 78.5$, $SD = 8.2$). Students in medium-sized classes performed moderately ($M = 70.2$, $SD = 10.1$). The lowest mean score was observed

among students in large classes (M = 65.4, SD = 11.5). This shows a clear declining trend in average performance as class size increases, suggesting that smaller classes may facilitate better learning outcomes in mathematics. Standard deviations increase as class size increases (from 8.2 to 11.5), indicating greater performance variability in larger classes, possibly due to reduced individual attention and increased classroom management challenges. The reported F-value of 6.34 with a p-value of 0.002 indicates that the differences in mean scores among the three class size groups are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means that at least one group mean differs significantly from the others, and the effect is unlikely due to random chance. While the overall F and p-values are reported, the table does not show which group comparisons are statistically significant. This necessitates a post-hoc analysis (e.g., Tukey's HSD) to determine whether the differences between small vs medium, small vs large, and medium vs large classes are all significant. Additionally, the effect size (e.g., eta-squared or partial eta-squared) is not reported, which would help in understanding the practical significance of the findings beyond statistical significance. Table 1 provides strong initial evidence that class size significantly affects mathematics performance, with smaller classes being associated with higher achievement. However, to fully interpret the results, the authors should report post-hoc test results and effect size measures, and if possible, include visual aids (e.g., bar charts or boxplots) to enhance interpretability. To further investigate which groups differed significantly, a Tukey's HSD post-hoc test was performed. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Tukey's HSD Post-Hoc Comparisons Between Class Size Groups

Comparison	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error**	**p-value**
Small vs Medium	8.3	1.84	0.001
Small vs Large	13.1	1.89	<0.001
Medium vs Large	4.8	1.76	0.018

The post-hoc analysis confirms that: Students in small classes performed significantly better than those in both medium and large classes. Students in medium classes also outperformed those in large classes, though the difference was smaller.

Effect Size: The effect size was calculated using eta-squared (η^2), yielding a value of $\eta^2 = 0.025$, indicating a small to moderate effect according to Cohen's benchmarks.

Table 2: Correlation Between Class Size and Mathematics Performance

Variable	**Correlation Coefficient (r)**
Class Size	-0.42

The negative correlation coefficient (-0.42) suggests an inverse relationship between class size and mathematics performance. Table 2 presents the correlation between class size and mathematics performance with a reported correlation coefficient (r) of -0.42. This result provides valuable insights into the relationship between these two variables. The value of -0.42 represents a moderate negative correlation between class size and mathematics performance. The negative sign suggests that as class size increases, mathematics performance tends to decrease. In other words, larger class sizes are associated with poorer performance in mathematics. The strength of the correlation, while not extremely high, is significant enough to indicate a meaningful relationship that warrants attention.

Reduced Individual Attention: Larger classes typically offer fewer opportunities for personalized instruction and individual support, which can negatively affect student learning outcomes in mathematics.

Classroom Management Challenges: Managing larger groups may limit a teacher's ability to maintain an optimal learning environment, reducing instructional efficiency.

Variation in Feedback Quality: Teachers in larger classes may struggle to provide timely and detailed feedback, which is crucial for mastering mathematical concepts.

Reducing Class Sizes: Efforts to reduce class size, particularly in mathematics instruction, could lead to improved performance. Smaller classes allow for more tailored teaching approaches, increasing student engagement and understanding.

Teacher Support in Larger Classes: When reducing class sizes is not feasible, strategies such as employing teaching assistants or integrating technology-based learning tools can help mitigate the negative impact.

Policy and Resource Allocation: Policymakers could use this evidence to justify allocating resources for interventions aimed at optimizing class sizes, particularly in subjects where performance is sensitive to class size.

Variable	Class Size Range	Mean (M)	SD
Individual Attention	Small (15-20)	4.5	0.7
	Medium (21-30)	3.8	0.9
	Large (31-40)	2.9	1.1
Comfort in Asking Questions	Small (15-20)	4.6	0.6
	Medium (21-30)	3.9	0.8
	Large (31-40)	3.1	1.0
Perceived Teacher Feedback	Small (15-20)	4.7	0.5
	Medium (21-30)	4.0	0.7
	Large (31-40)	3.2	0.9
Student Engagement	Small (15-20)	4.8	0.6
	Medium (21-30)	4.1	0.7
	Large (31-40)	3.5	1.0

This table presents a comparison of different classroom size ranges (small, medium, and large) on four key educational variables: Individual Attention, Comfort in Asking Questions, Perceived Teacher Feedback, and Student Engagement. The results show the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) for each variable within each class size category. The findings can be analyzed as follows: Small classes (15-20 students) have the highest mean score (M = 4.5), indicating that students in smaller classes receive significantly more individual attention compared to those in larger classes. Medium-sized classes (21-30) have a lower mean (M = 3.8), and the mean decreases

further in large classes (31-40) (M = 2.9). The standard deviation increases from 0.7 in small classes to 1.1 in large classes, suggesting more variability in the perceived individual attention in larger classes. The mean score for comfort in asking questions is highest in small classes (M = 4.6), indicating that students feel most comfortable asking questions in smaller class environments. The comfort level decreases in medium classes (M = 3.9) and is lowest in large classes (M = 3.1). The standard deviation also increases with class size, from 0.6 in small classes to 1.0 in large classes, implying greater inconsistency in student experiences in larger classes. Students perceive more feedback from teachers in smaller classes (M = 4.7) compared to medium (M = 4.0) and large classes (M = 3.2). The lowest standard deviation (SD = 0.5) in small classes suggests consistent experiences regarding teacher feedback, whereas larger classes have higher variability (SD = 0.9). Engagement levels are highest in small classes (M = 4.8) and decrease progressively for medium (M = 4.1) and large classes (M = 3.5). Standard deviations increase from 0.6 in small classes to 1.0 in large classes, indicating more varied levels of engagement as class size grows. Small class sizes consistently show higher mean scores across all variables, suggesting that students experience more personalized attention, better feedback, increased comfort in participating, and higher engagement. The increasing standard deviations with larger class sizes highlight greater variation in student experiences, potentially due to differing teaching strategies or challenges in managing larger groups. Large classes seem to limit the ability of teachers to provide individualized support and meaningful interactions, which may negatively affect student outcomes. Schools and policymakers should consider strategies to reduce class sizes where possible to improve student-teacher interaction and engagement. Teachers in larger classes may need additional resources or training in managing student engagement and providing feedback effectively to compensate for the reduced personalized attention. In summary, the data underscores the importance of class size in shaping key aspects of student learning and teacher-student interactions, with smaller classes consistently providing more favorable outcomes.

Discussion

The findings reveal that smaller class sizes are associated with higher student performance in mathematics. This supports previous research emphasizing the

benefits of individualized attention in smaller classes. Teachers in large classes reported challenges in providing personalized feedback and managing classroom dynamics effectively, which hinder learning.

Conclusion

Class size significantly impacts the teaching and learning of mathematics. Smaller classes provide a conducive environment for personalized instruction and better student-teacher interactions, leading to improved learning outcomes.

The negative correlation between class size and mathematics performance highlights the importance of considering class size as a significant factor in educational outcomes. While correlation does not imply causation, the relationship is strong enough to suggest that reducing class sizes or providing additional teaching resources in larger classes could enhance student performance in mathematics.

Recommendations

1. Policymakers should implement strategies to reduce class sizes, particularly in core subjects like mathematics.
2. Schools should prioritize allocating resources to ensure manageable class sizes.
3. Further research should investigate the long-term effects of class size on different educational levels.

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