

CLASS SIZE: AFFECTING LEARNERS AND TEACHERS PERFORMANCE

by:

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Substantial evidence suggests that the fewer students a teacher has in their class, the better a teacher can handle that class, resulting in improved educational outcomes. Even though researchers generally agree that smaller class sizes lead to better outcomes, there is an ongoing discussion about the ideal class size and the ways of supporting them. In this article, we'll be discussing the result of research about class size and the pros and cons of teachers to learner ratio.

According to a study from the Tennessee STAR study, 7,000 students and 79 schools are involved in this four-year project. Class sizes were reduced from 22 to 25 to 13 to 17. Primary school children had significantly better academic performance, with those from minority and low-income backgrounds benefiting the most.

Academic performance is not the only thing that enhances. Many people believe that when fewer children are in a class, children can focus better and are less likely to be interrupted. Research from 2011 supported this and discovered that fewer eighth-grade classes improve pupil engagement across various measures.

Class Size: Pros and Cons

Smaller class sizes are better, according to research, but what are the actual benefits? What are the arguments against a school implementing larger class sizes? Here are the pros and cons of decreasing the number of students in each class.

The Pros

More Attention

With fewer students in the class, the teacher can devote more time to one-on-one teaching. Teachers can adapt their teaching to the individual needs of each student in their class, allocating more resources to those trying to cope.

Teachers can monitor the class better.

Teachers can monitor and control the class; with fewer students, it is easier to keep an eye on each student.

Fewer distractions for students

With fewer children, students can concentrate more on the teacher and what they're learning. Small things of disruption are daily in large classes, making it difficult for teachers to eliminate potential distractions.

Increased level of participation

Large class sizes sometimes can exclude quieter children. They can instantly become frustrated if they are shy to speak in huge groups or refuse to speak up in a room full of children trying to compete because fewer class sizes make every child more likely to participate.

Better Assessment

More tests and essays to grade come with larger class sizes. With so many papers to grade, teachers are forced to spend little time on each one. Lesser class sizes lower the quantity of papers that a teacher must grade. They can provide more tailored feedback to each student if they have more time to devote to them.

The Cons

Less Diversity

Larger class sizes enable you to explore a wide range of the students within each learning experience, allowing for a wider range of people. Different children bring different perspectives and experiences to the classroom, resulting in a more rich learning environment.

Cost of Hiring and Building

One of the most significant disadvantages of decreasing class sizes is the cost. With a lower teacher-to-student ratio, schools have to invest in more teachers. This can be a controversial topic in publicly funded public schools. Construction and maintenance costs are also affected due to smaller class sizes. Smaller class sizes necessitate more classrooms in each school. If the school does not have enough area, they may have to build more, which will incur additional costs.

Low quality of teachers

Some argue that employing more teachers reduces the chances of each child obtaining a quality education. With only a limited number of qualified teachers available, you risk reducing the quality of hire if you are forced to bring in more.

References:

Chingos, M., & Whitehurst, G. (2011, May 11). Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy. Brookings. Retrieved July 6, 2022, from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/>