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**CLASS SIZE AND TEACHING METHODOLOGY AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH SUMMARY WRITING IN IBADAN NORTH-EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

**Aiyede, Evelyn I.**

*Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education*

*University of Ibadan, Ibadan*

*Email: evelynaiyede@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

*The study investigated class size and teaching methodology as correlates of students' achievement in English summary writing in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area of Oyo State. It adopted the survey research design of the correlational type. Ten secondary schools were randomly selected from 34 existing public secondary schools in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area of Oyo State. Twenty SS II students and two teachers of English Language were randomly selected from each school making a total of 200 SSII students and 20 teachers of English Language. Three research instruments were used for data collection: Questionnaire on Class size ( $r=0.75$ ), Questionnaire on Teaching Methodology ( $r=0.78$ ) and English Summary Writing Achievement Test ( $r=0.76$ ). Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. Findings of the study revealed that there was positive, non-significant relationship between class size ( $r=0.030$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) students' achievement in English summary writing and between teaching methodology and students' achievement in English summary writing ( $r=0.034$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). The result revealed that the two independent variables had no significant joint contribution to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing ( $F_{(2, 238)} = 0.221$ ;  $p> 0.05$ ). The relative contributions of class size ( $\beta= 0.026$ ,  $t= 0.402$ ), teaching methodology ( $\beta= 0.032$ ,  $t= 0.484$ ) were not significant to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that government should build more classrooms so as to reduce the number of students in a classroom.*

**Keywords:** Class size, teaching methodology, students' achievement, English summary writing

### **Introduction**

A summary is a succinct and concise description of a narrative or work of literature, serving as a valuable tool for both readers and writers. Writing summaries is a very intricate, recursive reading-writing exercise, as noted by Akinsowon (2016). In other words, the act of summarizing creates a vital link between various language abilities, particularly between writing and reading. The process of summarization requires not only comprehension of the original text but also the ability to distill its essence effectively. A summary, according to Langan (1993), is the distillation of a substantial amount of material to its key elements, capturing the core ideas without unnecessary detail. This skill is especially important in academic settings, where the ability to convey complex information succinctly can enhance understanding and communication. Additionally, as Friend (2001) explains, summarization involves identifying the most crucial information in a passage and condensing it into a brief statement in one's own words. This capacity to synthesize information is essential not only for academic success but also for effective communication in everyday life. By mastering the art of summarization, individuals can improve their analytical thinking, enhance their comprehension skills, and facilitate better retention of the material they encounter.

A summary, which can also be known as an abstract, precis, or synopsis, serves as a concise yet comprehensive description that captures the main ideas and essential elements of a particular work (Nordquist, 2019). It distills the content of the original text into a brief format, ensuring that the core messages are preserved while simultaneously emphasizing the key points that are most significant to the overall understanding of the material (Hidi & Anderson, 1986). Crafting an effective summary requires not only the ability to condense information but also involves deeper cognitive processes such as reflection, decision-making, and the capacity to recognize and select pertinent information from the source material (Kim, 2002; Rinehart & Thomas, 1993). This skill is vital in academic and professional settings, as it allows individuals to communicate complex ideas clearly and succinctly. Furthermore, a well-crafted summary can serve as a valuable

tool for readers, providing them with a quick overview of the content and helping them decide whether to engage with the full text. In essence, the act of summarizing is not just about shortening a text; it is about distilling meaning and facilitating understanding.

Because of its importance in daily communication, summary writing is a crucial skill that all language learners should master. This skill entails the ability to distill a text's content down to its essential elements, effectively reducing its size to a predetermined number of sentences while still capturing the core message. Therefore, one key indicator of proficient language use is the capacity for summarization, as highlighted by Fakeye (2017). The process of summarizing not only demonstrates a learner's understanding of the material but also showcases their ability to articulate thoughts concisely and clearly.

According to Ojedokun (2010), students require summary skills to ensure that the various pieces of information they have learned through books, lectures, seminars, labs, and conversations, among other sources, are retained in their memory and can be recalled when necessary. The act of summarizing helps learners process and internalize information, making it easier to access and utilize in future discussions or assignments. Moreover, effective summary writing can enhance critical thinking abilities, as learners must evaluate the relevance and significance of information before deciding what to include. In an increasingly information-rich world, the ability to summarize effectively is more important than ever. It not only aids in personal comprehension but also facilitates clearer communication with others, enabling individuals to share insights and ideas succinctly while fostering meaningful dialogue. Thus, developing strong summarization skills is essential for success in both academic and professional contexts.

Summary writing is defined as the process of rewriting or creating a condensed version of a lengthy text using one's own words, all while preserving the core ideas and essential concepts of the original material. This practice serves as an important assessment tool that evaluates how well students comprehend and retain the information presented in the written work. By distilling the main points and arguments into a more concise format, summarizing demonstrates a sophisticated level of understanding and cognitive processing.

The ability to summarize effectively is not limited to written texts; it can also be applied to spoken language, making it a versatile skill that enhances communication across various contexts. This technique is widely recognized in educational settings, where it is used to gauge students' grasp of complex subjects and their ability to articulate key messages succinctly.

Furthermore, summary writing can be beneficial in everyday life, such as when taking notes during lectures, summarizing meetings, or providing overviews of lengthy articles. The practice encourages active listening and critical thinking, as it requires individuals to identify and extract the most relevant information. As supported by various studies (Obasa, Alamu, & Giwa, 2002; Banjo, Elugbe, Onaga, & Akano, 2005; Aniga & Ellah, 2010), mastering the art of summarization is an invaluable skill that contributes to effective learning and communication.

Summary writing instruction plays a crucial role in helping students develop a comprehensive understanding of texts. By encouraging learners to articulate the essential concepts or the essence of a passage using the author's own words, educators aim to deepen their engagement with the material. This process not only enhances comprehension but also fosters critical thinking skills. To prevent confusion between the primary ideas and supporting information, teachers should guide students in distinguishing between the main points and the supplementary details that provide context or examples. This skill is vital for effective summarization, as it requires students to identify a passage's key points and distill them into concise phrases that capture the author's intent and message (Olagbaju, 2019). Ultimately, mastering summary writing equips students with the tools necessary to analyze texts critically and communicate their understanding clearly, which is an invaluable skill across all areas of academic and professional life. Through focused practice and guidance, students can learn to express complex ideas succinctly and meaningfully.

By presenting the essential concepts or essence of a passage in the author's own words, summary writing instruction seeks to demonstrate a thorough understanding of a text. This process not only reinforces comprehension but also fosters critical thinking skills, as it requires students to distill information down to its core elements. To avoid confusion between the primary ideas and supporting

information, teachers should help students articulate an author's main points in well-chosen terms that resonate with the overall message of the text. This ability entails identifying a passage's key points and summarising them succinctly in a few phrases, ensuring that the essence of the original content is preserved (Olagbaju, 2019). Furthermore, it is vital for educators to guide students through the nuances of effective summarization, encouraging them to discern which details are essential and which can be omitted without losing the integrity of the author's message. By honing these skills, students not only enhance their writing abilities but also develop a deeper appreciation for the texts they engage with, ultimately fostering a more profound love for reading and literature."

The job of summarising is challenging and intellectually taxing, according to Nambiar (2007). This intricate task demands a high level of cognitive engagement and the capacity to conceptualise content in a sophisticated manner. Learners must navigate the complex process of moving from the specific and local details of a text to its broader, more general themes or macro concepts. This transition makes summarisation a particularly difficult undertaking to master. In addition to this conceptual leap, students must also communicate the facts they have collected in an understandable and succinct way that captures the essence of the original material without losing its meaning. Research conducted by Norisma, Sapiyan, and Abdullahi (2007) highlights a prevalent issue: students often resort to the copy-delete approach when summarising, which involves merely copying phrases and sentences from the original text rather than genuinely processing and synthesising the information. Normah (2009) corroborates these findings, noting that instructors have observed that pupils frequently struggle to distinguish between the primary concepts of the summary text and the supporting arguments that elaborate on those ideas. Furthermore, when tasked with writing their summaries, many students encounter significant difficulties in employing their own language, which inhibits their ability to articulate the ideas effectively and hampers their overall comprehension of the material. This reliance on direct copying rather than original expression often leads to summaries that lack depth and critical insight, ultimately undermining the educational value of the summarisation exercise.

Students' performance in the English has been consistently reported as poor by Chief examiner in external examinations such as West African School Certificate (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), among others. Kolawole (2000) and Fakeye (2010) both draw significant attention to the concerning drop in proficiency levels among secondary school pupils in the English language. This decline is alarming and raises questions about the effectiveness of current teaching methodologies. According to Fakeye, achieving success in this critical subject area necessitates performing exceptionally well on English Language Paper 1. This paper specifically assesses vital writing abilities, including the composition of essays and letters, as well as the comprehension of passages and the ability to summarize information accurately. Furthermore, students' challenges with writing-related examinations are notably highlighted in the WAEC Chief Examiner's Report (2018), which outlines common pitfalls and difficulties faced by learners. The report suggests that many students struggle with articulating their thoughts clearly and effectively, which further exacerbates the issue of declining proficiency. It emphasizes the urgent need for targeted interventions and support systems to enhance students' writing skills and overall command of the English language.

Efforts to address this problem have made scholars and researchers to carry out numerous studies. Fakeye (2017) also conducted research on other variables that could predict learners' success in English summary writing, Olatunji and Bateye (2022) investigated psycho-social factors as correlates of students' achievement in English summary writing and Adejumobi (2020) investigated availability and utilisation of textbooks as correlates of students' achievement in English summary writing. All these studies came up with meaningful insights to the teaching and learning of summary writing but with less research focus on class size and teaching methodology as correlates of students' achievement in English summary writing.

Class size may be defined as the number of students per teacher in a given class or the population of a class (Ajayi, Audu & Ajayi, 2017). It could also be seen as the total number of students in a class that a teacher teaches at a given period of time. This explains that class size has impact on students' achievement in the course of learning. A larger class size will be at detriment of the students to achieving high

level of productivity. Due to the high teacher-to-student ratio prevalent in Nigerian schools, a significant number of children find themselves educated by a single instructor. This situation often leads to teachers resorting to self-help techniques, which, while well-meaning, are not always the most effective methods for teaching languages.

The challenges posed by large class sizes can hinder individual attention and engagement, which are crucial for language acquisition and learning. Different educational fields and levels exhibit varying average class sizes, reflecting the diverse needs of students at different stages of their education. For instance, while a class of 40 students is commonly found in secondary schools, the National Policy on education suggests smaller, more manageable class sizes—specifically, a maximum of 20 students for pre-primary education and 30 for primary education. However, in practice, classes can swell to accommodate as many students as possible, especially when there are more than ten pupils present. This situation often leads to overcrowded classrooms, where any number exceeding the recommended limits is categorized as abnormal. Such overcrowding can significantly impact the quality of education, making it challenging for teachers to provide personalized instruction and support to each student.

The National Policy on Education prescribed a maximum of thirty (30) students in a class but in most cases, reverse is the case. As a class may contain over 100 students. However, if this situation has negative outcome on the students in a class like English grammar; the achievement rate will be low.

Teaching methodology is the method used for teaching. It comprises the principles and methods used by teachers to enhance student learning. For a teaching method to be appropriate and efficient, it has to be in relation with the characteristic of the learner and type of learning. It is supposed to bring about. In teaching well, creativity is involved. Teaching and assessment are connected; student learning is continuously measured during teacher instruction. Commonly used teaching methods may include class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorisation or combination of all. The method used for teaching, determines its assessment. A teacher's influence, ideas and expectations of his or her students' capabilities have an effect on students' academic performance and achievements. Students take into effect the beliefs their teachers have

on them and accept it as part of who they are and their abilities. Students learning can be positively imparted by the encouragement of the teachers to the students. If teaching method is poor, the assessment will be affected.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Careful planning and effective assessment are closely related. Since the purpose of teaching and assessment are the same, namely to help learners learn. Teaching and assessment need to be planned as complementary aspects of one activity. It is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences. The process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning (*Huba & Freed, 2000*).

Assessment for learning supports practitioners and helps them focus on the learner and learning in individual classroom sessions. It also shows how one of the Assessment for Learning strategy's principal themes, quality feedback, can be used to help learners progress. Assessment for Learning is all about informing learners of their progress to empower them to take the necessary action to improve their performance. Teachers need to create learning opportunities where learners can progress at their own pace and undertake consolidation activities where necessary (Jones, 2005).

Researches (Blatchford, Moriarty Edmonds, & Martin, 2002) and Qadir, Yousuf, and Hussain, (2024) have indicated that class size and teaching methodology are strong predictors of students' achievement in Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Literature in English and other aspects of the English language but to the best knowledge of the researcher, these two factors have not been significantly linked to English summary writing, especially in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area of Oyo State. Therefore, this study investigated class size and teaching methodology as correlates of students' achievement in English summary writing in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Writing summaries is essential for English language learners to succeed not only on tests but also in daily conversations and overall

communication. Unfortunately, many students encounter difficulties when it comes to this crucial skill, which can significantly affect their academic performance and their ability to express ideas clearly in various contexts. While numerous studies have explored psychological and psycho-social factors influencing language acquisition, as well as the availability and usage of textbooks, there has been less focus on how class size and specific teaching methods correlate with students' success in writing English summaries. This oversight is particularly concerning, given the role of effective instruction and a conducive learning environment in enhancing language proficiency. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine these critical factors within Oyo State's Ibadan North-East Local Government Area. Here, students' performance in summary writing has not been sufficiently linked to either class size or teaching style. By investigating these relationships, the results of this study may provide valuable insights that can aid educators in developing more effective teaching and learning strategies tailored specifically for English language learners who struggle with summary writing. Ultimately, enhancing these skills will contribute to better academic outcomes and improved communication abilities for students.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

This study was carried out to examine how class size and teaching methodology correlated with students' achievement in English summary writing. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Examine the relationship exists between independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) and students' achievement in English summary writing;
2. Determine the joint contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing; and:
3. Investigate the relative contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing.

**Research Questions**

1. What relationship exists between independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) and students' achievement in English summary writing?
2. What is the joint contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing?
3. What is the relative contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing?

**Significance of the Study**

The study revealed the correlation among class size, teaching methodology and students' achievement in English summary writing. It also contributed to the existing research on students' achievement in English summary writing. Furthermore, findings from this study would serve as an eye opener to teachers, students and government on why class size and teaching methodology should be put into consideration so as to record an excellent achievement of students in English summary writing. This study will guide English language teachers on identifying factors that could enhance students' achievement in summary writing. Also, it will add to the pool of research on solution to poor performance of students in summary writing and English Language.

**Methodology**

The study adopted the survey research design of the correlational type. There are 34 public secondary schools in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area, out of which 10 senior secondary schools were randomly selected. This represent more than 25% of the population hence the sample selected is a fair representation of the population. The simple random sampling technique through balloting was conducted to select twenty SS II students and two teachers of English Language from each school. In all, a total number of 200 SS II students and 20 teachers of English Language participated in the study. Three research instruments were used for data collection. They are: Questionnaire on Class size, Questionnaire on Teaching Methodology and English Summary Writing Achievement Test. The instruments were

were subjected to face and content validity to ascertain their adequacy. To ascertain their reliability, the instruments, were administered to 50 students in a school that was not part of the schools selected for the study. Questionnaire on Class size ( $r=0.75$ ), Questionnaire on Teaching Methodology ( $r=0.78$ ) and English Summary Writing Achievement Test ( $r=0.76$ ). Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis.

### Results

Research Question 1: What relationship exists between independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) and students' achievement in English summary writing?

**Table 1: Showing the Correlation Matrix of the Independent Variables and Students' Achievement in English Summary Writing**

Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3
<b>Summary Achievement Test (1)</b>	15.69	6.089	1		
<b>Class size (2)</b>	53.31	8.566	0.030 0.648	1	
<b>Teaching methodology (3)</b>	45.25	12.888	0.034 0.596	0.107 0.096	1

Table 1 shows the relationship between the independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) and students' achievement in English summary writing. The result reveals that there is positive, non-significant relationship between class size ( $r=0.030$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and teaching methodology ( $r=0.034$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). This implies that class size and teaching methodology are not related to students' achievement in summary writing.

**Research Question 2:** What is the joint contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing?

**Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis of the combined Independent Variables on Students' Achievement in English Summary Writing**

R =0.043 R Square = 0.002 R Square (Adjusted)= 0.007 Standard Error of Estimate= 6.10921					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	16.528	2	8.264	0.221	0.802
Residual	8882.750	238	37.322		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8899.278</b>	<b>240</b>			

Table 2 indicates the joint contribution of the independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing. The result reveals that when pulled together, the two independent variables had no significant contribution to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing ( $F_{(2, 238)} = 0.221$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

**Research Question 3.** What is the relative contribution of independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to students' achievement in English summary writing?

**Table 3: Regression Analysis of the Relative Contribution of Independent Variables to Students' Achievement in English Summary Writing**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.723	2.729		5.140	.000
Class Size	.047	.046	.026	.402	.688
Teaching Methodology	.029	.031	.032	.484	.629

Table 3 shows the relative contribution of the independent variables (class size and teaching methodology) to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing, as expressed in Beta weight. The result reveals the relative contributions of class size ( $\beta = 0.026$ ,  $t = 0.402$ ), while the relative contribution of teaching methodology ( $\beta = 0.032$ ,  $t = 0.484$ ) was not significant to the prediction of students' achievement in English summary writing. This implies that class size and teaching methodology did not predict students' achievement in English summary writing.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Table 1 revealed that there was no significant relationship among class size, teaching methodology, and students' achievement in English summary writing. This observation is particularly interesting as it suggests that the size of the class and the instructional methods employed may not play a crucial role in determining how well students perform when tasked with summarizing written content. One possible explanation for this lack of correlation could be that the students were asked to summarize the material individually. This individual task may have mitigated any potential influences of class size or teaching methodology on their performance, allowing students to rely more on their personal understanding and skills rather than the dynamics of the classroom environment.

This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Afflerbach and Cho (2011), who similarly concluded that there was no significant relationship between class size and teaching methodology. Their work lends credibility to the notion that personal effort and comprehension may outweigh external factors such as the number of students in a class or the specific teaching strategies employed. Conversely, this finding contradicts the results of Ajayi, Audu, and Ajayi (2017) who reported in their separate studies that class size can indeed predict students' academic performance. These contrasting results may highlight the complexity of educational outcomes, suggesting that while some studies advocate for smaller class sizes and diverse methodologies, there are circumstances under which these factors may not significantly impact individual student success, particularly in tasks requiring independent work like summary writing. This invites further exploration into the nuances of educational practices and their varied

effects on student achievement. Table 2 revealed that there was no significant joint contribution of class size and teaching methodology on students' achievement in English summary writing. Specifically, the analysis indicated that variations in class size and the types of teaching methodologies employed did not lead to any measurable improvement in students' performance in this particular area of writing. This lack of significant correlation may be attributed to the fact that students appear to be quite familiar with the importance of mastering English summary writing. As a result, they may consciously avoid engaging in behaviors or practices that could hinder their performance, such as neglecting to study or failing to practice adequately. This finding is further supported by the work of Afflerbach and Cho (2011), who also revealed a negative relationship among class size, teaching methodology, and students' overall academic performance. Their research suggests that larger class sizes and certain teaching methods may not effectively facilitate learning outcomes, particularly when it comes to complex skills like summary writing.

In contrast, this finding stands at odds with the conclusions drawn by Ogunkanmi (2021), who found a positive relationship among class size, the availability of reading materials, teaching methodologies, background knowledge of the text, and students' achievement in reading comprehension. This discrepancy highlights the complexity of educational outcomes and suggests that other variables may significantly influence students' performance in different areas of study. Therefore, further research is warranted to explore these relationships more thoroughly, considering additional factors that may contribute to students' learning experiences and achievements in various subject areas, including English summary writing and reading comprehension.

Table 3 revealed that class size and teaching methodology did not make a relatively significant contribution to students' achievement in English summary writing. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Afflerbach and Cho (2011), who reported that there was no significant relationship among class size, teaching methodology, and students' achievement in similar contexts. Their study emphasized that factors such as individual student characteristics and intrinsic motivation might play a more critical role in determining students' success in writing tasks than the instructional environment itself.

On the other hand, this finding contrasts sharply with the study conducted by Ogunkanmi (2021), which indicated that factors like class size, the quality and availability of reading materials, teaching methodology, and the background knowledge of the text effectively predicted students' achievement in reading comprehension. This discrepancy suggests that while certain teaching methods and class dynamics may not significantly impact summary writing, they could potentially influence performance in reading tasks. Further investigation into the nuances of these variables across different educational settings may be warranted to fully understand the complex interactions that affect student achievement in various aspects of language arts."

### **Conclusion**

The study has shown that class size and teaching methodology could not predict students' achievement in English summary writing. Findings of this study have provided a better understanding of the two factors (class size and teaching methodology) and students' achievement in English summary writing in Ibadan North-East Local Government Area, Oyo State.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that government should organise seminars, workshops and conferences for English language teachers on how they can teach English summary writing better. Teachers should use teaching methods that will encourage students to learn English summary writing. Parents should provide necessary materials that will make the teaching and learning of English summary writing easy for the students. Government should build more classrooms so as to reduce the number of students in a classroom while further research should be carried out in other variables that could influence students' achievement in summary writing.

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