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Abstract: *In Pakistan overcrowded classrooms are going to be one of the major issues and considered, a factor responsible for falling the education standard. This study sets out to investigate the "Secondary school teachers' and students' experiences in overcrowded classrooms". The study adopts a qualitative research approach in which a case study design was adopted. It was conducted in four public sector school (two boys and Two Girls) from Lahore. Population consisted of teachers and students. Sample was taken from those classes which were consisting of above 60 students. The data generation process was obtained through in-depth-interviews from teachers and focus group interview from students. Major findings of the study were mostly classes at secondary school level are overcrowded. Teachers and students face a lot of problems due to high number of students in one class. These problems are: inadequate classroom space, less teacher-students' interaction, issues related to safety and health, increased workload and inadequate teaching time, disruptive behavior by students and teachers' attitude. The conclusions of the research also show the contributing factors to stressful experiences. These factors included lack of support from management, policy implementation, unsupportive parents, teacher training, professional development and lack of resources. The findings also showed that teachers tap into, mobilize and map out individual resources in order to manage overcrowded classrooms.*

Introduction

School may be a place where the teacher and the students live in close to each other. The students and teachers live under the umbrella of teaching learning process. It's a place where an individual gets formal education and that we can expect to produce good citizens, where students can have the thought about their culture, tradition, values and concepts (Shah and Inamullah 2012).

It is said to be school where the teacher and students live in close together. The teachers and students live below the umbrella of teaching learning process. It is an area where an individual gets formal education and we can hope to deliver productive members of society, where pupil can have the idea

about their way of life, custom, qualities and ideas.

Classroom is extremely essential for the learning exercises of pupil. High strength of the students in the school is the reason to become classrooms overcrowded. It is a study based on the challenges that students and teachers faced within the overcrowded classrooms (Fatima, Mushatq, & Fatima, 2019)

Teaching may be a challenge for a teacher to teach the students in overcrowded classrooms as well as to learn the students. Overpopulated classrooms introduce so many challenges that can feel not possible to overcome, even for the trained teachers. High strength of the students is difficult for the administration to open the door for every student in those schools where they are underfunded. (Meador and Derrick, 2020).

Bolarin (2012) considers education is a process by which the individuals develop the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior which are acceptable in a given society. Meador and Derrick (2020) Due to overcrowded classrooms teachers leave their profession because of overcrowdedness on a daily basis.

Khalid (2019) the main purpose of a teacher is to conduct classroom activity and to promote the students' expertise, and give them a chance to know their abilities and capabilities at the advanced level. But high strength of students, it is difficult for a teacher to enhance their learning abilities. Therefore, teachers follow the lecture method, that's why it leads the students to adopt copying which ends up with their academic failure.

In overcrowded class teachers are unable to hear because their voice dies within the class disorder, noise, students' gossip and pay least attention. It all slows the teaching learning process could be struck off (Sumera & Mushtaq, 2017).

Fin (2003) stated that overcrowded classrooms negatively affect on teacher's morale and of their professional satisfaction. Overcrowded classrooms have presented a scenario in which teachers face many problems in the classroom during the teaching-learning process. In light of this, this study Secondary School Teacher's and Student's Experiences in the Overcrowded Classrooms.

This chapter presents a background of the study and a discussion of the rationale for the study. The statement of the problem is also outlined together with objectives and research question that guided the study. This chapter also presents the importance of the study, overview of the research design and methodology and organization of the dissertation.

Significance of the Study

This study was provided an understanding the challenges and difficulties that teacher's students experience with overcrowded classrooms. The information generated from this study enables the DBE (Department of Basic Education) to think about providing support workshop, structures, and training that train teachers with the skills they require to overcome their challenges and difficulties. This study also provided the DBE with information that may allow them to rethink about finding and strategies for schools that assisted to the teachers to cope with overcrowded classrooms. The funds could be used to assist schools to build more classrooms and provide resources for learners. The study also generated knowledge for policy designers to take into account the issue of overcrowding in classrooms when developing policies that are not designed or cannot be adapted for overcrowded classrooms.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. To identify teachers' felt problems and experiences with overcrowded classrooms.
2. To identify students' felt problems and experiences and with overcrowded classrooms.
3. To identify the impact of overcrowded classrooms on teacher- students' interactions in teaching and learning process.

Critical Questions

In line with the objectives, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are teachers' experiences and felt problems with overcrowded classrooms?
2. What are students' experiences and felt problems with overcrowded classrooms?
3. What is the impact of overcrowded classrooms on teaching learning process and teacher-student's interactions?

Literature Review

Literature review defined the critical analysis of the relationship with different authors' work and their studies. (Galvan, 2006). According to Okoli (2010) literature review is describing the understanding of what existing research has to say of your research problem.

Overcrowded classrooms in government schools may be a significant issue for the teachers and students. Teachers and students face many challenges during teaching and learning process. For this purpose, I reviewed an in-depth literature and illustrated the most problems with overcrowded classrooms.

Overcrowded classrooms became a serious topic in Pakistan. Teachers and students of huge classes face numerous difficulties in their teaching-learning process. As an example, including stressed impersonal relations between students and therefore the teacher, limited range of teaching methods, discomfort among teachers managing large classes, also as discipline control. In this chapter certain elements associated with classroom management and overcrowded classes are discussed including definition of classroom management also as that of overcrowded classrooms, class size and method of instruction, some main problems associated with large classes and eventually, some selected strategies and methods of teaching in overcrowded classes. Shah and Inamullah, (2012) found their studies that over-crowded classes could have direct impact on students' learning. They not only affected students' performance but the teachers had to face different problems like discipline, behavioral problems, poor performance and health issues of students, put stress on teachers and enlarged drop-out rate of students.

It was reported that overcrowded classrooms create a barrier to teachers' interaction with students because it does not aid teachers to use modern teaching methods (Gharab, 2016).

Classroom management is considered an essential part of the teaching and learning process. It refers to the strategies, methods and skills teachers use to take care of a classroom environment that leads to students' learning success. Fenwick et al. (2006) defines classroom management is the ability to manage, engage, focus, and convey productive order to the classroom filled with active students. Classroom management is connected to a process of organizing and conducting a category that has time management, student engagement, students' involvement, and classroom communication.

Class room management is classified in two parts: classroom and management. From Oxford Learners' Pocket Dictionary, "classroom" is "a room in a school, collage where students are taught", and "management" is "the organization or control of something" (pp.72-261). The two terms interconnected to construct the word classroom management.

Operational definition of the overcrowded classrooms

A classroom is said to be overcrowded in which the number of students exceeds the optimum level such that it causes hindrance in the teaching-learning process. Researchers argue that there is no exact definition of a large class. It differs from country to country and from one situation of teaching to another. Hayes (1997), states that there can be no quantitative definition of what constitutes an

“overcrowded” class as perceptions of this will vary from context to context. Ur (1996) sees that:

Large is, of course, a relation term, and what a large class is, will vary from place to place a group of twenty may be considered large; in my own teaching situation 40-50. A study done by a team of the Lancaster-Leeds Language Learning in Large Classes Research Project of Coleman et al. indicates that an average perception of the large class may be around 50 students (p.302).

For example, some people hold that 50 would be large enough for a class other would argue that a large class could have as many as over 100 or even 150' students. However, most teachers generally agree that a class with 50-60 or more is 'large' enough.

Similarly, Nolasco and Arthur (1988) stated that “teachers who are used to teach groups of 12-14 students might find a group of 20 rather threatening. Others may be relieved when they have only 40” (p.04).

General problems of large size classes in Pakistan

It is very difficult to enumerate all the problems regarding large size classes. However, there are certain problems which may look small from a general point of view but may affect teaching-learning process badly. Certainly, there are certain problems that are related to all the large size teaching classes and cannot be ignored at any time.

Different institutions and situations give different definitions to overcrowded classrooms. In order to understand the impact of overcrowded classrooms it is important to explore how different scholars understand the concept overcrowded classroom.

In public schools overcrowding is a serious problem for the teacher and students. Teachers and students face a lot of difficulties during teaching learning process (Khawas & Naeem, 2016). Overcrowded classrooms create a huge problem for the result of students learning and teacher ‘teaching. The teachers face a lot of difficulties to teach the students who are disturbed due to overcrowding (Khalid 2019)

The teacher student’s interaction is an important for the effective classroom management and is the key to success. It is difficult for a teacher to overcome the burden of class work. It is not possible for a teacher to evaluate the class work at that time (Khalid 2019).

The classroom is the practically essential region inside a school. Hopefully students’ most time spent in an atmosphere favorable to learning. Unfortunately, there is no check and balance by supreme and concerned authority over quality of education. Overcrowded classrooms for inexperienced teachers are more discouraging than experienced one which indicates that more technical strategies are needed for teachers to handle overcrowded classes (Khan, & Iqbal, 2012).

In overcrowded class there is much noise, students can gossip, pay least attention to teachers who is already in turmoil and mental disturbance because he/she is unable to be heard, his voice dies in the class turmoil. It all slows down the learning process and teaching learning may be struck off (Sumera & Mushtaq, 2017).

The management structure of the class as well as school also play an important role in learning process as most of the class are joined to increase utility of the faculty that makes class rooms overcrowded, secondly the size of the room matters a lot that sometimes makes less number of students as a overcrowded class. The student’s teacher’s ratio may decrease this issue but some of the faculty doing other duties and they are on the strength of the teaching faculty can also be set aside so that overcrowded class could be made manageable (Mushtaq, Sagir, Kayni & Alim, 2015).

One of the major factors is the gradual increase in the high student-teacher ratio in public schools of Pakistan. According to the data provided by UNESCO in 2008, Pakistan has the most crowded

classrooms in South Asia.

General problems of large size classes in International context

According to Emmer and Stough (2010) teachers find difficulty in monitoring behaviors and activities in overcrowded classrooms. Overcrowded classrooms impact on classroom management.

According to Norris (2003), teachers in overcrowded classrooms in America used class time to settle disputes and soothe feelings in the classroom. This takes away time from learning and impacts on the teachers' lesson. Norris argues that the classroom environment impacts negatively on the learning process. A school in New York City has an enrolment of 3000 students. Due to the overcrowding the school had a 66% drop out rate (Hiller, 2003).

In Hong Kong a major problem regarding the classroom air quality was identified. Lee and Chang (1999) pointed out that the CO₂ level exceeded the norm in an overcrowded classroom. According to Lee and Chang (1999) the CO₂ levels depend on the occupancy of the classroom. A classroom should not contain more than the number it is designed for. The high levels of CO₂ in the classroom can pose health threats to students and teachers (Lee & Chang, 1999). Overcrowded classrooms have not only demonstrated to be a teaching and learning problem, but also a health risk to teachers and learners.

Class size can affect how much time teachers give to individual students as well as the social dynamics among students (Ehrenberg, 2001). Class sizes are also a problem in Sub Saharan Africa and even present problems to trainee teachers in conducting learner centred lesson (Mtika, 2010). According to Mtika in Malawi large class sizes leave trainee teachers with only one choice of using convenient teaching methods which requires pupils to be mainly passive recipients of knowledge during lessons. This does not allow for learner-teacher interaction. Learner-teacher interaction is a critical component for teaching and learning it is through interaction that a teacher can actually assess and determine what learners already know and what difficulties they are faced with. Behavioral problems, absenteeism and high failure rates are experienced in overcrowded classrooms (Gibbs and Jenkins, 1992).

Mweru (2010) states that the introduction of free primary education by the Kenyan government in 2003 resulted in a large influx of children to schools leading to overcrowded classrooms. Most schools were ill equipped to deal with such large numbers and could not cope (Mweru, 2010). Mweru argued that teachers in Kenya saw corporal punishment as the only way of controlling large numbers of pupils. Among the problems facing the Nigerian educational system was large classes. The social demand for formal education in Nigeria resulted in an upsurge increase in school enrolment with a dramatic increase in class size resulting into high pupil teacher rates (Onwu & Stoffels, 2005).

Holloway (2008) indicates that larger classes take a toll on a teacher's ability to manage time, manage tasks and behaviour. It is evident that there are many negative consequences associated with large or overcrowded classrooms. Wilson (2009) reports that overcrowded classrooms are much noisier and that pushing, crowding and hitting often occur in larger classes than smaller classes.

An overcrowded classroom occurs when the number of students increased and they cause difficulties in the teaching learning process (West & Meier, 2020).

Government schools provide education with low cost as compared to private sector schools, so parents with low economic condition cannot afford the admission of their children in private schools. Population problem, resource limitation and low budget are the reasons of overcrowded classrooms. (Tobih, Akintaro & Osunlana, 2013)

Onwu and Stoffels (2005) contend that the following constraints arise as a result of an overcrowded classroom which impacts on teachers.

- Lack of physical space for movement around the classroom.
- Diminished opportunities for all learners to participate actively in the learning process.
- The impersonalizing of teaching.
- Excessive workload for teachers.
- Limited opportunities to meet individual learner needs for self-activity, inquiry, motivation, discipline, safety and socialization.

Methodology

Philosophical Research Paradigm

This research came under the paradigm of interpretivist paradigm because qualitative research is grounded in interpretivist (Greene, 2007).

Research Approach

The research was qualitative in nature. The researcher chose this approach because this allowed her to gain insight into teachers' and student's experiences and problems in the overcrowded classrooms. This research allowed the participants to express their experiences and related problems. It developed textual data which is why this research was appropriated to the qualitative research.

Research Design

The researcher used the case study research approach. A case study is a qualitative research approach in which researcher focus on a unit of study known as a bounded system. A case study research approach is an appropriate because researcher wants to know the answer of descriptive or explanatory questions. This research guided by the interpretive paradigm which did not discover laws and rules. It was understood how people make sense of the context in which they work or live.

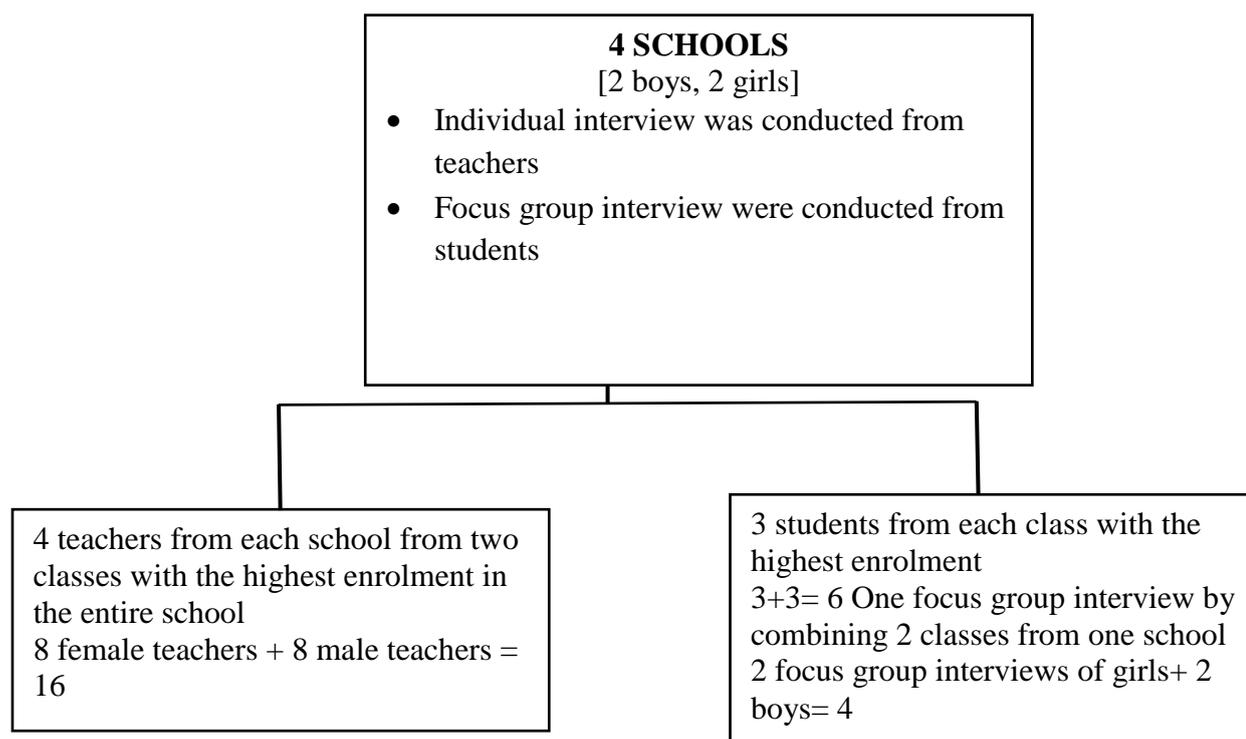
Fry, Ketteridge and Marshall (2009) stated that case studies as complex examples that give the understanding into the context of a problem as well as showing the main point. The case study method used because only particular schools were taken in the sample of the study. According to Yin (2009) a case study can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive. Therefore, the case study design fits in this study since it was exploring and describing teachers' and student's experiences and related problems in the overcrowded classrooms. This allowed self to gain insight into teachers' and students' experiences and problems in an overcrowded classroom.

Sampling Techniques

The sampling techniques that was chosen purposive sampling. Only those teachers and students who are enrolled in overcrowded were selected for this sample. These participants were selected based on the purpose and easily convenient for my research.

The Population and Sample

The population were the four schools from Lahore districts (Two boys and two girl's secondary schools). The sample size consisted of four teachers and six students from two classes with highest enrollment of students from each school. Similarly, the teachers and students were also being selected from those classes with the highest enrolment in the entire school. Individual Interviews were conducted from teachers and focused group interview were conducted from students for the research study. By using teachers with the highest numbers of students in the class allow the researcher to gain in-depth information on their experiences and problems due to overcrowded classrooms.



According to Cohen et al. (2011) in depth interview ask questions that the respondents may answer as they like. Using in dept interview enabled to gain in depth information into the experiences of respondents in overcrowded classrooms. Respondents were free to describe their feelings and experiences. When respondents are free to answer questions, they are comfortable and can describe their experiences in detail.

Focus Group Interview

Focus group interview is a qualitative method for data collection. A focus group is “a group comprised of individuals with certain characteristics who focus discussions on a given topic or issue” (Anderson, 1990, p.241) According to Denscombe (2007, p.115), “focus group consists of a small group of people, usually between six and nine in number, who are brought together by a trained moderator (the researcher) to explore attitudes and perceptions, feelings and ideas about a topic”. A focus group interview provides a setting for the relatively homogeneous group to reflect on the questions asked by the interviewer.

Data Analysis

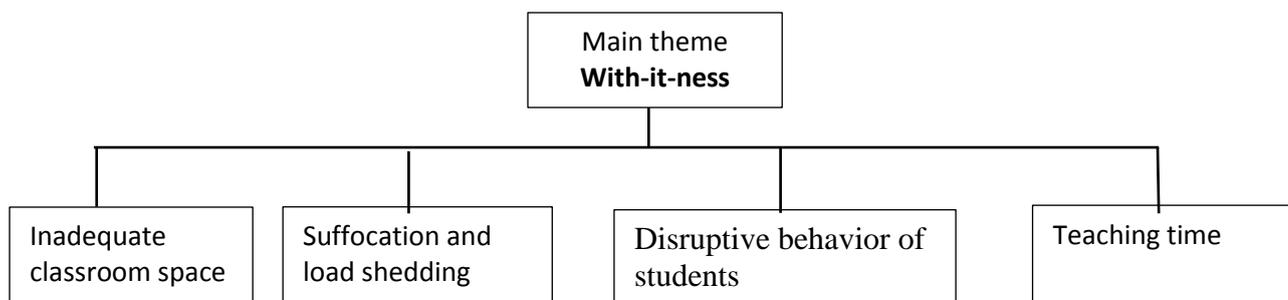
A thematic analysis approach was used to analyze data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research questions and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We followed six phases of thematic analysis which including:

- Familiarization with the data: I transcribed the data, read and re-read the data and noted initial ideas.
- Coding: I searched for interesting patterns or features across the entire data set.
- Searching for themes: I Collated codes into potential themes and gathered all data relevant to each potential theme.
- Reviewing themes: I checked if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.

- Defining and naming the themes: I Clarified names and content for each theme.
- Writing up: We wrote the findings chapter based on these themes. Each theme is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Data Analysis, Findings and Discussions

Five themes emerged from the in-depth and focus group interviews in response to teachers’ and students’ experiences with overcrowded classrooms in government schools. Figure 4.1 presents an overview of the main themes and subthemes.



Inadequate Classroom Space

All participants (teachers and students) in this study specified that insufficient space is a major problem in overcrowded classrooms. Mostly teachers who have participated in my study claimed that teachers and learners cannot move in the classroom due to over crowdedness. They claimed that they cannot move in the classroom, because of which backbenchers are ignored. Teachers also clarified how an overcrowded classroom bounds their movement in an overcrowded classroom.

In table 4.1 the code of respondents MT5(Male Teacher 5 number of teacher), FT (Female Teacher), SGR (Students Girl Respondent) and SBR (Students Boy Respondent).

Table 4.1

Teachers’ and students’ responses for inadequate classroom space

Teachers’ code	Responses	Students’ code	Responses
MT5	“There are 78 students in one classroom and to handle this strength is not an easy task when you have just 35 minutes to deliver your lecture and control discipline. I cannot maintain the discipline because I cannot move in the class.	SGR, SBR	“We do not move in the class, when we want to go to teacher for clear our crusty in some questions”
FT3	“Lack of space I cannot move in the classroom.”	SGR	“We want to understand some questions to the teacher due to the place does not go away because of being tight”
MT5, FT8 & MT4	“I cannot conduct group activity due to lack of space.”	SGR, SBR	“There are few rooms in our schools, so the number of students

			very high in one class”
FT4, MT5 & MT7	“I cannot maintain the discipline due to lack of space because I cannot move around the class	SGR	“When we take test, we have a lot of problems in writing because four students sit at one desk, and some poor girls getting good marks by cheating”
MT5	“I try to move around though it is hard to do so.”		
FT8	“I am unable to design the classroom to have a reading corner or fantasy corner (due to storage of space).”		
FT1& FT3	“Sometime it happens that backbenchers are ignored they busy with their personal activity because of the tight space I cannot around in the class due to lack of space”		

Teachers’ comments presented in Table 4.1 were supported by data from focus group interview. In focus group interview, students also said that due to lack of space in the class, teacher cannot move in the class and backbenchers do mischief which does not maintain the discipline in the class. Students also claimed that they did not have space for their bags and their bags were kept outside unattended. Some bags were left outside in the corridor.

Teachers said that students perform better when the teacher is able to give one-on-one or small-group instruction on a regular basis. As classroom size increases, this becomes gradually difficult to do.

Some teachers indicated that overcrowded classrooms restricted teachers’ movement in the classroom, hence stressful. Teachers seemed to be confined to one place and could not implement some of their teaching strategies which they believed could be beneficial if classrooms are not overcrowded.

Students also claimed that there were no reading corners in the classroom or any other additional resources as there was no space. Teachers cannot move in the class and backbenchers do mischief and disturbed our attention, and distract the flow of lecture of teachers.

Overall, data from this study shows that teachers’ and students’ experiences with overcrowded classroom pose stressful conditions in a variety of ways, in particularly, it leads to minimum interaction and movement of students and teachers in their classrooms. These findings confirm the results from other studies (e.g., De Corby, 2005) that argue that one of the issues associated with overcrowded classrooms is lack of space. In a similar way, a study presented by Baruth (2009) an overcrowded classroom revealed that insufficient space was a problem for teachers and students.

Suffocation and Load Shedding

Teachers and students indicated that overcrowded classrooms cause suffocation which is worsened in absence of electricity. Heated and suffocated classrooms are major problems in managing overcrowded classrooms. The statements of the teachers presented in Table 4.3 elaborate their problems.

Disruptive Behaviors of Students

Discipline is a major challenge for teachers in an overcrowded classroom. Teachers at the government secondary schools mentioned that they experience several discipline problems in their classrooms because of a high strength of students. Teachers' responses indicated that the discipline problems have a negative impression on teaching and learning processes. Some of the discipline problems that teachers and students faced due to overcrowded classrooms include theft, violence, noisiness and disruption during lessons. Overall, Teachers' reported that it is hard for them to maintain discipline in their classroom due to over crowdedness. Table 4.4 presents their concerns in detail.

Table 4.2

Teachers' and students' Responses on disruptive behaviors

Teachers' code	Responses	Students' Code	Responses
FT1	I personally experience discipline problems. Students are too noisy especially if there is an occasion.	SBR	"Whenever the teacher goes out of the class because of some work, the students start abusing each other and turn the desk upside down"
MT2, MT5& FT4	"There is too much noise, students are always talking and disturbing the class. It is difficult to maintain discipline in the classroom because of a high number of students. They are always talking and fighting."	SBR& SGR	"We do not understand anything because of the noise in the class"
MT6	"Students fight a lot of over minor issues like losing their stationary. So, I always find myself solving minor issues that provoke severe discipline problems. This takes away time from teaching."	SBR	"If our teacher goes out of class for two minutes because of some work, the class becomes fish market and the teacher of the other class come and scold us to shut up"
FT8	"Violence, theft and persistent disobedience is frequent. Learners do not follow schools code of conduct."	SBR& SGR	"Noise has a lot of impact on our studies because when the teacher teaches us, we do not understand anything"
MT5	"The teacher is very high in the society, but the respect of the teacher is lost in the eyes of students"	SBR	"Naughty students sit together and they talk a lot, sometime their talk turns into discussion and the discussion start fighting"

Furthermore, students claimed that most often we failed to listen to their teachers. Some students continued to talk and get into discussions. Ultimately, the teacher ignored such behaviors and continued

to teach. Some students said that they are unable to listen teachers' voice. Teacher said that some students also do not have their own stationery, they share stuff and end up in fight over small stationery items, FT5 said that students have so many clashes with each other like to snatch away books from each other and argued with each other that I want to erase chalkboard, these clashes become the reasons of noisiness and violation.

MT5 said that such behaviors show that significant discipline problems arise as a result of overcrowded classrooms. Teachers' felt ended-up and helpless either ignoring such behaviors or spending the teaching-learning-time on resolving discipline issues in their classroom.

These findings are consistent with the other studies that carried out research in overcrowded classrooms. Oosthuizen and Van Staden (2007) discuss several school related factors that heighten students' propensity to engage in disruptive behaviors. One of these factors was overcrowded classrooms. Levin and Nolan (1996) originated that some of the discipline problems faced by teachers in overcrowded classrooms were inattention, bullying, teasing, throwing objects, and the use of inappropriate language. Norris (2003) stated that teachers in overcrowded classrooms in America used class time to settle soothe and disputes feelings in the classroom. Emmer and Stough (2010) stated that teachers find difficulty in monitoring behaviors in an overcrowded classroom. According to Wilson (2009) also stated that overcrowded classrooms are much pushing, noisier crowding and hitting often occur in larger classes as compared to smaller classes.

Teaching Time

Teachers who participated in my study were concerned that there is not enough time to teach in an overcrowded classroom because of a large number of students. Students and teachers did not find sufficient time to monitor activities and complete tasks. They also reported spending time in maintain discipline rather than teaching and learning. Furthermore, they struggled with providing individual attention to the students and maintaining their records.

Table 4.3

Teachers' and students' Responses on teaching time

Teachers' code	Responses	Students' Code	Responses
FT3, &MT3	FT7 "I try to do reading during the lunch breaks."	SBR	"The students who are sitting behind make a lot of noise, teacher trying to keep quit to them, till then class time ends"
FT8	"I find myself solving minor discipline issues and this takes away time from teaching. I also take the grading and marking work to home because there is not enough time to mark students' work at school"	SBR	"The teacher goes out of class and when he come, the time is very short to teach"
MT5& FT1	"Number of students are large, school day is short, and then there is too much of administration work and planning tasks." I have just 35 minutes to deliver		

FT5 lecture, within 35 minutes I have to maintain the discipline, deliver lecture and check the students' work. Sometime I have to avoid

FT7 one of them because lack of timing
We are pressurized to complete course but our lesson plans disturbed due to over crowdedness.

Teachers' concerns were confirmed during students' response when I ask question to students that the teachers did not begin their lessons immediately because they had to settle problems and wait for students to settle down. Because some students sit attentively others start gossips. More than half time the teacher takes in managing the students' discipline and less time to learning. The next teacher was ready to come in for her lesson while teachers could hardly explain a concept and give an exercise before the class time was over. There was no time to monitor if students have completed the activity or to assist or monitor students work.

These problems are also reported in the results of other studies reporting that teaching and learning in overcrowded classrooms is a challenging task. The conclusions in this study indicate that teachers' and students' experience with overcrowded classrooms is stressful and these teachers and students face a lot of barriers including, minimal learner and teacher interaction, discipline, inadequate space, emotional and psychological problems, issues related to safety and health, increased workload and inadequate time are contributing factors to stressful experiences.

Review of previous lesson

Teachers said that they recall the previous lecture and ask question from the students frequently. It was proved when students said that when teachers entered in their classrooms, they asked students to revise the previous lesson and then asked questions from them.

Table 4.4

Teachers' and students' Responses on lesson revision

Teachers' code	Responses	Students' Code	Responses
FT1, FT3, MT4 & MT8	"First I hear the previous lesson from the students, so that I can find out they remember the past, then I teach the next lesson"	SGR	"When the teacher come in the class, they first tell us that no one should stands in their place and then recall the previous lecture and then read the next lesson"
MT6	"First of all, I check the students' homework and then ask them questions about previous lesson"	SBR	"The teacher asks to the students what we read yesterday and then read next lesson"

MT9	“Students are not coming to study half period passes into setting and bringing them to the study, and then ask the previous lesson, then as they have a mood, we also go on reading”	SBR	“The teacher asks the questions to the students about what I had taught yesterday”
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Teachers try to maintain the flow of lessons in their classroom by asking students to revise the previously learned material, teaching lessons, and asking questions. However, due to over crowdedness it becomes a challenge for them to maintain the flow of lesson. It was proved when students said that their engagement was increased in lesson and they attentive when the teacher asked them questions randomly.

Divide lesson in two parts

Mostly teachers who participated in my study stated that they divide their lesson in two parts. In the first part they read the content with their students and randomly asked to students where we are in reading to involve in reading, and in the second part they write ask questions and help students attempt exercise questions given at the end of the lesson.

Table 4.5
Teachers’ and students’ Responses on lesson planning

Teachers’ code	Responses	Students’ Code	Responses
MT1	“I distribute a lesson in two days, one day I read the chapter and do this chapter’s exercise the next day	SGR	“Teachers read the lesson one day and chapter exercise next day”
FT6	“I teach my students in two days by dividing the lesson. On the first day I discuss the content and clarify the students’ concepts. On the next day I ask questions from my students just to check their level of understanding”.	SBR	“The teacher reads the lesson to the students one day and the next day marks the answers from the book, and give home work for next day to write their answers on copies”

The same patterns were said by the students. This tactic helped the teachers to manage students’ engagement in learning. Though, sometime they looked violent and frustrated when they find that we are not paying attention.

Teachers’ Lesson Plans

Table 4.6
Teachers’ and students’ Responses on lesson plan

Teachers’ code	Responses	Students’ Code	Responses
MT6	“I deal with classroom effectively to prevent it from escalating. I try to	SGR	“Some teachers first tell us story then comes to the lesson, and our lesson

FT3	keep the learners constructively engaged from the beginning of the lesson to the end so that they do not get restless and disrupt other learners. I plan lessons that allow for interesting discussions.” “I made weekly lesson plans”	relate to the story, this is interesting for remember the lesson long time/everlasting”
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12 to 13 out of 16 teachers said that they made weekly lesson plan. Some teachers said that they made weekly lesson plans because their lesson plan does not follow, they have to change according to the situation. Some teacher made daily lesson plans but they also said that their lesson plans also disturbed due to large number of students. When I gone in schools for conducting interviews, I have seen that teachers do not bring lesson plans with them. When i asked them about their lesson plans, they replied that they do not have time to follow the lesson plan on daily basis and this is why they plan their lessons on weekly basis.

Handle interruptions by punishment

Planning for overcrowded classrooms also involves clear rules and regulations as specified in the teachers and students’ responses who participated in this study:

Table 4.7

Teachers’ and students’ Responses on punishment and interruptions

Teachers’ code	Responses	Students’ Code	Responses
MT3	“I make clear rules concerning classroom management. I do not ignore minor discipline problems because it saves me time to deal with a small problem than larger ones. I deal with discipline without disrupting the lesson. I provide rules and provide rewards for good behavior.”	SBR& SGR	“Teachers get out of the class whose making noise and create disturbance”
FT6& MT3	“I use corporal punishment and I give learners lots of notes to copy and write so that they are busy, but they still scream and shout and act like the teacher is invisible.”	SBR	“When students continuously make noise teacher leave the class, he said that I will not teach you then we apologize to him and promise that it will not happen again”
FT7	“I tend to shout a lot. I sometimes reward them with sweets. No one talks (in my class) unless they put their hand up and sometime, they force me to punish them”.	SGR	“If the students are making too much noise in the class then teacher close their break”

MT4	Corporal punishment works that is the only thing they (students) respond to immediately.”	SBR	“When a student’s does not do homework, the teacher makes him stand outside the class, and say him stand out and complete homework”
MT7	“I use corporal punishment for discipline because that is the only thing that works.		
T10	“I attempted to apply corporal punishment when learners don’t complete work and create discipline problems.”		

Although teachers stated in interviews that sometime they are applying punishment in the classroom, it is evident when students said that the teachers are frustrated and tended to use punishment for maintain the discipline. Students also said that the teachers often remove the students out of the class.

These responses are consistent with the findings from the previous studies. According to Mweru (2010) that teachers in Kenya saw corporal punishment as the only way of controlling large numbers of pupils.

The teachers spend more time on behavioral management rather than instructional time which impacts learning. The findings of this study also show that teachers at public schools do not just give up but seem to find even the smallest of evidence that managing overcrowded classrooms is worth doing. Their ability to persist is linked to their personal traits such as hope and staying positive towards learners in their school contexts (Gibbs and Jenkins 1992).

Findings, Discussion, Recommendation and Conclusion

Summary of the Findings

In this section the researcher presents a summary of the findings that were drawn in relation to the findings of this study. The study summarizes the following:

Teachers’ and students’ experiences in overcrowded classrooms as ‘stressful’

The findings of this study indicated that teachers’ and students’ experiences with overcrowded classrooms are stressful. Teachers and students themselves identified certain conditions that are stressful in an overcrowded classroom. These conditions were inadequate classroom space, issues related to safety and health, minimal learner and teacher interaction, disruptive behaviors, teachers experienced emotional and psychological problems, increased workload and inadequate time. Teachers don’t have enough space in the classroom since desks are tightly packed and learners are crammed. The movement is very bound and teachers were unable to walk around the classroom.

The lack of space also presented health and safety issues. It is very difficult for the teacher to interact with learners as these conditions restricted interaction. As a result of the minimal teacher-student’s interaction, learners feel insignificant which caused them to engage in disruptive behavior. Teachers also became very stressed and frustrated in an overcrowded classroom causing them to experience psychological and emotional issues. Due to the high number of learners in the classroom, teachers’ workload is increased. Teachers indicated in their responses that most of their marking and planning is done at home which takes away family time and this has impacted on their personal lives. There is not enough time to monitor activities and complete tasks. They also spend time settling disputes which takes away time from teaching and learning. All the conditions mentioned above revealed that teachers’ and students’ experiences with overcrowded classrooms is ‘stressful’.

RQ: - 1 What are teachers’ experiences and felt problems with overcrowded classrooms?

The first question was “Describe your teaching experience and felt problems in an overcrowded

classroom". 10 to 12 out of 16 participants agreed that teaching with overcrowded classrooms is unpleasant and unsatisfactory. Their replies vary from of worst experience ever to difficult and tough task to very noisy students. FT 6 reported "Worthless and stressful experience, it is inefficient for the students learning and academic achievement". Although they mostly have the same opinion, their answers slightly vary when it comes to the reasons behind this stressful experience.

Eight teachers out of sixteen have clearly indicated that successful strategies cannot achieve the targeted objectives due to the overcrowded classrooms, especially in classes over 80 students. For example, MT5 who is a Math teacher stated that "the teaching experience is exhausting, and strategies are not applied properly due to over-crowdedness and not being able to control the students in the classroom". They also said it is not easy to monitor all the students equally at the same time, and teachers do not have control over the students on many occasions.

The researcher came across words like harsh, stressful, exhaustive, inefficient, and unworthy. An interesting claim made by one of the participants' FT3 who is a science teacher wrote "Difficult experience, unavailable resources especially in the laboratory because it is not well equipped, students' capacity to understand is too low, and it is difficult to exhibit the experiment in front of the students.

Two teachers expressed that the social and mental differences between the students play a major role in making the teaching experience a harder one, especially if there are 85-90 students in each class. They stated that not only do the teachers have to manage an overcrowded classroom, which is in itself a tough challenge, they also need to meet the individual needs of each and every student, and monitor their progress taking into consideration their differences.

Four of the participants believe that the reason behind the students' negative behavior inside the classroom is due to the parent's ignorance and limited academic education, which overburdens the teachers. In addition, students tend to underperform in class and require extra assistance from the teacher as a result of the parents' modest academic background. Besides, teachers stated that parents do not monitor their children or assist them.

This was clear in MT 4's statement where he expressed this point by saying, "Very stressful, and we suffer due to over-crowdedness and the ignorance of the parents". In addition, FT 3 who is an Arts teacher exploited on this subject matter by saying, "Terrible experience, the parents' purpose is to send their children to school to avoid taking care of them.". Accordingly, FT 2 who teaches English added "It is not as simple as 20 students because controlling the class and then explaining is not easy where it required calmness, patience, tolerance and intelligence." However, two out of 16 participants wrote that managing an overcrowded classroom is the sole responsibility of the teacher and depends entirely on the teachers' personality and experience. MT 2 who is teaching science stated "Teaching in these classes needs extra effort; however, the teachers' ability to attract the students' attention and the teachers' personality is significant"

Teachers, response that they face difficulties in controlling their students, who make noise especially when they do activities or finish their, then the teachers cannot stop them. A disciplined class is an ideal field for a teacher to impart knowledge. Discipline is only possible if the strength of a class is normal. In a class of 60 students and more, it is impossible to maintain discipline.

RQ: - 2 What are students' experiences and felt problems with overcrowded classrooms?

Students, may find themselves uncomfortable when they learn in an overcrowded class; they might feel unhappy and hopeless, because of the overall hostile situation. Teachers cannot keep proper eye contact with the class, and students cannot move in the class. According to SBR (Student Boys Respondent) "said that if they do not understand any topic, they cannot move to the teacher to clear

their curiosity.”

“Students (SBR) stated that some students use abusive words with each other, and they steal even from their teachers. Disruption and noisiness during the lessons are common. Moreover, they use vulgar language and hit each other.”

According to SBR “students do not maintain the discipline due to lack of teacher attention; teachers use cell phone during the class time and students remain busy in their personal activity”.

“SGR said that high number of students is the main problem lack of discipline, we do not pay attention in our learning due to a noisy class. We sit four students on one desk, and we have to face problems in writing.” “SGR answered by focus group interview that overcrowded class also effects on our performance and consequences of result, because we sit tightly and some slow learners getting good marks by cheating. It also affects the behavior of the students and psychological problems increase due to workload”. These all problems relate to management and policy implementation including lack of attention and support.

With larger class sizes, students may not feel so comfortable asking questions or seeking the help they need, so quieter or less confident students risk staying under the radar.

The more students in the classroom, the more noise and distraction increases, so overcrowded classrooms are bad news for focus and concentration. And students with additional needs such as dyslexia may not get all the attention.

Students stated that “Students insult each other usually while the teacher is busy with other students or physical abuse among students”. Hence, bullying is a dominant behavior among each other. Another student said that some students insult each other when the teacher is writing on the board or busy doing something inside the classroom”. Students claimed that “Due to a lot of noise in the class, we do not hear the teachers’ voice because of which we do not understand the lesson”

SBR said that “Whenever our teacher goes out of class, it is so noise in the class the teacher of other class come and silence us” it also said that “Due to excessive noise, our education is very affected if any student wants to read, he also loses his attention”. SGR “The teachers themselves get busy with their work and ask the monitor to handle the class, and then some students do not obey the monitors, then there is noise in the class”.

Mostly students claimed that they feel frustrated and face a lot of difficulties in an overcrowded classroom. Some difficulties are maintenance of discipline, lack of space, weak learning and help with instruction issues. So, learners get discouraged and have negative effects on their studies.

RQ:- 3 What is the impact of overcrowded classrooms on teaching learning process and teacher-students’ interactions?

Teachers face discipline problems, students don’t get the proper attention and interaction with teachers, they become dull, proper evaluation is not possible and it becomes difficult to complete the planned lesson in a given time period. One of the respondents said “We cannot pay attention to every student in a class as the class is overcrowded and atmosphere is noisy, we waste our time in managing the class”.

The results affirmed that students cannot have proper interaction with a teacher, cannot easily ask and answer the questions, don’t get proper attention from the teacher, their concentration diverted in the class and they are lacking active participation in teaching-learning process therefore child learning ability is affected in overcrowded classrooms.

Every individual is not paid attention in the class due to crowd in the class and time shortage. The classes have large number of learners that’s why teachers do not have time for paying attention and

giving chance to participate and speak to every student. Shy and weak students are ignored and left behind in overcrowded classrooms.

Many teachers feel uncomfortable while teaching in overcrowded classrooms and students are not comfortable while learning as well. To increase the students' participation in the learning activities may not be an easy task for teachers. If teachers are not able to do so, they get stressed and that result distraction in the teaching-learning process. A stress is created by overcrowded classrooms for teachers so teachers feel difficulty to fulfill the learning needs of students (Oliver, 2006). contented that teachers' experience with large classes are mostly negative this becomes the reason of leaving the teaching profession. This will be an important contention because hard work is needed for the profession and from their profession people gain living. In overcrowded classrooms, less concentration is paid to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the lessons while management as well as control of the learners is more focused.

Researchers have found that overcrowded classrooms influence the quality of learning. the result of this study is that individual attention is prevented by overcrowded classrooms and students' progress gets slow down. There is limited time for the teacher in the class, just to teach the basic lessons so the teachers had no more time to spend with weak learners. Teachers were enabled to provide quality of individual learning support to each student. It also provided time for procurement of different exercises that improved the actual quality learning.

Future Recommendations

The following recommendations for future research have been provided below:

This study has only explored teachers' and students' experiences of overcrowded classroom in a public school in one district. Therefore, a much larger study involving a range of schools from other contexts such as urban and rural areas is needed in order to get a better picture and clear perspective of the magnitude of overcrowded classrooms in schools.

I would suggest that the future researchers should to conduct class visits during the teaching process to gain a deeper understanding of the situation and to observe the teaching strategies used inside an overcrowded class. The timing of conducting the research is crucial since the data was collected during the COVID-19 period, and, as a result, teachers were not as cooperative as expected.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that overcrowded classrooms affect the teaching-learning process. It creates difficulties for both teachers and students. Teachers can't pay attention to each of the students and can't able to use interactive modern pedagogies, which is the need of the modern era. On the other hand, students feel difficulty in questioning the teachers about any concept which are not clear to them. They can't get opportunity to express themselves and increase their confidence level of speaking in front of the public, which is an essential element of classroom learning.

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