

STUDENTS' POPULATION EXPLOSION AND MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KATSINA-ALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated Students' Population Explosion and Management of Secondary Schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and three hypotheses were formulated for the study. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 329 secondary school teachers. The sample for this study is 200 respondents drawn through multi-stage sampling technique. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled 'Students' Population Explosion and Secondary School Management Questionnaire, (SPES²MQ) was used for data collection. Mean Scores were used to answer the research questions while Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses. This study found out that students' population explosion has negatively influenced effective teaching and learning, students' assessment and provision of school plant. The study recommends that secondary school teachers should be retrained on the management of overpopulated students; the government should employ more teachers in the secondary schools so as to reduce to workload of teachers. Finally, the government, public-spirited individuals, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in education should assist secondary schools by providing enough school plant that will mitigate the influence of students' population explosion.

Keywords: *Influence, Population, Explosion, Management, Secondary Schools.*

Background to the Study

Nigeria happens to be a country where some married couples and unmarried couples unapologetically give birth to a high number children they cannot cater for. The number of children per couple is not controlled by the government of the day. With the Corona Virus

disease popularly called Covid-19 which brought about closure of schools, it became very clear to all Nigerians that, indeed, there is population explosion in the country. At the moment, the level of poverty in Nigeria is not encouraging (Umoke, 2021). One of the factors that are responsible for the abnormal level of poverty in Nigeria is the imbalance between the available resources and the population of the people—a phenomenon that Malthus once predicted but was refuted vehemently. For instance, as at the time of writing this article, the prices of goods in the market have been on a steady increase on a daily basis. The macroeconomic indices of demand and supply indicate that when demand is in excess over supply, prices of goods will definitely increase and this has become evident in the Nigerian social and economic spheres (Victor, 2022). The researchers of this work speculate that population explosion is one of the factors responsible for the abnormal increase in the prices of goods in the market with severely devastating ripple effects on the management of educational system in the country.

Population explosion refers to the excessive and almost unmanageable growth in the number of people that constitutes a population of a given geographical entity. In simple terms, population explosion can be referred to as the steady and almost astronomical growth in the number of individuals belonging to a particular species. The term is mostly used while refereeing to the population boom that yielded after the Second World War and is currently being experienced in underdeveloped and third world economies. In 2020, the global population had increased from 1 billion in 1800 to 7.9 billion where the end of 2022 saw global population rising 9 billion. Viewed globally, several factors continue to be potent determinants of the success in secondary education. According to Ukpong, Ekpebu and Ofem (2013), there is the expansion of school enrollments resulting from population explosion and an increased public demand for places in education and the fruits of formal education. Another equally phenomenon emanating from surging populations is the social pressure for equalizing educational opportunities between social classes, ethnic and racial groups, sexes, and rural and urban population.

The most prevailing problem of education in the third world countries is the provision of quality education for all or even a major percentage of their school-age children. Osam (2019) argues that globally, literacy is attuned to making creating functional, participatory and contributory members of a society. Sende (2012) notes that these goals, though lofty as they appear, become frustrated not only where a small percentage of students attend school regularly but are adequately monitored and assisted in the accomplishment of stated educational aims and objectives. According to Fan and Besong (2010), in many underdeveloped and developing nations of the world, only few students that go to secondary school come out as refined products that can favourably compete in the labour market in jobs commensurate with their academic attainment or progress to higher levels of learning. This stems from the fact that massification of education which has bred rapid educational expansion is offset by equally astronomical surges in population which turn out to drain the available human and material resources in the educational setting (Sedie (2020). Sheer quantitative education without corresponding qualitative output is manifestation of the persistent inequalities in the quality of education provided to various segments of the teeming population.

The causes of population explosion in Nigeria are numerous and include but not limited to the following: lack of birth control law put in place by the Governments; wrong attitudes towards family planning (Omonona, 2010); uncontrolled and predominant early marriages (Olukayode, 2019); male child preference syndrome; influence of Religion beliefs (Umoke, 2021).; high rate of illiteracy among Nigerians (Aduwa, 2020); high levels of sexual urges among some men and women; persistent high infant mortality rate and immigration (Victor, (2022). The most far-flung negative effects of population growth on education include propagation of overcrowding in classrooms. Observations by the researchers show that the carrying capacity of most classrooms in many secondary schools across the country has been stretched beyond their elastic limits demanding for urgent construction of additional classrooms. According to Pat-Mbano and Nwadiaro (2012) and Alyssa (2018), this will cost money that most school management and government do not have. The resultant effect on the educational system could be in terms of poor classroom management by the teachers. A study by Campbell (2018) found out that, overcrowded classrooms negatively impact on the teaching and learning process in areas like classroom control, students' attendance to lesson as well as participation in lessons and the absence of individualized instructional attention by the teachers.

Students' population explosion could have debilitating impact on the demand for places in education, completion rate as well as the ability to pay for the social service. Agbo (2018) found out that uncontrolled teenage pregnancies often result in surging population and on one terminating or truncating the educational journey of the teenagers. Agbo stresses that where the Nigeria government have experienced a population growth without an economic growth may find resistance in the funding of the school. This has led to increase in the demand of places in education in the face of poor funding of the educational system culminating to overstretched educational facilities. Students' population can breed the provision of mass education and not mass literacy resulting to the production of poor quality graduates: As a result of overstretched educational facilities by the huge number of students, there is tendency that poor quality graduates will be produced by the various educational institutions. According to Mfono (2008) Nigeria as a country is not exempted from this fact.

Osam (2019) conducted a research on analysis of the social consequences of overpopulation in Nigeria and found out that uncontrolled population explosion has resulted to defective curriculum implementation in many institutions of learning where most teachers are compelled to resort to lecture method and at worst case scenarios, storytelling instead of the application of instructional strategies that ensures active participation of all learners at all time during the teaching and learning process. Similarly, Chukwu (2012) had previously found out that managing overcrowded classrooms is a herculean task which impacts negatively on proper attention cannot be given to their assessment breeding the doctoring of assessment scores by some teachers just to fulfill all righteousness at the detriment of the learners. The researcher speculates that students' population explosion could influence the effective management of secondary schools in the study area, hence, the present research.

Statement of the Problem

The standard of performance in education by the products of the Nigerian educational system appears to be on a steady decline day-by-day today. There are grumblings in the labour market and tertiary institutions about the quality of graduates from the secondary education

system who are fobbed on the labour market or the tertiary education in terms of the quality of their performance. Many stakeholders in the education industry have decried the unprecedented deficiencies among products of secondary education today.

It seems the secondary education system in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State has witnessed mass education without a corresponding mass literacy. Checklists by the researchers have shown that most products of most secondary schools in the study area today are not better than primary four products of the yesteryears. Many products of the secondary education system today who, by miraculous means, brandish colourful results cannot communicate permissibly in English language. Observations by the researchers have revealed appalling cases where some products of the secondary education system in the area of study are unable to read ordinary Primary Two textbooks. Inexplicably, there seem to be something wrong with the secondary education in Nigeria today. The researchers speculate that tremendous explosion of students' population may be influencing the quality of teaching and learning giving birth to under-baked products of secondary education.

Personal observations by the researchers and interviews with some stakeholders in education in the area of study reveal that in some cases, secondary school teachers award arbitrary continuous assessment scores to students that did not partake in the exercise. The flip side of this phenomenon is that some bright students may be awarded abysmally low marks and grade while some fortunate dullards may be awarded unexplained higher marks. This arbitrary award of marks to students may be occasioned by students' population explosion which makes it difficult for teachers to religiously perform their students' assessment obligations. A visit to most secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue reveals classrooms filled to overflowing with students, whom, on closer observation have neither textbooks nor a commendable number of exercise books. Astonishingly, most classes in most secondary schools in Katsina-Ala today can conveniently pass off sections of a busy market square as overcrowding has taken central stage. The researchers assume that such overcrowded classrooms cannot give room to effective teaching and learning to take place. Similarly, the prime purpose of teaching and learning is to create a desirable and measurable change in the behaviour of the learner(s) after a stipulated period of exposure to training and practice. This change in behaviour is determined by the assessment of the extent of accomplishment of the stated behavioural objectives of the teaching and learning which is expected to be coordinated in a conducive environment. A visit to most secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State reveals deficient school plant in terms of classroom buildings, classroom infrastructure, staff common rooms and other essential school plant like libraries, laboratories, recreational facilities, urinary, toilets and parking space among others. The researchers speculate that in an overcrowded classroom, evaluation of the attainment of the stated behavioural objectives may not be properly coordinated resulting to poor assessment of students' overall academic performance as well as performance in other domains. It is the strong assumption of the researchers that the decline in the standard of performance in education by secondary school products could be as a result of ineffective management which could have been exacerbated by unprecedented students' population explosion. This worrisome scenario spurred the researchers into carrying out this research.

Purpose of the study

This study investigated Students' Population Explosion and Management of Secondary Schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the research sought to examine:

- i. the ways in which students' population explosion could influence effective teaching and learning and secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State;
- ii. the influence students' population explosion on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.
- iii. the extent to which students' population has influenced the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. In what ways does students' population explosion effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State?
- ii. How does students' population explosion influence effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State?
- iii. To what extent has students' population explosion influenced the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

- i. Students' population explosion does not significantly influence effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.
- ii. Students' population explosion has no significant influence on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.
- iii. Students' population explosion has no significant influence on the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Methodology

Research Design

survey design was adopted for this study. A descriptive survey research design deals with data collection from a large population by drawing a representative sample of such population for the purpose of describing, interpreting, evaluating and analyzing the existing perceptions, conditions or variables and prevailing situations through the formulation and testing of relevant hypotheses for drawing inferences. This research design was appropriate for this study because it enabled the researchers to get opinions or perceptions of a sample of respondents drawn from a larger population that could not be completely studied.

Population of the Study

The population for the study comprised all the 329 secondary schools teachers in all public and private secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study is 200 respondents which was 60.79% of the population of respondents from all the public and private secondary schools in the study area. Multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents from the secondary schools in the area of study. In the first stage, the researcher selected all the 2 secondary schools are they were not

too many for all of them to be studied (this is called a census). In the second stage, after deciding the number of respondents to be sampled from secondary school, the researcher adopted simple random sampling to draw sample size. The researchers got the names of the teachers in the secondary schools from the Area Education Office, Katsina-Ala, which were then written on pieces of paper that were folded uniformly, dropped in a basket and balloted one at a time with replacement.

Instrumentation One instrument was used for data collection. It was a structured questionnaire titled “Students’ Population Explosion and Secondary School Management Questionnaire, (SPES²MQ). The questionnaire consisted of Parts ‘A’ and ‘B’. Part ‘A’ was a letter of introduction of the intent of the research to the respondents. Part ‘B’ of the questionnaire consisted of three (3) clusters named Section i, II and III. Section I contained items eliciting information on the influence of students’ population explosion on effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. It had five items related to the theme of the cluster. Section II elicited information on the influence of students’ population explosion on effective students’ assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. It had five (5) items. Section III elicited information on the influence of students’ population explosion on provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue state. It had five (5) items. The response format was Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree for cluster I and II while Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent for cluster III.

Reliability of the Instrument

A trial test was conducted on 60 secondary school teachers in Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State which borders the area of study. A reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained through the split half method and analyzed using Cronbach’s alpha.

Method of Data Collection The instrument was administered on the respondents by the researchers. A total number of 200 copies of the questionnaire were taken to the field and administered to the respondents and all copies were recovered for data analysis.

The descriptive statistics of Mean Score was used to answer the research questions. A cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. The Boundary for Decision Making with respect to positive items was 1.00-1.49= SD; 1.50-2.49=D; 2.50-3.49= A; 3.50-4.00= SA while the reverse was the case for negative items. Chi Square statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 21 software was used for analysis of the data collected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1. In what ways does students’ population explosion effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State?

The analysis on this research question is presented on Table 1.

Table 1: Influence of students' population explosion on effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Item No	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1	Owing to overcrowded nature of classrooms in the school where I teach, there is very low classroom control during the teaching and learning process.	200	129	47	1	23	3.89	Agree
2	I have been able to effectively give and mark students' home work even though the classes are overpopulated.	200	15	22	46	117	1.11	Disagree
3	Owing to overpopulation of students, individual attention cannot be provided during the teaching and learning process.	200	163	33	01	03	3.83	Agree
4	I am able to adequately check the notes of all the students in the classes I teach even though the classes are overpopulated.	200	18	21	23	138	1.15	Disagree
5	It is not possible to allow each student participate in the teaching and learning process due to exploded students' population.	200	126	57	6	11	3.78	Agree
Cluster							2.84	Agree

.Source: Researcher's Field Survey Results (2022).

Table 1 shows the Mean Score of respondents' opinions on the influence of students' population explosion in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. This result reveals that all item 1 Mean score of 3.89. The respondents did not reject the item indicating that students' explosion has influenced classroom control in the secondary schools. Item 2 has Mean Score of 1.11. This implies that the respondents disagree with the insinuation that teachers can effectively give and mark homework of overpopulated students. Item 3 has Mean Score 3.83. This also implies that respondents agreed with the opinion that due to students' overpopulation, individualized attention cannot be given during the teaching and learning process. Item 4 has Mean Score of 1.15. This implies that respondents disagreed with the opinion that teachers are able to adequately check the notes of all the students where classes are overpopulated. Item 5 has Mean Score of 3.78. This implies also that respondents agreed with the opinion that it not possible to allow each students participated in the teaching and learning process due to students' exploded population. The cluster Mean Score 2.75 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50 which implies that students' population explosion influenced effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Hypothesis 1: Students' population explosion does not significantly influence effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

The collected and analyzed data relating to the hypothesis stated above is presented on Table 2.

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of students' population explosion on effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Decision	Nature of Influence
Chi-square	25.009	63.712	122.921	66.172	7.174	Ho rejected	Negative
Df	4	4	4	4	4		
Asymp. Sig	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.004	

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected; Negative Influence).

Table 2 shows the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value between 7.174 and 122.921 and a critical value between .000 and .004. Since the calculated value is greater than the Chi-square critical value at 0.005 level of significance, the null is rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states students' population explosion does not significantly influence effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State was rejected. This implies that there is significant negative influence of students' population explosion on effective teaching and learning in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Research Question 2: How does students' population explosion influence effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State?

Data answering the above research question are presented on Table 3.

Table 3: Mean Scores on the influence of students' population explosion on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State

Item No	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Decision
6	I no longer give and mark continuous assessments regularly due to overcrowded classrooms.	20 0	15 2	27	1		3.72	Agree
7	Due to overcrowded classrooms, some students are usually absent during tests but teachers cannot notice.	20 0	16 2	22	6	10	3.79	Agree
8	Some teachers in the school where I teach give continuous assessment			24	7	23	3.51	Agree

	marks to students without	20	14						
	conducting any test.	0	6						
9	Even with the overcrowded nature of classrooms in the school where I teach, teachers are able to mark and records students' assessment scores on time.	20	22	22	29	12	1.01	Agree	
		0				7			
10	Due to the overcrowded nature of classrooms in the school where I teach, many students engage in examination malpractice	20	13	48	9	8	3.58	Agree	
		0	5						
	Cluster						3.12		

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Results (2022).

Table 3 shows the Mean Score of respondents' opinions on the influence of *students' population explosion* on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. The result from the data analysis shows that item 6 has Mean Score of 3.72 and. This implies that the respondents strongly agreed with the opinion that they no longer give and mark continuous assessments regularly due to students' population explosion. Again, item 7 has Mean Score of 3.79. This implies that respondents agreed with the suggestion that due to students' population explosion, some students are usually absent during tests but teachers cannot notice. Furthermore, item 8 has Mean Score of 3.51 indicating that the respondents strongly agreed with the claim that some teachers give continuous assessment marks to students without conducting any test owing to students' population explosion. Item 9 has Mean Score 1.01 indicating that respondents disagreed with the opinion that teachers are able to mark and records students' assessment scores on time even with the overcrowded classrooms. Item 10 has Mean Score of 3.58. This implies that respondents agreed with the opinion that due to the overcrowded nature of the classrooms, students often engage in examinations misconduct. The cluster Mean 3.12 this implies that students' population explosion has influence on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Hypothesis 2: Students' population explosion has no significant influence on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Analysis of generated data in relation to the above hypothesis is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Chi-square Analysis on the Influence of students' population explosion on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State

	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9	Item 10	Decision	Nature of Influence
Chi-square	9.722	16.175	132.612	18.612	51.131	Ho rejected	Negative
Df	4	4	4	4	4		
Asymp. Sig	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected; Negative Influence).

Table 4 shows the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value between 9.722 and 132.175 and a critical value between .000 and .001. Since the calculated value is greater than the Chi-square critical value at 0.005 level of significance, the null is rejected. This implies that students' population explosion has significant influence on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Research Question 3: To what extent has students' population explosion influenced the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue state?

Data answering the above research question are presented on Table 5.

Table 5: Mean Scores on the extent of Influence of students' population explosion influenced the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State

No	Item Description	N	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Decision
11	All the classrooms in the school where I teach are overcrowded with students.	200	172	2	6	0	3.96	VHE
12	In the school where I teach, there are no enough classroom seats for the overcrowded classrooms.	200	149	2	11	11	3.39	VHE
13	There are adequate library spaces for the overpopulated students in the school where I teach	200	0	1	23	163	0.72	VHE
14	Not many students have access to recreational facilities in the school where I teach due to students' overpopulation.	200	183	1	0	5	3.93	VHE
15	In the school where I teach, instructional materials such as apparatuses and specimens hardly go round all the students during lessons.	200	135	5	7	0	3.69	VHE
	Cluster						3.14	VHE

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Results (2022).

Table 5 shows the Mean Score of respondents' opinions on the influence of students' population explosion on the provision of school plant in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. The result from the data analysis shows that item 11 has Mean Score of 3.96. This implies that the respondents reported overcrowded classrooms as having a very high extent negatively influence the provision of school plant. Again, item 12 has Mean Score of 3.39. This implies that respondents indicated that students' explosion has a very high negative influence on the availability of seats in the classes they tech. Furthermore, item 13 has Mean Score of 0.72 indicating that students' population has a very high negative influence on the provision of libraries in the schools. Item 14 has Mean Score 3.93 indicating that students' population explosion has a very high influence on the available recreational facilities. 15 has Mean Score of 3.69. This implies that students' population explosion has very high negative influence on the provision of instructional materials for students. The cluster Mean 3.14 this implies that students' population explosion has influence on the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Hypothesis 3: Students' population explosion has not significant influence on the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Analysis of generated data in relation to the above hypothesis is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Chi-square Analysis on the Influence of Students' Population Explosion on the Provision of School Plant in Secondary Schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State

	Item 11	Item 12	Item 13	Item 14	Item 15	Decision	Nature of Influence
<i>Chi-square</i>	70.281	23.911	83.217	16.226	61.183	<i>Ho rejected</i>	<i>Negative</i>
<i>Df</i>	4	4	4	4	4		
<i>Asymp. Sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.646	

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected; Negative Influence).

Table 6 shows the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value between 5.153 and 156.153 and a critical value between .000 and .646. Since the calculated value is greater than the Chi-square critical value at 0.005 level of significance, the null is rejected. This implies that students' population explosion has influence on the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study reveals that students' population explosion has significant negative influence on effective teaching and learning and secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. This finding agrees with Campbell. (2018) who found out that, overcrowded classrooms negatively impact on the teaching and learning process in areas like classroom control, students' attendance to lesson as well as participation in lessons and the absence of individualized instructional attention by the teachers. This finding can be accepted in this area of study because, owing to prevalent moral decadence in the society occasioned by repeated inter- and intra-ethnic squabbles and other factors, overcrowded classrooms will be a fertile breeding ground for social nuisance which will negatively affect

the teaching and learning process. This implies that students' population explosion has significant influence on effective students' assessment in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. The finding of this study agrees perfectly with Osam (2019) and Chukwu (2012) who separately found out that where students are overcrowded, proper attention cannot be given to their assessment breeding the doctoring of assessment scores by some teachers just to fulfill all righteousness at the detriment of the learners. This result can also be accepted in this area because there has been some grumbling from parents and other stakeholders about the quality of some result dished out the students at the end of a teaching and learning period in some schools.

The third finding of this study reveals that, students' population explosion has negative influence on the provision of school plant in secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State. This finding is in consonance with Ukpong, Ekpebu and Ofem. (2013) who found out that the provision of school plant in educational institutions is severely and persistently strained where there are recurrent surges in the learners' population. This phenomenon can be accepted in this area because personal observations by the researchers has revealed most secondary schools in dear need of school plant as a result of surging students' population.

Conclusion

The study has found out that students' population explosion have negative influence on the management of secondary schools in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria in areas like effective teaching and learning, students' assessment and provision of school plant.. All these findings call for proactive intervention to control excessive population explosion with its attendant influence on the educational system in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the researchers hereby recommend that:

1. Secondary school teachers should be retrained on the management of overpopulated students as the menace of students' population explosion cannot be resolved in the twinkle of an eye.
2. The government should employ more teachers in the secondary schools so as to reduce to workload of teachers thereby paving way for effective students' assessment in the face of students' population explosion.
3. The government, public-spirited individuals, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in education should assist secondary schools by providing enough school plant that will mitigate the influence of students' population explosion.

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