

# Big Class Size Challenges: Teaching Reading in Primary Classes in Kampala, Uganda's Central Municipality

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Research on reading has established that reading is a pivotal discipline and early literacy development dictates later reading success. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate challenges encountered with reading pedagogy, teaching materials, and teachers' attitudes towards teaching reading in crowded primary classes in Kampala, Uganda's Central Municipality. This study's scope reached beyond daily functional literacy for reading road signs, recipes, and posters into teaching reading with critical reading methodologies that benefit learners' progress to higher reading levels. The methods used to collect quantitative and qualitative data were surveys, interviews, and questionnaires. Three approaches to data collection that guided the study were determining the effect of the size of the classes on the teaching methods used to teach reading skills in primary classes, the effect of big classes on the teaching materials used to teach reading skills in huge classes, and the effect of enrollment on teachers' attitudes towards teaching reading in big classes. Data were collected from 48 teachers of reading skills in lower primary classes, 16 primary head teachers, and 16 heads of the lower sections in the 16 primary schools selected for the study. Most responders tended to show that the commonest teaching methods used by the teachers of reading in the crowded classes were those that tended to raise chorus reading. Such methods helped the teachers involve every pupil to read. Besides, such methods indirectly enabled the teachers to have better class control. Another finding was that the teachers used mostly the traditional learning materials, including chalkboards and wall charts. No school had any materials that use modern technology. Yet, the markers and manila paper that would be used to design other teaching materials were given out irregularly. Also, the big numbers of pupils handled made the teachers' teaching a burdensome task. It was concluded, therefore, that the teaching-learning process of reading in the lower classes was substantially affected negatively by the large classes.

*Keywords:* Uganda, reading, teaching, big classes, primary classes, attitudes

## Introduction

Reading plays an essential role in the daily lives of most people. It is functional when people read road signs, maps, recipes, labels, fill forms, or apply for jobs that are unique to our daily lives. It is fundamental to school achievement, and hence, learning to read at the appropriate time is crucial to one's academic success. All school subjects require reading various written materials like graphs, charts, maps and tables. In Kaplan's (1986) opinion, failure to learn to read by the end of Primary one (i.e., first grade) is associated with later academic failure.

Teachers of reading skills have built up and used different methods for teaching reading, sometimes mechanically, in order to help learners overcome the initial difficulty of identifying letters, of recognizing words, and of uttering sounds they represent. Undoubtedly, reading is one of the most effective means of language learning. It expands one's proficiency in the use of the language. It also gives the skills necessary to acquire more knowledge. These skills are difficult to achieve in the big class sizes commonly found in Kampala Central Municipality primary schools.

### **The Statement of the Problem**

The problem addressed by the present study is the challenges of teaching reading to large classes in lower primary in Kampala, East Uganda. A lot of complaints have been registered by both parents and teachers that pupils' academic performance is poor due to inappropriate reading skills demonstrated by those children. For this reason, the parents are anxious that their children should learn to read sooner than later.

What is even more surprising is that unlike in the rural environment, children in Kampala City join Primary one after attaining nursery school education where they grasp the vowel sounds and learn to shape letters among other things. Besides, they have access to readings provided on billboards, TV (television), and advertisements on buildings. In some homes, adults read to children, and they look at pictures in books, or newspaper. It is, therefore, likely that rather than socio-economic factors, the effective teaching of reading in the lower primary in Kampala Central Municipality is challenged by the big class sizes.

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

The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges of teaching reading skills in large primary classes in Kampala Central Municipality. This study will, therefore, establish the challenges working against attaining maximum reading levels attained by children at primary levels.

### **The Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in selected primary schools in Kampala Central Municipality, Kampala District. It was restricted to lower primary classes in the area focusing on teaching methods, teaching materials used to teach the reading skill and the teachers' attitudes towards reading.

### **Significance of the Study**

The results of the study may be found useful to teachers, school administrators, the MOES (Ministry of Education and Sports) and District Education Authorities, and future researchers. Since it is the teachers who are directly concerned with the instruction of reading in the schools, the study may help them in the choice of reading methods, techniques and learning materials. School administrators may be encouraged to facilitate teachers in teaching reading lessons by providing the necessary material. MOES authorities may see the need for sufficient financial support for procurement of the necessary instructional materials essential for empowering learners to read effectively. Besides, policymaker authorities may plan for reducing the pupil-teacher ratio per school. The study may provoke other researchers interested in finding out more about the reading skill at various levels of learning. Consequently, more scientific knowledge related to reading is likely to be generated.

## Literature Review

A number of studies have been carried out on reading as an aspect essential to language learning. However, little has been done on matters concerning the effect of big class sizes on teaching the reading skill of pupils in the lower classes. This study, therefore, will bridge the gap but first by making a general review of studies related to the research problem under the following sub-problems:

- (1) Big class sizes and teaching methods;
- (2) Big class sizes and teaching materials;
- (3) Big class sizes and teachers' attitudes.

### Big Class Sizes and Teaching Methods

Home experiences have shown that there is a linkage between children's learning to read and their background. According to Smith (1988), schools build on the language learning began at home. Even before children join the spoken language club, parents can encourage reading development by reading to the children, telling them stories, and discussing childhood experiences. This point implies that such parents feel that when the children are exposed to reading early enough in their growth and development, children are likely to acquire the reading skill much earlier than if they were without that experience.

This view is emphasized by Bracey and Leita (1996) that in some homes, children can see from an early age that reading and writing are pleasurable and useful in that people in their families write letters and messages, and read books and newspapers. Thus, each child has an opportunity to participate actively, because each one is taken as an individual who also has the need to read.

The same authors argue that children from homes whose parents are illiterate do not have the advantage of any literature in their homes. They also advise that it is necessary for teaching of reading to help the children from the disadvantaged homes to experience, that what is said, can be written and read, and that reading is the reverse process of decoding words to discover a meaning. In this sense, a teacher acts as a catalyst for learning which requires him/her to assist every learner. But when there are too many pupils in class, some learners may go without this assistance.

Kay (1971) believed that the association of familiar objects with written symbols is an informal way of introducing children to reading and even writing. Thus, in infants' classes, the teacher of reading talks about objects in the classroom and writes out names on labels which are attached to them. This implies that such a method can work if the classroom has various objects against which the teacher can attach labels.

Rosenthal (1987) noted that the complexity of the reading process makes it difficult to learn by only one method. Instead, most teachers of reading adopt a combination of techniques determined by the teacher's own preferences, students' needs, and the instructional materials available. In this regard, the teachers' choice of teaching methods depends on various factors, such as the number of pupils in a class.

Rosenthal (1987) outlined the commonly used teaching programs of reading, such as the developmental methods, the whole language philosophy, the language experience method, phonics instruction, sight words, look-and-say instruction, and individualized reading program. We can infer from the list above that a teacher can apply different methods suitable for his/her class sizes.

Brimer and Paul (1971) argued that grade promotion, curriculum, methods of teaching, and lack of adoption in the present day conditions are resulting more and more in the loss of interest in school learning and even in knowledge of any kind. Farrant (2000) confirmed this when he asserted that bad methods that teachers

use cause learning blockages that are difficult to unlearn and overcome later. The assertion emphasizes the importance of employing proper teaching methods that will result in encouraging the learner to carry on with the required task. However, one wonders if it is possible to do so in a crowded class.

Izizinga (2000) advocated the use of the child-centered method to teach reading. She criticized teachers who assume that they possess the classes and adopt a teacher-centered method of teaching, assuming the role of experts who have to perform all the time. She added that they are probably ignorant that learner-involvement is the key to learning how to read. The viewpoints seem to show that teachers sometimes resort to teacher-centered methods to teach the reading skill.

Contrary to the above criticisms, Venkateswaran (1995) pointed out that at low levels, learners can read aloud followed by the whole class orally word by word or sentence by sentence or an individual reads sentence by sentence after the teacher. In this sense, it seems that the teacher guides the learning process by showing the learners how to read.

Welch (2009) asserted that, "Reading is in the mind, not in the mouth" (p. 10). Therefore, this assertion mandates time for silent reading, even in large classes. Welch (2009) contended that read-aloud methods alone can hinder reflective thinking skills. It is through meta-cognitive thinking skills—thinking about one's own thinking—that one conceptualizes what is read.

To emphasize the importance of child-centered methods, Kochhar (2000) asserted that the child is of prime importance. Guiding his/her learning experiences is a second principle of the teaching process. Therefore, the child should begin to learn when he/she becomes purposefully involved in the learning process. However, effectiveness of the methods used in the teaching of reading is quite often eroded by big class sizes. Related to the above is shortage of space where reading can be taught using certain methods. Conveniently, Namatovu (2000) explained that by the time of implementing UPE (Universal Primary Education), classrooms were already full with more than 100 pupils. Already that was too much for a teacher to handle. The rooms and the seats remained the same. Thus, some children were forced to sit on the floor.

It can be inferred from Kochhar that those pupils who are forced to sit on the floor feel portable, and hence, cannot concentrate on what is being taught. The researcher felt that all these problems might be affecting the acquisition of the reading skill of the pupils in the lower classes. To ascertain this, an investigation was essential.

### **Big Class Sizes and Teaching Materials**

After the implementation of UPE, teaching materials in schools worsened. Kanyike (1998) revealed that working space, furniture, library space, storage spaces, sanitation facilities, water supply, and instructional materials have either not been available in schools or accessible to pupils. This viewpoint seems to show that the shortage of materials was in short supply although the enrollment was high.

Similarly, Keller (1995) reported that most primary schools are in a poor state of repair with inadequate teaching materials and high proportion of untrained teachers. With such situation, one wonders how the teaching skill can be handled.

Carasco (1996) also emphasized that although schools had received books in previous years, the books were still not being used in classrooms. Carasco (1996) revealed that teachers reported that the failure to use instructional materials was one of their most serious adverse classroom experiences. In view of the above, it appears some materials that would be used to teach the reading skill are not given out to teachers of reading.

Also, the MOES attests that instructional materials, such as textbooks are inadequately and inappropriately managed in government primary schools.

The implication of the above statements shows that government primary schools lack instructional materials that would facilitate the teaching of the reading skill. In 1996, the California Department of Education suggested that a balanced comprehensive early literacy program must embrace a variety of reading materials including environmental print, magazines, newspapers, and reference materials, works of fiction, and non-fiction and technology.

The same department explained that such materials can be divided into three categories to facilitate good readability: reading aloud, instructional reading, and independent reading. In this regard, it appears that teaching the reading skill is difficult for the teacher who experience lack of such materials.

A number of educationists have expressed the shortages of scholastic and instructional materials almost at all levels of education. Odada (1997) observed that besides having inadequate trained staff members, lack of textbooks and scholastic materials in secondary schools were among the major drawbacks in the teaching of history. Similarly, Manana (1992) found out that there is a serious inadequacy of basic instructional materials for social studies in Primary Teachers' Colleges. It appears that even the teachers who are trained to teach the reading skill are not exposed to certain aspects of using teaching devices since the teachers' colleges also wish for the instructional materials.

Further, the benefits that would accrue from the use of teaching materials like the ones stated by Mulima (1990) are not achieved. They state that teaching materials help the pupils to use more than one sense in learning. Learning is more effective if the impression on the sense is more vivid, arresting or striking. Thus, the more senses used in learning, the greater is the impression made on the mind and consequently the greater the understanding and the longer the retention in the mind of what has been learned (Rowtree, 1988). This view is reinforced by this Chinese Proverb:

I hear and I forget;  
I see and I remember;  
I do and I understand.

Essentially, the authors are referring to the use of the ears, eyes, and hands. The learning materials accelerate the rate at which pupils learn besides making teaching and learning interesting and comparatively easy. By implication, if reading teachers employed so many teaching materials, the learners would understand and remember effectively.

From the foregoing observation, the researcher felt that shortages of teaching materials were having an impact on the teaching effectiveness of reading skills in a big class. This is the need for an investigation on the correlation of big classes and teaching materials on the reading skills.

### **Big Class Sizes and Teachers' Attitudes**

While it is important to have various teaching aids for the learners, in a big class, the teacher may find it impossible to provide each child with appropriate materials. UNICEF (Nations International Children's Emergence Fund) (1997) pointed out that parents see the problem of high pupil-teacher ratio from the perspective of teachers not being able to control the class; teachers being overloaded and so unable to give individual attention to a class of over 100 pupils or more. The viewpoint seems to suggest that high pupil-teacher ratios affect the teaching of the reading skills.

According to Farrant's (2000) documentation, in a crowded class, there is little participation per pupil supports the foregoing viewpoint. He maintained that it becomes even more difficult to cater for each pupil's needs or individual differences and hence signs of indiscipline will be inevitable especially where the feeling of anonymity by children sets in.

Clearly, big class sizes can be overwhelming to a single teacher whose role in class is multidimensional; that is instructional expert, manager and counselor. Kalinaki (2000) linked poor academic performance to big class sizes. He observed that many schools with high pupil-teacher ratios experience poor performance by students since teachers are thinly spread and the learning conditions are not conducive enough for the children.

The observation above suggests that factors affecting learning like those that originate from the learning environment or the teacher have to be considered for better results of the reading skill. Kyogabiirwe (1991) asserted that the problem of big classes populations have steadily risen while the number of teachers has remained the same. Thus, the lesson here is that there is a noticeable high pupil-teacher ratio whose implications might be affecting the teaching of the reading skill.

According to UNICEF (1997), the rise of pupils per class due to the implementation of UPE affected the discipline of pupils in class. They also observed that the teachers in such classes spend much time on class control and consequently become slow in completing the syllabus. This viewpoint implies that teachers can be overwhelmed by numbers of the pupils during the teaching-learning process of the reading skill.

Contrary to the foregoing claim on numbers, Namatovu (2000) argued that most classrooms, especially in urban areas, were already full with more than 100 pupils per class even before UPE was introduced. She concluded that the number of pupils was too much for a teacher to handle. In this sense, it seems, when UPE was implemented, it worsened the teaching-learning situation not only for the teachers but also the pupils. Therefore, it is likely that the teaching-learning process decreased pupil performance. The teaching of the reading skill is likely to have faced similar problems since the classes are crowded.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Questions**

The research questions are as follows:

- (1) To what extent do big class sizes affect the teaching methods used by teachers of reading in lower primary classes?
- (2) How do big class sizes affect the use of teaching materials for reading in lower primary classes?
- (3) What are the teachers' attitudes towards teaching reading as a subject in big class sizes in lower primary classes?

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional survey was used for the study. The method has a number of advantages, such as collecting information once from a random sample that has been drawn from a target population. The target population included teachers, head teachers and heads of the lower primary sections. The study used mainly quantitative methods and a few qualitative ones. Interviews and questionnaires were used to obtain views and opinions from the target group.

### **Area of Study**

The study was carried out in selected primary schools in Kampala Central Municipality, Kampala District

(see Appendix A). The area was selected due to the advantages it has. There are very many primary schools of various grades that are close together. Thus, the researcher saved on transport costs and time that would have been used if they were scattered. Besides, the researcher wanted to tap a variety of views and opinions from each grade of school.

### Selection of Schools

Due to the presence of many primary schools in the area, the simple lottery random sampling method was used to select 16 schools. A list of all the schools was secured from the area education officer. Then, they were listed down according to their grades. Each school in each grade was then listed on a piece of paper separately folded and put in a container and churned beginning with Grade one schools. Out of the entire Grade one schools, four schools were selected. This exercise was repeated for Grades two, three, and four. The total number of schools is 16.

### Section of Subjects

The subjects of the study were in three categories. The first one consisted of teachers of the reading skills in the lower classes in each school that was selected. The expected number from P.1 to P.3 in each school was three teachers who were selected purposively because they are directly involved with reading. The total number of teachers is 48.

The second category consisted of the heads of the lower section in each school. Being the immediate supervisors of teachers concerned with reading and advisors to the head teacher, they were included in the study. They too were selected purposively. The total number of heads of lower section is 16.

The third category was the head teachers. They do the administrative work in the school and are expected to be the immediate advisors to the education local authorities. Therefore, they are directly responsible for the effective teaching of reading in their schools. They were selected purposively. The total number of head teachers is 16 (see Table 1).

Table 1

#### *Sample Size*

Name of school	Code	No. of head teachers	No. of teachers	No. of heads of lower school
(i) Buganda Road P/S	A	1	4	1
(ii) Bat Valley P/S	B	1	3	1
(iii) Kyagwe Road P/S	C	1	2	1
(iv) Nakasero P/S	D	1	4	1
(v) East Kololo P/S	E	1	3	1
(vi) Kamwokya K.C.C P/S	F	1	3	1
(vii) Nakivubo Settlement	G	1	3	1
(viii) Arya P/S	H	1	3	1
(ix) Kitante P/S	I	1	3	1
(x) Shimoni Dem.Sch.	J	1	3	1
(xi) Rhamgharia P/S	K	1	2	1
(xii) Nakivubo Blue P/S	L	1	3	1
(xiii) Muslim Girls P/S	M	1	4	1
(xiv) Old Kampala P/S	N	1	3	1
(xv) City Parents P/S	O	1	3	1
(xvi) Nabagereka P/S	P	1	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>

### **Instruments of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was the main instrument for collecting data from teachers. It consisted of both closed and open questions. Questionnaires were adopted for these reasons:

- (1) They are convenient for collecting data from a large sample with a short-time;
- (2) They give the respondents freedom to give frank answers to sensitive questions especially, if they are not asked to disclose their names;
- (3) Respondents can answer questions during their free time.

### **Observation**

The researcher made direct observations of the way classrooms are organized for reading lessons and the teaching materials used. This helped the researcher to verify and consolidate information that had been gathered through oral interviews and questionnaires.

### **Oral Interviews**

The researcher carried out interviews with head teachers and heads of the lower sections of each of the selected schools in order to obtain supplementary information to that collected through an oral, interview guide and a questionnaire. The researcher visited the schools and offices physically to deliver the questionnaires. Interviews with head teachers and heads of the departments were conducted in their offices during predetermined convenient times.

### **Data Analysis**

The main procedure of analyzing data was by using descriptive statistics. Data were grouped into themes with descriptive tools, such as frequencies and percentages. All data from oral interviews, observations and questionnaires were subjected to content analysis and then reported in a narrative form. Thus, both the quantitative and qualitative techniques for analyses were used in order to cover as much as possible the views and opinions the subjects were willing to provide.

## **Results**

The results from analyzing the challenges of teaching reading in large classes in primary levels in Kampala Central Municipality are as follows.

### **Research Question One**

The question sought to establish how big class sizes affect the teaching methods used by teachers in lower primary classes. In order to test this question, Section A of the teachers' questionnaire and the interview guide for head teachers and heads of lower sections were used.

Results showed that all teachers handled reading as a subject on a daily basis. They also showed that they were trained qualified teachers. Eighty percent of them were Grade 111 teacher certificate holders, 15% were Grade V, while 5% were graduate teachers. Apart from reading, teachers taught other subjects in the school as summarized in Table 2.

From Table 2, 79% of the teachers who taught Reading showed that they also taught English, 67% of them indicated that they taught religious education, and 63% of them revealed that they taught social studies, too. Forty-six percent of them taught science, while 38% of them taught physical education as well as reading. Therefore, the majority of teachers of reading in the lower classes taught English as well. The researcher wanted to find out which teaching methods they used in teaching reading. So, the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 2

*Summary of Other Subjects Taught Besides Reading*

Other subject	Expected frequency	Frequency	Percentage of frequency (%)
(i) English	48	38	79
(ii) Mathematics	48	21	44
(iii) Science	48	22	46
(iv) Social studies	48	30	63
(v) Religious education	48	32	67
(vi) Physical education	48	18	38
(vii) Music	48	20	42

Table 3

*Summary of Methods Teachers Frequently Use for Reading*

Method	Yes	No	Percentage of yes (%)
(i) The phonic method	31	17	65
(ii) The look-and-say whole-word method	40	8	83
(iii) The look-and-say sentence method	41	7	85
(iv) The alphabet method	26	22	54
(v) Telling stories	17	31	35
(vi) Teacher reads to learners	21	27	44
(vii) Pupils read aloud in turns while others repeat	27	21	56

According to Table 3, 85% of the teachers noted that they used the look-and-say sentence method to teach reading, 83% revealed that they used the look-and-say-whole-word method, 65% of them showed that they used the phonic method, and 56% of them indicated the method of making pupils to read aloud in turns while others repeat. Only 42% of the teachers revealed that they made pupils read silently. Thus, the majority of the teachers used the look-and-say sentence method.

Concerning whether big classes affect the methods used to teach reading in the lower classes, all the respondents agreed that such classes affected the teaching methods the teacher used. The reasons on which they based their considerations were categorized in Table 4.

Table 4

*Summary of Big Class Limitations on Teaching Methods*

Limitation	Frequency	Percentage of frequency (%)
(i) Limitation of pupil-teacher interaction	42	86
(ii) Limitation of pupil-pupil interaction	36	75
(iii) Limitation of teachers' helpful feedback to individual pupil needs	48	100
(iv) Limitation of testing individual pupils	30	63
(v) Limitation of providing individual motivation	39	81
(vi) Limitation of monitoring pupil's attendance	27	56

Results in Table 4 show that all the respondents indicated that in big classes, teachers had limitations of giving helpful feedback to individual pupils. Eighty-six percent of them responded that they had limitations of interacting with the pupils, and 81% revealed they had limitations of providing for individual pupil motivation. Only 56% of the teachers noted that they had limitations of monitoring pupils' attendance. Majority of teachers revealed by 100% that with big classes, it was difficult for a teacher to give helpful feedback to individual pupils.

Concerning whether teaching methods used by teachers of reading influenced pupils to like reading, respondents revealed that if a teacher read aloud to learners in Primary one, the learners feel confident with what they read. Similarly, if a pupil read aloud while other pupils repeated after him/her, the pupils feel confident with their oral repetitions. Besides this, it was noted that the sounds of the letters or words made by the pupils as they learn to read, say through the phonic method are mastered faster than other methods where learning to read is done silently.

Further, results indicated that with big classes, the commonest methods of teaching reading which influence pupils to like reading were those which involve pupils in the reading act. So, the methods where pupils repeat after a leader are very common and enjoyable if well organized by the teacher. Results from oral interviews revealed that there was a reading lesson marked on the class-time tables in the lower classes.

Asked whether the teachers were supervised during the reading lessons, the respondents revealed the results shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*Frequency of Supervision of Reading Lessons*

Supervision frequency	Yes	No	Percentage of yes (%)
(i) Everyday	8	24	25
(ii) Weekly	5	27	17
(iii) Fortnightly	14	18	44
(iv) Monthly	27	15	84
(v) None	4	28	13

The results above show that 84% of the respondents supervised teachers of reading monthly, 44% of them supervised them fortnightly, and 25% of them supervised them every day. Only 13% of them did not supervise the teachers of reading. Thus, the majority of the respondents supervised reading monthly. Concerning teaching methods, teachers of reading use to teach reading in the lower classes, the results were similar to those obtained through questionnaires. However, the heads of lower sections in School C and E noted that repeating chorus readings on flash cards were most suitable for primary one because they enjoy doing things in a group. The head teacher of School B noted that various methods would work very well to cater to the mixed abilities and age ranges found in lower classes.

Further results indicated that in big classes, the most convenient method of teaching the reading skill is one which compels all the pupils to participate at the same time. Such methods include identifying group leaders who can read aloud while the group mates repeat after him/her. In one of the oral interviews, one respondent in School G revealed that in infant classes, the pupils enjoy making noise in a group. Hence, methods in reading should enable the pupils to speak, sing, or shout.

### **Research Question Two**

The question sought to find out how big class sizes affect the use of teaching materials for reading in lower classes. Section B of the teachers' questionnaire and the interview guides were used to obtain the results. The researcher tested different teaching materials that teachers often use in teaching reading. The results are shown in Table 6.

According to Table 6, 100% of the teachers showed that teachers used the chalkboard, 86% used picture cards, 85% of them used wall displays, 81% of them revealed that they used textbooks, 75% of them showed

that they used jigsaw drawing, and 32% of them indicated that they used photographs. There was no evidence for strips and video recordings. The majority of teachers revealed that they used the chalkboard.

Table 6

*Summary of Teaching Materials Used to Teach Reading*

Materials	Yes	No	Percentage of yes (%)
(i) Wall displays	41	9	85
(ii) Chalkboard	48	-	100
(iii) Jigsaw drawings	36	12	75
(iv) Picture cards	42	6	86
(v) Textbooks	39	9	81
(vi) Film strips	-	-	-
(vii) Video recordings or slides	-	-	-
(viii) Photographs	15	33	32

The researcher wanted to find out how the teachers used the teaching materials to teach reading. It was revealed that although materials like manila papers and colored markers were not regularly supplied to them, the few that they got were used by the teachers to design teaching materials for reading if the teachers had the time. Further, the teachers noted that teaching materials influence pupils to like reading. Table 7 shows the themes of the responses which the teachers revealed showing how teaching influences pupils to like reading.

Table 7

*Summary of Role Played by Use of Teaching Materials*

Code	Frequency	Percentage of frequency (%)
(i) Encourage pupils to interact freely in class	42	86
(ii) Act as reinforcement to learners	40	83
(iii) Provide a positive environment for creative discipline	39	81
(iv) Enable the pupil to meet his or her individual differences	37	77
(v) Attract learners' attention and motivation	48	100

Table 7 revealed that the use of teaching materials influences the learners to like reading by attracting the learners' attention and motivation. Eighty-six percent of teachers showed that teaching materials encourage pupils to interact freely in class, 83% of teachers noted that the materials provide a positive environment for creative discipline, and 77% of them showed that the materials enable pupils to meet individual differences. So, majority of all teachers revealed that the use of teaching materials influences the learners to like reading because the learners' attention and motivation is captured.

Results from oral interviews were similar to those obtained from questionnaires. However, most head teachers revealed that teaching materials cannot do much in influencing learning, unless the teacher himself/herself uses them skillfully. One head teacher revealed that it is important for a teacher to stress the important things the pupils can learn from the teaching materials.

Results from observations obtained through the observation guide revealed the state of teaching materials used to teach reading. The results showed that 55% of the teaching materials were appropriate, 25% of the teachers showed that the available teaching materials used to teach reading were inappropriate, and 20% of the teachers noted the materials for reading were not available.

### Research Question Three

The question sought to find out teachers' attitudes towards teaching reading as a subject to big class sizes in the lower primary classes. Section C of the questionnaire interview guide was used. The researcher also wanted to establish the number of pupils the respondents handled per reading lesson. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

#### *Summary of Number of Pupils Handled Per Teacher*

Number of pupils	Frequency	Percentage of frequency (%)
(i) less than 50 pupils	-	-
(ii) 50–70 pupils	4	8
(iii) 71–100 pupils	30	63
(iv) over 100 pupils	14	29
Total	48	100

Besides this, the researcher wanted to find out the teachers' attitude towards the class sizes they handled per lesson. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

#### *Teachers' Feelings Towards the Size of Class*

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage of frequency (%)
Small	-	-
Reasonable	-	-
Crowded	36	75
Overcrowded	12	25
Total	48	100

Table 9 shows that 75% of the teachers felt their classes are crowded, 25% of them felt that the classes are overcrowded. No teachers indicated that the classes are small or reasonable. Therefore, the majority of teachers felt that the classes are crowded.

Concerning the number of pupils teachers would handle effectively in reading lessons, all teachers indicated numbers between 25 and 50 pupils. It was noted that with such a number, the teaching methods and teaching materials can be appropriately used.

Teachers indicated that crowded classes had a higher incidence of indiscipline cases than the small classes. Yet, if the classes are small, the pupils are easy to manage and their participation will easily be enhanced and monitored. Besides, individual help can be given to pupils easily.

Results from oral interviews revealed that because classes are crowded, there is always a scramble for almost everything. The facilities—seats, textbooks, and space—are always in shortage. Therefore, it is inevitable to punish pupils who tend to be very vigorous while getting those things.

## Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn based upon what had been found by the study. Recommendations were made and lastly, possible areas for further study were suggested. From the findings, several conclusions were drawn.

Lower primary classes in primary schools in Kampala Central Municipality are crowded classes having between 71 and 100 pupils assigned to one teacher to handle during the teaching-learning process of the reading skills. Therefore, the teaching methods that are often employed are basically those that call for chorus reading in the class.

The teachers of reading use such methods, mainly because they want to curb indiscipline that would arise from pupils who misbehave due to being in a crowded class. Because the classes are crowded, the teachers fail to give individual attention to learners of the reading skills.

The teaching materials that would reinforce use of various teaching methods are also restricted to the traditional ones like wall displays, posters and chalkboard. The supply of manila paper and markers out of which teachers would design teaching aids if teachers got the time was irregular.

The findings revealed that not every pupil's needs were catered to in such crowded classes. Additionally, the teachers felt that there was too much work to handle by a single teacher of the reading skills.

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Appendix A

### A MAP OF KAMPALA DISTRICT SHOWING CENTRAL DIVISION

