

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Challenges of students' discipline in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes: A case of primary schools in Dembi Dollo and Nekemte towns of Oromia Region, Ethiopia**

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**In many cultures in the world, discipline is a very important quality of students in schools. Thus, the prime objective of this study was to explore major factors contributing to students' discipline problems in some primary schools of Dambi Dollo and Nekemte Towns in Ethiopia. To achieve the objective, basic research questions were developed, related literatures were reviewed and different methodologies were designed to gather the necessary data. Fourteen male and nineteen female teachers and seven male students, totally forty people were selected as participants of the study. The sample selection was made purposely on the basis of the subjects concerns and commitments to deal with students' managements in the schools. Information was collected from the respondents by using different instruments such as Questionnaires, Interviews and focus group discussion (FGD). After the analysis was made, the following findings were found: English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers have knowledge and skills gaps in properly teaching and handling their students in class, they do not collaborate in students' management systems, schools also declined to consistently manage students by applying school laws, and students were dissatisfied by classroom instructional processes. Other causes of students' discipline problems were peer influences, hatred towards English language, automatic promotion, and classroom physical conditions.**

**Key words:** Parents-teacher association (PTA), focus group discussion (FGD), behavior, discipline, disciplinary/behavioral problems, automatic promotion.

## **INTRODUCTION**

School violence and students' disciplinary problems seem to reach its climax in many schools nowadays.

Lack of respects for the authority of schools, teachers and other school employees as well as for the rights of other students, is reducing the ability of many schools to

provide students with qualities of education since it hampers good teaching-learning atmospheres in schools. According to Ghazi (2013) and Shahril (2008), unless children are well handled in all aspects of their life, for example, behavior configurerol and academic activities,

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in their early ages and schools, they will not follow the right paths in their entire education systems in general and English Language Learning in particular. Inability to do this, according to Ghazi (2013) and Shahril (2008), is one of the major factors that can lead students' final failure in the academic works. So, if students are mistreated and misled somewhere in their early educations, they will no longer be successful.

Azizi et al. (2009) also stated that working on students' disciplinary problems in schools is one major way of bringing sustainable qualities of education. Meaning that considerations must be taken to neutralize students' disruptive behaviors both in and outside their classroom situations. However, Debela (2014) and Azizi et al. (2009) emphasize on the inside classroom discipline as a major factor that affects students' real learning than the outside ones and this is because the actual and curriculum based learning is the base for the others and this at large takes place in the classroom in the presence of the subject teachers.

Therefore, it is meaningful at this point to derive that conducive learning and teaching atmosphere is highly required and as a result, the learners can get concentration on the task they are doing and thereby make meaning out of the classroom interactions.

Thus, albeit students inevitably misbehave during English Lessons at different levels of education, it is due to the fact that early ages in education are more important than the later that researcher took the issue into considerations and aimed at conducting a research on early grade students' classroom behavioral defects in EFL classes. Thus, investigating the causes of such disruptions by students is the focus of this study.

### Statement of the problem

Though not always the case, an English proverb says "A good starting will have a good ending." This implies that if something goes wrong from the beginning, it will hardly become right as it comes to an end unless efforts have been made to improve on its way. Hence, it is not without a purpose that the researcher wanted to conduct a research on early grade students' discipline. For example, children at early ages can be shaped and reshaped in the way they can develop the desired appropriate behaviors which will help them succeed in their ongoing education life.

Researches also indicate that early treatments of students' misbehaviors will have positive outcomes in their later educational journeys. Debela et al. (2014) conducted an action research on "Improving 1st Year Evening Students' Classroom Disciplines" and came up with the conclusion that discipline matters in schools and must be taken into considerations otherwise failure in academic career is likely to be resulted in.

Olaitan et al. (2013) and Sulaiman (2008) have also

conducted research on investigating types of the existing disciplinary problems and concluded that school discipline cases should not be undermined and need further studies.

Doorlag and Lewis (1995) and Casto and Mastropieri (1986) for example, also disclosed that early interventions of students' behavioral problems may lessen if not prevent their later learning problems. Baker (2005), Akey (2006) and Pastor et al. (2012) also supported the idea.

Therefore, well behaved students are more thoughtful, conscious and concerned about what they are doing than the disruptive ones. This is because ill-mannered students, unless they are closely examined and intervened in accordance with a specific behavior they manifest in their early ages, might be misled and finally fail at their education.

Experience has also shown that students who are able to score good marks in their education and, in most cases, succeed as expected of them are those who heart-fully attend their lesson by recognizing different language signals both in and outside the classroom.

However, many students of some primary schools nowadays are not properly behaving in schools. The researcher observed this practical problem while undertaking different Practicums by the college and conducting community service trainings by the university (the researchers past and present experiences). Thus, he has been observing and recognizing many discipline problems on students when he was working with the Practitioners (teacher trainees) in different catchment area schools. Some of the major problems that made the researcher to conduct this study were:

- (1) Students were not concerned about their education, they carelessly and aimlessly move;
- (2) They were dancing, pinching, and kicking each other the English lessons;
- (3) They enter and leave the class as they like without any permission from the teacher;
- (4) They do not follow the lesson being delivered rather talking something else and joking;
- (5) Insulting and fighting with teachers and teacher practitioners (during practice).

For example, the researcher recalls what one student said in Afan Oromo "*kaartonii kanarra ishee ciibsaatii gorsaa yoos isheedhaaf galaatii*".... when roughly translated, sleep with her on this carpet or mat to make it clear for her. This is really harassment.

Therefore, this study aimed at investigating factors contributing to such discipline problems and suggesting possible recommendations for the stake holders. As to the site of the study, Olika Dingil, Lafto and Burka Jato Primary Schools were in focus. The first two schools are from Dembi Dollo Town and the third school is from Nekemte Town Administrations, both towns are found in Oromia Regional State and located at western part of

Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia.

### Objectives of the study

This study attempts to find out some of the factors contributing to students' behavioral defects which can have negative impacts on their learning. Hence, the study aimed at investigating major factors affecting students' disciplines in school; examining the extent to which students' behavioral problems are identified and treated accordingly in schools.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Dughatkin (2012) and Bergstrom (2016), behavior is one's code of conduct manifested in the regular life experience of an individual. It is an indicator of what a person manifests and how he/she acts when living within the society. Accordingly, there can be behaviors which are normal and acceptable on one side and those that are not normal and not acceptable on the other sides in front of people one is living with.

Lindgren (1980) says "Most teachers would probably agree with the definition of disruptive behavior as behavior that interferes and disturbs with the healthy conditions of teaching/learning processes."

Hence, students' with acceptable behaviors in school are characterized by the appropriate ways of behaving as the school expects them to be both in and outside the classroom. Since they go in line with the given norm within the school community, such behaviors can be referred to as normal, whereas disruptive behaviors are observed on students with 'behavioral disorders' in school (Doorlag and Lewis, 1995).

Disruptive behaviors, according to Dughatkin (2012) and Bergstrom (2016), and Doorlag and Lewis (1995), are behavioral problems in which students reveal inappropriate school behaviors such as aimless moving in and outside their class, cursing or offending each other, disobedience, ignorance and other unruly behaviors.

Therefore, the terms disruptive behavior, behavioral disorder, behavior problem and discipline problems are all to mean almost the same thing and used interchangeably for this study.

### Indicators of disciplinary problems

Students' disciplinary problems are not uncommon at any level of primary schools (Doorlag and Lewis, 1995). This seems to dictate that disciplinary problems are highly observed on junior school students and these students were also the main focus of this research.

There is no common consensus among writers on any one or two indicators of students' behavioral problems. Doorlag and Lewis (1995), for example, have disclosed

that.

Many attempts have been made to clearly define students' behavioral problems in terms of a certain indicator observed on students as disruptive cases but, there is no common agreement on any one definition. One reason for this is that no single pattern of behaviors identifies a student as having disruptive behaviors. Instead, many students behavior can be indicative of a behavioral disorder ranging from aggression to extreme withdrawal.

However, it seems reasonable at this point to have some common understanding of the indicators of disruptive behaviors in school contexts for the purpose of this study.

Doorlag and Lewis (1995), on the other hand, identified the following indicators of children's discipline problems.

- (1) Hyperactivity refers to excessive, aimless and inappropriate movements for the age and the majority of children within the school.
- (2) Distractibility when students are easily distracted from school tasks and unable to maintain attention, they are considered distracted.
- (3) Impulsivity is an action that occurs without thought and deliberation. When students act impulsively, their actions are more likely to be inappropriate and their classroom responses inaccurate. Example: verbal outbursts, laughing and insulting.

To wind up this part, students' disciplinary problems are exhibited in any one of the following three conditions: Low rates of appropriate behavior; high rates of inappropriate behavior; and absence of appropriate behavior from students' repertoire.

However, it should be noted that the indicators might be subjective and can be interpreted differently by teachers. But the frequency of such behavior problems can communicate that students with any one of these kinds of reactions are likely to be categorized as having inappropriate behavior. Doorlag and Lewis (1995) supporting the idea wrote: "...such students may depict such behaviors not once or twice a period or a day but once or twice of a minute."

### Roles of stakeholders in managing behavioral problems

#### *Teachers and school administrations*

It is true that teachers are believed to be the first frontiers to deal with students' affairs in schools albeit school administration should deal with the overall disciplines of the school.

One of the most common concerns of classroom teachers is the students who disrupt the instructional processes. Whether typical or special students with conduct problems call attention to themselves by arriving

late, shouting out in or around the class, wandering in and outside the classroom, interacting poorly with others, entering and exiting as they like, not coming back to the class after break time, etc., these inappropriate behaviors resulted in poor students/classroom management skills and poor general work habits (Doorlag and Lewis, 1995).

Nelson (1993) also suggested that no other external observers can identify and know students' behaviors very well than the actual teacher and the mainstreaming team organized to study causes and consequences of such problems.

Therefore, the focus of the classroom teachers should not be a mere teaching by leaving every aspect of their students up to the administrations, but they must also do students controlling affairs.

### ***Parents or families***

Children accomplish a vast amount of nonacademic learning before they enter school and that they continue to learn from such sources even after they enter school. So, it is the family, not school, that provides the first educational experiences of children. According to Lefebvre (2013), the values or norms children acquire from their parents will have a great influence on their future school life.

Research has also shown that one of the most useful approaches to understanding of the behavior of children at school is the study of their family situation. A study conducted by Conyers (1977) cited in Doorlag and Lewis (1995), for example, revealed that the greater the instability of the family and its living arrangements, the greater the likelihood that children's emotional and behavioral problems will be aggravated, and the problems children of such families experience at home is reflected in their school career.

Thus, the values parents hold are especially influential for students' behavior. By the term 'values' the author refers to beliefs as to what is important and what is not: what is worthwhile or interesting or worth doing, and what is useless or not worth doing or what is bad. For the effect, therefore, parents should encourage their children to develop appropriate behavior by being role model by themselves and should closely work with school so that children can hardly get opportunities to develop behavioral problems (Beaty, 1988; Cohen and Cohen, 1987; Lefebvre (2013). Besides, peer influence on students' behavioral change should not be over looked (Blatchford, 1998; Beaty, 1988; Lefebvre (2013); Doorlag and Lewis, 1995).

### **Consequences of disciplinary problems in schools**

Researchers in the area have identified a number of negative consequences of disruptive behaviors of students at school. Woodring (1989), Frase (1989),

Guetzloe (1989), Males (1993) cited in Doorlag and Lewis (1995), Lefebvre (2013), Emmer (1981) and Cohen and Cohen (1987) have mentioned the following major consequences of a non-interfered disciplinary problems seen on students. These are low academic achievements, dropouts, under age pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, drug and alcohol abuse, ill-health, social discriminations, suicides, and fatal death.

Therefore, early grade children must be closely examined and identified on the basis of their day to day activities in schools and should soon be intervened if they are on wrong ways before all these things are likely to happen since this is a great lose to the parents in particular and the country in general.

### **METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

In this study, mixed research methods were employed and the following deal with how the research was conducted.

#### **Target populations**

There were two cycles at the aforementioned schools, grades 1-4 and 5-8 in 2016 academic year of which the latter grade students were the focus of the current study. Thus, 7 second cycle primary school students and 33 teachers of which 28 were participating in filling questionnaires and 12 in interview and FGD.

#### **Sampling technique**

According to Bhattacharjee (2012) and Kothari (2004), reasonable sampling solves a dilemma of getting representative subjects of the study, and the sample size and sampling technique of a study largely depend upon the type of research being conducted. Thus, as this is a descriptive research, students who were relatively matured in age but revealed disciplinary defects were purposively selected by the researcher. Regarding teacher respondents too, experienced teachers with 10 and above years teaching experiences were purposively chosen. So, in both cases, non-random sampling technique was used because these respondents could provide the required reliable data for the study.

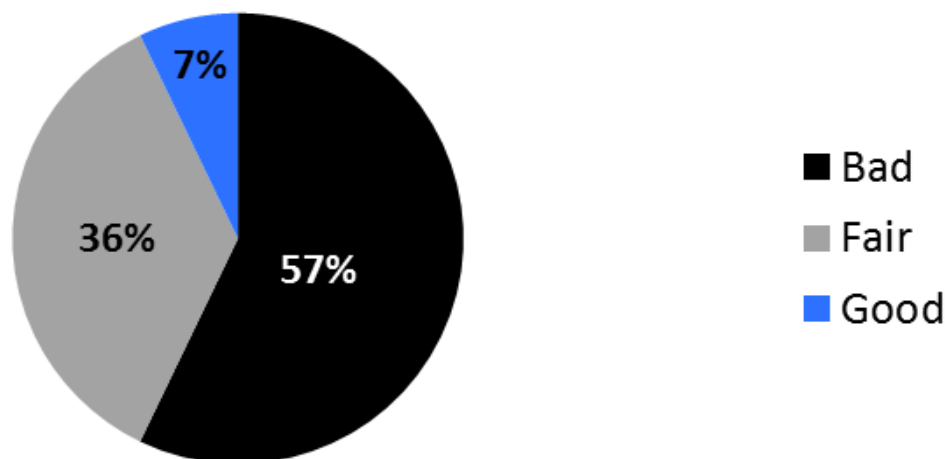
#### **Data collection instruments**

It was recommended that two or more research tools be used to collect valid and reliable data (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Kothari, 2004). For this effect, data was gathered by using the following tools: questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions (FGD). To gather the direct and general data, questionnaires with both close and open ended questions were prepared and administered for the respondents.

According to Bhattacharjee (2012) and others, the purpose of the interview and/or FGD is to probe the ideas of the interviewees about the phenomenon and extract the detailed information on the issue. Thus, the interview was used with individuals and also FGD with group interviewees who were selected for this purpose accordingly.

#### **Data analysis procedures and techniques**

The collected data were thematically sorted out and analyzed using



**Figure 1.** A pie chart showing respondents' judgments of students' current behaviors.

descriptive statistics. A descriptive analysis, according to Bhattacharjee (2012), refers to statistically describing, aggregating, and presenting the constructs of interest or associations between these constructs. Thereby, conclusions and recommendations were made based on the findings obtained.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

### Respondents' judgment of students' behaviors

As shown in Figure 1, 16 (57.14%) of the teacher respondents replied that students' behavior in school in general and in EFL classes in particular is so "bad." Whereas 10 (35.72%) and only 2 (7.14%), respectively said that students' behavior is "fair" and "good". The information obtained both from interview and FGDs also showed that 70 to 80% of school students are having disciplinary problems nowadays.

Hence, the idea can witness the existence and severity of discipline problems in the schools and can support the researcher for being initiated to conduct a research on the issue. It also revealed the severity of the problem for primary school EFL teachers.

### Students' management systems

As shown in Table 1, about 64.29% of the respondents replied that the ways teachers teach have problems and can be major cause of students' disruptive behavior. They disclosed that most teachers in schools nowadays cannot satisfy their students well. And around 10.71% said that teachers satisfied their students well. But about 25% of them said not this much and were in doubt. The data obtained from FGDs and interviews also clearly showed that there is a huge gap in teaching students by fitting their interests and abilities. For example, one interviewee in the discussion said this in Afan Oromo: "akkaataan nuti itti 'English' barannu rakkoo qaba

*barsiisaan sirriitti nutasgabbeessee nu hin barsiisu; kunimmoo akka barattoonni barumsicha jibbanii jeeqan taasisa.* Another respondent added: "... osoo barsiisaan barumsicha sirriitti beekke barsiisa ta'ee barattoonnis ni kabaju, hin jeeqanis." When translating the two, the main reason why students are disturbing during English lessons is that the subject teachers are lacking enough knowledge and then lack confident to manage non disciplined students.

The researcher also crosschecked this information from the school directors and senior EFL teachers. They claimed that most teachers, especially the younger and beginner do not have confidence to properly handle and guide students and this is becoming a major cause for students to develop ill manners in schools.

Therefore, from the analysis, it can be deduced that there exist major gaps in EFL teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching the subject thereby properly controlling students.

Regarding the school proper implementations of School Laws (rules and regulations) in taking different corrective measurements on disruptive students, 53.57% responded "no", 28.57% responded "yes" and 17.86% were in doubt and they were in between "yes" and "no". When asked for seasons why the schools do not do the activity, the respondents wrote many thing and the following are only the major ones:

- (1) The school does not seriously follow up students and identify them according to their problems thereby take corrective measurement as soon as possible;
- (2) No administrative and academic corrections are taken on students with tangible discipline problem rather always excusing them though they revealed serious disciplinary defect, for example, fighting with teacher. "... If educative correction is taken practically on some of the students, it will also be a lesson for others not to follow the wrong path..."

- (3) There are interferences from external bodies such as Woreda Education bureau and other cabinets not to properly punish students with discipline cases;
- (4) Schools are afraid of students' parents and other communities;
- (5) Schools fail to clearly understand and apply School Laws and Disciplines.

Furthermore, the FGD and interview result showed that the schools have not been implementing the School Laws as stated, especially to correct ill mannered students. That is why many students are highly misbehaving and act as they like in schools. One student participant in an FGD said, "*Adabbii seera qabeessaatti eenyuyyuu ni amana; kana jechuun rakkoo naamusaa shilleessuun sirrii natti hin fakkaatu. Fkn: yeroo ammaa kana mootummaan barataan rukutamuu hin qabu haajedhuuyyuu malee iddoo itti hojjetu qabaachuu qaba. ... hanga hincabsinetti yookaan hin jaamsinetti...*" When translating this: though the government/policy is not encouraging teachers to punish students, we all should believe in reasonable and lessonful punishments; it is a must for students to be pinched as per their discipline cases .... What is not good is the brutal or the corporal punishments....

Therefore, it is meaningful to point out that schools are a bit hesitated to implement school laws, for example, logical punishments as per students' disruptive behaviors so that others can also learn from the activities and go on the right track as the school expects them to be.

Literatures also support the logical and reasonable punishment of disruptive students. For example, Beaty (1988) and Lindgren (1980) suggest that provided that a school does two things: (1) proper verbal counseling and guidance, (2) not applying corporal punishments that cause physical damages, the roles of punishments should not be overlooked in putting students on proper line and develop the desired school behaviors.

On whether all EFL teachers or staffs are cooperatively working to manage students in school or not, 64.28% perhaps the majority of the respondents replied "no" and only 35.71% said "yes". The researcher can also be an eye witness while conducting both the observations and the school (compound) notes that teachers' collaborative work on students' management in schools under focus is less as compared to other primary schools. When asked for the reasons, the respondents gave their ideas as some teachers:

- (1) Observe carelessly when students disturb; "...*Yoo ofii jette haabarattu....*"
- (2) Do not want to quarrel with students, others; "...*Maaltu wajjin mataa nacabse?....*"
- (3) Leave it up to the school administrations, etc. "...*Hojji bulchiisaati....*"

Undeniably speaking, however, problematic students

cannot be successfully managed unless all the school communities work hand-in-hand. Literatures also underline this fact. The controlling mechanism of students with disciplinary fault is mainly via cooperative managements (Cohen and Cohen, 1987; Doorlag and Lewis, 1995).

Regarding the line managements encouragement of students' management via reasonable penalties/punishments, 35.71% of the respondents replied that they do "not" encourage the school; they rather interfere not to do so. 42.86% were in doubt either to say one and 21.43% responded "yes", that is, they encourage the school to properly control students with behavioral problems.

However, the interview result showed that school administrations could not reasonably deal with disruptive students as expected of them and the majority of students nowadays are out of control. For example, an interviewee dictated that parents-teacher association (PTA) is most of the time reluctant in making appropriate decisions. He said that they rather make them ignore the intolerable deeds of disruptive students and this is interference as far as they have an authority to give the right decision. He spoke that there are disciplinary problems that have no prerequisites to take corrective measurements by the school, for example, *fighting with a teacher*, and the directors should also pressurize the PTA.

Another interviewee who has been teaching English for around 35 years disclosed "... I definitely believe in the statement; but there is a problem in putting what is in theory into practice because of some 'circular' (by phone) order/interference from the aforementioned, may be from bureau ..."

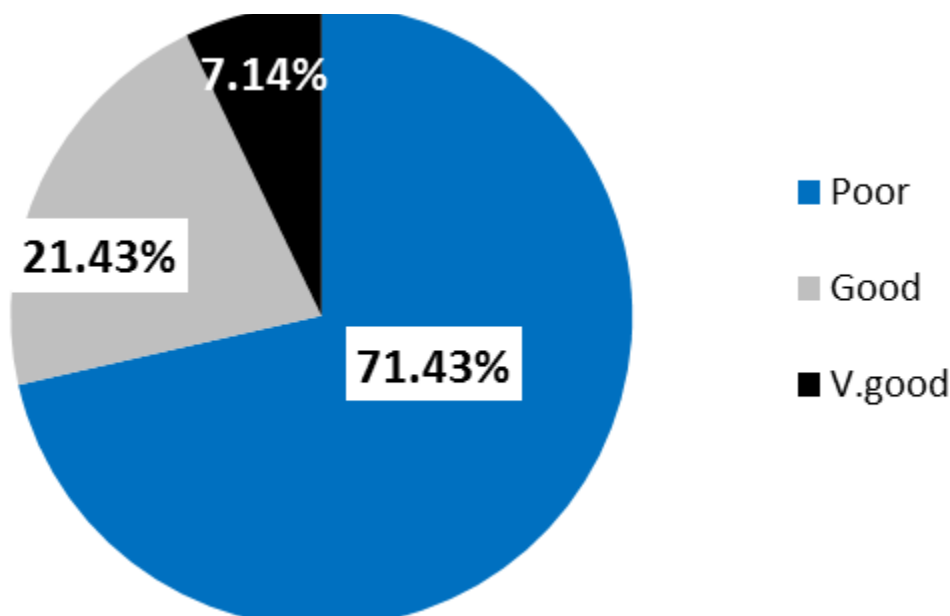
Hence, despite respondents were lacking confidence to witness the real existence of interfere from outside, as it might be wrongly interpreted by the authorities, the researcher's indirect observations reveal that there are indicators that shows the presence of influences from outsiders not to properly manage students with disciplinary problems.

Finally, Table 1 shows respondents' response on parents follow ups of students. Accordingly, about 46.43% responded "not", 42.86% said "rare cases" and 10.71% replied "yes". The data obtained through interview and the FGD also showed families do not come to school to check what their children are doing and how they behave in school.

A participant in an FGD uttered: "*Amalli barataa yeroo maatii biraafi bakkee tokko miti. Kanammoo maatiitu mucaan koo maalfakkaatti jedhee hordofuu waan qabu natti fakkaata. Maatiin tokkoon tokkoo barsiisaa faana hariiroo qabaachuu qaba....*" When translated: students may not behave the same both at home and at schools. So, parents should follow and check whether their children are disciplined and properly attend their education or misbehave at schools. For the effect,

**Table 1.** Respondents’ response on students’ management systems in schools.

Item	Issues/Focus	Responses		
		Yes	Not as such/rare cases	Not
3	Do EFL teachers’ ways of teaching (fitness in both subject matter and pedagogic knowledge) have impacts on students’ disciplinary problems?	18 (64.29%)	7 (25%)	3 (10.71%)
4	Do the schools take different corrective measurements per students’ disruptive behaviors?	8 (28.57%)	5 (17.86%)	15 (53.57%)
6	Are EFL and other teachers cooperatively engaged in’ management students with discipline problems?	10 (35.72%)	-	18 (64.28%)
8	Do the line managers of the school encourage your school on disruptive students proper management?	6 (21.43%)	12 (42.86%)	10 (35.71%)
9	Do parent/families make proper follow ups... visiting the schools?	3 (10.71%)	13 (46.43%)	12 (42.86%)



**Figure 2.** A chart showing respondents’ response on what academic performances of those students looks like.

parents should establish proper links and relationships with the schools and also with each teacher.

Literature also stresses the role of parents/families in students’ management. Thus, parents have a lion share to follow up and know with whom their child is moving and what he is doing in his every day activities (Blatchford, 1998; Beaty, 1988; Lefebvre 2013; Cohen and Cohen, 1987; Doorlag and Lewis, 1995).

Therefore, data at hand shows parents do not follow their children in harmony with schools to manage their behaviors. As an interviewee pointed out, two main

reasons for this include:

- (1) Families being grandparents and unable to control;
- (2) Some children are out of their parents control and live independently on their own “*dhaqeen shaqqaladha*” (economic factors).

**Academic statuses of disruptive students**

As shown in Figure 2, 71.43% of the respondents said

that the academic performance and/or achievement of disruptive students is “poor”. The remaining 21.23 and 7.14% of the respondents replied “good” and “very good”, respectively. Doorlag and Lewis (1995), among others, wrote that disruptive students are most commonly characterized by low academic achievements which will finally be converted into their failures. This is mainly because their attention is not on what and how to learn but how to disturb and discourage others learning.

Thus, the analysis depicted that the academic performances and/or achievements of students with behavioral defects in schools are generally poor.

### Open ended questions

Under here is the presentations of some independently developed questions the researcher deliberately used to cross check the data obtained from close ended questionnaires.

Question 12: Participants were asked to put their expectations of what the future fates of those students be if early interventions are not made accordingly. Their ideas were summarized and presented as follows:

- (1) Barumsicha jibbuu (hating the subject, English)
- (2) Abdii kutatachuu (hopelessness, despaired)
- (3) Barnoota kaanillee jibbuu, kufaatii (hating other subjects, failure)
- (4) Addunyaa ala ta'uu (be out of the world)
- (4) “Their Futurity will be dark and they cannot be productive”
- (5) Hirkattummaa (dependency, lampoons)

Doorlag and Lewis (1995), Lefebvre (2013), and Cohen and Cohen (1987) have also mentioned the following as major consequences of disturbing students: low academic achievements, dropouts, failure, dependencies, ill-health, and social discriminations.

Question 13: The respondents were asked to tick and add further factors they thought have contributions, in one way or another, in causing students to disturb and develop undesired behaviors in EFL sessions. Accordingly, the respondents' reported that “*peer influences, the misunderstanding of rights and responsibilities, not having clear vision in learning, lack of role model teachers in EFL at their disposal, ‘.... One of the most common concerns of classroom teachers is the students who disrupt the instructional processes. .... Students' inappropriate behaviors ...poor students/classroom management skills will generally earn poor work habits (Doorlag and Lewis, 1995). Automatic promotion (free pass from grades 1-4), students not knowing their right and responsibilities, for example, one of the respondents in the interview said “...how can you impose a student who said ‘I don't take this exam, it is my*

*right not to take it' and leave the room by throwing the paper to the teacher? It is really amazing.”*

Question 14: Finally, the respondents were asked for how to improve the students' disciplinary problems in EFL classes.

Many teacher respondents announced that they become despair and hopeless about students' behaviors improvement in schools as well as in classes. One interviewee, for example, put his idea like this: “*Unless something radical changes come on both the students' behavior control and the teachers' ability to properly manage and teach English as a whole in the country, I am afraid that the problem will be the worst; and it is impossible to bring back the norm and classroom respect...”*

### Conclusions

Based upon the findings obtained in the analysis, the major conclusions can be made as follows:

- (1) EFL Teachers have knowledge and skill gaps in teaching English and this resulted in lack of confidence to properly manage their classroom.
- (2) Schools also declined to implement school laws, for example, logical punishments as per students' disruptive behaviors so that it will also be a lesson for others.
- (3) Parents do not follow their children in harmony with schools to manage their behaviors for two reasons: families being grandparents and some children are out of their parents' management as they live independently on their own “*shaqqaladheen jiraadha*” (economic related factors).
- (4) The academic performance and/or achievement of students with discipline problems in schools are generally poor as they are not focusing on their education.
- (5) Other causes of students' disruptive behaviors were: lack of interest in English course, peer influences, misunderstanding the boundaries of rights and responsibilities, automatic promotion (the students do not fail in grades 1-4 in Ethiopia), poor instructional processes, home/environment students are brought up in, and classroom physical conditions and school facilities.

To wind up, students' causes of disturbance and their development of discipline problems in schools can be seen from two major angles: in school and outside school factors.

**In school factors:** These are causes of students' disruptive behaviors formulated in the school compound, both in and outside the classroom. These include: Teachers (Teachers related factors that contribute to students' discipline problems are knowledge and skills gaps to teach English well, classroom management problems, less fitting and having confidence in subject



matter knowledge and satisfying students' learning styles, not very much concerned about their works and students, and lack of cooperation in managing students with disciplinary defects, and carelessly passing by students misbehaving in the school) and Students/Peers (Regarding students' related factors, lacking interest in learning English language and thereby hating the teacher, being misled and absorbed by other non-disciplined friends/peers, not knowing the boundaries of their rights and responsibilities were among the major factors. Poor classroom physical conditions and lack of school facilities were also considered as causes of students' behavioral problems. The researcher practically observed while students entered and exited through the broken windows of the classroom).

**Outside school factors:** These are external factors coming from outside schools contributing to students' disciplinary problems. Hence, interference from the authorities, less follow ups by parents/families and environments in which students were brought up were among the major factors affecting students' disciplines.

Overall, unless early interventions are made and immediate actions are taken to alleviate the problems, such students' future fate will be failures and they will no longer be responsible citizens and this is a great loss to their parents/families as well as to their country.

Literature, for example, Doorlag and Lewis (1995), Dughatkin (2012), Bergstrom (2016), Baker (2005), Akey (2006), Blatchford (1998) and others also support that any discipline case in school should be intervened as soon as possible before it goes beyond control so that students can develop the desired behaviors and also be successful in their educations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of these findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were forwarded:

- (1) EFL teachers should be given different in-service trainings to improve their pedagogy and subject matter knowledge.
- (2) Schools should rebuild their capacities of systematic managements of students by paying much attention to students with discipline problems.
- (3) All teachers and school societies should collaboratively work to manage students in schools. The issues of students' disciplinary problems should not be a business of only individuals.
- (4) Reasonable and meaningful corrective measurements/punishments should be properly applied in the school laws by schools to bring problematic students to the appropriate lines.
- (5) Parents/Families should be encouraged to give values for their children learning and make the necessary follow ups as much as they can.

(6) Model EFL teachers who are always striving for satisfying their students' learning and should get recognitions to initiate others.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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