

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS
ATTITUDES BELIEFS, EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCES, AND THE
STRATEGIES THEY EMPLOY TO MANAGE CHILDREN'S PROBLEM
BEHAVIORS IN REFERENCE TO CHERRY ORCHARD ACADEMY**

BY

YETIMWORK NEGASSA

OCTOBER, 2014

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Abstract

The major intent of this study was to investigate pre-school teacher's attitudes, expectation, experiences; and the strategies they employ to manage children's problem behaviors. Problem behavior in school is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate. This problem behavior does not only negatively impact upon their own developmental outcomes, but can also have negative consequences for the teacher. These consequences lead to an inability of teacher to manage behavior problems in the classroom, which is rated the most serious problem facing teachers and quality of teacher's interactions with the students is increasingly acknowledged as a major importance for student's success in school. This study was conducted in cherry Orchard Academy which is found in KolfeKeranio sub-city, Addis Ababa. The study employed qualitative case study design, three children with problem behavior, their homeroom teachers and parents' of children with problem behavior, were purposely selected using critical case sampling method consisting of three months of observations of students' behavior inside the classroom setting and interviews with teachers and focus group discussion were used to collect data from parents' of children with problem behavior. In addition to this, in quantitative study, the questionnaire was administered to all seventeen teachers in the school to investigate the researcher questions. The result indicated that when problem behavior appeared in the classroom, the teacher feeling of frustrations, negative attitudes and assumption towards their student emerged.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.2 Background of the study

Problem behavior is a wide spread problem in many schools in different countries that can have negative consequences for the general school climate.

Smith and Fox (2003) define problem behavior in young children as any repeated patterns of behavior or perception of behavior that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults. This behavior takes the form of disrupted sleeping or eating routines, physical and verbal aggression, property destruction, self injury and withdrawal. Thus, these types of behaviors exert impact on the lives of their teachers, peers and community members. It is also a serious problem that can dramatically affect the ability of the children to progress academically and socially.

However, most preschool teachers perceive or take the child's problem as unmotivated or as having attention and behavior disorder or even learning disabilities or who are not interested in learning or recognizes the child as the one who engage in unacceptable behavior deliberately.

Problem behaviors occur in social contexts in which teachers and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem and other children are either reluctant to get involved or simply do not know how to help (Carach et al. , 1995).

So, the school teachers see punishments as the only means in order to minimize students problem behavior. This is frequently paired with caretaking that lacks warmth and empathy. But the children in contrast whatever they do, they need love, care and encouragement from their teachers. Teachers who are not able to give such care may cause children to suffer from low self-esteem, insecure and lack social skills from their teachers.

Medway (1979) has indicated that children with problem behavior perceived as lacking motivation were criticized more often by their teachers. Hence, for example , if teachers think that students are consistently involved in problem behavior .On the other hand, if teachers

believe that this is due to lack of appropriate disciplinary measures at school, then they will attempt more discipline.

There are different views regarding teachers experience and perceived behavior problems. Studies conducted in USA which looked at teacher's teaching experience and its relation to behavior problems, were not able to establish any association. Other studies, on the Island of Malta, found that, the more experienced the teacher's the fewer the behavior problems they perceived (Papatheodorou&Ramsaut, 1993).

Moreover, as Shewakena (1997:4) cited from Bizunesh (1983) , the training as well as the competence of the teachers were inadequate in handling the diversified behavior of children. They show a tendency to deal and relate with all children in the same way. This condition initiated the researcher to address teachers' beliefs and expectations towards problem behavior and that can provide support and encourage them to modify their problem behaviors.

It is believed that psychologically, in healthy environment children feel safe and protected and this help the children to have the confidence to explore and develop new skills and to grow strong. This safety is dependent on the positive teacher-child interaction and teachers who could understand individual difference, the way children grow, behave and learn.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Preschool years are the basis of all round development of children, teachers need to interact with children in ways that prevent negative behavior, like ignoring inappropriate conduct and providing positive attention, encouragement and praise for appropriate behavior are powerful tools for shaping behavior. With the teacher's warm support, children adjust better to school they like it more (Ladd & Burgess, 2001).

In line with the above, teachers, parents and the school administration are expected to play a big role for the academic and social behavioral success of children with behavioral problem. Furthermore, preschool teachers attitude and experience vis-à-vis the strategies they employ will be a determining factor to manage such children's behavior. When teachers are aware of the needs of individual difference, they can build in methods for helping each student get their needs met strategies to address the problem behavior of young children.

However, teachers do not give due attention to children with problem behavior because of their attitude; gaps in awareness and recognition of the problem; lack of experience and not much has been done to support these children to cope up with the school environment. Teachers assume children with behavior disorders can control their actions and could stop their disturbing behavior if they wanted to.

According to U.S Department of Education (2005), most teachers feel distressed, knowing there is a problem, but feeling unable to do anything about it. The inability of teachers to manage behavior problems in the classroom is rated the most serious problem facing teachers.

Otherwise children displaying high levels of externalizing problems (like aggression) have been found to be prone to a large number of school adjustments difficulties. These children are at risk of developing academic problems such as increasing classroom disengagement; and underachievement as well as social difficulties (Ladd & Burgess, 2001). This problem behavior at pre-school level may tend to persist in to the formal school years, and may prove to be long lasting if no intervention is attempted.

Thus this study will attempt to study how the teachers' attitude, beliefs, expectations and action towards problem behavior and its influence on the child academic and social behavioral success and offers recommendation that preschool teachers can use when working with children that misbehave.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General objectives

The general objectives of this study was to assess teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and expectations towards children with problem behavior and its influence on the children's academic and social behavioral success.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

This study specifically attempts to:

- The major factors contribute to children's problem behavior.

- To examine how teachers' beliefs, expectations, values and experience influence their teaching style and their ability to handle their students' problem behavior.
- To explore measures/strategies, and skills that can be used to effectively manage children's problem behavior.

1.4 Research Questions

The research aims to look for answers for the following research questions.

1. What major factors contribute to children's problem behavior?
2. Do teachers' attitudes, beliefs and expectations towards children with problem behavior influence children's academic and social behavioral success?
3. What measures/strategies do pre-school teachers employ in managing student's problem behavior?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is expected to provide necessary empirical evidence regarding how problem behavior affect the academic and social behavioral success of the child there by enabling the concerned individuals/authorities to be aware of the behavior and necessary steps to manage such behavior and the result is expected to have the following implications.

The study will have importance to:

- Create awareness about problem behavior among teachers and other concerned bodies.
- Be a source of information for parents and teachers about the problem behavior of the children so that they can make the necessary intervention for the betterment of the children's behavior.
- Add to the existing body of knowledge and may serve as additional input in the area.
- Recommend practical and feasible ways and methods of handling problem behavior.

1.6. Operational Definition of Terms

In this study, the definition of terms is as follows:

Attitude: - the way you think and feel about someone or something or a feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior.

Behavior problem:-loosely used to refer to a person who acts disruptively or abnormally or to such behavior (Hawas, 1982:50).

Preschool:-schools for children of age below formal primary school (Good, 1973).

Preschool teachers: - a female after completing grade 12, trained for some time and teaches in preschool.

Nursery:-a school which offers supervised educational experiences for 3- year and 4- year old children (Good, 1973).

Kindergarten: - an educational set or section of a school system devoted to the education of children, usually from 4 to 6 years of age; characterized by organized play activities having educational and socializing values (Good, 1973).

1.7 Organization of the Study

The thesis is organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and definitions of terms. Chapter two discusses review of related literature and a theoretical overview of the research topic. Chapter three addresses methodological issues and design. In chapter four the research findings are presented. In chapter five the research findings and its highlights are discussed and conclusions with ways to help the teachers' improve their approach towards the behaviorally challenged students in order to develop a more successful relation between them.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Problem Behavior

According to American Psychiatric Association (1994), problem behavior is a persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others and major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated. The behavior must occur over time, not just be isolated antisocial acts, symptoms begin during childhood or adolescence.

Problem behavior may be mild, moderate or severe in nature. Mild forms tend to dissipate as a child matures, but more severe forms are often chronic. Problem behavior appears in many settings including the home, the school, with peers and in the community. Children with Problem behavior are often physically aggressive and cruel to other people and animals. These children typically lie and cheat in games and in school work and are often truant and may run away from home. Such kinds of children often show no concern for the feelings of others and fail to show remorse or guilt for harm they have inflicted.

Children are labeled to have Problem behavior if he or she meets the following specific behavioral criteria. These children project an image of toughness, but usually have low self-esteem. They often have other difficulties as well, such as depression, low problem solving skills, learning disorders. A large number of these children are also diagnosed as having attention deficit /hyperactivity disorder/.

Problem behaviors may be viewed as occurring in a cycle: trigger, escalation, crisis, and recovery.

Analysis of this cycle provides a foundation for using a variety of strategies to minimize the triggers of problem behavior teach more appropriate behavior in response to these triggers, or provide consequences to the challenging behavior that will encourage a more appropriate response (Emerson Eric, 2001).

2.2 Causation and prevalence of problem behavior

There are various factors that may predispose children and youth to the development of problem behavior. Most believe that it is a complex interaction of numerous biological, interpersonal and environmental factors. Developmental disorders and mental retardation are also commonly found in conjunction with problem behavior. Social stressors often include difficulties in the home, a parental history of alcohol dependence and economic factors (Kazdin, 1990).

According to Center for Mental Health Service (1999), the exact cause of problem behavior is not known, but it is believed that a combination of biological, genetic, environmental, psychological, and social factors play a role.

Regarding biological factors some studies suggest that defects or injuries to certain areas of the brain can lead to behavior disorders. Conduct disorder has been linked to particular brain regions involved in regulating behavior, impulsive control, and emotion. Conduct disorder symptoms may occur if nerve cells circuits along these brain regions do not work properly.

On the other hand, low socioeconomic status and not being accepted by their peers appear to be risk factors for the development of conduct disorder. Example: boredom, seeking social interaction, the need for an element of control, lack of knowledge of community norms, insensitivity of staff and services to the person's wishes and needs.

Environmental factors such as a dysfunctional family life, childhood abuse, traumatic experiences, a family history of substance abuse, and inconsistent discipline by parents may contribute to the development of conduct disorder. Example: physical aspects such as noise and lighting or gaining access to preferred objects or activities

Some experts believe that conduct disorder can reflect problems with moral awareness (notably, lack of guilt and remorse) and deficits in cognitive processing. Example: feeling excluded, lonely, devalued, labeled, disempowered, living up to people's negative expectations.

The significant rates at which problem behavior occur in young children are now well documented, although specific estimates of prevalence rates vary depending on the sample and criteria used. In a review of prevalence studies, Campbell (1995) estimated that 10% to 15% of

young children have mild to moderate problem behavior while, in a pediatric population, Lavigne et al.(1996) found that 21% of preschool children met the criteria for a diagnosable disorder, with 9% classified as severe. Data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal study revealed that 10% of kindergartners arrive at school with problem behavior (West et al.,2000).Children living in poverty appear to be especially vulnerable, exhibiting rates that are higher than that of the general population (Qi & Kaiser, 2003).

Problem behavior affects 1 to 4 percent of 9 to 17 year-olds, depending on exactly how the problem behavior is defined (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Problem behavior appears to be more common in boys than in girls and more common in cities than in rural areas.

2.3. Factors that contribute to children problem behavior

2.3.1 Parenting Style

Parenting style is the major environments within which children grow and develop, generates the earliest influences upon their behavior. In other words, how parents respond to and discipline their children greatly affects how they develop, both cognitively and socially. According to Baumrind (1991), a child's development process is influenced by a mixture of all the stimuli he came into situations. Since parents are normally a fixed presence in a child's life, they tend to have the most significant impact on whether his development is positive or negative. Baumrind suggested that the majority of parents in United States of America display one of the four different parenting styles:

a) Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parenting is a democratic style of parenting, parents are attentive, forgiving, teach their offspring proper behavior, have a set of rules, and if the child fails to follow there is punishment, if followed there is reward/reinforcement. These tend to result in children who are happy, capable and successful (Maccoby, 1992)

b) Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting is a strict parenting style, involves high expectations from parents but have little communication between child and parents. Parents don't provide logical reasoning for rules and limits, and are prone to harsh punishments. These generally lead to children who are obedient and proficient but they rank lower in happiness, social competence and self-esteem.

c) Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting take on the role of "friends" rather than parents, do not have any expectations of child, they allow the child to make their own decisions. These often results in children who rank low in happiness and self-regulation. These children are more likely to experience problems with authority and tend to perform poorly in school.

d) Uninvolved Parenting

Uninvolved parenting neglects their child by putting their own life before the child's. They do provide for the child's. They do provide for the child's basic needs but they show little interaction with the child. These rank lowest across all life domains. These children tend to lack self-control, have low self-esteem and are less competent than their peers.

Baumrind (1991) asserts that, parenting styles might vary. Some potential causes of these differences include culture, personality, family size, parental background, socioeconomic status, educational level and religion.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999), research shows that some cases of problem behavior begin in early child hood, often by the preschool years. Factors that may make a child more likely to develop problem behavior include: early maternal rejection, separation from parents, without an adequate alternative caregiver, early institutionalization, family neglect, abuse or violence, parental mental illness, parental mental discord, large family size, crowding and poverty.

2.3.2 Physical Punishment

Punishment is a common and often used method of disciplining children. And it is believed that punishment have positive contribution to reduce the probability that the behavior will be repeated in the future.

Physical punishment is associated with children's aggression and other antisocial behavior (towards peers, siblings and adults). physical punishment may legitimize violence for children in interpersonal relationships because they tend to internalize the social relations they experience (Vygotsky, 1978). Ironically, the behavior that parents are most likely to intend to prevent when physically punish children is exactly the behavior that they are likely to be strengthening social learning theory. Bandura (1969) also suggest that physical punishment enables children to learn aggressive behavior through modeling. If parents try to modify their children's behavior through inflicting pain, then those children are likely to do the same to others when they want to influence other people's actions.

Straus (2001) points out that, the use of verbal methods of discipline through explanation and reasoning are likely to provide the child with more cognitive stimulation than the use of corporal punishment without induction. Thus, poorer cognitive outcomes may result if parents who physically punish their children make less use of inductive methods of discipline, such as explanation and reasoning – procedures that are likely to enhance cognitive growth. It may also be that children who are anxious about being physically punished are inhibited from exploring their physical and social worlds, and therefore less likely to extend their cognitive skills.

Physical punishment does no guarantee a harmful effect, but the more that children experience corporal punishment and the more frequent and severe it is, the more they are at risk for problems like aggression and depression, regardless of their cultural background. The use of corporal punishment as a method of family discipline is a health risk for children- a risk to which parents might not expose their children if they understood the probability of harmful consequences (Straus 1999).

McGuiness (1993:41) states that a punished child is forced to pay attention while at the same time develops the attitude of regarding all human relations from the superior-inferior angle and trained in a basic neurotic attitude. It can also cause many problems like: it generate fears and harmful anxieties which may encourage avoidance behaviors (i.e. the child may avoid places where, or people from whom punishment has been-or is-given) and their application may serve as an unhealthy model for pupils.

Punishment is the most controversial aversive behavior management procedure has been used and abused with students with disabilities (Bratten et al. , 1988).Because of its abuse, the use of punishment as a behavioral change procedure continue to raise a number of concerns regarding legal and ethical ramification.

2.3.3 Teacher - Child Relationship

Social relationships such as early attachment to care givers, friendships and collaborative learning between children and teachers, directly and indirectly influence children's learning and motivation to learn (Straus 2001).

The quality of early teacher-student relationships has a long-lasting impact. Specifically, students who had more conflict with their teachers or showed more dependency toward their teachers in kindergarten also had lower academic achievement (as reflected in Mathematics and languages arts grades) and more behavioral problems (example, poorer work habits, more discipline problems) through the eighth grade. These findings were evident event after taking into consideration (statistically) the extent to which students' behavior problems related to problematic teacher relationships. These findings were greater for boys than for girls (Hamre&Pianta, 2001). Attachment security is vital for children's sense of wellbeing and their feelings of safety within and outside the boundaries of the family, and is a vital ingredient in the development of conscience (Laible& Thompson, 2000). Further work describes that children with more closeness and less conflict with teachers developed better social skills as they approached the middle school years than those with more conflictual relationships in kindergarten (Berry & O'Connor, 2009).

2.3.4 .Curriculum

The curriculum of the kindergarten should contribute to the children's physical development and expand their control of language. It should help them enter into their literary and musical heritage. Furthermore it should help them express themselves aesthetically, understand quantitative and spatial relations, and establish satisfying relations with other children and adults (Heffernan & Todd, 1960).

In order to meet the above indicated objectives, related content should be included in designing the curriculum. McCarthy & Houston (1980) also suggested the content of kindergarten curriculum should comprise of basic learning in the areas of language, Math, art, health and science, social studies, music and physical education.

2.4. What are the Signs of Problem Behavior?

According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999) symptom of problem behavior include: aggressive behavior that harms or threatens other people or animals, self injurious, destructive behavior that damages or destroys property, lying or theft, very restless, truancy or other serious violations of rules, frustrated about lack of success, early tobacco, alcohol, and substance use and lacking motivation.

Children with problem behavior also may experience: higher rates of depression, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, and suicide, academic difficulties, poor relationships with peers or adults, very quiet, withdrawn, attention seeking, difficulty staying in adoptive, foster, or group homes, and higher rates of injuries, school expulsions, and problem with law.

2.5. Modeling from teachers' behavior

Modeling is an important way in which children and adults learn chunks of behavior. From a classroom management perspective modeling theory has much to offer. Children, in addition to that which they learn from the formal curriculum in school, learn much from observing their teachers and peers. It is common knowledge that they often find it easier to learn behaviors which they are practiced, rather than only being explained to them: they tend to do even better when the two are combined. In general, teachers who are able to form good personal relationship with their pupils and earn their respect are more likely to earn prestige and therefore have their behavior modeled (Zirpoli&Melloy, 2001).

Modeling is an important concept in the understanding of human behavior. One definition is that “a model is any antecedent stimulus that is topographically identical to the behavior the trainer wants imitated (Cooper et al. , 1987).

According to Cooper et al., models can be actual demonstrations, or they can be done symbolically. Symbolic models are presented in sources other than in the students' actual environment. Examples include models in books, movies, and television. A major concern today is with such media. When students view models of aggression and violence, they may become more likely to do the same thing. This tendency is especially true if the person displaying the model has similar characteristics to the student (example, another teenager). Therefore, it is crucial that appropriate models are shown in the classroom and imitation is reinforced; conversely, inappropriate models should be prevented and/or not allowed to continue and imitative behaviors should not be reinforced. Modeling, then, is a possible reason for the display of many behaviors in school (Alberto & Troutman, 1999; Zirpoli&Melloy, 2001).Students is faced with a multitude of models, both good and bad. Once an imitative behavior is displayed, however, it must be reinforced in some manner for the behavior either wanted or unwanted to continue.

Brophy (1995) also described that modeling prosocial behavior is the most basic elements for enhancing student socialization, because teachers are unlikely to be successful socializers unless they practice what they preach. Modeling, accompanied by verbalization of the self-talk that guides prosocial behavior, can become a very influential method of student socializations because it conveys the thinking and decision making involved in acting for the common good. In situations in which prosocial behavior is difficult for students to learn, modeling may have to be supplemented with instruction (including practice exercises) in desirable social skills and coping strategies.

2.6. Attributes of Successful Teachers

Good and Brophy(1995) have identified some general attributes of teachers that contribute to their success in socializing students. These attributes include:

- a. Social attractiveness, based on a cheerful disposition, friendliness, emotional maturity, sincerity, and other qualities that indicate good mental health and personal adjustment;

- b. Ego strength, exhibited in self-confidence that allows teachers to be calm in a crisis, listen actively without being defensive, avoid win-lose conflicts, and maintain a problem-solving orientation;
- c. Clarity about teacher roles and comfort in playing them, which enables teachers to explain coherently to students what they expect;
- d. Patience and determination in working with students who persist in testing limits;
- e. Acceptance of the individual, though not necessarily of all of his or her behavior, and making this attitude clear to students; and

The ability to state and act on firm but flexible limits based on clear expectations, keeping rules to a minimum and liberalizing them as students become more independent and responsible over time.

2.7. Teachers' Perception of Problem Behavior

Children who engage in disruptive and aggressive behavior are likely to upset classroom order, break rules and provoke confrontations with the teacher (Ladd et al., 2006). The relationship with the teacher may, therefore, be hampered and unsupportive. Teacher's reactions to these behavior problems seem to depend on the type of problem behavior (example: aggressive vs. inattentive/hyperactive behavior), as well as on teacher belief and attitudes towards the management of these behavior (Poulou& Norwich, 2002) : Teachers report more negative affect and see punishment as more appropriate for aggressive than for inattentive-hyperactive child behavior (Lovejoy, 1996). Moreover, they perceived children's aggressive behaviors to be more under control of the child than inattentive/hyperactive behavior (Lovejoy, 1996).

One study showed that teachers are more likely to punish students with problem behavior and less likely to encourage them when they behave appropriately (Walker & Buckley, 1973). Teachers also call on children with aggressive behavior less frequently, ask them fewer questions, and provide them with less information (Shonkoff& Philips, 2000).Not surprisingly, these students soon fall behind, and they are more likely to be held back, placed in a special class, or even expelled (Kazdin, 1987).

According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2002), a person's perceived control to perform an intended behavior or action depends on past experiences as well as an evaluation of an anticipated impediment and obstacles.

Concept of perceived control over an action does not only refer to Bandura's (1989) concept of self-efficacy (the perceived ease or difficulty of an action), but also includes a person's view on the controllability of an action (beliefs about the degree to which performing the action/behavior is up to the actor; Ajzen, 2002).

Children's repeated engagement in aggressive behavior may deteriorate teacher's perceived control over this child's behavior. Consequently, experience a multitude of negative feelings without question the most prominent barrier between the teacher and a student with problem behavior (Lassen, 2005). Such negative attitudes and behavior may influence the relationship between the teacher and the student, and detrimental to the child's development of constructive behavior. By empowering the teachers to perceive the students' behavior as clearly as possible, the teacher may be better able to adapt the teaching situations in the inclusive setting. By making the inclusive settings better for specific students' the educational experiences within the classroom often appear to become more for all students (Befring, 2001).

2.8. Managing disruptive behavior in the classroom

Kounin (1970) described that some child behaviors are hard to change after they have become ingrained. Therefore, the earlier the challenging behavior is identified and treated, the better the chance for success. Many aspects of classroom life could also contribute to students' misbehavior: the physical arrangement of the classroom, boredom or frustration, transitional periods and lack of awareness of what is going on in every area of the classroom. Therefore, teachers should manage the instruction and interactions with students in ongoing classroom life, as follows:

1. The development of relevant, interesting and appropriate curriculum.
2. The manner in which teachers give recognition and understanding of each students as an individual with his or her unique set of characteristics and needs.

3. Teachers own behavior as a teacher and characteristics such as witness overlapping that reduce misbehavior, increase instructional time, and maintain group focus and movement management of students.

Reitz (1994) proposed a model designing comprehensive classroom-based programs for students with emotional and behavioral problems that also included academic and behavioral techniques. Of the ten components presented as essential, five directly or indirectly addressed the creation of appositive class climate:

1. Consistent classroom schedule and structure in which rules, expectations, consequences, and routines are clearly communicated to students and consistently followed by the teacher. Students may be involved in developing classroom procedures. The teacher should maintain positive focus by emphasizing desired behaviors and their consequences.
2. High rates of students' academic involvement and achievement in which the curriculum (content) and instructional delivery (teacher behavior) focus on high rates of student engagement during instruction and practice.
3. High rates of social reinforcement from teachers to promote the learning of new behaviors. Teacher's use of approval statements is an effective teaching tool.
4. System to insure high rates of tangible reinforcement in which points or "tokens" are given immediately following the occurrence of a desired student behavior and exchanged later by the student to obtain predetermined privileges, activities, or items.
5. A repertoire of teacher responses to mild disruptive behavior that keeps minor problems from escalating into major ones. Combinations of praise for appropriate behavior and ignoring of inappropriate behavior (e.g., differential reinforcement) are effective in maintaining a focus on the positive.

2.9. Prevention

2.9.1 Positive relationships

Positive relationships form the foundation of the triangle. In their early years, children exist within a web of relationships among parents, teachers, other caring adults in their lives and,

eventually, peer. This web supplies the context within which healthy social emotional growth and the capacity to form strong affirmative relationships with adults and peers develop (Huffman, Mehlinger, & Kerivan, 2000).

2.9.2 Child care settings

Within child care settings, there are many practices that promote the formation of secure attachments and the development of strong positive relationships. Once again adult-child interactions form the core of these strategies. Children in center-based care who receive more frequent sensitive interactions with adults have been shown to be both more securely attached to their caregivers and more competent in their interactions with peers (Kontos & Wilcox-Herzog, 1997). Teachers who are warm and attentive, and who engage and encourage the children in their care, are both using and modeling qualities that build strong relationships. Moreover, positive relationships between early educators and children provide a potent management tool for teachers. Children become eager to please, become eager for positive attention, and are more readily guided by teachers with whom they are emotionally invested (Edward & Raikes, 2002).

2.9.3 Family-teacher relationships

Arnold et al., (1999) explained that relationships between teachers and parents also play an important role in children's development. When staff in child care programs and parents forms warm, respectful relationships, they are better able to communicate openly about children's behavior and experiences and to respond to children's individual needs. In the context of mutually supportive relationships, parents are more likely to share information about family and home situations and stressors, and about their child's development and behavior. The role of family involvement in defining high-quality child care is receiving increasing recognition along with efforts to articulate and explicate the concrete practices that contribute to relationship-building and family involvement. Staff practices include:

- a) Spending time getting to know families,
- b) Welcoming parents to observe and participate in program activities,
- c) Consulting parents about their children's abilities, interests, and preferences,
- d) Conducting home visits.

2.10. Prevention practices

2.10.1. Home prevention practices

Family may receive information on practices that will promote their child's healthy social-emotional development from healthcare professionals (example, pediatrician, and home healthcare visitor), other families or relatives, magazines, television, videotapes, parent manuals, and parent support groups. In addition, health care professionals can provide families with information (through consultation or literature) on parenting practices such as sleep routines, environmental safety, nutrition and feeding, toy selection, selecting quality of early education and care providers and other concerns of parents. All of these have a relationship to support the development of children and minimize the development of challenging behavior (Patterson et al., 1975).

2.10.2. Classroom prevention practices

Classroom schedules, routines, and activities can provide valuable tools for preventing the development and occurrence of problem behaviors.

The classroom climate and physical arrangements should encourage desirable behavior. A teacher should modify or change the curriculum, make adaptation in instruction to address multiple intelligences and make changes in his/her communication style or attitudes toward students.

Children who are fully involved in classroom activities are less likely to engage in disruptive behavior. Various activities like fun and creativity planned to fit children's developmental levels, individual interests and needs contribute to children's positive engagement. Teachers should make sure directions are clear and understandable, as well as stated positively (inform the child what to do, rather than what not to do), contribute to compliance. Finally, monitoring and redirecting children's behavior can often prevent problems from escalating (Reeve & Carr, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically (Kothari, 2004). There are various types of research methodologies and one broad classification is qualitative versus quantitative method. This research employs both methods. This section of the study will deal with the description of the area, research design and approaches, tools of data collection, procedure sampling technique, and data analysis.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, in Cherry Orchard Academy. It is a privately owned preschool found in KolfeKeraniyo Sub-city. The school was founded in 2004 E.C. in a total area of 2000 square meter. The class rooms were built in one two storey building having 13 rooms, from which 9 rooms were used for teaching purposes, 2 for offices, 1 for library, and 1 teachers' staff room. The compound is very attractive and a conducive place for children. There are different playing stuffs in the play ground like slides, swing, sand box, spring etc. Regarding the academic staff, there were 17 teachers and a school principal. Of this one was a degree holder, 10 were diploma holders while 7 had a college certificate. The teachers worked an average of 22 periods per week. The school admitted about 120 students per class in a total of 6 sections.

3.2 Research Design

The major objective of the study is to investigate preschool teachers' attitudes, beliefs and actions towards problem behaviors in Cherry Orchard Academy. To realize this, the researcher used case study which is an in depth examination of small group of people and a form of qualitative method. It is much more time consuming, but provides more richness to the data.

3.3 Research Approaches

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to address the research objectives of the study. This mixed research method is used because it has an advantage to view problems from different perspectives. The data collected in this approach allows compensating the weakness of each approach and also for triangulation of data.

3.4 Sampling technique

The sampling procedure of this study was purposive sampling for the case study, three teachers, three children with problem behavior and their parents were purposefully selected to serve as a source of data. The children with problem behavior were purposefully selected after they had been observed in different settings, during different types of activities and who had social and psychological problem from each class. Besides, the questionnaires were administered to all teachers in the school. This is done because there are a relatively few number of teachers in the school selected for the study and the researcher required to collect an optimum amount of data.

3.5. Instrument for data collection

In collecting the data for this study, a multiple method or triangulation approach was employed. This multiple method was a combination of observation, questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion.

3.5.1 Observation

Since the study is concerned with problem behavior observation was chosen as a major technique of the study. The researcher developed the observation checklist before the fieldwork during the pilot study and the main study.

Observations were conducted in each three class for 8 hrs for three months, during lunch time and outside the classroom during breaks. The observations were focused on the teachers' interaction with children with problem behavior and child's behavior in different settings. Information were recorded as field notes first, and systematically elaborated each time after field work. Observation checklist was prepared based on other related research works (Example: U.S

Department of Health and Human Service (1999). The observation check list has 9 items with 2-point scale rating as (present=1, absent=2)

Finally, the researcher recorded the specific units of behavior that were observed as related to the goals of the study in the natural settings.

3.5.2 Interview

In an attempt to collect data from teachers, the researcher has developed an interview guide (see appendix B). The interview has eight items and it was delivered only for three teachers who were selected purposefully. The reason why these teachers were selected purposefully was that the researcher thought that these teachers might give better information than the other teachers. The interview explored the attitude and action of teachers' towards problem behavior and their experience. The interview questions were constructed in English and later translated into Amharic to avoid unnecessary complications in understanding the items. The researcher has recorded the interview and also took field notes of the responses.

3.5.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire for this study was developed based on the research questions and after the review of available related literature. The questionnaire included issues that helped the researcher to assess the teachers' attitude on the issue under investigation and to suggest solutions.

The questionnaire has two parts. Part one deals with demographic data of respondents. In part two, respondents were asked strategies they use to manage problem behavior, their interaction with children with problem behavior, and their attitudes towards problem behavior.

The items of the questionnaire were closed ended type. Accordingly, 19 items in total were distributed to all teachers in the sample school. Of the total number of the questionnaire distributed, all of them were appropriately filled and returned.

The questionnaire was constructed in English and later translated into Amharic to help the respondents to understand the items easily.

3.5.4 Focus Group Discussion

The other data gathering tool utilized in this research was focus group discussion. It provided a means for collecting qualitative data in some issues and allowed the researcher to obtain profound information.

The major issues discussed during FGD include the awareness of the parents about problem behavior and the involvement of the parents in improving their child's problem.

The FGD was guided by unstructured questions that were prepared in English and later translated in to Amharic to minimize communication barrier.

The numbers of participants of FGD were 5 parents of children with problem behavior. The FGD took 4:15 hrs and the responses that were raised by the participants were recorded by taking field notes.

The researcher was serving as facilitator of the discussion by forwarding discussion issues, motivating all to participate actively and leaving the stages open.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection was made in two stages: the pilot and main study stages.

3.6.1 The Pilot Study

The tools were developed and pilot tested prior to the study. First the pilot test was established whether the interview guide and the questionnaire were feasible for use. Second, it determined whether the observation checklists were appropriate for identifying classroom behaviors.

The pilot test was conducted in Cherry Orchard Academy. Students were selected with similar criteria. Observation of these students and their interaction with their teacher were also done. This systematic observation was completed in two 45 minutes periods in Science and Mathematics lessons, followed by an in-depth interview with their teacher (90 minutes). Accordingly some modifications were made on the Amharic version of the interview and the method of interviewing.

In addition the instruments commented by one special needs education expert from MOE. Accordingly necessary and convincing comments were taken.

3.6.2. Main Study

To identify the participants of the study, the selection criteria were distributed to all home room teachers of the school and 10 students were identified. Of these 8 students met the criteria. Thus three children with severe problem behavior were purposefully selected.

Subsequently, classroom observation was conducted during two periods in each classroom to build familiarity with the teacher and students before beginning data collection. Observation was completed in each classroom for a total of 8 periods for three months.

Here after, interviews with the teacher of the selected children with problem behavior were conducted.

Based on the information obtained about the children, their classroom behavior from interview, observation, focus group discussion were conducted with individual subjects and recorded by audio recorder after introducing the intent of the interview and their input for the study to them.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected have been analyzed and interpreted qualitatively and quantitatively .The data obtained through the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed quantitatively mainly percentage and frequency. According to (Cassel and Symon' 1994) quantitative research method help to be generalize with its clear anticipation of cause and effect. It also provides a fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of an attribute.

The researcher also employed the qualitative data gathering method for the focus group discussion, observation and interview. Because qualitative approach is advantageous as it's more open to changes and refinement of research ideas as the study progress; this implies that qualitative data gathering tools are highly flexible. It can also provide rich and well grounded descriptions and explanations.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

This study required the participations of human respondents. Thus, certain ethical issues were addressed. To ensure the privacy as well as the safety of the participants' ethical issue is considered. Among the significant ethical issues that were considered in the research process, includes consent and confidentiality. In order to secure the consent of the selected participants, the researcher disclosed all important details of the study, including its aim and purpose. By explaining these details, the respondents were able to understand the importance of participation in the research. The confidentiality of the participants was also ensured by not disclosing their personal information in the research only relevant details that helped in answering the research questions were included.

At the end of the research study the findings and subsequent suggestion will be presented to the school, teacher, and parents.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Results and Discussions

The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' attitude, beliefs and expectation of preschool teachers towards problem behavior and its influence on the child academic and social behavioral success.

As mentioned in chapter three, qualitative and quantitative research design and analysis were applied to respond to the major research question of the study.

4.1 Results

Case 1

Mickey is a three and half years old boy in nursery. He is living with his father and mother. His father is a merchant and his mother is a house wife.

His teacher reported that Mickey seemed to have attention seeking characteristics. He frequently acted bossy and tried to hold the attention of his peers. His typical behaviors include feeling angry and frustrated for unknown reasons. He also strikes out verbally or physically when he is ordered to do something. He also made aggressive comments towards his teacher and classmates. He seems to enjoy lunch time, break time, computer class and physical education.

Mickey's teacher stated that: Mickey is inattentive. I am just looking for ways that I can help him gain self control and teach him to be nice to his peers. I tried so many remedies to manage Mickey is behavior during instruction. However, he was not able to benefit from it; I have not taken the training or course on helping such children in my college study. As a result, I sometimes use corporal punishment for his repetitive misbehaviors

The teacher tried her best to manage his maladaptive behavior. However, he continued to stick his tongue out when he is asked to complete a task.

According to his parent (mother) the manifestation of problem behavior began when he was 2 ½ years old. His father is overly restrictive and harsh and all the children are afraid of their father. Mickey can play with the neighboring children only when his father goes to his job. His mother

also has little influence in shaping her child. She said that: his teacher has sent complaints several times saying that he refuses to do his work, disrupts class, and doesn't listen. By the time he gets home he doesn't want to talk about it. So, I do not get to hear his side of the story. The teacher makes him stay in for break time but it doesn't seem to be helping, what should I do?

Observation

During the observation, the teacher explains the lessons as if she were telling a story and every student was listening to her attentively except Mickey and the students' answer to the questions were recognized by verbal reinforcements, such as saying 'excellent' and 'it is good'. However, Mickey's replies to teacher's questions were 'I don't have to listen to you' or 'I will do what I want because I said so!' (Keep in mind that he is yelling at the top when he does this). The teacher showed signs of anxiety about having him in the classroom then the assistant teacher calm him down there by sending him to the office.

Table 1 Behavior observation check list of Case 1

No	Behavior manifested on Mickey in the study	Present	Absent
1	Lacking motivation	✓	
2	Often inattentive	✓	
3	Throws equipment		✓
4	Quiet, with drawn (with peers, with adults)		✓
5	Very restless		✓
6	Aggressive	✓	
7	Often frustrated about lack of success		✓
8	Needs a lot of attention from the teachers	✓	
9	Self injurious		✓

Case 2

Suleiman is a four year old boy in KG. He is from divorced family and lives with his father. After his birth he was not able to get breast feeding from his mother because his mother had gone out of house after the divorce. His teacher stated that Suleiman always shouts and cries when he comes to school. The teacher has also seen that his father brings him to school by force (by hitting him) but, he is not motivated to learn.

Suleiman appears to be inattentive, stressful, angry, sad, and confused and often plays alone. He especially becomes aggressive when he is corrected. His teacher understands his problem but, often get frustrated and do not know what to do about Suleiman's problem behavior.

The teacher tried to help Suleiman individually as follows:-

- To sit in front of the class where he could not get easily distracted.
- For test or exams, he gets extended time for completion.
- Provide verbal feedback about working patterns that could be improved when needed and positively praised him when he was behaving appropriately.
- Give recess detention for choices which the teacher considered as 'bad' and 'in appropriate' behavior.

If things get out of control of the situation, his parents are informed about the situation by writing.

In spite of the teacher's efforts, Suleiman continued to be disruptive in class by talking too much, throwing pencils and other things to the students while the teacher is telling a story to the class. In addition to this he hits, and insults other students out of the class. Most of the time he likes to play alone and talk to himself.

According to Suleiman's father the manifestation of Suleiman's challenging behavior began when he was 2 years old. There was no care taker near to him as a mother and was raised under the care of home servant.

Observation

During the observation, while the teacher was explaining Suleiman appeared to be absorbed in other thoughts. Sometimes he appeared lonely, talked to himself or displayed what seem like stress. As a result he didn't realize what is going on in class for a long period of time. Although I sat behind him during the observation, he did not seem to be aware of my presence.

I found Suleiman alone at break time asked him why he doesn't play outside with the other kids. He said that 'I need my mom and dad to stay involved in my life, if not I feel like I am not important and they don't really love me.'

Table 2 Behavior observation check list of Case 2

No	Behavior manifested on Suleiman in the study	Yes	No
1	Lacking motivation	✓	
2	Often inattentive	✓	
3	Throws equipment		
4	Quiet, with drawn (with peers, with adults)	✓	
5	Restless	✓	
6	Aggressive	✓	
7	Often frustrated about lack of success	✓	
8	Needs a lot of attention from the teachers	✓	
9	Self injurious		✓

Case 3

Thomas is a five year old boy and he is living with his mother and father. He is the third child for his parents and he exhibits behavioral problems. Related to this he has more bad days than good and his teacher got really upset that his behavior is always like that. As soon as he gets to school they line up and he pushes somebody that's already in line just because he wants to stand next to his best friend and that starts a whole problem with the kids. Then when the students walk to the class room he will just start poking the kids or pull on their hair, or say rude things to them. He knows what he is doing is in appropriate, but he thinks it's funny. Sometimes he becomes upset

and loses his temper during the school day. He also has a problem of establishing positive interactions with the students in his class.

Thomas's teacher often feels frustration and anger about not being able to manage his behaviors. He doesn't listen to what she says, or suddenly starts hitting students and this distracts the teaching learning process.

She has expressed that having to take care of Thomas is frustrating and challenging and this takes a lot of time in her teaching period. Therefore, she really just focused on his behavior, not his academics or work.

Academically Thomas tries to do well if the lesson is manageable for him. If he gets it difficult and the teacher doesn't help him, he appears to hit others. However not much attention was given to Thomas's academic areas; the focus was on his problem behavior.

According to his mother the manifestation of Thomas's problem behavior began when he was three years old. She said that: He usually watches movies I strongly believe on my son's freedom and do not want to control him. Furthermore, both she and her husband are merchants and busy. Thus, they usually reach home after Thomas gets asleep and do not have time for him. His mother said that she is in grief because of her son's current condition and scared about his future. She always informed about her kid's problem from the school.

Observation

It was Science class in the morning, the teacher was explaining, throughout this class the teacher knew that Thomas has been inattentive, later on he starts poking the kids that sit in front of him. Then his teacher gets frustrated and burst out easily in front of the whole class saying; 'one more time if you do it again I will send you directly to the office.' Then he immediately left the room.

During the observation, hitting was the troubled behavior that prevailed when he has to work on his own or without teacher's supervision, he appears to hit others, take or destroy what the other kids had done.

Table 3 Behavior observation check list of Case 3

No	Behavior manifested on Thomas in the study	Yes	No
1	Lacking motivation	✓	
2	Often inattentive	✓	
3	Throws equipment		✓
4	Very quiet, with drawn (with peers, with adults)		✓
5	Very restless	✓	
6	Aggressive	✓	
7	Often frustrated about lack of success	✓	
8	Needs a lot of attention from the teachers	✓	
9	Self injurious		✓

Similarities between the cases

These three cases were found to display behavioral problem inside the classroom and the teachers needed to deal with difficulties as consequences of the problem behaviors. The students with problem behavior in common also shared some other similarities:

- They have the same kind of problem behavior in common like lacking motivation, often inattentive, aggressive, and very restless;
- They were also experiencing academic difficulties, besides their problem behaviors; and
- All the teachers experienced some type of negative feeling towards students with problem behavior.

The data showed the teachers perception seemed to affect both the teachers' expectation and responses to their students. Through the observation, the following rules and regulations set by the school were not practiced by the three cases. That:

- Students are supposed to listen quietly while the teachers talks, and when they are called on, they have to respond one at a time,
- Students are supposed to sit still and maintain eye contact and
- Students work independently, even if they function better when they work together with a group of their peers.

4.1.1 Analysis of Quantitative Questionnaire Data

4.1.2 Background information of pre-school teachers

In this section, teachers of the preschool were requested to provide information concerning their sex and years of experience.

Table 4. Background information of teacher respondents

No	Characteristic	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
1	Sex		
	Male	-	
	Female	17	100
	Total	17	100
2	Years of experience		
	0-4	4	23.5
	5-7	7	41.1
	8 & above	6	35.2
	Total	17	100

As depicted by item 1 in Table 4, the total respondents were female. Regarding years of experience, a substantial number of respondents (41.1%) have 5-7 years of experience. While 23.5% of the respondents have 0-4 years of experience and the remaining (35.2 %) of the respondents have 8 and above years of experience. From the demographic data it can be inferred that the children with problem behavior might be treated with patience and care because all the teachers are female. Most of them have worked for five years and above, which could also be considered important to manage such children.

4.1.3 Descriptions of behavior and strategies used to control (minimize) problem behavior

Table 5. Teachers' strategies used according to each type of problem behavior.

Item No	Types of behavior	Avoidance		Prevention		Physical punishment		Give advice		% of total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Lacking motivation	5	29.4	4	23.5	2	11.8	6	35.3	17	100
2	Aggression	7	41.2	5	29.4	3	17.6	2	11.8	17	100
3	Attention seeking	4	23.5	7	41.2	1	5.9	5	29.4	17	100
4	Very restless	7	41.2	4	23.5	6	35.3	-	-	17	100
5	Destructive	6	35.3	3	17.6	7	41.2	1	5.9	17	100

* Prevention (e.g. high levels of engagement, individual program plans)

As it can be seen from the above data, most teachers give advice (35.3%) to manage who lacked motivation. While (29.4%) of respondents used avoidance, (23.5%) employed prevention and the least number of them (11.8%) practiced physical punishment as a strategy to children who lack motivation.

With regard to aggression majority of the respondents (41.2%) used avoidance to prevent problem behavior, (29.4%) of the respondents employed prevention, (17.6%) used physical punishment and the remaining (11.8%) gave advice to manage problem behavior.

According to the data gathered for attention seeking the most frequently mentioned strategy (41.2%) was prevention, (29.4%) of the respondents gave advice, (23.5%) avoidance and the least number of respondents (5.9%) employed physical punishment to prevent problem behavior.

As it can be seen from the data, for very restless children good number of the respondents (41.2%) employed avoidance, (35.3%) physical punishment and the remaining (23.5%) of them used prevention to manage problem behavior.

As it is indicated in table 5, for the destructive majority of the respondents (41.2%) employed physical punishment, 35.3% of the respondents used avoidance, 17.6% prevention and the least number of the respondents (5.9%) gave advice.

From the strategies which teachers used to improve or manage the specific behavior, the most frequently used strategy was avoidance (receiving 34.1% of all mentions). In terms of strategies used according to specific types of behavior, it can be seen that for Aggression and very restless behavior the most likely to be employed was avoidance. For lacking motivation, the most likely strategy to be employed was giving advice for attention seeking was prevention and for destructive the most strategy to be employed is physical punishment.

Even though the school policy doesn't allow physical punishment, there are teachers who still use physical punishment to manage students' problem behavior, but the school was not aware of this.

4.1.4 Teacher-child with problem behavior relationships

In this section attempt was made to examine the relationship of the teachers with children with problem behavior and the results obtained from them are presented in table 6 below.

Table 6. Teachers' Perception on teacher-child relationships

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Dealing with this child drains my energy	Never	1	5.9
		Sometimes	4	23.5
		Often	12	70.6
		Total	17	100
2	My interaction with the child makes me feel effective.	Never	8	47.1
		Sometimes	5	29.4
		Often	4	23.5
		Total	17	100
3	I Share an affectionate warm relationship with the child	Yes	3	17.6
		No	14	82.4
		Total	17	100
4	The child values his/her relationships with me.	Yes	5	29.4
		No	12	70.6
		Total	17	100
5	The child becomes angry or resistant after being disciplined.	Never	-	
		Sometimes	4	23.5
		Often	13	76.5
		Total	17	100
6	The child feels that I treat him/her unfairly.	Yes	10	58.8
		No	7	41.2

		Total	17	100
7	The child and myself seem to be struggling with each other.	Never	2	11.8
		Sometimes	6	35.3
		Often	9	52.9
		Total	17	100

As it is clearly shown in table 6 above most respondents (70.6%) dealing with the children with problem behavior always drains their energy, (23.5%) of respondents sometimes drain their energy and only (5.8%) of respondents never drain their energy.

Concerning effectiveness of teachers' interaction with the child, most respondents (47.1%) do not have feeling of effectiveness, (29.4%) of respondents sometimes make them feel effective and the remaining (23.5%) of respondents often make them effective.

As it can be seen from the above table (82.3%) of the respondents do not have warm relationship and any the remaining (17.6%) of respondents share an affectionate warm relationship with the child.

In response to the question, whether the child value his/her relationship with the teacher, most of the respondents (70.6%) said no and where as the rest (29.4%) of respondents said yes.

With regards whether the child becomes angry or resistant after being disciplined, substantial number of the respondents (76.5%) said the child becomes angry or resistant after being disciplined and the remaining 23.5% of the respondents said the child sometimes becomes angry after being disciplined.

In response to the question, if the child feels you treat him/her unfairly, most of the respondents 58.8% said yes and the remaining 42.2% of the respondents say no.

As clearly shown in the data, (52.9%) of the respondents said that the child and the teacher often seem to be struggling with each other, (35.3%) of the respondents sometimes struggle with each other where as the remaining (11.8%) of the respondents never struggle with each other.

4.1.5 Teachers attitude and their capability to deal with problem behaviors

Table 7. Responses related to teachers capability and attitude to deal with the problem.

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Average
1	Have insight about problem behavior	Yes	6	35.3
		No	11	64.7
		Total	17	100
2	Able to cope with children with problem behavior.	Yes	12	70.6
		No	5	29.4
		Total	17	100
3	Problem behavior has impact on teachers' interest to teach.	Yes	15	88.2
		No	2	11.8
		Total	17	100
4	Try to help the student by adapting the curriculum according to their needs	Yes	8	47.1
		No	9	52.9
		Total	17	100
5	Have positive attitude towards problem behavior.	Yes	7	41
		No	10	59
		Total	17	100

As indicated in table 8 majority of the respondents (64.7%) do not have insight about problem behavior where as the remaining (35.3%) of respondents have insight about problem behavior.

In response to the question, whether they able to cope with children with problem behavior, substantial number of the respondents (70.6%) are unable to cope with problem behavior where as the least number of respondents (29.4%) are able to cope with problem behavior.

As it is clearly shown in the above table most of the respondents (88.2%) asserts that problem behavior has impact on teacher's interest to teach while the least number of respondents (11.8%) believe problem behavior does not have impact on teaches' interest to teach.

As can be seen from the data (52.9%) of the respondents do not try to help the student by adapting the curriculum where as the remaining (47.1%) of the respondents try to adapt the curriculum.

According to the data 59% of the respondents have negative attitude towards problem behavior while 41% of the respondents have positive attitude towards problem behavior.

4.2. Discussion

In this chapter the findings will be discussed below with particular regard to the research questions as follows.

4.2.1 Teachers' attitude, beliefs, expectations and actions towards problem behavior

This study revealed that when problem behavior comes on the scene in the classroom, the teachers' negative feelings, attitudes, and assumptions emerge. These phenomena and other external factors may influence the way teachers perceive students.

Children's with problem behavior do not only negatively impact upon their own developmental outcomes, but can also have negative consequences for the teacher(Hammarberg,2003).Children who engage in disruptive and aggressive behaviors are likely to upset classroom order break rules and provoke confrontations with the teachers (Ladd et al.2006). Teachers' reactions to these problem behaviors seem to depend on the type of behavior, as well as on teacher beliefs and attitudes towards the management of these behaviors (Poulou& Norwich, 2002).

These findings may have consequences for teachers' beliefs about their ability to cope with children's externalizing behavior and their aggressive behavior in particular. According to Bandura, a person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills comprise what is known as the self-system. This system plays a major role in how we perceive situations and how we behave in response to different situations. In this study Suleiman's teacher seemed to have this confidence more than the other two teachers. She was able to enact with the student and keep a positive relationship. The two remaining teachers openly exclaimed that they were unable to cope with their students.

As this study has indicated teachers have different styles, values, and life experiences; what suits one teacher might not suit the other at all. And every child is unique. The behavioral standards of working independently, sitting still and do not expressing emotions was very difficult for the three children in this study to meet. Their externalizing behaviors were directly opposite of what was expected as normal or proper behavior. Without a clear understanding of the children's problem, the teachers could easily perceive the students as intentionally behaving in a rude

manner. It became apparent that the teacher's had more focus in administrating the curriculum than enhancing their students with challenging behaviors' learning capacity. While this is unfortunate for all students, it seems especially so, for the children who have challenging behavior.

The behavioral standards of working independently, listening quietly, sitting still and not expressing emotions were very difficult for the three children in this study to meet. They very often did not have control of their impulsive reactions. Their behaviors were, furthermore, directly opposite of what was expected as normal or proper behavior. Without a clear understanding of the children's the teachers easily perceive the students as intentionally behaving in a rude or abusive manner. Thus, impulsive, unintentional responses evoke a judgmental and negative response in the teachers.

Consequently, applied to a teacher's work context, and specifically their classroom management, teacher's perceived ability to cope with a child's problem behavior encompasses several aspects. First is the perceived difficulty of coping with the problem behavior of the particular student. Second, is teacher's belief about the extent to which children's problem behavior is controllable by the teacher. In response to children's problem behavior teachers use unfavorable interaction strategies which may increase the degree of conflict in teacher-child relationship.

4.2.2 Reasons for teachers' actions and its impact on children with problem behavior

Within this study it was not possible to observe what long term effects the teacher's actions had upon their students. Problem behavior is troubling and puzzling. Being able to understand the students' problem behaviors, require insight, interest and observational skills of the teacher. Because of the complexity of the behaviors of the three cases in this study, the teachers easily misunderstand the students. When the teachers actions are based on misunderstandings, they can affect the student's feelings of being understood taken seriously or appreciated .This is, especially, the case if the teacher feels threatened by the behaviors. The seriousness of the students' behavioral problems that were studied were an important factor in analyzing the three teachers' approaches towards their students.

There are some common reasons why the teachers have very little knowledge about problem behavior in general. Teacher training programs devote little about children with problem behavior, how they learn, how they need to be instructed, their strengths and weakness and what they need to make progress in the academic and social areas.

The teachers don't realize that children with problem behavior have to work much harder than their peers to acquire, retain, and perform academic and social skills on a daily basis. This can cause over whelming stress for children who have limited coping resources. Very often this stress is translated into behaviors that are likely to be misinterpreted or not noticed by teachers who don't have a good understanding of problem behavior.

These three cases with problems behavior have emotional and behavior problems. Their patterns of behavior are inconsistent, unpredictable and unstable. As a result they have great trouble in the academic area and problems with social skills and relationships. The behavior, if not properly understood, places the child at risk for being misunderstand, socially marginalized, and insufficiently educated to become viable citizens. This is especially apparent from 'Thomas' and Mickey's teacher's actions. They show feelings of anxiety, frustration and negative attitude towards the children with problem behavior.

4.2.3 The effects of teacher-student interaction

The teacher is the major determiner of interpersonal relationships and classroom climate. In this study lack of authentic and caring relationship was observed between Thomas and Mickey and their teachers. Both these teachers in the study demonstrated negative attitude towards their students. Students' participated more actively when having a warm, informal relationship with the teacher.

In school, one of the most important tasks young children face is to form a close and harmonious relationship with the teacher (Ladd, Herald & Kochel, 2006). However, research to date, consistently found children's aggressive behavior increasing conflict in the teacher-child relationship.

On the other hand, teachers who were observed to be warmer and consistently responsive to students also attended to be more proactive, managed the activities and student behavior more

efficiently, and provided activities that encouraged higher order thinking. If the teacher responds to a student sensitively, promptly, and consistently, these interactions eventually add up to an emotional investment; a positive, supportive relationship; and an organized way for teacher and child to relate to one another (Hoews, 1999).

When a problem behavior is involved, the teachers' temperament, values, and beliefs also have a powerful effect-all these influences the way they see their students, twisting their expectations of them, affecting the way they see themselves and the way they behave.

4.2.4 Teachers' strategies to manage student's problem behavior

For two of the teachers, the child's behavior prompted adaptation of teacher practice. Suleiman's teacher tried to help the student learn by designing and adjusting the program to meet his needs. Although, full success was not accomplished during observation, the teachers' effort to help the child cope and adapt was giving possible results. He was also included in the class and retained positive relationships with his teacher. In contrast, Thomas and Mickey teachers lacked curriculum adaptation and adapted teaching practices. These two teachers did not shift instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of the students. Neither did they hold consistent and high expectations for all learners in the class. The tension in the relationship between the students and teachers was high. Thus, the students' emotional balance and academic progress was hampered.

Ultimately, how much the children and how much fun they would have learnt depends on how well the teachers' curriculum and teaching strategies reflected the interests, abilities, cultures, temperaments, learning profiles, and readiness of the students in class. This corresponds with the enrichment perspectives (Befring, 2005), that ascertains that by meeting the needs of the challenged child, the atmosphere in the classroom is improved for all the students.

CHAPTER FIVE

6. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Summary

In relation to the research objectives teachers' beliefs and expectations have profound implication on classroom life; the beliefs that impact children are layered, multidimensional, sometimes implicit, and difficult to change; and the teachers who fail to examine their belief may bring about unanticipated consequences in the classroom. Without intending to, teachers may set aside valuable curriculum, overlook or marginalize students who need them, misinterpret students' motives or behavior, and limit their professionals. Conversely, teachers who are willing to explore their expectations, and how their beliefs relate to practice and the professional knowledge base, can capitalize on the beliefs they hold to promote children's intellectual growth, autonomy and reciprocity, and equity in their classrooms.

According to this study many teachers have dealt children behavior that interferes with classroom situation by using physical punishment. The goal of course, has been to reduce, if not eliminate the immediate problem. However, different studies has shown that these usually are not the most effective or efficient means to eliminate problem behavior. 'Reactive' approaches that follow inappropriate behavior, such as punishment, are not only time consuming, but they fail to teach the student acceptable replacement behavior and also may serve to reinforce the inappropriate behaviors.

From the interview with the teachers, it becomes evident that the teachers felt distressed, knowing that their students had serious learning and social problems, but feeling unable to do little about them. The results indicated that when problem behavior appeared in the classroom, the teachers' feelings of inadequacy, frustrations, and negative attitudes towards their students emerged. Effective teachers use a series of techniques that elicit student cooperation and involvement in academic activities; they keep the classroom running smoothly, and head off behavior problems before they grow too big to handle (Good & Brophy, 2008; Kounin, 1970).

The way the teacher behaves during a challenging situation also plays a key role in the effectiveness of a strategy. When there is a problem, it's important for the teacher to be reflective, patient and flexible, and talk with the student privately.

The finding indicated that parents have low levels of awareness and involvement in helping their children problem behavior. Parents who were in focus group discussion know nothing about the disorder (problem behavior) do not have time to follow up their child, and blame the teachers for their children problem behavior. Parents in this study experience shame, guilt and fear of being blamed or ridiculous for their child's behavior in school. Therefore, the teachers should meet with parents as soon as possible convey their interest in helping their student and give the parents advice on things they can do to help their child. Some of the things these students often need from the home are positive attention, praise, and protection from parental stresses. This could address problems that are also being worked on at school. When the school and home are attending to similar behaviors more generalizations likely to occur.

This study indicates that teachers' feelings of self-efficacy are related with their effectiveness ratings. Teachers who believe that they possess, or at least are developing, good management will be able to remain patient and focused on seeking solutions when confronted with difficult problem. In contrast teachers who view management socialization skills as talents in which they are lacking may tend to become frustrated and give up easily. Through developing their role as facilitators of students' socialization into the learning environment, teachers can create the potential for having a significant impact on the lives of children with problem behavior.

Dealing with school behavior problems can be a bit tricky but there are certainly some steps parents can take to encourage their child to behave while he/she is at school. It's essential that they work together with the teacher as a team and find appropriate consequences to promote good behaviors. In addition to this, the teachers should help parents to develop a contact with a student at home. It could address problems that are also being worked on at school. When school and home are attending to similar behaviors more generalization is likely to occur.

As awareness of these issues grows, it will be increasingly urgent that a systematic, evidence-based approach be promoted and adopted by teachers, care givers, and parents.

6.2 Conclusion

The occurrence of problem behaviors presents serious implications for all aspects of children's development. It has been argued that children's problem behavior do not only negatively impact upon their own developmental outcomes, but can also have negative consequences for the teacher. These consequences lead to an inability of teacher to manage behavior problems in the classroom, which is rated the most serious problem facing teachers and the quality of teachers' interactions with the students is increasingly acknowledged as a major importance for students' success in school.

Results of the study show that there are gaps in awareness and recognition of the problem behavior among teachers and this led the teachers to have negative attitude towards children with problem behavior.

The experience of mastery of teachers can have very positive effects on the children's motivation to learn and develop. Teachers' insight in their responses and educational training with regards to learning and development seem imperative for this process to evolve. For that reason, the educational policies must be good enough to empower their teachers with sufficient skills and knowledge, there by ensuring that all children have possibilities to develop and use their potential.

6.3 Recommendations

The findings of this research indicate that teachers find their work extremely challenging and they cannot satisfy the interest of children with problem behavior because of numerous profound challenges in relation to lack of awareness (training) and negative attitudes. Therefore, the following effective measures to overcome the problems are recommended based on the findings and this study and idea extracted from related literature.

- Teachers should reduce the occurrence of inappropriate behavior by revisiting and reinforcing classroom behavior expectations; rearranging the classroom environmental, schedule, or learning activities to meet students' needs; and/ or individually adapting instruction to promote high rates of student engagement and on-task behavior.

- By using identification and intervention, schemes in the early years, kindergarten administrators, teachers, and school counselors in cooperation with parents must optimize the individual child's adjustment in the school program.
- Parents should train to reinforce their children's positive behavior patterns and model appropriate interpersonal interactions. Counselors can help parents support children who tend to become victims as well as recognize problem behaviors that require intervention.
- Training can also help teachers identify and respond to problem behavior as well as to implement positive feedback and modeling to address appropriate social interactions. Support services personnel working with administrators can help design effective teachers training modules.
- Educators in general and school psychologists in particular must play a major role in extending research to the school content, and apply research outcomes in the process of schooling to enhance the child's welfare.

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Appendix A
Addis Ababa University
College of Education and Behavioral Studies
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Special Needs

Interview Guide for Teachers

1. What kind of educational support do you use personally for the child in your classroom?
2. What strategies do you use to manage the child's discipline problems?
3. Do you have good interaction with the children with problem behavior?
4. What observable effect does problem behavior have on the child's academic performance?
5. What kind of activities does the child enjoy?
6. How does the behavior make you feel?
7. Do you know about the background of children with problem behavior?
8. What is your response when the student is able but unwilling to perform a task?

Appendix B
Addis Ababa University
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School of Graduate Studies
Department of Special Needs

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Parents

1. Age _____
2. Marital status _____
3. Level of education _____

1. Have you ever seen any bad behavior in your child so far? What sort?
2. Do you think your preschool child has close relationship with you and other siblings at home?
3. What measures/interventions/you take to make your child's behavior better?
4. Do you understand the need of your child?
5. What kind of behavior you want your child to have?

Appendix c

Addis Ababa University

College of Education and Behavioral Studies

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Special Needs

Behavior Observation Checklist/Guide

No	Behavior manifested in the study	Present	Absent
1	Lacking motivation		
2	Often inattentive		
3	Throws equipment		
4	Quiet, withdrawn (with peers, with adults)		
5	Restless		
6	Aggressive		
7	Often frustrated about lack of success		
8	Needs a lot of attention from the teachers		
9	Self injurious		

Appendix D

Addis Ababa University

College of Education and Behavioral Studies

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Special Needs

Questionnaire for pres school teachers

The Purpose of this questionnaire is to collect relevant data for the research to come up with solutions to mitigate the negative attitude of preschool teachers towards problem behavior and recommend the possible interventions by concerned bodies. It is the hope of this researcher that your responses will be very sincere.

You are not supposed to write your name. All information is being sought for the intended use and shall be kept confidential.

Thank you in advance!!

After you read please tick mark on your appropriate responses.

I. Background Information

1. Name of the kindergarten _____

2. Sex

A. Male

B. Female

3. Years of experience

A.0-4

B.5-7

C. 8 and above

II. Teachers strategies used according to each type of behavior

Item No	Types of behavior	Avoidance		Prevention		Physical punishment		Give advice		% of total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Lacking motivation										
2	Aggression										
3	Attention seeking										
4	Very restless										
5	Destructive										

* Prevention (e.g. high levels of engagement, individual program plans)

III. Problems related to Teacher –child with problem behavior relationships

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Dealing with this child drains my energy	Never		
		Sometimes		
		Often		
2	My interaction with the child makes me feel effective.	Never		
		Sometimes		
		Often		
3	I Share an affectionate warm relationship with the child	Yes		
		No		
4	The child values his/her relationships with me.	Yes		
		No		
5	The child becomes angry or resistant after being disciplined.	Never		
		Sometimes		
		Often		
6	The child feels that I treat him/her unfairly.	Yes		
		No		
7	The child and I seem to be struggling with each other.	Never		
		Sometimes		
		Often		

IV. Responses related to teachers capability and attitude to deal with the problem.

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Average
1	Have insight about problem behavior	Yes		
		No		
		Total		
2	Able to cope with children with problem behavior.	Yes		
		No		
		Total		
3	Problem behavior has impact on teachers' interest to teach.	Yes		
		No		
		Total		
4	Try to help the student by adapting the curriculum according to their needs	Yes		
		No		
		Total		
5	Have positive attitude towards problem behavior.	Yes		
		No		
		Total		