

**CHILDREN ENGAGED IN CHILD LABOR AND CLASSROOM
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES: The Case of Four Children in
Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School, Addis Ababa**

BY

REDIET MESFIN TADESSE

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CADE	Convention Against Discrimination In Education
CRC	Child Right Convention
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
EFA	Education For All
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia
ILO	International Labor Organization
MLE	Mediated Learning Experience
MOE	Ministry of Education
SCM	Structural Cognitive Modifiability
UDHR	Universal Declarations Of Human Rights
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific And Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency For International Development
ZPD	Zone Of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

Children in most developing countries including Ethiopia are victims of exploitive and abusive forms of child labor. Most children engaged in child labor in Ethiopia work in the informal sectors. Children involvement in labor activities negatively affects their school enrollment and performance. It leads their learning and holistic development to be at risk, as a result they are in need of special educational provision; however, little is known so far concerning the educational situations of these children in most primary schools of Ethiopia, hence, the major intent of this study was to investigate the classroom learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor and the nature of classroom instructional practices with particular reference to its potential to enhance their learning based on the Theory of Mediated Learning Experience(MLE).The study employed qualitative case study design, four children engaged in child labor and their homeroom teachers were purposely selected using critical case sampling methods. Data was gathered using systematic observation of the instructional practices, semi-structured interview and document analysis. The data were analyzed and interpreted using case-by-case and cross-case analysis strategies. The findings revealed that children engaged in child labor commonly exhibited learning behaviors such as: inattentiveness, sleepiness, tiredness, lack of motivation to learn, feeling of incompetence and inferiority, lack of time to study and do assignments which would be related both to the work load and unresponsive instructional practices. As a result, though they fulfilled the minimal pass marks, their academic competence was reported as below average. Moreover, the instructional practices were found to be inadequate and ineffective in promoting better learning of children engaged in child labor; they employed varieties of active teaching methods but the actual implementation was limited in its potential to enhance students active involvement, they dominantly focused on promoting the students' abilities to recall facts. Commonly, applause, modeling of high achievers and verbal reinforcement were used to reinforce students' successful completion of tasks but provision of feedback for students attempt and individual progress were less. Based on the major findings conclusions are drawn and implications in other similar conditions were indicated.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.2 Background of the Study

Children engaged in child labor spend much of their school time working for their guardians or informal employers. Spending their study and leisure time on labor may affect their development and education. This may leads them to be among those children who require special educational provisions.

Internationally, there has been scientific research on child labor whereas, little is known concerning the educational condition of these children in most primary schools of Ethiopia. My Personal observation and theoretical knowledge motivated me to conduct this research in a small area of Addis Ababa. This study investigated the classroom instructional practices in Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School with special reference to the learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor.

The problem of child labor is as old as human history. As documented in many studies most children engaged in child labor were denied the opportunity of going to school violating their inherent right to education (International Labor Organization (ILO), 2005, 2006). However, as a result of recent efforts of various organizations by using national and international conventions, some improvements have been observed, particularly in urban areas. As a result, access to basic and compulsory primary education has improved and children with special needs in general and children engaged in child labor in particular have received the opportunity for schooling. But the rate of repetition and dropout are still high, especially in developing nations, including Ethiopia. In support of this, Education Sector Development Program (ESDP III) of Ethiopia specifies that, accessing children for primary

education have not been compatible with the achievement in quality (Ministry of Education (MOE), 2005).

Poor quality can best be improved to a level of high quality through teachers' efforts in and out of the classroom. Although students' prior learning, family background, availability of resources are influential factors, the role of the teacher could be invaluable. If the teacher is effective and committed, he or she can narrow the gap in previous poor learning of students. Further, professionally equipped teacher may be creative in producing locally available instructional materials, and making other inputs available and accessible, so that the output results in a quality education (Tsegab, 2009). Classrooms which are responsive to the diverse needs of learners can make a real difference in a student's learning, regardless of other personal factors.

Teachers, who design and facilitate learning based on the learning styles, needs, and abilities of their students, can encouraged the desired learning outcomes in the learners. Therefore, evaluation of a student's learning should often focus on what the teacher is doing at the classroom level. If these are absent, the child's learning could be at risk.

As a result of the very intensive and extensive burden of the nature of the work, children engaged in child labor are characterized by frequent absence, dropping-out of school, repetition, low academic achievement, and over-age or school failure. Their learning problems are more aggravated with the provision of poor quality of classroom instruction (Salazar, 1998). This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and threatens abolition of child labor; however, classroom instruction, which is responsive to the diverse needs of students, may reduce this significant problem and promote learning.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The consequences of child labor are significant and have a tremendous impact on the holistic development of the child. Child labor and education are highly interrelated and substantially affect one another. Poor quality education may exacerbate the affect of child labor. In turn, child labor adversely affects the quality of education.

While children engaged in child labor stay longer hours at work and attend school, poor provision of quality education and non-practical lessons will let them to be less benefited from their learning. As a result, they need special supports to reduce this disadvantage and enhance their learning. The school should be a place where children engaged in child labor gain relevant, encouraging and promising lessons; however, research in the area often does not consider the consequences of poor classroom instruction in their learning, especially, in Ethiopia.

Investigating the kind of learning that children engaged in child labor, involve in classroom discourse, teachers classroom behavior and the mechanisms teachers use in encouraging and involving their students in learning has paramount importance (Anderson, 2004).

It is believed that quality classroom instruction helps children benefit more from their education, regardless of their differences in background, parental stimulation, socio-economic status and all other barriers they face outside the classroom. Moreover, primary school age children benefit more from classroom instruction instead of having long period of time to study.

Consequently, the general objective of this study is to investigate the nature of classroom instructional practices in Addis Zemane First Cycle Primary School with special reference to the learning needs of children engaged in child labor with the following research questions:

1. What are the learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor?
2. How does classroom instruction enhance the learning of children engaged in child labor?
3. What is the academic performance of children engaged in child labor?

1.3 Operational definitions of terms

Academic Performance: students' academic competence in basic academic areas as expected from their age and grade level.

Child: according to this study "child" refers to children between the ages of 5-14 year.

Children engaged in child labor: children between the age of 5-14, working in the informal sector for greater than 5hr/day and 5 days/week in a non conducive working environment and simultaneously attending school.

Classroom instruction: The teaching learning processes as measured by Mediated Learning Experience (MLE).

Informal sector: a work environment which is not legally recognized by the government and is below the standards of labor policy.

Learning: A relatively permanent change in behavior gained through experience.

Mediated Learning Experience (MLE): defined as the quality of interaction between the teacher and children engaged in child labor in an intentional and purposive manner to help the child get more benefit from the instructional process.

Weaving Industry: A small informal sector which works on production of traditional Ethiopian clothes usually in a home using traditional tools.

1.4 Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized in six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction which deals with background of the study, statement of the problem and operational definitions of terms. The second chapter presents review of related literatures and the third chapter is about the methodological approaches of the study including the research setting, participant selection and data collection tools, main procedures of the study and methods of data analysis. The fourth chapter deals with result of the study using case by case presentation and cross case analysis. The fifth chapter focuses on discussions of the main findings using relevant literature and my own view under three emerged themes. Finally, the sixth chapter presents conclusions drawn and indicated implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Child Labor and Traditional Weaving Industry in Ethiopia

Weaving has a long history in Ethiopia with diverse traditional handloom products. It has been a means of employment and basic source of income for many. Traditionally it has been a key home industry activity in both rural and urban areas. Over the last 60 years, weavers have migrated from the southern part of Ethiopia to Shiro Meda. Now, Shiro Meda, and Addisu Gebeya are the centers of traditional weaving in Addis Ababa (Worku, 2006).

Among the estimated number of weavers, more than 60% are found in the Gulele sub-city of the Addis Ababa Administration. This includes weavers both in Shiro Meda and Addis Gebeya areas. These weavers may be broadly classified as:

- Weavers who are working in their homes.
- Weavers who are members of cooperatives as well as using working sheds for production (Worku, 2006).

As the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia Central statistics authority (CSA) has reported, the traditional weaving industry is categorized as cottage or handicraft manufacturing industries. This is defined as manufacturing establishments:

- Where goods are produced for sale
- Which predominantly do not use power driven machines during the manufacturing process, and
- Where employment is limited to the owner and in some cases may extend to family members (CSA, 2001).

The working places for most weavers are their homes. They use their living room as production unit, dining, sleeping, and for children's entertainment. Their residence is everything for them. Everything and property in the home can be found around the handloom weaving. In general, most traditional weavers are within the informal sector. They are almost all self-employed and operate from homes, have no formal training, do not pay taxes and have almost no access to modern finance in whatever form (Worku, 2006).

A study of the situation of child labor in Ethiopia indicates that the informal sectors in the country massively use child labor and children starting at the age of 5 and are employed in the informal sector in a variety of forms (People In Need Ethiopia (PIN), 2009). Particularly in urban settings the most common types of child labor are shoe shining, selling lottery tickets in the streets, vending injera (traditional bread), “kolo” and bread, peddling, working as taxi assistants (woyala in local language), begging, prostitution, weaving, baking and carrying goods for people. Commonly, almost all societies in the country consider begging, prostitution, weaving, baking and carrying goods for people as exploitive and violent child labor while regarding the other activities as normal (PIN, 2009). However, ILO considers involvement of children in economic activities to the level of threatening their normal development in terms of the nature of the work, working time and working condition as child labor and they are exploitive and violent actions.

Children involved in weaving activities work under horrendous conditions, hunched up for the most part, given little food, having to sleep in very cramped conditions and suffer eyesight problems due to poor lighting conditions. Consequently, they tend to suffer from malnutrition, fatigue and deformities (due to sitting hunched over for hours each day). They are also prone to respiratory diseases, due to inhalation of wool dust. They suffer from musculo-skeletal diseases, eye strain and defective vision at a premature age, as well as

chronic and acute chemical poisoning and aggravation of non-occupational diseases (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), 2008).

2.2 Special Needs Education and Children engaged in Child Labor

Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs. Education programs need to be designed and to take the wide diversity and needs of students into account according to the principle of education for all (United Nations Economic, Social And Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 1994).

Education for all promotes the inclusion of all children by addressing the spectrum of needs of all learners, including those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. According to the Salamanca Framework for Special Needs Education (1994) marginalized or excluded groups of children include children with various disabilities, abused children, children engaged in child labor, migrants, HIV/AIDS orphans, religious minorities and nomadic children (UNESCO, 1994).

Children engaged in child labor are included as one category of children with special needs due to the exploitive and abusive experiences they face in their early developmental ages which may significantly impair their optimal healthy development.

Child labor is clearly detrimental to individual children preventing them from enjoying their childhood, hampering their development, and sometimes causing lifelong physical or psychological damage. It is also detrimental to families, communities and society as a whole. As both a result and cause of poverty, child labor perpetuates disadvantage and social exclusion. It undermines national development by preventing children from gaining the education and skill that would enable them as independent adults to contribute to economic

growth and prosperity (ILO, 2002). As a result, this catastrophe requires special support from adults in any possible context including classroom developmental interventions.

Intervention strategies for such children may include preventive, protective and rehabilitative efforts. However, rehabilitating children with disadvantaged experience is an expensive and difficult task not only from a cost point of view, but also a humanitarian approach. Reducing negative consequences of child labor by providing special supports in their learning may encourage sustainable and long-term results in the fight against child labor. As a result, it decreases the possibility of drop out and repetition which can best be achieved through special needs education.

In Ethiopia, the educational system has currently catered its special services to the learning needs of only about 2000 deaf, blind and children with mental retardation (Teka, 2002). This indicates that the learning needs of other special needs education target groups including children engaged in child labor have not gained sufficient emphasis.

2.3 Children Engaged in Child Labor and Education

2.3.1 Definition and Prevalence of Child Labor

Definition

There may be confusion of identifying child labor from non-child labor among people rearing children and other society members. Children in all societies may work and contribute according to their age and capabilities. The types and forms of work may vary from society to society. Children's participation in certain types of simple work such as helping parents care for the home and family for short periods in the day or teenagers working for a few hours before or after school or during holidays to earn pocket money is considered to be part of growing up and is a means of acquiring basic survival and practical skills. These works are

uncomplicated, trouble-free, undemanding and harmless for children both physically and psychologically. This has a positive developmental impact on children and their families. It is not part of child labor. ILO further allows up to fourteen hours of work per week for children over five and below twelve years of age, and up to forty-three hours of work per week for children age twelve years and above (ILO, 2000).

Child labor can be defined in different ways by different bodies based on their purpose and context. For the purpose of this study, child labor includes both paid and unpaid work and activities that are mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children. It is work that deprives children of opportunities for schooling or requires them to assume multiple burdens of schooling and work; that enslaves them and separates them from their family; and is carried out to the detriment and endangerment of the child in violation of international law and national regulations (ILO, 2000).

Prevalence of Child Labor

According to the 2006 ILO Global Report, estimates suggested that there are 218 million children engaged in child labor in the world. Of this, 166 million are within the age group of 5-14 years and about 74 million of these age groups are engaged in hazardous work. Compared to the 2002 report, this figure shows a decline in child labor by 11% globally for the age group of 5-14 years. The decline in hazardous work for the same age groups is even steeper by 33 percent. This picture reveals that child labor is globally declining and improvement is especially promising on the worst and most dangerous forms of work. But still the least progress has been observed in Sub-Saharan Africa, where child labor remains alarmingly high (ILO, 2006).

Regarding the prevalence of children engaged in child labor who combines work and school, the 2000 ILO global figure indicates that approximately 7% of all children in the 5-9 year age group and 10% of those aged 10-14 year combine work and school (ILO, 2002).

In Ethiopia about 34.2% of children attend school while working as children engaged in child labor. More boys' report attending schools than girls, urban-rural variations are very high. Only 19.6% of children living in rural areas are reported to be attending school while in urban areas, 61.8% attend schools. Of those children who combine work and schooling, many face difficulty in continuing their education and frequently dropout or repeat grades (CSA, 2001).

In summary, the prevalence of child labor in general and of children engaged in child labor who combine work and schooling in particular is high globally, requiring timely and long term actions by all concerned. For a country such as Ethiopia, identifying appropriate and supportive strategies to meet the needs of children engaged in child labor is significantly important for the future development of the country.

2.3.2 Relationship between Child Labor and Education

Child labor and education are highly interrelated and one affects the other, negatively or positively. Child labor negatively affects the achievement of children. On the other hand, quality education may help to reduce or totally eradicate child labor problems. ILO and other concerned international organizations promote the use of education as an instrument to reduce or eradicate child labor.

Accessible good quality educational opportunities for children can help them keep out of unacceptable and dangerous work conditions. The absence of public educational provisions, quality schools and absence of training programs are responsible for children to

be engaged in labor; and child labor in turn prevents children from regularly attending and benefiting from school (ILO, 2002).

Access to primary education and attendance rate has shown remarkable progress in recent years in line with an attempt to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) goals by 2015 in most developing countries in the world. As a result, children from deprived and disadvantaged backgrounds, especially live in urban areas may have gained opportunities to free and compulsory primary education. However, poor educational outcomes continue to be reported (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2001).

Children engaged in child labor who get the opportunity to attend primary education may face poor school outcomes and increased rate of repetition and dropout. Moreover, studies undertaken on the relationship between education and child work shows that they tend to be interconnected. Dropping out of school, repetition, low academic achievement, school failure characterizes children engaged in intensive working conditions (Salazar, 1998; ILO, 2005).

Researchers suggest that there is a high correlation between child labor and school enrolment. Yet because work is conducted, outside school hours, the long hours of activity may make these children fatigued. Grossly over worked children are found to be less able, less industrious and less regular in school attendance (ILO, 1988). This is assumed to be the core reason for the high rate of dropout and retention of children engaged in child labor for years considering the school quality as acceptable and good. In recent years it has been found that low educational achievement as well as lack of relevance in what is eventually learned is major causes of drop-out (Schiefelbein, 1997; Salazar, 1998).

In Ethiopia access to primary education has shown improvement in the Education Sector Development Programs (ESDP) I, II and III. As indicated in the Education Statistics

Annual Abstract (2007/08) the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in primary schools increased from 57.4% in 2003/4 to 83.4% in 2007/8 demonstrating promising progress. The quality of primary education also shows a relatively positive progress. However, much more needs to be done in order to successfully meet international goals of assuring quality education. The rate of repetition in first cycle of primary school indicates that the highest rate is at grade 1 (6.2%) and the lowest rate in grade 3 (4.6%). Dropout rates at the same grade levels are very large. At grade one 18.3% enrolled in 2005/6 dropout. The lowest rate of drop out during the same year was in grade four (7.2%) (MOE, 2009).

Studies of Ethiopian children engaged in child labor also indicate that child labor is negatively linked with their education due to the socio-cultural values attached to child work, poor educational background of parents, low quality of education in terms of addressing their specific needs as well as limited access to pre-school education (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), 2008). Furthermore, most, if not all, of the more than 100 million children around the world who are missing primary education belong to a category of children engaged in child labor that may hinder the achievement of UPE. As a result, efforts to achieve UPE must go hand in hand with efforts to eliminate child labor (MOLSA).

Due to the lack of early identification, appropriate support, personal problems, environmental concerns, whether temporary or long term reasons, these children are prone to repeat grades or drop out of school earlier. Poor school achievement of children with special needs is usually associated with several factors such as quality of teaching, interaction between learners and teachers, and socio-economic environment. Regardless of the cause, many of these children could be assisted by the classroom teachers (MOE, 2006).

Generally, since child labor is inextricably linked to poverty, it is very difficult to be easily eradicated. However, as long as these children get access to school, teachers should be able to support them based on their specific needs.

2.3.3 Children Engaged in Child Labor and EFA Goal

As education is one of the fundamental human rights of individuals, many are often denied this right due to various reasons. In response, the world community has determined that Education For All (EFA) is a goal that all nations must strive to achieve by 2015 and its achievement is intended to be assessed based on the EFA Dakar Assignment (2000).

The educational goal of EFA declares that to ensure the learning needs of all young people, equitable access to appropriate learning is crucial. So that learning outcomes are achieved by all especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (UNESCO, 2005).

On one hand, free, compulsory, quality education to the minimum age of employment as defined by ILO Convention No.138 is a key element in preventing child labor. Education contributes to building a protective environment for all children. On the other hand, child labor is one of the main obstacles to full-time school attendance and in the case of part-time work, prevents children from fully benefiting from their time at school (ILO, 2005, 2006). This inextricable linkage has not been recognized or acted upon at the international level until recent years. Real progress has been made in reducing child labor by connecting the EFA initiative and the campaign to end child labor by recognizing child labor as a key obstacle to achieving EFA (ILO, 2006).

2.4 Legal and Policy Documents Regarding Child Labor and Education

Different policies and conventions have been developed, ratified and exercised by the world community to assure the rights of children to education and to eliminate various

manmade barriers in exercising it. Off these legal and policy documents, this paper highlights Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR), Convention Against Discrimination In Education (CADE), Child Right Convention (CRC) and International Labor Organization (ILO) convention on children engaged in child labor and education.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The human right to education is inextricably linked to other fundamental human rights; rights that are universal, indivisible, interconnected and interdependent. UDHR specifically states that:

Everyone has the right to education..... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms....” (United Nation (UN) Article 26, 1948).

This declaration states that everyone, this refers to all children regardless of their sex, race, ethnicity, developmental deprivations or other differences, should receive education to support the full development of his or her potential and personality; however, most children engaged in child labor are denied basic and compulsory education that considers their learning styles, abilities and needs. As a result they usually face the problems of dropout or repetition.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Convention on the Rights of the Child also states the rights of all children to basic quality primary education in article 28 and 29. Moreover, it prohibits child involvement in exploitive and abusive experiences.

Article 28 and 29 of the convention state that:

State parties recognize the right of the child to education.... in particular. Make primary education compulsory and available free to all... the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential... (UN Article 28&29, 1989)

Article 32 also states that:

State parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to

interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's healthy or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (UN, Article 32).

Generally this convention assures the rights of the child to education based on his or her needs, abilities and pace of effective learning. Similarly, a child must be protected from exposure to any work which is harmful to their healthy development. The convention clearly states the need of assuring or recognizing the best interest of the child and of protecting him or her from any type of abuse including child labor and poor quality education.

Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE). This convention states that:

The state parties...undertake...to...discontinue any... Practice which involves discrimination in education..., to formulate develop and apply a national policy which promote equality of opportunity and of treatment in... education...." (UN Article 3, 4&5, 1960/62).

To combat discriminatory treatment and promote the opportunity of addressing their learning needs, children in disadvantaged situations or who experience conditions of risk, have the right to education of the same quality and standard regardless of the disadvantage situations in which they may live in.

International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No.138 (ILO Minimum Age Convention). This convention set a minimum age of employment for children in formal or legal industries with the aim of ending child labor that is beyond their level of development. Specifically the convention states that:

Each member for which this convention is in force undertakes to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labor and to rise.... The minimum age... to employment or work...Consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young person's... (ILO Article 1, 1973).

Ethiopia ratified all the international conventions stated above. These practices were supported by the FDRE constitution in article 9/4 as international agreements which the country ratifies as an integral part of the law of the land (FDRE, 1994). Specifically,

Ethiopia's legal provision on the rights of children stated in the constitution was that children should:

Not to be subject to exploitive labor practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which is harmful or hazardous to his or her education, health or well-being (FDRE Article 361 (d), 1994).

In addition, MOLSA (No 377/2003) established specific provisions pertaining to child labor such as minimum age for employment and a list of activities prohibited to young workers. Moreover the criminal code, civil code and family law also affirmed prohibitions of child labor. However, Enforcement of these proclamations and conventions was and continues to be the major problem.

2.5. Instructional Practices for At-Risk Students in Primary School

Taylor and Mulhall (1997) emphasized the need for basic education to correspond to the needs, interests and problems faced by the learner. Pupils at this level, despite their diverse backgrounds, should get access to quality education which is responsive to their learning needs and styles. If quality education is not available, improving access to education makes little sense.

Recent views in educational quality centre on the educational process, which tells how teachers and administrators may use educational inputs to frame meaningful learning experiences for students. Quality classroom instructional practices are at the heart of this process focused on educational quality assurance (UNICEF, 2000). But often education fails to create good quality learning conditions and governments are currently not able to provide quality education for all children (USAID, 2001).

More specifically, improving the quality of classroom instruction for at risk students in urban school settings is a major challenge in education today. Most of these children come from disadvantaged circumstances that heighten the probability that they will not be

successful in schools. Their greatest risk factor is that their teachers and schools contribute to failure and academic under achievement by lack of materials, inadequately trained teachers and lack of accommodations for learning differences (Waxman & Padron, 1995).

Research suggests that teachers praise and encourage at risk students less often and have lower expectations. In addition, schools serving disadvantaged or low-achieving students often devote less time and emphasis to higher order thinking skills than do schools serving more advantaged students (Waxman & Padron, 1995).

The goal of first cycle primary education in Ethiopia, as stated in education and training policy (1994), states that education offered to students in this cycle, who may not advance to the next cycle, should educate these children to the best of their abilities (MOE,1994). For the attainment of these goals a self-contained classroom organization is recommended and practiced. Students learning ought to be measured based on continuous assessment of their performance. However, studies indicate that the practice of continuous assessment strategies in lower cycle primary schools of Ethiopia is immature. Teachers usually consider continuous testing as a means to better instruction, but it is not. Giving tests every month and accumulating pupils' marks for final grading is an insignificant aspect of the assessment package (Desalegn, 2004).

Although the Ministry of Education reports that the learning needs of children are being met, according to Teka (2002), educational services are still provided in forms that barely encourage learners to be active participants and release their untapped potentials.

The government emphasizes the need for improvement of the quality of teaching through employment of active learning activities, methods and lessons. However, a study conducted by Derbessa (2006) in Ethiopia on the extent of implementation of active learning

approaches in primary school. Using a descriptive survey of 12 schools (6 from urban and 6 from rural areas) indicated that traditional lecture methods dominated in most classrooms.

2.5.1 Learning behaviors of Children engaged in child Labor and Required Learning

Supports

Children engaged in child labor and simultaneously go to school usually exhibit various learning behaviors associated both with the work load as well as the nature of classroom instruction. Those who worked long hours had less time to study and were more likely to be tired after work, thus influencing their learning quality, either in class or in doing homework (World Bank, 2003). Children who were exhausted from coping with both lessons and work were often ostracized in the classroom or subjected to corporal punishment, thus reducing their enthusiasm for learning (ILO, 2002). Moreover, the long hours of work activities tired the child to the point of impairing concentration and learning. As a result they frequently slept in class (Heady, 2000). Research conducted on Romanian children engaged in child labor aged 8-15 years found that lacking the time and physical space to prepare for lessons at home, they often become tired at school and were less able to concentrate (Pantea, 2006/07). Recent studies in Ghana on child labor and school performance found that child labor left children too tired to learn, robbed them of their interest in learning and academic achievement resulting in lack of motivation that affected both their learning and their future prospects (Heady, 2000).

Similarly, studies on learning characteristics of children engaged in child labor in urban informal work sectors in Ethiopia indicated that children engaged in child labor usually came to school without doing their homework assignments. As a consequence, they were frequently disciplined or were suspended from classes or from school. Moreover, absenteeism, inattentiveness, fatigue and desperation characterized these children. They often

sat idly and hid themselves from their teachers (Addisu, 2008; Alegant, 2007; Solomon, 2006).

These learning problems were directly or indirectly responsible for low achievement, repetition or dropout of children engaged in child labor. In order to reduce such educational waste, several social, school, and classroom factors have been investigated. Research has generally found that proximal or *alterable* educational variables rather than distal variables like hereditary were directly and highly related to improved outcomes. One such alterable variable is the quality of classroom instruction. Waxman & Padron (1995) found that an important variable to improved student outcomes was the ability for the school and teacher to alter classroom instruction. Additionally, they suggested efforts to enhance the skills and working conditions of classroom teachers including mastery of the pupil-centered approach that recognized that each pupil had specific learning needs and required a particular set of interventions (Fasika, 1998).

Addressing learning needs of students from disadvantaged groups regularly followed two strategic directions: the establishment of specific educational responses according to the learning need of each group and the refinement of the mainstream educational provisions so that they were flexible and sensitive enough to respond to the specific learning needs of different groups (UNESCO, 2006).

There was no one response for all the unique situations amongst students at-risk, but decades of research indicated that certain practices and strategies could make substantial increases in learning for these students. These practices and strategies usually focused on active learning methods when students were given the opportunity to be actively involved in classroom tasks and provided interactive learning environments (Regional Educational Laboratory, 2002).

A study of classroom strategies for helping at-risk students determined six effective classroom practices that included whole class instruction, cognitively oriented instruction, small groups, tutoring, peer tutoring and computer assisted instruction (Regional Educational Laboratory, 2002).

Usually, through the use of comprehensive practices and strategies, teachers were able to move at risk students to greater heights of achievement (Regional Educational Laboratory, 2002). Moreover, teaching which focused on individual differences, such as learning styles, use of active learning methods, and increased participation, gained theoretical support from the constructivist model of learning and related more to the way in which new information was handled and learning challenges that were tackled. These were found to be effective strategies for teaching pupils with special needs in general (Davis & Florin, 2004).

2.6. Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 Constructivist Theory of Learning

Behavioral theory of learning postulates objective knowledge based on the premise that “Reality is established” and exists outside the mind of the individual. In contrast, the constructivist hypothesizes that knowledge is constructed by the learner through interaction with the social and physical environment based on prior knowledge; thus, “Reality is constructed”, flexible and subjective. As a result, multiple interpretations of events are valued and acknowledged (Bae, n.d.). A constructivist theorist believes that learners construct their own reality or at least interpret it based upon their perception of experience (Mergel, 1998).

In constructivist theory, learning is defined as *a process of constructing meaning; it is how people make sense of their experience*. This is the effect of a combination of a person’s cognitive abilities and insights to understand their environment (Wikibooks, 2005).

In this theory, learning is an active process, a personal interpretation of the world which emphasizes problem solving and understanding where contents are presented holistically, not in separate smaller parts (Giesen, 2005).

There are two major strands of the constructivist perspective: cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. Jean Piaget is one of the early contributors to cognitive constructivism. He suggested that through processes of accommodation and assimilation, individuals construct new knowledge from their experience (Wikibooks, 2005). Social constructivism however, premises that learning is constructed through social interaction and discourse. In this theory, an optimal learning environment involves a dynamic interaction between teacher, learner, and content (“Work Shop”, 2000).

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky’s theory of the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)* has a valuable implication in social constructivism. ZPD refers to “*the distance between the actual developmental level of a child as determined by his or her independent problem solving ability and the level of potential development as determined through the child’s problem solving ability under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers*” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 70).

The constructivist classroom instruction values collaboration, personal autonomy, generativity, reflexivity, active engagement, personal relevance and pluralism (Savery & Duffy, 1995). Such classrooms are characterized by a pedagogy which gives attention to the individual and respect for a student’s background and develops understandings of and beliefs about elements of the domain. Constructivist classroom instruction promotes active learning or learning by doing, which may also be described as student-centered (Wikipedia, 2010; Richardson, 2003).

In constructivist classrooms, teachers become a guide for the learner, playing a facilitator role, providing bridging or scaffolding, helping to extend the learner's ZPD and mediating the environment in an interactive manner. On the other hand, the student is encouraged to develop higher order thinking skills by interacting with the learning experience and be active creators of meaning. Moreover, the learner is intrinsically motivated to generate, discover, build and enlarge her or his own framework of knowledge (Gray, n.d.; Bae, n.d.; "Constructivism in the Classroom", n.d.).

In summary, activities and methods that are grounded in constructivist theory of learning appear helpful in focusing on individual students, developing deep understanding in the subject matter and expanding the interest and habits of the mind for future learning (Richardson, 2003). Since children engaged in child labor face various learning challenges that lead them to be unresponsive and passive, instructional processes which focus on their specific learning needs and styles are similarly helpful in affecting their learning. Constructivist's instructional approaches enable teachers to promote communication and create flexibility so that the needs of all students may be met.

2.6.2 Theory of Mediated Learning Experience (MLE)

The theory of Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) is part of the theoretical framework of *Structural Cognitive Modifiability (SCM)* developed by Professor Reuven Feuerstein which explains the modifiability of deficient cognitive functions. He argued that a *person's capability to learn is not solely determined by one's genetic make-up; but is on the contrary, cognitive enhancement is through mediation* (Feuerstein, 2009). This theory views the human organism as open, adaptive and amenable to change (International Center for the Enhancement of Learning Potential (ICELP), n.d.).

which the learning experience occurs (S-H-O-H-R). Organic factors consist of heredity, maturational level and other natural phenomena. Environmental factors include sensory stimulation, socio-economic status, and educational opportunities. These two types of factors constitute *distal* determinants of cognitive development (factors which cause the differential responses to the environment), while the mediated learning experience constitutes *proximal* determinants (Feuerstein, 2009).

Consequently, regardless of the distal factors (e.g., socioeconomic status and educational opportunity), inadequate MLE leads to cognitive functions that are undeveloped or poorly developed, arrested, impaired, or inefficiently used resulting in limited academic and social learning. When MLE is adequate, prior limitations can be overcome and higher levels of cognitive and social development will be achieved (Feuerstein, 2009; ICELP, n.d.). In contrast, in situations where developmental or environmental difficulties occur MLE becomes the necessary relationship to overcome deficiencies and foster enhanced functioning (ICELP, n.d.).

Gatica (n.d.) also noted four characteristics that learners typically display when provided with high quality mediated learning. "Learners will (a) develop the ability and desire to adapt to new situations, (b) learn how to learn, (c) transfer what they learn from one situation to other, and (d) become active generators of information" (p.35).

As the theory of MLE is rooted in social constructivism, the Vygotskian concept of zone of proximal development implies that mediation of the child's cognitive potential has to reflect developmental, process-orientation, and casual dynamic relations, rather than the static end products of performance (Vygotsky, 1978). It underscores the possible enrichment of the child's learning capacity through interaction, guidance and joint-partnership with experienced adults (Teka, 2002). Thus, guided by an era of mediated principles, Vygotsky viewed a child's

interaction with the world as mediated by symbolic tools, which are provided by social constructivism. However, Feuerstein gave further insight on cognitive functioning, such as logical memory, voluntary attention, categorical perception and self regulation of behavior (Feuerstein, 2009).

In examining these two theories in terms of their potential for optimal learning, Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural theory and the theory of MLE are both supported by various studies. However, there is a theoretical gap which can be filled by the help of MLE which assigns a major role to a human who mediates stimuli for another human (i.e., S-H-O). These theorists believe that such mediation is indispensable for a child with learning problems because the mediator helps the child develop prerequisites that would make learning effective (Feuerstein, 2009). Teka (2002) also noted the potential of MLE over Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural theory in the learning of children with special needs saying that: "MLE is a new theoretical perspective that offers a new hope in addressing the learning needs of especially the low achieving children and children of the lower primary schools of developing nations" (p.36).

Based on these reasons, we can infer that instructional practices delivered through the MLE approach have a better potential for affecting children, particularly from disadvantaged background, to produce optimal learning. As a result, this study investigates the nature of classroom instructional practices for children engaged in child labor based on the theory of MLE.

In an MLE model of interaction, the teacher provides a suitable stimulus (i.e., instruction, homework, test, assignment) and then observes the response of the learner to the stimulus. Based on the response, the teacher interacts with the learner (e.g., provides praise, criticism, encouragement, grades, a new assignment,) and the process continues until either

the teacher or the learner is satisfied. Teachers develop their own repertoire of methods depending upon the size of the class, the apparent ability of the learner and the subject matter (Galyam & Grange, 2005).

Generally, MLE is necessary for all human learning though the quality, amount, intensity, frequency and duration will vary as a function of individual differences (distal factors) in children. It is possible to apply MLE at later stages when cognitive development or academic and social learning have not been sufficient. Through applied interaction, such as in the MLE method, parenting, teaching and counseling facilitate learning (ICELP, n.d.).

2.7. Parameters of Mediated Interactions

The quality of the MLE interaction is best described by twelve specific criteria or parameters:

1. Intentionality and Reciprocity
2. Transcendence
3. Mediation of meaning
4. Mediation of feeling of competence
5. Mediation of regulation and control of behavior
6. Mediation of sharing behavior
7. Mediation of individuation and psychological differentiation
8. Mediation of goal seeking, goal setting and goal achieving behavior
9. Mediation of challenge: The search for novelty and complexity
10. Mediation of an awareness of the humane being as a changing entity
11. Mediation of the search for an optimistic alternative
12. Mediation of the feeling of belonging (Feuerstein et al., 1991)

Because not every interaction that involves a task, a learner and a mediator has an interaction quality related to MLE, these parameters have been developed to distinguish the MLE interaction from other kinds of interactions. They are divided into the main and reinforcing components.

The first, three criteria (Intentionality/Reciprocity, Transcendence, and Mediation of Meaning) comprise the main components of the MLE approach. These are universal, basically essential criteria to characterize an interaction as a mediated interaction and they are considered to be responsible for what all human beings have in common: *structural modifiability* (Feuerstein et al., 1991). The other nine criteria are not necessary conditions for an interaction to be considered as MLE; rather, they are situational, task dependent and culturally sensitive. These reinforcing parameters are responsible for the diversification of cognitive styles, of affective modes of experiencing oneself and others, and of ways to respond to stimuli emerging from both endogenous as well as exogenous sources. They are important for the construction and evaluation of environments that promote cognitive development in young children and the identification of risk factors within an environment (Klein, 2001). Furthermore, Klein demonstrated with empirical evidence that these parameters could be reduced to five criteria without losing their two basic salient and reinforcing properties: Mediation of Feeling of Competence and Mediation of Regulation and Control of Behavior in addition to the three salient parameters.

The criteria are used as a general guide to a variety of activities or opportunities to intervene, but do not identify a specific action to be taken. Rather they become a *road map* for responses. They offer possibilities to exploit (focus, elaborate and enhance) meditational potentials in situations (ICELP, n.d.).

1. Intentionality and Reciprocity

Intentionality transforms any interactive situation from accidental into purposeful. By constantly focusing on the child's state of attention, problem solving strategies, mistakes, and insights, the adult infuses the learning situation with a sense of purpose and intentionality (Collins, 2001). Gatica (n.d.) described intentionality as the mediator's ability to focus on the learner's needs and to shape the task according to these needs.

The intention transforms the three partners involved in the interaction: the stimuli, the mediator and the mediate. The particular event is transformed in some of its characteristics by the mediator's intention to make it experienced (not only incidentally registered by the mediate). This transformation of the stimuli to be mediated is accompanied by efforts on the part of the mediator to transform the mental, emotional and motivational state of the mediate. Moreover, detecting the transformation produced by the intention in the stimulus or event to be mediated is used as the best way to evaluate the mediational quality of an interaction such as parent-child or teacher-student (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

In mediated classroom instruction the teacher intentionally leads the process by involving activities that focus the student's attention, sets the required pace and identifies the cognitive functions required to analyze the tasks and to generalize from a series of activities without diminishing the students level of activity (Schur, Skuy, Zietsman & John, 2002).

Intentional mediation is meaningful only if it is combined with the mediate's reciprocity. Reciprocity is present when the teachers' behavior is not accidental but purposeful and when the student's behavior is in response to what she or he saw or heard from the teacher.

Reciprocity is achieved when the teacher has succeeded in catching the child's attention so that the child responds vocally, verbally or nonverbally, to the adult's behavior

(Klein, 2001). This gives an interesting interpretation of MLE implying that verbal interaction is not necessarily required, as all modalities of interaction (e.g., gestures, kinetic, mimicry, and modeling) can also constitute quality interaction provided that the mediator is conscious and well-intentioned in the process (Teka, 2002). In other words, reciprocity refers to the mediator's willingness to see the students at the "same level" and to be attentive to the students' response (Gatica, n.d.). Reciprocity is a way to turn an implicit intention into an explicit, volitional and conscious act. It is an essential counterpart of the mediation of intentionality (Feurestein et al., 1991).

A teacher or mediator who initiates a reciprocal relationship, joins the student in the learning process by giving responses such as summarizing what a student said and asking for elaboration on one or more points (e.g., *Say more about what you meant by...., or help me to understand how...., or why....* (Collins, 2001).) The teacher does not pretend to know the answer as to how the learner should be thinking. Only the learner knows how the thinking proceeds. The mediator is rather a fellow explorer (Galyam & Grange, 2005).

Teachers, working with a student who has difficulty learning, must focus attention on the student's needs. It requires the teacher to constantly judge the learning experience and making needed changes to assure that the student's experience is within his or her zone of proximal development (Collins, 2001). Reciprocity helps the teacher to be aware of the student's progress, their alternative concepts and their relevant cognitive deficiency. Since understanding the students and their abilities, needs and motives can enable the teacher to design appropriate learning activity and properly mediate intentionality (Schur et al., 2002).

In summary, the interaction, animated by an intention and an effort to create a relationship of reciprocity, can be viewed as powerful and rich in behavioral, mental and

emotional components. It sets the stage for all of the other critical attributes of mediated learning and influences all the three patterns of the interaction (Feuerstein et al., 1991)

2. Transcendence

Transcendence, defined as the orientation of the mediator to widen the interaction beyond the immediate primary and elementary goal, creates in the mediate a propensity to enlarge his cognitive and affective repertoire of functioning constantly (Feuerstein et al.). In this case, the goal of the interaction is expanding and going beyond the immediate experience, from its immediate precedent and consequences to others remote in time and space (Klein, 2001). This transcendence of the immediate environment promotes flexibility of mind and structural changes in the sense of anticipation, search and need for information beyond the immediate.

Similarly, Tribus (n.d.), defines transcendence as a human's unique ability to draw a lesson from an experience in one time and place, transmit to their progeny the lesson learned and see the progeny apply these lesson in a new time and place. Bridging, ability to transcend the moment, is the key to the mediation of transcendence.

Students, who experience difficulty learning, do not readily see any relevance to what they are learning without transcendence. It is the responsibility of a teacher to help his or her student make connections between what he or she learns in the classroom with what might be done at home or in other settings. This will not be achieved by providing examples of bridging; rather, it is realized by helping the student to draw examples from his or her own experiences or situations in which the same process could work (Collins, 2001).

Generally, transcendence not only transforms the immediate goal by widening its scope to include more remote goals but also changes many of the means employed to achieve

these goals. It changes the primary goals of the interaction, widening them by including more remote, and in certain cases more important, goals than the primary ones (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

3. Mediation of Meaning

The mediation of meaning represents the energetic, affective, emotional power that will make it possible for the mediational interaction to overcome resistance on the part of the learner and thereby, ensure that the mediated stimuli will indeed be experienced by the learner (Collins, 2001).

As indicated by Feuerstein et al. (1991), the mediation of meaning answers question of why, what for and other process oriented questions related to casual and teleological relationships, reasons for something to happen or to be done. Also, mediation of meaning is defined as an act of expressing affects by the parent or the carrier and relation to objects, animals, concepts or values through facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, verbal expression of affect classification, labeling and valuing of the child's experiences (Teka, 2001).

The mediation of meaning has two major roles to play in determining the quality of the interaction and its formative power. One is rendering efficient the mediator's attempts to convey to the mediate the stimulus, event, relationship and concepts which are the purposes of the interaction. The other is the endowment of the mediate with the "need" to look for the "meaning" in a wider sense of the term (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

Of all MLE criteria's, mediation of meaning is the one most determined by the cultural heritage of the individual irrespective of the communication modalities used. Because the "meaning is the reflection of attitudes, values, mores and commandments which regulate and shape the transmitted behavior" (Feuerstein et al., 1991, p. 28).

In the classroom, meaning is triggered as the teacher addresses the cognitive, affective and/or motivational needs of the learner. Its goal is to help the learner find value in a learning experience that brings about an emotional response, whether joy or wonder, or a willingness to express fear or anxiety (Collins, 2001).

Since students from disadvantaged backgrounds have learning difficulty do not automatically see learning experience as meaningful, it is the mediator's role to guide the student in a search for meaning which will be accomplished by (a) comparing and contrasting present learning experience with those of the past and those anticipated in the future (b) discussing learning goals with the student (c) helping a student to identify and use new learning in different applications (d) by asking "why" and "how" questions rather than "what" questions (Collins,2001).

4. Mediation of Feeling of Competence

An adult's expression of satisfaction with a child's behavior and his or her explanation of why he is satisfied is an example of feeling of competence (Klein, 2001). It is confirming (at a feeling level) abilities and skills, creating an optimistic belief in success, empowering confidence, task accomplishment, self reflections on abilities and achievements (Falik, n.d.). This criterion refers to the interactions in which the mediator organizes the environment to support children's feeling of success (Shamir & Tzuriel, 2004).

Mediation of feeling of competence comprises a mediational interaction of cognitive and emotional features initiated by the mediator whose interest is not just to render the child competent, but to equip him with a feeling of competence (Feuerstein et al., 1991). This is done by actions such as providing opportunities for success, by regarding the learner for solving problems successfully, and by interpreting to the learner the meaning of his or her

success (e.g. “wow, you did a great job, “very good, you remembered the procedures”)
(Shamir & Tzuriel,2004).

Mediation of feeling of competence helps the child acquire a sense of mastery, a feeling that she or he is capable and successful, which contributes, no doubt, to a willingness to explore the new and to attempt to apply oneself to new and challenging endeavors which is important to encourage curiosity and active exploration (Klein, 2001).

In today’s civilization with its promotion of highly individualized ways of life, a feeling of competence is a much greater need. Because it may play a crucial role in the adaptation of the individual to new situations, an ongoing condition of life in today’s world, it helps to be courageous enough to explore unfamiliar realities (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

5. Mediation of Self-Regulation and Control of Behavior

Mediation of regulation and control of behavior refers to experiencing and modifying environments to provide self monitoring, making adjustments in responses or perspectives, developing skills through active structuring, and developing insight into needs, skills, past and future experiences (Falik, n.d.).

Mediated regulation of behavior creates the flexibility and plasticity necessary for modifying the individual with respect to inhibition as well as initiation which are polar activities and probably one of the most important dimensions of interaction between parent-child and teacher- students (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

In this type of interaction, the mediator regulates the learner’s behavior by either controlling impulsiveness or by accelerating the behavior, depending on the task’s demands as well as on the learners’ personal behavioral style through modeling, demonstrating or scheduling objects or events in time and space and introducing a pattern of activities for the

learner (Klein, 2001; Shamir & Tzuriel, 2004). Mediated regulation of behavior also accelerates behavior through the orientation of the individual to self-reflection, arousing awareness of the task characteristics and provides the feedback necessary for decisions bearing upon the appropriateness or inappropriateness of certain behaviors, their timing, rhythm, and suitability to the particular situation (Feuerstein et al., 1991; Shamir & Tzuriel, 2004).

Working with students with special needs, teachers are expected to clarify their expectations and to spend individual time with students helping them to better focus and become accountable for their actions. Students were given opportunities to remove themselves from situations without having to ask permission of their teachers, especially during instruction when they found themselves unable to focus (Mann & Hinds, 2006).

Generally, imposing control and acceleration of student behavior is rendered more acceptable when it has the quality of mediation. This is particularly true when reciprocity makes the mediate able to understand the meaning of the inhibitory action of the mediator and offers him the extension of this meaning to the transcending goals set up by both the mediator and the mediate. This quality of regulation affects the individual's behavior in a structural way that is more permanent and is generalized over future situations which he or she will confront (Feuerstein et al., 1991).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Methodological Approaches and Design of the Study

The major intent of this study was to investigate the classroom instructional practices in Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School with special reference to the learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor. To achieve this, a qualitative case study design was employed. Case study was used for this study for its relevancy and in-depth investigation of the difficulties children engaged in child labor faced. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) stated, case study methods are useful to portray, analyze and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts, to catch the complexity and situation in which the behavior occurs, and to present and represent reality to give a sense of “being there”.

3.1 Research Setting

This study was conducted in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, in order to understand the living and learning conditions of children engaged in child labor who experienced poverty and poor quality of life. Particularly, the study was conducted in Gullele sub-city commonly known as “Shiromeda” area, which is located in the northern part of Addis Ababa. The total population of the sub-city is estimated to be between 346,000 and 360,000 divided in to ten *kebeles* for administrative purposes. As the Strategic Plan of the sub-city showed, the inhabitants of the sub-city came from different parts of the country and with various ethnic backgrounds. They were engaged in diverse economic activities. Of these the weaving business which harbored 20% of the total population of the sub-city was the dominant one, accounting for 60% of weavers found in Addis Ababa. However, they used traditional technologies which could not take the industry even one step ahead. Moreover, Gulele sub-city was one of the poverty stricken sections of the capital, Addis Ababa. Nearly

half of the sub-city's population lived in abject poverty or below the poverty line (Worku, 2006).

There were two government first cycle primary schools in the sub-city. One of these was Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School. This was located in the centre of the sub-city. The school was founded in 2000 E.C in a total area of 4000 square meter. The classrooms were built in one four storey building having twenty eight rooms, from which 24 were used for teaching purposes, two for offices. In addition, the school had a library, resource room and cafeteria located at the back of the main building. There was a new building within the compound which was under construction. Regarding the academic staff, there were 41 teachers (13 male and 28 female). Of this, 12 were diploma holders while 29 had a college certificate. The teachers worked an average of 22 periods per week. The school admitted 1160 students (524 male and 636 female) in the current academic year and had an average of 50-60 students per class in a total of 24 sections. Most of the students admitted to grade one had no preschool experience and ranged in age from 7 to 15 years (Endale M., personal communication, October 4, 2009).

3.2 Participants of the Study

In a qualitative case study, research participants are selected using purposive selection based on criteria relevant to the study. This requires the researcher to specify in advance a set of attributes, factors, characteristics or criteria that the study must address. The logic behind purposive selection of participants derives from the emphasis on in-depth understanding of the phenomena or individuals under investigation (Patton, 2002; Cohen et al., 2003). The selection strategies for this study were critical case sampling because as Cohen et.al., suggested, these strategies involved selection of people who displayed the particular set of characteristics (i.e., children engaged in child labor, ages 5 to 14 years, attending primary

school) to permit logical generalizations and maximum applicability of the findings to others in similar conditions.

Moreover, collections of information from various informants increased the possibility of understanding the phenomena from the insiders' perspective and improved its credibility. As a result, participants in this study were four children engaged in child labor, two sisters of the selected children and their teachers. The children were selected by the homeroom teacher and the researcher based on the following criteria;

1. The child worked in the informal small sector weaving industry.
2. The child's work influenced his or her learning in terms of time spent (5-8hrs/day), working days (more than 5 days/week) and working conditions such as unfavorable work site, hygiene, and illumination.
3. The age should be between 5-14years.

In actual fact, the ages of the four selected children engaged in child labor ranged between 8-14 years and worked in the informal home-based weaving industry. Their work was found to be intensive and threatening to their learning as reported by themselves and their teachers the cases spent more than 5 hours each day and 6 days a week. By observation, I determine that their working conditions did not comply with legal age limits. The detail demographic background of the research participants will be presented in table 1 and 2 below:

In table 1, the age of children engaged in child labor ranged from 8-14 years. All were home workers and lived with families or relatives. Zemenu and Mesaye, lived with their biological parents, Berihune lived with his father only while Shemalise lived with his uncle. Three were students in grade 2. Shemalise was the only student in grade four.

Table 1
Background of Children engaged in Child Labor

Name	Age	Living relationship	Employment relationship	Work intensity per week		Grade level
				Hours	Days	
Shemalise	14	Uncle	All work in a home-based, small scale weaving industry without wages.	55.5	6	4
Berihune	13	Father		52.3	6	2
Mesaye	9	Biological parents		57.3	6	2
Zemenu	8	Biological parents		50.5	6	2

As indicated below in table 2, educationally, two of the teachers have TTI Certificate and two are learning their diploma in the summer program. All of them had more than five years of work experience, in addition Mesay's and Zemenu's teacher teach the cases for one semester whereas the other two have been teaching the cases for 2 years.

Table 2
Background of Teachers

Teacher of	Sex	Educational background	Work experience	Experience of teaching the student
Shemalise	F	TTI Certificate Diploma in progress	8 years (6 years in basic education, two years in first cycle primary school)	2 years
Berihune	M	TTI Certificate Diploma in progress	6 years in first cycle primary school	2 years
Mesaye	F	TTI Certificate	5.5 years (5 years in basic education, one semester in first cycle primary school)	One semester
Zemenu	F	TTI Certificate	37 years	One semester

3.3 Data Collection Tools

A distinctive feature, not unique to case study research, was the use of multiple methods to establish construct validity. Indeed, the case study's unique strength was its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, including documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). In order to increase the validity of data in this study, classroom observation, interview, and document analysis were used.

Observation

Observation in qualitative research allowed the researcher to formulate his or her own version of what occurred independent of the participants self reported data. It provided an in-depth understanding of what was occurring in the natural setting (Gall, et al., 1996). Hence, systematic observation was used in this study to investigate the tradition of classroom instruction with reference to learning needs of research participants. In addition, unstructured observation was used in the work setting to understand the living and working conditions of the children engaged in child labor.

The systematic observation was conducted using the MLE observation guide of the five major parameters previously discussed in Chapter Two. The guide was adapted from MLE rating scale developed by Mentis et al. (2008) and believed to have cross cultural applications. Each five major parameters included 5-7 guiding questions with ratings of: not at all implemented, negatively implemented, sometimes implemented and usually implemented by the teachers in the classroom.

The instrument involves questions related with teacher's instructional strategy, whether it involves all students' active involvement or promote reciprocal relationship or not, the major focus of instructional strategies in terms of promotion of students independent learning ability and application of lessons in their daily lives, provision of reinforcement, as

well as their assessment and classroom management strategies. This was done by making a tick mark in one of the four ratings while the teaching learning process goes on (See in appendix A).

Interview`

Interview was an essential tool used to gather information on a given phenomena or events from the point of view of others. This provided information on the phenomena under investigation. This enabled the researcher to triangulate the data and validate the researcher's impression from observation (Best, 2003).

In this study, a semi-structured interview was conducted with each child engaged in child labor to assess his or her working condition, its influence on their learning and the child's feeling about the classroom instruction. In addition, teachers of the selected children were interviewed to determine information on the children's academic performance, learning behavior, and available instructional supports. Since the sisters of Zemenu and Mesay were elder, interviewing their sisters was helpful in increasing the reliability of the data.

The interview guides used for all interviewees except the two sisters were prepared by the researcher based on the study research questions and MLE parameters. The main content of the interview includes information about demographic background of participants, their working conditions, and their interest towards their education, their academic performance and feelings on the nature of classroom instruction. An informal interview was conducted with the sisters to obtain information on the working conditions and total working time of their brothers, as well as parent's education and economic status.

Document analysis

One of the purposes of document analysis in qualitative research was to explain the possible causal factors related to some outcomes, actions or events. It also served to supply information helpful in evaluating or explaining social or educational practices, (Best, 2003). This study analyzed student academic records in order to examine each participant's attendance and academic history.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

3.4.1 Pilot Study

The tools were developed and pilot tested prior to the study. This was done with two major intentions. First, the pilot test was to establish whether the interview guide was feasible for use with this age group and the level of language competence. Second, it determined whether the recording methods were appropriate for identifying classroom behaviors.

The pilot test was conducted in a different school from the study, Guiskume Etege Taitu Primary School. A student was selected with similar criteria. The selected student was a 10 year old boy who lived with his parents. Observations of this student's homeroom teacher classroom instructional practices were also done. This systematic observation was completed in two 40 minutes periods in Amharic and mathematics lessons, followed by an in-depth interview with his teacher (90 minutes) and with the child (45 minutes). Accordingly, some modifications were made on the Amharic version of the interview and the method of interviewing.

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

3.4.2 Main Study

To identify the participants of the study, the selection criteria were distributed to all homeroom teachers of the school and 30 students were identified. Of these, eight students met the criteria. Thus, four children with severe working conditions and with ages ranging 8-14 were randomly 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 during three subjects (Arithmetic, Amharic and Environmental science) for a total of six periods over three consecutive weeks.

Hereafter, interviews with the teachers of the selected children engaged in child labor were conducted. After communicating the assurance of confidentiality, the teachers were asked for permission to record the interview with an audio tape recorder. The interviews took place other than the school outside of class instruction time except one for one of the teachers who did not agree to meet me outside the schools compound. For this case the interview was done in the school resource room. The teacher interviews took 1 to 1.5 hours to be completed.

Based on information obtained about the children, their classroom behavior and instructional traditions from review of documents, interviews with teachers, and observations, interviews 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. Informed consent of the children and their parents was obtained. To establish rapport the researcher had conversations with each student and provided refreshments such as tea and bread, candy, chewing gum and chocolates before the interview. The students were also permitted to listen to their recorded voices as an entertainment. They were interviewed during their free time in the school resource room.

After observation of the children engaged in child labor at home and in work settings, being as a customer of their handloom products getting consent with the children, the results were recorded using note taking.

Finally, an informal interview was conducted with sisters of the two children engaged in child labor during their free time at school. Additional informal interviews were completed with the children engaged in child labor and teachers to fill information gaps identified during the time of data analysis.

3.5 Methods of Data Analysis

This study used case by case and cross case methods of data analysis. One of the main characteristics of qualitative research was its focus on the intensive study of specific instances of phenomena to produce thick description. Thick description of the phenomena under cases brought the event to life for readers and helped them to understand its meaning (Gall et al., 1996).

In this study, the raw data was coded, reduced and presented case by case. In addition cross-case analysis was used to make an in-depth and detailed comparison across cases so as to increase the generalizability of the findings to similar conditions.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in consideration of all ethical issues of a research. The participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and asked for their informed consent to be involved in the study. The researcher developed rapport with the participants to encourage optimum responses in a naturalistic environment. The participants were assured of confidentiality of all data collected. In addition, respondents were informed that they could withdraw from participation at any time.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Results

The study was conducted in Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School, Gulele sub-city, Addis Ababa. The school had 24 sections and 41 teachers with 50-60 students in each section. Since the population in the area lived in abject poverty, most are living in a very sophisticated and poverties home environment: they are using their home for multiple purposes such as dining, cooking, working and entertainment. Moreover, most of the students in this primary school were admitted to grade one without any preschool experience.

In this Chapter the results are discussed under two major sub headings: case by case presentation and cross case analysis. The case presentation was done based on the data obtained from observation of the classroom and the participants' homes, interviews with the students and their teachers and document analyses. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were used in presentation of all the four cases.

4.1 Case Presentations

The study setting

The general setting for this study was Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School. The school was built of concrete and stone. The classrooms were the naturalistic setting of this study. The rooms had half paint glassed windows on one side and blocked with concrete on the other three sides. The size of the classrooms was 3 meter width and 4 meter height, which seems relatively sufficient to accommodate the number of students in each class. Lighting and environmental quality was adequate. The desks were benches that accommodate 2-3

students and were made of wood and metal. The overall classroom environment is relatively free from external and distractive noises..

In each classroom, there was a blackboard with few other resources. Except the classroom of Berihun, the top right part of the black board is regularly used for writing the daily attendance of students and current date will be written in the left side. The names of the first three or four students with highest grades in weekly tests and ground rules were displayed.

The other parts were decorated with different teacher-made materials. These partly included the Amharic alphabet, grammar and pronunciation guides for English, pictorial aids such as pictures and names of domestic and wild animals, arithmetical figures like multiplication, division and calculation of linear equations. In Shemalise's classroom there were also aesthetic teaching aids (e.g., directions to prepare traditional shirts and trousers as well as preparation of traditional arts made of sand.) The number of students in each classroom was 50-60, on average. Their sitting arrangements, in many cases were organized in an interactive mode. The number of students in heterogeneous groupings was primarily decided by the teacher. The age range of students in each classroom was broad, ranging from 7 to 15 years. Students were admitted to grade one, without prior preschool experience. As reported by their teachers, most students faced difficulties in achieving the minimum competence level defined in the curriculum.

For students with low academic performance, the school provided tutorial programs all students, participated in this study, was regular participants in the tutorial programs. The case studies provided in-depth understanding of each student's school experience.

Case 1- Shemalise

Shemalise was a male, 14 years old, thin and tall. He appeared careless in his appearance, his face was not usually clean and his uniform was old, torn and untidy. He was living with his uncle, aunt, and one elder female cousin in one small room in a rented house. The house was very big and old with one common gate for all family members. There was a large gathering room in front of the main gate. The house was divided into eight small rooms which were separated by thin walls. Four families lived in the house with a total of fifteen members. Shemalise's parents used the first room of the house for living and shared a room with another family for work purposes.

Shemalise was born in Webera Wereda, Gamogofa region. His biological parents had two children and he was the first born. His uncle adopted at the age of seven and brought him to Addis Ababa. Shemalise reported how he came to Addis Ababa with his uncle as follows:

My uncle, since he has no children, took me from my parents with a promise to rear and educates [sic] me, like someone does for his biological children. But when I first came here, he was not admitting me to school; rather he trained me in weaving production of traditional clothes at home. This took me about seven months. After that my uncle orders me to work with him during the day time and admitted me to the evening school. However, due to the political instabilities of the city at that time, he suspended me from school and in the next academic year I was registered in the regular program in this school, and started grade one.

Economically, Shemalise's uncle worked at a small scale weaving industry in his home and his wife was a bush fire-wood collector. She collected wood from the nearby jungle and sold it. Moreover, as Shemalise stated, his uncle had not worked recently due to chronic pain in his hand muscles. As a result, Shemalise was responsible for the major part of the work and family basic income. Consequently, their economic status was at a subsistence level. Educationally, as Shemalise reported, both his uncle and aunt were illiterate.

Behaviorally, as his teacher expressed during the interview and verified during the observation, Shemalise was calm, quiet, and sociable. He chatted with his peers and respected and obeyed classroom and school rules and regulations. He spoke softly and usually feared to express his feelings in front of others. He did not exhibit undesirable behaviors.

Shemalise was first admitted to school at the age of 5 in his hometown and educated in his mother tongue. His education was terminated when his uncle brought him to Addis Ababa. He had worked for two consecutive years since he came to Addis Ababa. He was admitted to grade one in the night program during his third year in Addis Ababa. His uncle withdrew him from school for some reason during the same year. Then, Shemalise was readmitted to school and assigned to grade one in the 2006 academic year. In the 2010 school year, Shemalise was a student in grade 4.

In his classroom, there were a total of 56 students, 35 male and 25 female, with an age range of 9-16 years. The classroom was arranged to promote interactive lessons. The tables in each row formed a long rectangular shape and 7-9 students sat in each group. The group composition was determined by the teacher. Students were assigned to heterogeneous groups. Shemalise sat at the back of the middle row. His group's table was located at the distant base of the rectangle facing the black board. He sat between two classmates. There were seven members in that row.

As the teacher reported, Shemalise's group consisted of students with all levels of academic performance. Students in this group were relatively active, participatory and performed well.

Since the time he had been trained in the small scale weaving industry, he had worked with his uncle to increase the family income. In the beginning, he started working early in the

morning at 6:30am and continued until midnight. After he began regular day school his working schedule was adjusted. At the time of the study, he worked from early morning until the school began, (i.e., 6:30am to 8:00am) and after school until midnight during weekdays (i.e., 5:00 pm to 12:00 pm.) On Saturdays he spent the entire day and sometimes into the night until the clothes hacked.

In the workroom, there were four weavers including Shemalise and his uncle. He sat on a little dig up in the floor. It had no free space in the floor and customers usually dealt with them standing in front of the workers' seats. There was electric light available during the day as well as at night. Shemalise was expected to finish one product, working the whole process alone within two days. This was very intensive work since full-time workers were expected to complete similar task in the same amount of time.

Concerning, the relationship between his work and education, Shemalise hung his head as he expressed his feelings:

I like my education very much as it is important for all human beings because educated persons do not fail and have the opportunity to get good position in their future life and those who do not take education do not get good position. Although my parents did not send me to school early in my life, I am working hard in my education to help them in the future. But I hate the work, as it lets me not to study hard in my education while others study and while my friends play but not me because, I am always working. I usually feel tired in the class. I feel sleepy during the instruction. I did my home works usually after weaving, then, I feel very much tired. Besides, I have no one that assist me at home in my education. As a result, I am not as such successful in my education. So I am now trying to do home works in the school, during tea breaks and when teachers are absent from a class.

Besides, he stated his uncle's response to his education:

My uncle encourages me to be strong in my education reminding that he is not educated. But, since he is not educated at all, he did not encourage me to study and do my homework. My teacher is the only person who advises me to study, regardless of the work load.

Shemalise's teacher also commented on the working condition:

This is my second year in teaching Shemalise. He is living with his uncle and work until midnight. Most parents living around here usually do not want to disclose the working condition of the children, due to fear of not to be penalized by the law. They tell you that they are helping their children to learn. But the student's appearance clearly tells you the truth that they are working and tired. Shemalise's usually engages with the work for longer hours, which is beyond his age. As a result, he frequently misses classes and he is one of the low performers in my class. During class instruction he is passive, regularly sleepy and does not work his homework. In addition, he was not participating in tutorials. In the middle of this academic semester, I was calling his uncle and trying to discuss on the possible solutions. First, he was totally refused about his home condition and blames the child himself for his academic failure. After long discussion, he accepts the truth and promised me to consider and improve the situation. Accordingly, his absenteeism has been improved except days near holidays when he is expected to complete many works for the holiday and he is now attending tutorial programs as well. Currently he demonstrates good improvements in class participation and tests. I think this is resulted not from changes in the work load; as he still disclosed that he is working till 12:00pm; rather it is from his emerged motive and initiation. He begins to realize the importance of learning and tries to use his school time effectively. For example, he tries to do his homework even sometimes staying after the last school bell. He uses all his time reading in class and tries to complete given tasks immediately asking his peers for some difficult tasks. But still he is sleepy and tiresome in the classroom.

In order to verify his academic performance and absenteeism, the researcher examined and reported his academic records from grade 2 to the present (three academic years). The results indicated that in 2008, he missed 25 days. His average grade was 61 with the rank of 35th out of 63 students in his class. His English performance was below 50%. In 2009, his attendance had improved as the school began to take serious actions on students' attendance. He missed 10 days that year. However, his academic performance essentially remained the same with an average mark of 61.6. His rank in grade 3 was 30th out of 81 students. He scored below 50% in English and Amharic. In this academic semester (2010), his attendance showed improvement, as the teacher stated above. He missed 4 days during the first semester. His total average grade has been 65. He scored above 50% in all subjects and his lowest score was in English, 54.

Regarding the nature of his teacher's classroom instructional approach, she described it as:

I planned my instruction based on the textbooks and teachers guide. The lesson plans are direct copies of them because officers strictly evaluate us based on the textbooks. However, its delivery will depend on the students' response. For example, I sometimes teach lessons given at grade one level because they fail to understand things as planned. For your surprise, there are times which I teach those Amharic alphabets at this level. The text books are not appropriate for my students level, especially their mathematics text book is beyond their level; it is very difficult even sometimes for us as a result, we always extend complains for education bureau but they do not give us any response.

As a result, though I will be happy if I am able to employ group discussion method, when students discuss on a given topic by themselves and I am expected to further clarifies the point, I don't have time for that. If I do it while ordered by the teacher guide, I will try to use one of my double classes only for discussion and the other for reporting but it is very much time consuming and push me out of my lesson schedule. As the students are young it is not that much comfortable to take only the idea of one or two groups as a model they feel sad, but as a teaching learning process group method is very helpful. But I usually employed questioning and answering and workout strategies. Students are expected to answer questions, I ask, by raising their hands or to work out the answers on the blackboard. Besides, I encourage them to ask me questions, if any.

Furthermore, in order to help them to grasp the core meaning of each lesson, I tried to prepare and used some concrete teaching aids like those posted in my class, order them to write what they understand from each topic as an assignment [due to time constraint I stop it] and gives revisions at the end of each semester on important topics.

Moreover, to make my classroom active and conducive for learning, I usually tried to deliver various strategies; changing class activities by combining class work, homework and note takings together making them very short and precise, giving them time for relaxation like stretching their body and work other sports standing from their seats and in the afternoon I also try to open all windows for conditioning the room with air.

She also describes her strategies in self- regulation and control of students' behaviors in the following ways:

I want my students to be honest and being punctual in school, as I don't come late even I am sick. I also recommend them to be goal oriented, for example, they are learning now, when they come to school are they coming because their parents send them? Or they have interest for learning? If they have interest, I tell them to ask themselves what they get from it, each day and it is the easiest way to be successful in education. I strongly advise them not to be deceitful, even though, they made mistakes, I recommend them to be honest to their mistakes and learn from it, for example, when a student comes without doing his homework and tells me his reason for that truly I just tell him not to do it again and leave him, but if he tries to lie me I will not take it easily.

Additionally, I am trying to motivate them and create feeling of competition by appreciating clever students through adding marks, calling their name and advice students to use them as models, giving special emphasis for them and posting the name of top scorers in each test. However, these things are not that much effective as it is determined by their socio-economic background. Furthermore, I don't leave out to recognize medium and lower students' academic improvement, if any.

Regarding her assessment strategy she stated that: "Students' progress is continuously assessed through tests regularly administered once in two weeks and final examinations. In addition, I give grades for their classroom participation, neatness of their exercise books and the classroom disciplines".

Shemalise also explains his teacher's way of teaching:

She has an excellent performance in teaching and she usually compensates missed classes by giving make ups. I am happy when she teaches; she usually encourages me to study very hard. I am very happy when she gives us class work, because I want her to visit my exercise book, and ordered to work out the answers in the black board. She encourages us saying "very good", "you are correct"... for right answers and recommend us to listen attentively for the answers of others if one don't get the right answer.

Observation verified the above points: the teacher began her class by checking students' exercise books if they have homework or she gave them time to prepare for the lesson by opening their exercise book and textbooks if they did not have homework. She reviewed the previous lesson through questioning. Students then explained the daily lesson from their textbook, relating what they knew, using examples, and brainstorming strategies. Before proceeding to the main part of the lesson, she usually asked students confirmation about their understanding. Her questions were usually process oriented and focused on the students' understanding. Tasks were presented by varying their intensity and students were involved in asking questions. The teacher gave feedback to their responses by including the idea of other students. She uses such incidents effectively to further clarify lessons. She was not observed in trying to give them verbal or any other rewards for their participation other than confirming their correct answers.

She seemed an enthusiastic, serious and respectful of her responsibility to help the students to learn. She usually came well-prepared. The lessons were imparted in ways considering the competency of her students. She usually listened to the students' responses and tried to interpret their feelings about the lesson and their understanding of it. Her examples were simple and practical. For example, her mathematics lessons were usually taught using pictorial explanations and student demonstrations. Her class was very active and students participated in all activities enthusiastically. The lessons promoted learning. The students were disciplined and respected her very much.

Regarding educational support, the teacher stated that she was trying to support him during tutorial time. This was designed for low achievers from each class for all subjects. In his group there were seven students including him. In this program, students were helped on a one-to-one basis by planning lessons based on the student's individual needs and weaknesses. Topics which seemed difficult were usually revised and exercises were done together during this time. As the students sat together with others with similar academic performance, they freely communicated their strengths and weaknesses. The program was developed with the intention to support students to work closely together with their teachers.

In her further explanation the teacher described how he frequently missed classes. She called his parent and asked their reasons for his absence as well as attempting to honestly tell them about his learning problems, his academic status, and the impact of his absenteeism. She further reported what she said for his uncle word by word as follows:

As long as you send him to school you have the obligation to fulfill all the required things and to be abiding by the school regulation; he has to attend classes regularly otherwise, you will be asked in front of the law, but if you prefer him to work, you can withdraw him from this and admit him in the night program.

Consequently, she stated that his uncle affirmed his stand in the following way: “Because I am not educated I want him to be better than me I am here because I am not educated so I don’t want him to be like me. So I consider your advice and tried to take action”. His teacher continued: “Accordingly, even if his attendance and class participation frequently fluctuates, he is showing promising improvement in his education now”.

Case 2- Berihune

Berihune was a 13 year old, thin, medium height male. His brown eyes were crossed (i.e., strabismus) with frequent blinking and discharge. His face appeared as if he had not washed it for more than a week. Usually he wore old and torn untidy uniforms and shoes. His parents were divorced.

Berihune lived with his father in a rented and shared house with a total of eight family members. They rented part of a big house which had one common gate in the front and divided into eight sub parts. A pair of each sub parts was rented to different people and they had multiple purposes; used for gathering, sleeping, cooking, and working (as a small scale weaving industry). Totally there were around eighteen people living in this house. Of these, Berihune’s home is located at the left side of the main gate. They used the first part of the house for work purposes and the inside area for living purposes.

Regarding his health status, Berihune described that he had a history of unreported sight problems; he had difficulties seeing in a place with light such as light from the sun and electric lights. He explained his feeling of the problem this way: “I don’t like when the sun rises and electric light is on, I feel ill. Sometimes I also do not clearly read notes from the blackboard due to sunbeam”. His teacher confirmed the visual problem of the child: “Berihune usually rubs his eyes during classroom instruction and his eyes mainly look red. I think this might be due to lack of enough sleep”.

During observation I confirmed that Berihune blinked and rubbed his eyes frequently. To protect his eyes from incoming light he put his hand around his forehead while he tried to read his exercise book as well as while he attempted to read and copy written text from a blackboard. His eyesight seemed to be similar to a person with low vision; however, it was not medically confirmed.

Regarding his parents' economic and educational background, he was from very low economic class. His father was illiterate and worked in a small private organization as a security guard during daytime and in a small scale weaving industry at their home at night, earning very little for the survival of his family members.

His teacher substantiated this as follows: "His parents are living in one of my nearby home. His father is illiterate, though I am not sure whether he has another additional work or not, his primary income generating means is weaving."

In addition, the teacher stated that their living standard was similar to others in the neighborhood. To further clarify the situation, the teacher repeated the Amharic saying ኑሮዋቸዉ: ያዉ: ከእጅ: ወደ: አፍ: ነዉ:: (that is, their living is from hand to mouth). This suggested that, their income was less than necessary for daily living expenses.

As a result, Berihune and his older brother worked in their father's home-based small scale weaving industry to support their family's income. Berihune, began to work with his father when he was six years old. Initially, he was involved by assisting his father and older brother as they worked; by providing materials, preparing the weaving tools such as dig and fix metals to the weaving purpose with their support, and other related activities. Through developing experiences by observing and trying to weave, he began to work independently without additional formal training. As he said "I began to work with my father and my older brother when I was six years old and I developed the skill by observing while they were working". Now he could work independently and produce varieties of woven materials (eg.

Scarves, Netela, Gabi) every day after school which is usually around 4:15 pm, until midnight. On Saturdays, he worked the entire day and into the night, if the work was not finished. His teacher added that “Berihune always works in till midnight while sometimes spending the whole night.”

He worked in the basement of his home, sitting beside his brother. The place was a little dig in the ground to setup and fix the weaving tools and there were two such places, one for him and the other for his brother. Their father worked with the same tools but his set up was a little bit different from theirs. It was fixed in the floor without digging down and he sat in a chair level with the tools. Berihune explained the reason for this difference: “I can’t work, sitting in the chair like my father because I can’t reach up the tools comfortably”.

The place was very dark and cold to work in with comfort. Dim light came in through small openings in the roof from sun light during the day and small electric light bulbs from the back of the room in the evening. Once he started working he was not allowed to stop until he had completed his daily assigned tasks. When he completed his work, usually between 11:30 pm to 12:00 pm, his father ordered him to do his homework and eat dinner before going to bed. In addition to the “permanent” job he engaged in, he worked in a minibus as an assistant to the driver in collecting fares from passengers, a position titled in Amharic “Woyalla” and as a shoeshine boy (“Listro”). These jobs were done usually on Sundays and in the absence of schooling, in addition to his work as a weaver.

Berihune expressed his feeling towards his involvement in work as not being very disappointed. Rather, he seemed to like it and, considered and believed it to be of his life and survival, as follows:

Though I lost the opportunity to play with my peers, I like to engage on various work activities to earn money, because it helps me to fulfill my survival needs; to buy cloths and sometimes foodstuffs. Besides, my father strongly believes on any kind of child work and he considers me as very strong and hard worker.

Berihune was admitted to school at the age of nine and assigned to grade one. However, due to the negative economic effect to the family income resulting from his absence from weaving job, his father removed him from school to work fulltime for two and a half years. He was readmitted and placed in grade one in 2009 at the age of 12 years and attended school, in addition to his work in the home industry. At the time of this study, he was a student in grade 2, with 59 students (29 male, 30 female) and an age range of 7-13 years. The seating arrangement grouped students in 3 rows. Tables in each row formed a rectangle. In average, 5-7 students were assigned to each group. The teacher assigned students to groups based on heterogeneous academic ability.

Berihune sat in the first row, and second line desk with one student beside him and three students in front of him. Their group composition was relatively homogenous in terms of academic performance. When interviewed, his teacher appeared confused and said: "I do not know how I did this mistake, but they all, except one medium achiever, have almost similar academic performance; they are below average."

Behaviorally, as his teacher stated, Berihune acted out in class in the absence of the teacher and disciplined in his presence. He seemed to have attention seeking characteristics. Though he was older than most of his classmates, he tried to hold the attention of his peers through systematic and respectful actions. He wanted to be respected by his peers. Due to this, his teacher stated, "he does not want to participate in questioning and answering in the classroom because he feels ashamed to expose his fault in front of his peers". During observation, when he received his test results back, he scratched the paper and put it in his pocket. After class, when asked why he did that, he responded as follows: "I did that because I felt sad by the results, I do not deserve it" but he did not want to disclose his score. The teacher later told me that the score was zero out of ten. He was a monitor for his class; however, he frequently acted bossy, yet his classmates respected and feared him.

Concerning his school experience and the work, Berihune explained that:

I am very happy of my school time than working but I have to get money for my survival and I always wish to get the chance to stay at school only because it is an interesting and fascinating place for me: I play and chat with my peers and I also acquire knowledge which is important to my future life. However, as I usually cannot clearly read notes from the blackboard, I cannot catch up the teacher's instruction attentively.

His teacher summarized Berihune's school experience as follows:

Berihune is usually inattentive and passive participant. He frequently misses classes. His classroom instructional participation is very low. He sometimes sits idle while almost all students are actively participating. His face usually appears disturbed and lack sufficient time to sleep. He does not usually raise his hand during questioning activities. Even if he did the right answer in his exercise book, he does not understand it even for himself. Because I feel that he does not work his homework by himself I usually ask him to tell me how he gets the answer, but he failed to respond correctly with the right meaning. He is the least performer in the classroom academic activities, but he always gets average or a little bit above average in classroom tests. I am always confused of his results, it is completely opposite from his performance... [thinking for some time]; as far as I know him, he is one of the least performers but his results may be gained by copying from his sit mates especially I suspect the one who sits in front of him; who is relatively better than him, in addition, the exams and its way of administration; we give them detail briefing on each question before beginning, are very easy for his age level.

Nevertheless, he has good academic potential, if he would use it. At the age of twelve and attending grade two, he is expected to be so perfect and achieve highest results. Then again, the workload he has imposed by his family members could be responsible for his least academic performance. The work load largely disadvantaged and over stressed him.

During class, Berihune frequently stretched his hands forward and backward. He usually had with written answers for his homework but he did not respond orally or accurately. His classroom participation during questioning was little to none: he did not raise his hand to answer the questions. He often asked his peers about the question number or page number of the textbook, when class assignments were given or the teacher checked individual and group work. He did not appear to be listening attentively during class. During all instruction related tasks or activities, Berihune either sat idle without opening his exercise book or opened his exercise book and feigned attention. Observations were canceled twice due to his frequent absences.

His 2009 and 2010 first semester academic records verified good achievement in exams, in spite of his poor academic performance in the classroom. During grade one, his average mark was 84.8 and ranked 10th out of 87 students. In the 2010 first academic semester his average grade was 75 with a rank of 15th in a class of 59. This indicated that his achievement was above average. However, his attendance records indicated that he was absent 24 days in the 2008-2009 school years and during the first semester of the 2009-2010 school years he was absent 15 days. This was very serious and frustrating. The teacher commented on Berihune's poor attendance saying that: "though he frequently misses classes I do not ask him to call his parent because I know why he did that: the work."

In response to the nature of classroom instruction the teacher described it in this way:

We deliver lessons based on teachers' guide and their text books. I am always trying my best to stick on my lesson plans because if you do not be able to follow the guides you will lag behind the schedule.

Usually I employed questioning style of teaching; for example, in Mathematics lesson, I usually work out one or two questions in the black board and order them to do the rest by themselves. If the lesson is Environmental Science; the guide usually orders to employ group discussion method but I am not comfortable with this methods because my students are too young to carry out the discussion. I do not think that they can be able to share their ideas and make meaningful discussions. These will opens the opportunity that they become dependent on a single individual and they will be dominated by high achievers, so that, I give them explanations on the lesson and orders to work out some revision questions independently. In order to manage my classroom, I usually utilize corporal punishment, because I cannot control my emotion while they misbehave. Of course, sometimes I tried to give them an advice on how to behave in class.

Students academic achievement is decided by different techniques; weekly tests, quizzes, group assignments and currently one progressive assessment strategy is begin announced by the officers. This strategy request teachers to fill students progressive achievement in each tests but I am not clear on my students progress I am usually confused, my students achievement is continually fluctuating; a student who scores 10 out of 10 in test one will score 6 or 7 out of 10 in the next test.

Berihune also described his teacher's teaching strategies as follows:

My teacher usually orders us to do homework and class works during class time. He mainly gives us explanation on the daily lesson and sometimes engages us with question and answer. Then we respond to the question willingly, raising our hands. But I do not usually raise my hands and he also does not ask me to answer the

questions. In addition he disciplined us through strong corporal punishment, all of us fear him.

I observed that the teacher was usually disorganized, not well prepared and did not seem willing to accept that the students were equal to him in the learning process nor did he share learning responsibilities with the students. Rather, he appeared to have an autocratic style of teaching. He usually began class by ordering the students loudly to keep quiet and he asked them whether they had completed their homework. He then asked the students to recall where they had finished during the last class period. Speaking about his class schedule, the teacher said that he did not go by the posted schedule; rather, he taught subjects he preferred to teach at that time.

The students' levels of understanding, complexity, and relevance of instructional activities were not given consideration by the teacher. The teacher transmitted what was in the textbook, using weak or non-practical examples. They often did not provide relevance to promote the students' independent learning abilities. He rarely rephrased lessons when students failed to understand. He showed less concern in motivating students, holding their interest, giving appropriate feedback or granting reinforcements. He commonly used question and answer strategies; his questions were content oriented. The same students were always seen raising their hands. When they missed the correct answer, he usually expressed his dissatisfaction non-verbally and looked for others to respond without commenting either on the steps completed or the mistakes of the students.

After giving a short lecture on a given topic or working one exercise as an example, he ordered students to do the problem the same way or to recall what he had said. He usually responded to students' misbehavior through swift and strong punishment. As a result his classroom did not have frequent disturbances.

In response to a question about Berihun's required and given learning supports, his teacher reported that though he knew his learning behaviors he had not used any support measures so far, except having him participate in tutorials designed by the school :

Berihune requires continuous support and follow up in his academics such as; supports in doing his homework and encouragement to actively participate in class activities, if I were able to handle the burden, as there are so many students like him, I cannot help all of them within this limited school time.

As Berihune has not have any learning problems, his academic performance can be improved through continues and collaborative actions especially if his parents are willing to support him at home; because parents can make a better difference than teachers on their children's academic performance and overall development.

Berihune, expressed his teacher's response to his learning: "My teacher does not usually ask me to participate in class activities".

Case 3 –Mesaye

Mesaye was a male, 9 years old, short and medium weight, with a bald head. His appearance seemed careless. His face, clothes and shoes are untidy. Mesaye usually wore an untidy old shirt with old uniform trouser. He lived with his biological parents. There were a total of twelve family members in a small two room rented home, which they shared with other family members for work purposes. As he said, their home was used for both work and living. As a result, the children slept in a place found above the ground which in Amharic is called "k'ote". It was made of wood with two vertical corner points vertically and five to seven boards placed horizontally to serve as a bed. Only his parents slept in a bed in the home. The rest of the home floor was used for work.

Regarding their economic and educational background, his father was a weaver; self employed in the small scale home based weaving industry. His mother was a firewood collector and seller; she collected wood from the nearby forest and sold it in small markets around their residence. Mesaye also told about his parent's economic status as: "My parents do not have enough money to buy uniforms and other materials for my education. It is KURE

T [a nongovernmental organization, NGO], which buy my uniform and gives me exercise books, pen and pencil, since I admitted to school”.

He also added that his uniform shirt was stolen. It was stolen, when it was washed and put outside to dry. His parents are not able to substitute another one. As a result, he always came to school wearing another shirt.

His teacher, who had known his parents for a long time, reported that:

His living condition is very low, I know his parents. He is living with his biological mother and father. In addition, the family is much extended have many children, living in small suffocated rooms. His living condition can also be evidenced from his uniform dressing style; he usually wears untidy and very large adult's shirt which I doubt whether it will be his own or not. As a result, their economic status seems to be not more than a subsistence level. Educationally, Mesaye's mother is a literate while his father is illiterate.

Mesaye was very funny and interacted with his friends well. He made jokes and the students often laughed at what he did. Moreover, as his teacher said, he usually reacted to classroom activities very fast, even sometimes, without knowing the answers. He was decent and respectful of classroom rules.

Mesaye worked with his father and older brother in putting the wool on the loom in preparation to start the weaving and in selecting and refining the patterns for the clothes. He worked from early in the morning until the second school bell rang, during lunch breaks, and after school time, from about 4:00 pm until 11:30pm on weekdays. However, he would spend the whole night, if the work was not completed, and all day and night on Saturdays. This had been his schedule since he had been admitted to school in grade one. In addition, he was involved in other domestic work activities at home. Regarding his feeling about the work and his schooling, Mesaye stated that:

I like to work in weaving with my father, but I prefer to be a doctor, get education and help my parents by giving medical treatment when they sick and if they feel tired to work, helping them in any work that help them to survive.

Continuing his expression, he stated his father's words about his involvement in work: "My father always encourages me to work with him. He appreciates my performance saying "good", "do better than this"...and if I made mistakes he gives me correction and serious verbal warnings".

In their work place, there are two fixed weaving tools set in the dig. These two digs were a place where Mesaye's father and another person who rented the place were working. The room was very dark and suffocated. Light was from electricity both day and night.

Mesaye worked sitting near his father's place. He described the working place as: In our home, there is my parent's bed in the right side of the room, the left side consists of a ladder for us to get in bed and the middle place consists of my father's weaving tools and the wrapt tools which I used for work. I worked with the tool standing near my chair. This is a little bit far from the bed.

Mesaye was enrolled in grade 2 with his older sister. In this section there were 58 students (24 male and 34 female) who sat face to face in four rows. Three students were randomly assigned by the teacher to each desk. The age range of the students was from 6 to 15. Masaye expressed his feeling about schooling as follows:

I prefer to spend my time in school, because I like learning very much, as it helps me to get knowledge, to maximize achievement for future, for example to get 10 out of 10 in every tests. This way, I wish to be a doctor or a policeman. Preferably, I want to be a doctor. I also like to stay at school, because it is the only time I have to play and chat with my peers.

Mesaye sat between two of his classmates. He was one of the lower scorers in his classroom; his academic record revealed that he scored an average of 68.5 in 2009 academic year and had the rank of 40 out of 72 students. In the 2010 academic years, his average score was 65.6 the first semester and he stood 40th out of 59 students. He was absent for 8 days in 2009 school year and for the first semester of the 2010 academic year he had been already 5 days.

In line with these academic results, the teacher said that, "Mesaye has good academic potential, if he would able to use it and if he would not been disadvantaged by his parents'

low living status, and their low level education.” She added that he did relatively better on tests rather than his classroom performance: “He did well in exams but if you ask him, how he did in that way, he does not know”. She added her feeling as follows:

I am surprised of his total results of this semester in all the three subjects, I am teaching Amharic, Environmental Science and Mathematics, and asked myself that, Does he has this much results?, Because, his classroom performance and test achievements have great differences. This might be due to the value he gives for exams or he might copy answers from others.

Regarding the relationship between his classroom experience and the work, Mesaye explained it as follows:

I think the workloads forced me to feel less competent with my friends; I do not usually participate in class activities as my friends do, because I feel like I am lower than them. I feel tired, bored and get to sleep during class time. Sometimes I feel hatred of my schooling and learning; specially, when I experienced headache and stomach-ache during class time and I asked permission from my teacher and get to sleep at home.

He added that his father permitted him to do his homework after completing the work late at night; as a result, he usually tried to complete copying the questions during his free time at school and directly copied the answers from his sister.

His teacher substantiated this:

Because I know his background very well, I am not that much surprised of his classroom behaviors; reacting before others even for things which he does not know, forgetting things immediately and sleeping especially after tea breaks and in the afternoon. In addition, I read feeling of tiredness, being inattentive and overstress from his face. He is on and off during classroom instruction.

This was verified during observation. Mesaye appeared inattentive, bored and seemed tired. He frequently stretched his body, rubbed his eyes and chewed his fingers or clothes. In addition, he copied notes from the blackboard by lying on his desk and completed later than other students. If the task was class work, he asked his peers the answers. When explanations or questions were given, he frequently engaged in distracting behaviors: standing up, turning around in his seat, gesturing to his peers. He usually was not actively involved during group discussions. Rather, he would look at his peers work, turn away, or engage in other activities.

Since his exercise books were rarely reviewed by his teacher, he sometimes did not do the assignments. Sometimes, Mesaye appeared lonely, sang or talked to himself, or displayed what seem like stress. Sometimes, he rotated his pen on the desk and appeared to be thinking about other issues, remaining in this state for a relatively long period. He was not always aware of what was going on in the classroom. Although I sat behind him during one observation, he did not seem be aware of my presence as he talked with his peers.

Regarding the nature of his classroom instruction the teacher stated that:

I always prepared my lesson based on the text book and teachers guide. Its delivery is also accordingly. I tried to teach my students as it is ordered in the teachers guide. I usually employed grouping method of classroom instruction; I divided the class to small groups near to their seat, gives topics for discussion and I tried to follow their activities moving through each group. After doing within their small groups those who work on the same topics will be merged to cross check their answers and discuss on it. This will opens an opportunity for students with heterogeneous performance to share ideas. I find this more helpful to enhance my students' active participation. Finally, the answers from each group are communicated for the whole class by representatives of each group and I will give further clarifications, if needed. Moreover, I sometimes employ questioning and lecture methods depending on the topic of the lesson. In order to motivate my students, I usually tried to respond for their performance using verbal reinforcement and giving recognitions in front of their peers and ordering them to clap their hands for their peer. Furthermore, students are engaged on competitive questioning activities once per two weeks. In this competition, students with similar academic performance are grouped together to compete and their result as well as their conduct will be summed and owners will get pen or pencil depending on their rank. To facilitate the instructional process, I also tried to share my life experience to my students and give an advice for them based on it. Because I also grow up in very challenging conditions, I want my students to cope up their life challenges efficiently. Moreover, I strongly beliefs on students freedom and I do not want to take it away but I sometimes use corporal punishment for repetitive misbehaviors.

Mesaye explained his teacher's way of teaching:

I liked our teacher very much, because she teaches us all the three subjects very well. She usually gives us homework and class work, order us to discuss in group, answer questions by raising our hands and working out on the black board. If I raised my hand more than three times, she gives me the chance and if I get the right answer she orders the students to clap for me, but if I do not get the right answer she orders me to sit back and hear for the right answer from others. Of all this activities, I am happy when she orders us to do homework [my sister helps me in doing so], reading our exercise and text books and copy notes from the black board. If we disturb in class our monitor refers us to the teacher and most of the time she does not take any action but she sometimes gives an advice and hits us by Archume ("Stick"). I like my

teacher's patience in teaching, she permits us to be as we want and I am really happy with her behavior.

The observation confirmed the above points to some extent. The teacher regularly began the daily lesson by brainstorming the previous lesson using a question and answer method. Her questions were both content and process oriented. She sometimes asked students to give her justifications for their answers, but did not encourage in-depth thinking in their response. She immediately skipped the student if they did not respond. She tried to connect previous lessons with the daily lessons and communicated the ways that they might be used for future life.

Mesaye's teacher appeared not well-prepared, the instruction was loosely focused and organized, students were disruptive, students did not use self-discipline, and they usually engaged in off-task behaviors. In responding to this, she mainly begged students not to disturb her, saying "please keep quiet, please, please..." (In Amharic, እባካችሁ፡ ዝግም በሉ፡ እባካችሁ፡ እባካችሁ...) She called the name of some disruptive students to change their minds or she asked the monitor to stand up during instruction and control the students' misbehavior. The students seemed to respond to the monitor more than the teacher. She seemed to have difficulty in explaining tasks patiently when students' did not understand. As tasks were directly presented from their textbooks without considering its level of complexity or the students' levels of understanding, they sometimes got confused with what she said. Her response in such situations was not that very satisfactory. She either skipped over the topic or proceeded to the next part. Students were rewarded by applause if they successfully responded to questions and their trial to answer questions takes only little recognition. She was not observed in commenting on their progress. The teacher sometimes gave feedback to students' homework and class work by correcting their exercise books or giving corrections on the blackboard. She seemed to ignore different incorrect responses when they try to answer questions. She usually ordered them to listen for the answers of others.

During group discussions, most students appeared passive and disruptive, her orders lacked clarity and precision. Only a few students in each group were involved in working on the assignment while others either talked or observed what the involved students wrote or engaged in other activities. Mesaye was also passive, he did not get involved in working out answers; only one day was he observed reading questions from the blackboard to his group mates.

About instructional supports that Mesaye required the teacher stated that:

I do not know what to do; I am really worried about him. I was tried so many remedies such as standing near to him to catch up his attention during instruction but, it may be due to his sitting position. He was not being able to benefit from it; he is not able to be active participant. Maybe if I will ask some advice from others to get better hint, especially from those who take training on helping such children as their major area of specialization because I have not taken the course in my college study in depth. I will be able to help him more. In addition, I advised my students, if they do not frighten, to ask me any question which is not clear for them in my spare time and some tranquil students ask me but because the time is fixed, there is nothing other than this that I can do for such students only. I encouraged them to ask questions and create opportunity to equally participate during the classroom instruction. But the school has a fixed tutorial programs designed for low achieving students by each grade level departments and he is also involved in it. I think this helps him a lot.

Both observation and Mesaye's response suggested the same things, which the teacher described.

Case 4- Zemenu

Zemenu was an eight year old, male, thin, short, and with well-managed hair. He usually dressed in clean school uniforms. Zemenu is the only son with one sister. He lived with his biological parents in a rented one room house with a total of four family members. They rented part of a big home, which was very small in size. As the previous students, they used the rooms for both living and working. There was one bed and home utensils located to the right side of the door. The left side was used for work.

His mother was an illiterate housewife, responsible for all the household responsibilities. His father was a weaver involved in production and sales of traditional

woven products. During the day, he worked in the small cooperative weaving industry found in the nearby area. At night he worked on the same tasks at home with his son, Zemenu. The family's income depended on the father. Their living was at a subsistence level. As Zemenu's teacher stated, their economic status was very low. Educationally, his father was able to read and write only his name.

Behaviorally, Zemenu looked shy; he avoided eye contact with his teacher and the researcher. He respected others and spoke with his classmates easily. He seemed docile. In describing Zemenu's behavior the teacher stated that: "Zemenu is very decent, I do not usually hear his voice in class, and he is very disciplined and shy".

Zemenu and his older sister were admitted to school and assigned to grade one in the academic year 2008-2009, without prior school experiences. During this study, he was a student in grade 2. This classroom consisted of 56 students, 22 male and 34 female, with an average age range of 7-14 years. Students in this classroom were arranged in a sitting arrangement that encouraged interaction among the students. Each row had 5-7 students sitting together in one group. The group composition was decided by the teacher based on heterogenous academic ability (i.e., high, medium and low achievers in each group). Zemenu sat between two of his classmates.

Though he did not remember the exact time at which he began to work in the weaving industry, Zemenu had been working with his father at home before he was admitted to school. The work continued after he was admitted to school with the following schedule: he began work at 3:30 pm after school to 11:00 pm on weekdays and during the entire Saturday. He was involved in various stages of the work. Zemenu himself said:

In my home, I am always involved in weaving, washing dishes, studying and then sleeping. I work with my father in weaving, after school, except Sundays and holidays. As he works in the nearby weaver's cooperative during the day time, he sometimes forwards an order through my mother to complete a task. I will do it as he ordered me. Then, he in turn buys me clothes and shoes by the money I made.

Zemenu worked beside his father's working tools which were set in the dig of their home. For working, he did not have any particular tools. There were many domestic tools (e.g., Pots, pans, bed...) scattered around him. Their home is very disorderly.

In describing his feeling towards the work and his schooling, Zemenu stated that:

I am interested in the work, since it is helpful and important for me to acquire skills for the future and survive from failure that may come as a result of missing educational opportunities. I preferred schooling than any other things, because education is vital for leading an independent and good life, and it also enables me to support my parents.

He further described his feeling about school: "I preferred schooling because I feel happy of my school time and it helps to become first in the class and get reward in my academics". He added that his father did not permit him to play with his peers in the neighborhoods. Opportunity to play with his peers happened only in school. Due to this, he never missed classes, even if he was very tired.

Regarding the impact of the work on his learning and classroom experiences, Zemenu expressed his feeling as follows: "I am always tired from the work, it is very hard and difficult for me to work after school but I have to do it in order to improve my future life". He indicated that the workload hindered him from equally and actively participating in the classroom activities: "The work lets me not to equally participate with the other students"; I wish to be like the other students."

His teacher agreed:

Zemenu has a learning problem which results from lack of parent's sufficient follow up and support. In the classroom, he is usually inattentive. As a result he usually does not properly understand questions and answer properly. He sits idle while the other students raise their hands to answer questions. In addition, his home problems and other factor resulted in poor academic performance. He does not regularly do his homework handle his books properly. His exercise books are untidy and notes are written here and there without following the right line and he usually take corrections for his mistake by striking through the written once .So that I rarely visited and comment it.

During observation Zemenu spent much of the instructional time coping notes and questions from the blackboard or his textbook as assigned by the teacher. During question and answer periods he raised his hand as if he knew and wanted to answer the question but he did not answer confidently and correctly. He usually did not sit on his chair properly, but rather, stood up, chewed his fingers and stretched his body frequently. He engaged in various activities simultaneously. For example, he copied notes from the blackboard and stared at his peers. These behaviors might have been his own strategies to make himself alert. They seemed to be symptoms of lack of sleep. Often, when class work was given, Zemenu did not finish copying notes on time and asked peers for answers. In general, he appeared to lack confidence in his academic ability and his implied that he felt stressed.

His academic achievement in grade one was an average grade of 51.4, a rank of 30th out of 76 students. In grade 2 his average score was 57 with a rank of 43rd out of 56 students. His teacher concurred that he was one of the lower performers in her classroom. He was absent for eight days in 2008-2009 academic year. During the first semester of the 2009-2010 academic years he had missed seven days.

Zemenu expressed his feeling about his academic results as follows:

I am performing well in my academics; I want to be a doctor in the future. I always tried to work hard and I stood 30th, out of 76 students, last year. In this semester I planned to take the rank of 20th out of 56 students.

The instructional environment in Zemenu's class was active, participatory and dominantly employed the question and answer strategy. Speaking about the nature of the instructional activities in his class and his personal preferences he stated that:

Our teacher usually ordered us to answer question, make discussions in group and to complete class and home works. Of all this, I preferred to do home works, because I did it with my sister. When correction is given we are expected to answer by raising our hands.

My teacher asks me to answer questions if I raised my hands. If I responded correctly she orders the whole class to clap for me and if I do not get the right answer she orders me to sit back and attentively follow the right answer from others. I like my teacher very much, because she teaches us in a very simple and understandable way

and patiently, repeating what we do not understand. So far, I was not physically punished, for any discipline problems I committed. She often takes verbal remedies and in worst cases she gives an advice, sometimes the advices continue the whole period.

The teacher also explained her strong belief in an active and student-centered method of teaching due to its importance for the students to grasp the core idea of a lesson:

As my students are young, they are more benefited from question and answer styles of teaching than any other method. I prefer to give them only very short and focused notes, taking more time for participatory explanation and exercising through repetitive clarification and drills on important issues.

Furthermore, as I have my own biological children, I tried to give my students an advices as a mother regarding the importance of education for their future and their classroom behaviors ; as a result, most of them engages in classroom instructional activities very seriously; at least, they always looks at me while I explain tasks. I think this motivates them to listen attentively as well as to inhibit themselves from inappropriate behaviors.

I am trying to measure my students' performance based on their level of participation during question and answer. I cannot be able to judge their performance based on their test results, because it usually tells you the difference in the complexity of tests than their improvement in performance. A student who scores 10 out of 10 will get 7 or even sometimes 6 out of 10 in the next test. So I said that my students show progress if they demonstrate some new behavior during classroom instruction and in holding their exercise books.

During the observation, the teacher frequently employed student-centered teaching strategies. She began by communicating the objectives of the daily lesson and repeatedly incorporated them in the instruction. Her instructional fluency, particularly in environmental science lessons, appeared as if she were telling a story. She internalized the lesson content very well. She always checked her students' exercise books and gave corrections. The students' verbal contributions to the questions were recognized by applause and verbal reinforcements, such as saying Gobeze (excellent boy) and Tirunewu (it is good). But I did not observe students asking questions. Furthermore, the teacher encouraged their progress in class participation and measured their improvement relative to their own standards, as she did for Zemenu. He responded correctly for questions in his mathematics lesson. When she again asked him another question during the same period and he again responded closely to the correct answer. The teacher appeared surprised and said that: "Zemenu has shown good

improvement today. He was able to answer this question. Good Zemenu keep it up!” The students’ overall achievement was assessed by their test results. She did not use any other grading systems.

In instruction, she used pictorial teaching aids to provide further clarification and applicability of the content to go beyond the present meaning. She paraphrased concepts and questions for her students, frequently breaking the content into its parts and recognizing the level of difficulty in the content. She tried to help students recall the meaning of each lesson using various strategies such as asking what or who for content-oriented questions, giving constructive feedback for students’ responses, and clearly stating the relevance of each subtopic. Moreover, she instilled in the students, behaviors which were conducive to learning, modeled commitment and respect for her students using frequent discussion, advice and encouragement for self-discipline.

In general, she seemed enthusiastic, committed and responsible for her students’ learning. As she was older and had had long experience in teaching, her way of interaction with the students seemed similar to that of a parent. She always called her students by their full names and gave them advice to remind them that they should always do well in front of others so she might be proud of them. In relation to her instructional strategies she appeared more interested in improving her students’ abilities to recall and capture what they had been taught precisely.

Regarding academic supports, which Zemenu required, the teacher stated her opinion that:

Being a human being, there is no one who cannot be changed or who is innately uneducable, if you tell them repeatedly they can be improved. But it is the inconveniency of their parent’s condition which has adverse effect on their learning. So that if his parents help him at home by providing sufficient food, prohibits his involvement at work and controlling his schooling and studying schedules, he will show good improvement. But I do not think that the school and I can make any different thing for him.

In her further explanation about supports given to him, she stated that:

Due to my age I do not participate in provision of tutorials for students. I feel tired to spend even few minutes after the last school bell. But I tried to compensate it during my regular class time. I do not miss classes for the whole semester. I begin my class on time, stay until the end of the class and use my maximum effort in helping them to benefit from the lesson. This is what I can do. But again the most part is expected from his parents not from us. As all of us grown up our biological children, they can only be effective if we provide special supports at home. I do not believe in tutorials because if they are properly handled at home, the class time is enough but due to the educational and economic conditions of their parents they cannot be effective.

4.3 Cross- Case Analyses

In order to increase generalizability of the study's findings to similar situations cross-case analysis was done. The major similarities and differences among the cases were presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Cross Case Analyses

Background of the Cases	Learning behavior	Teachers instructional strategies	Average grad ranges	Class rank			Academic competene
				2008	2009	2010	
<p>Shemalies</p> <p>14 year old male.</p> <p>Work: 55hr, 30 min per week.</p> <p>Every day except Sundays and holidays</p>	<p>lack of sleep</p> <p>lack time to study</p> <p>passivity</p> <p>frequent absenteeism from school and tutorials</p> <p>lack of completion of school assignments</p>	<p>Was well-prepared.</p> <p>Delivered based on students competency</p> <p>Checked their exercise books.</p> <p>Accepted their responses.</p> <p>Related lessons with previous experience.</p> <p>Asked process oriented questions.</p> <p>Presented varied tasks.</p> <p>Assessed achievement through tests,</p> <p>Encouraged classroom participation, neatness in exercise books and classroom discipline.</p> <p>Praised for successful completion of a task.</p>	From 61-65	35 th out of 63	30 th out of 81	38 th out of 81	Average
<p>Berihune</p> <p>13 year old male.</p> <p>Work: 52 hr, 20 min per week.</p> <p>All days except Sundays and holidays</p>	<p>lack of sleep</p> <p>inattentive</p> <p>absenteeism from classes</p> <p>passivity</p> <p>Infrequent class participation.</p>	<p>Not well prepared</p> <p>Did not appear positive with students</p> <p>Did not respond to student needs, progress, or development of competencies</p> <p>Students usually passive</p> <p>Examples did not promote independent and future learning</p> <p>Asked content-oriented questions</p> <p>Assessed students' performance based on their classroom behavior</p> <p>Used strong and swift punishment</p>	From 84.8-75	—	10 th out of 87	15 th out of 59	Low
<p>Mesaye</p> <p>9 year old male.</p> <p>Work: 57 hr, 20 min per week.</p> <p>All days except Sundays and holidays</p>	<p>lack of sleep</p> <p>inattentive</p> <p>feeling less competent</p> <p>bored</p> <p>forgetfulness</p> <p>feelings of stress</p>	<p>Not well prepared.</p> <p>Failed to engage students or accept their responses</p> <p>Did not relate daily topics with previous and future lessons.</p> <p>Asked vague process and content-oriented questions.</p> <p>Did not reward for hesitant or incomplete responses</p> <p>Did not comment on progress.</p> <p>Gave occasional feedback on homework and class work.</p> <p>Did not control the class well</p>	From 68.5-65.6	—	40 th out of 72	40 th out of 59	Low
<p>Zemenu</p> <p>8 year old male</p> <p>Work: 50 hr, 30 min per week</p> <p>All days except Sunday sand holidays</p>	<p>inattentive</p> <p>lack of sleep</p> <p>feeling of inequality or incompetence</p> <p>did not complete homework</p>	<p>Well prepared</p> <p>Checked students' exercise books.</p> <p>recognized their performance and progress by applause and verbal reinforcement</p> <p>Recognized the level of difficulty for lesson content</p> <p>Related lessons with previous and future experiences</p> <p>Asked content-oriented questions.</p> <p>Modeled commitment and respect</p> <p>Encouraged self-discipline.</p>	From 51.4-57	—	30 th out of 76	43 rd out of 56	Very low

As indicated in Table 3 above children engaged in child labor in this study engaged in an intensive work environment and faced numerous learning behaviors. Moreover, the classroom instruction which they were provided did not show any significant support to help them cope with their challenges.

The children did not know the exact time that they were expected to work and there was no formal data which indicated their total work time per day or per week. Therefore, I calculated the minimal time spent based on the data from students and their teachers. Zemenu and Mesaye, for example, did not exactly report the time numerically. Rather, they explained it in terms of the activities in which they engaged on after school time as follows:

Zemenu:

When I return back from school, first I put my school bag. Then if there are untidy dishes I will wash together with my sister. After that I work engage on weaving task until I am told by my father to sleep. This is usually at 11:00pm.

Mesaye :

When I back home from school, I used to wash my face and hands. Then I wash dishes and I engaged on some domestic tasks if my mother orders me otherwise I begin my weaving until my mother prepares dinner, which is usually at 11:30 pm. When we wake up in the morning, I first wash my face and do some weaving tasks until the second school bell rings; then I eat my breakfast and run to school. After eating my lunch, I also work and complete some unfinished tasks during lunch breaks.

The time they spent at work was estimated to range from 50 hours to 58 hours per week. Additionally, all, except Zemenu, reported that they sometimes worked the entire night if they did not finish their daily work on Saturday. The work load was very intensive and dangerous for their age levels, especially when combined with schooling. It affected their study and leisure times. Relatively, Zemenu engaged in work for the least amount of time, estimated to be 50 hours and 30 minutes. Since he was the oldest of the four children the intensity would perhaps be less for his age. However, it was above the ILO minimum standard. Whereas, Mesaye worked for an estimated 57 hours and 30 minutes and this was a

very intensive and challenging job. His maximum working hours were related to the nearness of his residence to the school that allowed him to spend even his lunch breaks at work.

All four children engaged in child labor in this study demonstrated various learning behaviors. Those commonly observed and reported were feelings of inequality, incompetence, sleepiness, stress and inattentiveness. Furthermore, Zemenu and Mesaye showed signs of a lack of concentration in lessons and usually engaged in various awkward and off-task behaviors. These behaviors occurred during question and answer periods in the classroom. For example, Shemalise disclosed his behavior in this regard as: “When I spend the whole night at work I get to sleep at school ...”

The nature of classroom instruction in all four cases had different characteristics. The type of interaction the teachers had with their students fulfilled only some of the parameters of MLE. Except for Berihune’s teacher, all employed the active learning strategies to some extent but the practices was inadequate to mediate lessons with intention and create opportunities for students’ responses in different ways. Despite, Berihune’s teacher’s teaching experience he seldom created opportunities for active engagement in lesson activities. It was predominantly teacher-centered.

The teachers of Mesaye and Zemenu motivated their students through applause and verbal reinforcement; whereas, Shemalise’s teacher used modeling of high performers as a means of motivation. Berihune’s teacher was not observed in making any attempt to motivate his students except by verbal, strong, and at times, punitive warnings to listen attentively to his instruction.

The teachers’ classroom management strategies in the case of Zemenu and Shemalise were conducive to enhance students learning. They modeled commitment and respect to their students and they provided an advice and created interactive relationships. Students’ performances in these classrooms were assessed by successful completion of tasks. However,

the students' attempts were not given significant recognition. Such practices had a profound effect on the development of students' efficient thinking and taking responsibility for their own learning. In contrast, the learning environment in Mesay's classroom was disruptive and not conducive to the students' active involvement in their learning. Though Berihune's classroom did not experience such disturbances, it was not conducive to development of independent and autonomous learning capacities due to the teacher's use of swift and strong punishment.

The type of interaction between students and their teachers was a determinant of the efficiency of their learning as well as quality of MLE. As a result, the type of interaction in the four cases was found to be different: Zemenu's teacher had a moderate and parental kind of relationships; Shemalise's teacher's interaction was reserved when the students were expected both to respect her and to be free in expressing their interests; Mesay's teacher seemed lenient in her interaction with the students, often let them behave as they wished but attempted to control behavior through the monitor (e.g. Through observation and the interview, she admitted giving extra freedom to her students. As a result most engaged in off-task behaviors during instruction time.); and Berihune's classroom was tightly controlled by the teacher (i.e., Students were simply recipients of his orders.) Such experience did not provide opportunities to create an interactive learning environment.

Academically, all except Shemalise had low competence relative to the expected standards of their respective grade levels. Comparing the four cases Zemenu was performed the poorest both in his competence and average grades. In contrast, Berihune had higher average grades than the others but his competence was reported as lower. Regarding this contradiction Berihune's teacher reported that the numbers did not define the student's academic competence and their capacity was usually below the scores. On the other hand, Shemalise's academic competence was average and scored an average grades.

4.4 Summary of major findings

The major intent of this study was to investigate the relationship between children engaged in child labor work outside the classroom, its possible affect on the child's classroom learning behaviors, and the classroom instructional practices with in Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School. The study employed a qualitative case study method that included the four children engaged in child labor, older sisters of two children engaged in child labor, and their homeroom teachers. Data were collected using systematic observation of the classroom instruction based on the five major parameters of MLE; a semi-structured interview with the children, their sisters, and homeroom teachers, as well as review of the academic document records of each children. Based on the data the following summary indicates the major findings:

- All children engaged in child labor exhibited learning behaviors such as inattentiveness, lack time to study and complete homework assignments, sitting idly in class, lack of motivation to learn, and feeling incompetent or unequal with other students in academic efforts.
- All children engaged in child labor, except one, exhibited low academic competence as judged in qualitative terms. Though their average grades were greater than or equal to the minimal pass marks on assessments, their classroom performances were poor.
- The most common instructional strategies applied in each of the classrooms were questioning and answering, informal lecture, and group discussion. However, these practices were in contrast with the actual meaning of the strategies.
- The focus of most instruction was on promotion of the student's ability to recall facts, regardless of the strategies employed.
- The instructional practices in all cases provided fewer opportunities for the enhancement of the student's active involvement in lessons.

- Teachers were less concerned and aware of the learning needs of children engaged in child labor.
- Teacher-student interactions during the instructional process had varied styles such as parental, reserved, lenient and high-handed.
- Applause, modeling of high achievers and verbal reinforcement were reported as the most common responses of teachers for students' successful completion of tasks.
- Teachers tended to provide much less feedback on progress and overall academic performance for the children engaged in child labor.
- Some teachers employed classroom management strategies which promoted development of self-discipline.
- Generally, the instructional practices in the classrooms, except for the case of Berihune, suggested the teachers attempted to create an interactive, MLE, learning environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The objective of this study was to investigate the classroom instructional practices in Addis Zemen First Cycle Primary School with special reference to the learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The findings were presented by individual case presentation. Cross-case analysis of the main findings was done to develop a general description of the results. Hereafter, the major findings will be discussed in relation to relevant literature and the researcher's interpretations under three major themes: learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor, classroom instruction and its mediation, and academic performance of children engaged in child labor.

5.1.1. Learning behaviors of Children engaged in child Labor

The findings indicated that children engaged in child labor commonly depicted learning behaviors such as inattentiveness, lack of concentration, absenteeism and feeling fatigued during class instruction. They engaged in various off-task activities or sat idle. These seriously threatened their academic functioning because such behaviors reduced the amount of time that the children spent in actively attending classroom instruction. These behaviors might have been the result of factors associated with the outside work, as well as the nature of class instruction.

Children engaged in child labor spent long hours at work in addition to their schooling. Most of them engaged in work in almost all of their out-of-school time, including nights and Saturdays. They neither had time to play with their peers nor do their homework.

These obligations cumulatively appeared to contribute to feelings of fatigue, inequality with other students, frequent absenteeism, and lack of motivation to learn.

As a result they were neither actively engaged in class activities nor did they do their homework consistently or well. Both the children and their teacher reported that the work load had a significant and negative relationship with their learning. For example, the cases described their feelings about work and schooling:

Zemenu: "I am always tired of my work, it is very hard and difficult for me to work after school ... The work lives me not to equally participate with the other students ..."

Mesaye :

I think the work forces me to feel less competent with my friends; I do not usually participate in class activities as my friends do because I feel like I am lower than them. I feel tired, bored and get to sleep during class time. Sometimes I feel hatred of my schooling and learning; specially, when I experienced headache and stomach-ache during class time and I asked permission from my teacher and get to sleep at home.

Berihune's teacher stated that: "The workloads he has imposed by his family members could be responsible for his least academic performance. The work load largely disadvantaged and overstressed him".

Shemalse stated: "... I hate the work, as it lets me not to study hard in my education while others study and while my friends play but not me because I am always working".

In a descriptive study on the impact of child labor on education, children engaged in child labor in blacksmithing activities in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Alegant reported that: "The work inhibits children's school attendance, reduces their time to study and makes them inattentive or sit idle during instruction". (2007, p. 60).

However, it might be misleading to conclude that work is the only factor preventing children from actively attending and performing well in their academics. Yet the evidence depicts the fact that child labor, by and large, competes with, rather than facilitates, learning. Moreover, this situation should alert educators to the fact that such conditions produce

children who may be at risk and disadvantaged unless collaborative supports to train teachers in implementation of mediation principles are provided. Raising the awareness of teachers and parents to these relationships and possible solutions is important for the child's education. Training teachers with the principles of MLE may improve classroom instruction and help parents to be aware of the disadvantages of undesirable work for their children.

Instruction, which is not responsive to a student's learning needs and difficulties, is responsible for poor learning behaviors. Teachers who are not aware of the specific learning needs of their students and fail to respond accordingly create situations, in which some of their students are disadvantaged.

The instructional practices provided for children engaged in child labor were unresponsive to the children's' engaged in child labor learning behaviors, difficulties and abilities. This infers that the students' different learning behaviors impacted their abilities to complete assignments and write notes more than active and direct involvement in other learning activities such as asking and answering questions, attentive listening and group work. As Mesaye reported: "... Of all this activities I am happy when my teacher orders us to do homework (my sister helps me in doing so), reading our exercise and text books and copy notes from the black board". Zemenu also stated his preference as "Of all this, I preferred to do homework, because I did it with my sister".

For other students provided with opportunities to actively engage in learning tasks, share responsibilities for their own learning, understand the relevance and the intention of lessons, with a conducive and responsive learning environment that consider their needs and potential seldom face the kind of learning behaviors children in this study faced. Rather, they are more likely to develop knowledge and skills which are important for their future and independent learning experiences.

This indicates that teachers should take responsibility to create conducive and interactive learning environments which promote learning of all students in their classrooms. Moreover, since we are in the era of inclusive education, classrooms are expected to be responsive to the diversity of students' learning needs. Inclusive classrooms embody the belief that diversity is a positive force in the lives of children and teachers and should be embraced, rather than ignored or minimized (UNESCO, 2001).

5.1.2. Classroom Instruction and Mediation

An instructional process, which is responsive to a student's learning style, abilities and difficulties in learning, is the foundation for the enhancement of their learning. It is emphasized often that basic education should correspond to the needs, interests and problems faced by the learner (USAID, 2001). Such classrooms help students to be successful regardless of their background and difficulties.

Children engaged in child labor face difficulties in learning which may be related to the work load and the nature of classroom instruction. They need the classroom to be responsive to their learning needs in order to benefit from the instructional processes.

As Feuerstein (2009) stated, in situations where developmental and environmental difficulties (such as the work load) occur, MLE becomes the necessary relationship to overcome deficiencies and foster better functioning. Prior limitations can be overcome and higher levels of cognitive and social development will be achieved through adequate MLE (ICELP, n.d.; Feuerstein, 2009)

However, findings in this study suggested that, although some teachers demonstrated promising attempts to help their students benefit from the classroom instruction, they seemed to be inadequate to promote learning. As a result, all four cases benefited less from these instructional practices. For a better understanding of the affect of the instructional practices the following discusses the teaching methods in relation to the five parameters of MLE:

Intentionality and Reciprocity

The findings indicated that the common instructional strategies used in these classrooms were informal lecture, group discussion and question and answer. Since such strategies are within the constructivist teaching learning approach, which emphasizes learning by doing, students are considered the essential participants by active involvement in tasks. However, the actual practice in the four cases was not found to be similar.

Only a few students in Berihune's class were actively engaged in answering questions. A maximum of two or three students in each group answered questions. In the case of Mesaye's teacher, she primarily used group discussion. As Berihune and Mesaye described their experiences: Berihune said: "... I do not usually raise my hands and he also does not ask me to answer questions". Mesaye stated that: "... if I raise my hand more than three times she gives me the chance...." This implies that children engaged in child labor are not actively engaged in the instructional process. These are important indicators for the teachers about their poor practice of active learning methods. The inability of the teachers to effectively use active learning methods and their lack of awareness about the needs, abilities and background of their students are two hypotheses as to why the teachers' active learning classrooms were not effective. Supporting this assumption, Mentis et al. (2008) specify that lack of teachers' awareness about their students' needs and abilities is one of the obstacles to the mediation of intentionality and reciprocity. Since such teachers do not recognize whether their students are actively on task, they do not present lessons clearly or re-explain tasks.

These might be related to the teachers, particularly in Berihune's and Mesaye's cases lack of intentionality or preparation and inferior presentation of the lesson (i.e., focused, well-organized and explicit instructions). Teachers, who mediate intentionality and reciprocity, present lessons that arouse students' interests and motivation through provision of

appropriate feedback to the students. The teacher contributes additional explanations where students face difficulty in understanding (Mann & Hind, 2006).

Besides the instructional organization in the case of Zemenu's and Shemalise's, the teachers demonstrated that the teachers were well prepared and enthusiastic to teach; however, the students were not responsive to their lessons. Seeing that obstacles to mediation of intentionality also sometimes relate to lack of reciprocity with students their intention alone could not mediate intentionality and reciprocity adequately. Mentis et al. (2008) stated that:

Teachers may sometimes actively invite interaction in a well prepared relevant lesson but the students do not receive the initiation of the teacher because they are tired, lack interest or motivation, do not perceive the relevance of the given topic or any other reasons which prohibit reciprocity and become an obstacle to mediation of intentionality and reciprocity (p.19).

Since children engaged in child labor commonly demonstrate inattentiveness, fatigue and lack of motivation during instruction, their teachers are required to work towards identification and reaction to their learning behaviors in attempting to mediate intentionality. To sum up, mediation of intentionality and reciprocity demand the teachers' efforts to precisely identify the problems as well as solutions.

Mediation of Transcendence

The instructional practices in all cases, except Berihune's, demonstrated some attempt to expand the student's understanding of the lesson's concept with tangible examples related to the student's daily life experiences. For instance, during the researcher's observation of Zemenu's and Mesaye's teachers, tasks were explained through student demonstration. The teacher of Zemenu in her mathematics period used demonstration to clarify the concept of division and subtraction. In doing so, she had five students stand in front of the class and gave them 10 pencils to share equally. They were asked to tell how much was shared by each of them. It was used to indicate how $10/5=2$. Such practices are meaningful in expanding

students' understanding concepts and ideas beyond the mere recall. This method has the potential to mediate transcendence.

Moreover, these classrooms attempted to mediate transcendence through brainstorming and revision of previous lessons at the beginning of each new lesson. However, not all subjects benefited from these practices. Some teachers failed to recognize a student's active engagement in classroom activities. The students were characterized by fatigue, inattention, and seldom demonstrated reciprocity.

The teacher's lack of awareness of the needs of the students, their instructional focus and their knowledge and skills were in large part responsible for the students' learning behaviors. As revealed during observation, the teacher's instructional practices were focused on promotion of student's ability to recall. The student was expected to recall what the teacher had told him or her in previous lessons during the time of brainstorming and revision. It focused on enhancement of students' ability to repeatedly practice the same fact. As a result, its potential for transcendence seems to be limited. In line with these, Mentis et al. (2008) indicated that in the classroom, the potential for transcendence is limited when the focus is on facts and rote regurgitation of facts resulting in knowledge that is fragmented and compartmentalized.

On the other hand, Berihune's teacher demonstrated no attempt to teach students through examples and his instruction did not incorporate revision and brainstorming strategies. His mode of instruction was not focused or well organized. The coherence of ideas from topic to topic and lesson to lesson was poor. Teachers who fail to impart lessons in a meaningful and well organized way usually exhibit failure in practicing mediation of transcendence.

Mediation of Meaning

As revealed in this study Mesaye's, Zemenu's and Shemalse's teachers employed questioning and answering strategies; however, the type of question was not sufficient to affect the student's deeper understanding and ability to construct meaning. They were either content-oriented, as in the case of Berihune, or process-oriented due to the way they were asked. They were not practical applications of the actual meaning of process-oriented questioning strategies. In the case of Zemenu's teacher, she asked "how" and "why" questions but expected students to recall the answers she had told them word for word which barely encouraged the students to use their own ability to construct meaning.

Similarly, Mesay's teacher sometimes tried to ask "how" and "why" questions but she usually failed to help the students develop understanding of the core meanings. If the students failed to answer the how and why of a subject, she ignored the idea, instead of giving an explanation. As a result, although the teachers attempted to employ the questioning and answering strategy in terms of mediation of meaning, their efforts were insufficient.

Zemenu's teacher tried to use some pictorial teaching aids, particularly in her Environmental Science lesson. The pictorial aids were used to promote understanding of domestic and wild animals as well as different part of plants. Instructional strategies which employ various media of instruction make a tremendous contribution to a student's understanding of meaning. Since students in primary school understand and easily remember concepts presented through visual aids, such practice would be supportive for children engaged in child labor, too.

An instructional process, which focused on mediation of meaning, would be helpful for children engaged in child labor who failed to have meaningful learning experiences. Collins (2001) substantiated this finding in his study of mediation of meaning: "Since students from disadvantaged background or have learning difficulty do not automatically see

learning experience as meaningful, it is the mediator's role to guide the student in a search for meaning" (p.54).

This may explain Zemenu's reported feeling on the importance of his learning and its relevance for his future: "... I preferred schooling because education is important for leading an independent quality life and it also enables me to help my parents".

Furthermore, Zemenu's teacher exhibited a degree of intimacy with her students, which seemed parental. This expression of affection towards the students enhanced the emotional bond between them. As a result, the students showed a greater motivation to learn. The degree of intimacy between Shemalise and his teacher had similar results.

In contrast, instructional approach of Berihune's teacher demonstrated fewer attempts in mediation of meaning. The teacher's interaction with his students did not promote motivation. He did not express a feeling of affection towards his students. His approach was inclined towards an autocratic style. The lack of an emotional bond between him and his students did not encourage an understanding of the relevance of their learning.

Each of these methods may have affected the students' motivation and feelings of competency. As a result, they were not being able to consider their teachers as significant others. Rather they considered the teacher as strangers and they may have preferred to avoid personal contact with the teacher. Over time this forced students to miss the relevance of their learning and prefer to stay away. In this regard Berihune's teacher expressed his interaction with Berihune when they met outside the classroom: "While we meet outside the classroom; leave alone, asking academic issues, he does not look at my eyes, he does not say a word except giving a greeting he really fears me very much".

Berihune also confirmed that all of his classmates, including him, strongly feared his teacher due to his use of strong corporal punishment. He added that his teacher did not

encourage him in his learning: "... I do not usually raise my hands to answer question and he also does not ask me to answer".

Furthermore, teacher failures to help students to construct meaning inhibited the development of the students' cognition within their ZPD. Because it reduces the opportunity for the teacher to constantly understand his or her students' academic backgrounds and plan lessons, the activities often do not meet the student's level of development. As indicated in Seng Seok (1991), cognitive development within children uses ZPD to carry out collaboration with the teacher to create dynamic interactions.

Mediation of feeling of competence

The findings in this study suggested that the instructional practices in all cases often lacked opportunities for students to actively respond to the teacher's presentations. The lessons did not enhance mediation of reciprocity which is the core element in a teacher's mediation of feeling of competence. As stated in Mentis et al. (2008), in mediation of feeling of competence, the teacher selects and presents lessons, phrases questions and breaks down complex tasks into simpler parts based on the student's level of understanding, which is usually identified through reciprocity.

In this study, teachers usually focused on active students, they rewarded and praised successful completion of tasks and activities by those students. Although there was praise through applause and verbal reinforcement, the teachers were not able to communicate the reasons for their reinforcement beyond getting the right answers. They did not acknowledge students' attempts to solve a problem or give a response. One exception was Mesay's teacher who sometimes asked all students to applaud for both attempts and successful completions of tasks. However, mediation of feeling of competence does not refer to an expression of satisfaction alone. Klein (2001) indicated: "...mediation of feeling of competence occurs

when an adult expresses satisfaction with a child's behavior and explains why she or he is satisfied" (p.35)

Children engaged in child labor in this study commonly demonstrated feelings of incompetence and inequality with the other students which probably originated from a lack of awareness of their own abilities and achievements. Klein (2001) and Feuerstein et al. (1991) supported this idea by saying that as a young child may not realize that he had succeeded in performing what he attempted to achieve, he needed an adult to "scale" his success relative to the seemingly perfect performance of another adult.

With this regard, Shemalise's teacher stated that her students had diminished feelings of competence, attributing this to their socioeconomic status:

Students in my classroom including Shemalise had poor feeling on their own abilities as they had been learned for the last four years in the same classroom, they usually given higher academic ranks for some students and consider their performance as fixed and unalterable. For instance, when I ask them who would get the first rank in each weekly as well as semester tests most of them say student x. they do not give such ranks for their own. It is an indication of lack of motivation and awareness on own competence.

However, such feelings in students results not only from their socioeconomic status, although it makes a considerable contribution. The teacher's way of response to low performing students also contributed to these feelings. Shemalise's teacher's strategies to motivate her students usually focused on appreciating clever students through adding marks, calling their names and giving advice to students to use them as models, giving special emphasis to them by posting their names of top scorers in each test. These strategies made students aware of the competence of their peers. Therefore, they might have used these models to measure themselves as less capable. These would in turn reduce their motivation and value to learning.

A teacher's negative emphasis or ignorance of a student's mistakes may lead the student to define his or her performance in terms of weakness rather than strengths. As the

findings indicated, all teachers except Berihune's, usually praised and rewarded a student's successful completion of a task but not on their attempts or mistakes. As the children reported and confirmed by observation, teachers usually gave instructions for students who answered incorrectly to sit and listen to others. Given that the teachers lacked knowledge of each child's learning needs and lack of appreciation for the students competencies, the student's did not identify nor were cognizant of their own competence and developed feelings of helplessness. In support of this conclusion, Mentis et al. (2008), denoted that a student's own negative perception lead to low self-image despite their achievements. As a result of a poor self-image, the child might experience a variety of behavior problems, lack of confidence, poor motivation and anxiety.

Motivation is the major determinant in having a feeling of competence because it represents a search as well as a source for competence. Regardless of the student's own perception of his or her capacity, teachers generate feelings of competence in the student through interpretation of his or her mastery. This in turn creates an awareness, feeling, and consciousness developed through a feeling of competence. This signals that the teacher conveys explicitly and implicitly his or her perception of students and has a profound impact on their senses of competence, academic performance and achievement (Feuerstein et al., 1991; Mentis et al., 2008).

Mediation of self regulation and control of behavior

Control of behavior (self-regulation) is the mediated learning strategy utilized to bring a change to disorganized and chaotic classrooms, to create a more desirable instructional setting and process (Mann & Hind, 2006). Mediation of self regulation and control of behavior is essential to affect the learning behavior in a more sustainable way for children engaged in child labor.

This study found that Berihune's and Mesay's teachers used classroom management and self-regulation strategies which were not sufficient to affect the cause of independence and future learning. They did not encourage the student's self-discipline through appropriate and intentional reaction to their behaviors. Though Berihune was not usually engaged in disruptive behavior, he was not actively involved in learning activities. This is one type of passive and undesirable behavior that hinders active involvement in learning and requires the teacher's immediate reaction. On the other hand, Mesaye was usually involved in awkward and off-task behaviors during instruction which also seriously impaired his active involvement in learning activities. One possible reason for such behaviors might be related to the student's failure to take responsibility for his or her own learning. However, teachers could alleviate such problems by encouraging appropriate behavior and inhibiting inappropriate behaviors using mediated learning experience. Strategies such as modeling, demonstration, regulation of the pace of learning activities, elaboration and expression helps teach self-regulation and control of behavior.

A second possible reason for lack of self-regulation might be the nature and complexity of tasks assigned them. If teachers do not present lessons which are appropriate to the student's level of competency, he or she might either disrupt the lesson or withdraw from the activities due to lack of relevance and motivation.

Zemenu's and Shemalise's teachers' practices revealed that teachers demonstrated sustained interest and commitment in classroom activities. The teachers attempted to model commitment and respect for their students and responded to students' impulsiveness through advice and encouragement. Zemenu's teacher, for instance, reported that she had sometimes spent the whole class giving advice: "I usually give them an advice to seriously engage on their learning, to study hard and remind my name in front of others by their good doings".

This might support the students to develop efficient thinking skills that would enable them to become autonomous and independent learners.

Shemalise's improvement in class participation and acceptance of responsibility for his own learning was related to his teachers' continuous advice and commitment in encouraging his engagement in learning tasks. As Shemalise reported, his teacher always gave advice and encouraged him to study hard. The teacher also stated that Shemalise exhibited an emerging motive and initiative in his classroom participation and doing assignments regardless of any change in the work load. This might be a good indicator of the effect of the teacher's interaction with Shemalise.

5.1.3 Academic performance of children engaged in child labor

The student academic performance heavily depends on the efficiency of the teacher's instructional approach, though other factors also influence. An interactive and responsive learning environment that promotes the student's ability to construct meanings and take responsibility for his or her own learning has a significant influence on learner academic performance.

A mediated interaction or an instructional practice that employs MLE has the capacity to promote a student's cognitive and social functioning. In contrast, the absence or inadequate provision of MLE leads to cognitive functions that are underdeveloped, arrested, impaired or seldom and inefficiently used with limited academic and social learning (ICELP, n.d.). These also affect academic performance.

Academic performance of children engaged in child labor in this study was defined in qualitative terms based on student observed classroom participation, competency in doing homework, and class assignments, as well as the teachers' judgments on the basic literacy and numeracy skills. All (excluding Shemalise) had below average performance. However, in

contrast to this, their academic records revealed that they achieved average or above as judged quantitatively on class assessments.

One possible reason for this contradiction, as reported by their teachers and through observation might be associated with the inaccuracy of assessment tools which teachers administered to judge academic competency.

Berihue's teacher, for instance, describes this contradiction and the possible reasons as follows:

Berihune is one of the least performers in my classroom but he usually gets average or a little bit above average in tests. His results may be gained by coping from his sit mates in addition, the exams and its way of administration; we give them detail briefing on each question before beginning are very easy for his age level.

Mesaye's teacher stated the reasons for such contradictions as follows:

Mesaye did well in exams but if you ask him how he did in that way, he does not know it. His academic performance and test achievements have a great difference. This might be due to the value he gives for exams or he might copy answers from others.

My observation also confirmed that their grades did not explain or define their academic performance. Rather it is their classroom behaviors, which were more representative of their performance. For example, from Berihune's records, his average academic results were an average of 84.8 during grade one and 75 in the first academic semester of his present school year. Yet he was not even able to read and write answers from his exercise books and was passive in most instructional activities.

In this regard, constructivists' instructional strategies recommend the emphasis on the concept of dynamic assessment, which is a way of assessing the true potential of learners that differs significantly from conventional tests. Here the essentially interactive nature of learning is extended to the process of assessment (Wiki Books, 2005). Such assessment strategies are important at a lower primary school level to minimize squander resources by

assuring that all pupils are promoted to the next grade without compromising the quality of education (Desalegn, 2004).

In addition, the grading or assessment strategies in all cases revealed that the teachers graded not only the students' academic knowledge but they also graded their conduct, class attendance, and neatness of their exercise books. This tended to skew the results. The inclusion of these additional factors in scoring might be due to their misconception of the intent of continuous assessment and assessment of students' academic and formative competencies. Since usually formative assessment results are considered a means of supporting students, total grading than a means of widening and enhancing of students' learning and academic involvement. The teachers gave students who did not succeed well more grades to improve their total results.

However, as stated in Desalegn (2004):

The intent of continues assessment is much more than an examination of pupils' achievement. It is a powerful diagnostic tool that enables teacher to modify their instructional strategies to include the construction of remediation activities for pupils who are not working at the expected grade level and to create enrichment activities for pupils who are working at or above the expected grade level (p.7).

Yet, as indicated in Helen and Judy (2004), teachers can make a larger difference in enhancing students' academic performances than any other factor, including student background or school resources. This suggests that teachers' instructional efficiency has the potential to narrow the gap of students' low performances.

Nevertheless, their low performance may be associated with their learning behaviors; both distal and proximal, such as inattentiveness, absenteeism, fatigue, and lack of time to study and do homework. These reduce the time they actively spend on learning activities. It is not surprising if these children engaged in child labor do not acquire basic knowledge and skills expected at their grade levels, unless they are provided with appropriate supports.

Shemalise's teacher, however, reported that his academic performance was average particularly during the first semester of 2009-2010 school year in both his class participation and tests. Though he sometimes exhibited fatigue and slept during instruction, he showed relative progress in his academics. I observed his attempts to actively participate in class activities, particularly in the mathematics lesson. This resulted from his own effort and personal motivation to improve his academic performance.

In summary, as Ethiopia is striving to achieve the goals of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education For All (EFA) (MOE, 2006), ensuring quality classroom instruction is available to all, this research, which assesses the current status of classroom instruction for children engaged in child labor, is significant for the efforts of different organizations. Specifically, this study is significant for the following reasons:

- It may be helpful for teachers and principals in Addis Zemane First Cycle Primary School to develop more effective classroom instruction that addresses the needs of children engaged in child labor.
- It may provide additional input to the existing literature in Ethiopia and a source for those who want to conduct further studies in the area.
- It may be also helpful for parents, teachers and other concerned bodies who want to conduct intervention and respond to the learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor.

CHAPTER SIX

6. Conclusions and Implications

6.1 Conclusion

The relationship between child labor and classroom learning behaviors, instructional practices that respond to the learning needs of the students and enhance the benefits to the students from the instructional process was examined based on the theory of MLE using a qualitative case study design. In summary, the findings revealed that child labor had a negative relationship with students' holistic development. The instructional strategies that were used did not support enhancement of learning for the children engaged in child labor by reducing the negative consequences of their work loads. In turn, this leads to less competence academically.

All children have the right to quality instruction, which is responsive to their learning needs, potentials, styles and difficulties in order to be fruitful citizens who contribute to the development of their nation. However, children engaged in child labor in this study did not have this right. They did not benefit well from the instructional process.

Dynamic assessment strategies lay a foundation for appropriate identification and reaction of teachers to students' learning behaviors. They induce teachers to think of possible solutions for challenges faced by their students. It helps them to plan and present lessons within the students' ZPD. If teachers are looking for their students' fulfillment of expected standards and numerical grades only, students' actual learning is not affected and the result is often devastating for the child, his or her parents, and the nation at large. Since the role of MLE is significant in promoting children engaged in child labor learning needs, it does not get appropriate consideration by teachers. Even the intuitive and traditional interactive practices among most teachers in lower primary schools, which could potentially bridge their

practices with modern principles of MLE, the relationships are not properly recognized and acted upon.

In general, from the findings, the teachers' failure to make accurate and authentic judgments of students' performances hindered their response to promote efficient learning of children engaged in child labor. Moreover, first cycle primary school teachers' instructional practices have an effort to affect the learning of children engaged in child labor using MLE if they gain appropriate and practical trainings in the area. There needs to be further investigation of a teacher's challenges to identify and respond to the diverse needs and learning behaviors of children engaged in child labor.

The study was not ended up without limitations; the shortage of accurate information about the amount of time the children were expected to work was a weakness because of the lack of a fixed working schedule. In order to minimize this challenge, I attempted to make an accurate estimation through multiple informants.

6.2 Implications of the study

On the basis of the findings and conclusions drawn the following implications can be indicated:

- Continuums of support are required to overcome the negative consequences of the work. Thus, teachers should work in collaboration with parents to respond to the various difficulties children engaged in child labor face.
- Continues assessment strategies which measures students' actual performance should in corporate in First Cycle Primary School instructions, in order to help children get quality education. The implementation of such; dynamic assessment strategies requires knowledge, skills, motivation and dedication on the part of teachers. This can be achieved through training of teachers in the effective practice of their assessment strategies by pedagogical

experts and enhancement of the inclusion of children engaged in child labor in education by the government.

- There are trends in the practice of traditional and intuitive interactions which have the potential to promote an MLE kind of learning environment in First Cycle Primary School classrooms. These indicate the need to provide trainings in modern principles of MLE by special needs educators and psychologists to build up teachers' awareness in their intuitive and traditional interactive practices and the promising effect on education of children engaged in child labor learning.

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Appendixes

Appendixes A

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

**CHILDREN ENGAGED IN CHILD LABOR AND CLASSROOM
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES: The case of Addis Zemen First
Cycle Primary School, Addis Ababa**

Observation Rating Scale

MEDIATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE (MLE) (Mentis et al., 2008)

Date _____

Time Started _____

Time Ended _____

Instructions

The main objective of this observation is to naturally observe how child laborers learn and to what extent the classroom instruction addresses their needs. This naturalistic observation of the classroom instruction is done based on five parameters of MLE. The observation guide involves 5-7 guiding questions under each parameter which will be rated in four scales. Administration of the observation will be done by considering the necessary ethical issues.

Introduction

The observation will be conducted to generate relevant data for the study from the naturalistic environment. This will be carried out by the researcher.

Description of MLE Activity	Not at all implemented	Negatively implemented	Sometimes implemented	Usually implemented
Intentionality and Reciprocity				
1. Teacher arouses students' interest and motivation				
2. Students ask questions relevant to the subject matter				
3. Teacher gives appropriate feedback to students' verbal contribution				
4. Teacher gives appropriate feedback to students' written contribution				
5. Teacher is willing to re-explain when work is not understood				
6. Teacher comes prepared and creates a sense of anticipation by changing classroom atmosphere				
7. Other				

Description of MLE Activity	Not at all implemented	Negatively implemented	Sometimes implemented	Usually implemented
Mediation of Meaning				
1. The teacher explains the importance focusing				
2. The teacher explains the reason for focusing on a subject				
3. The teacher transforms material by changing frequency and/or intensity of presentation				
4. The teacher gives positive or negative feedback to student responses				
5. The teacher asks “how” and “why” questions- process				
6. Other				

Description of MLE Activity	Not at all implemented	Negatively implemented	Sometimes implemented	Usually implemented
Transcendence				
1. The teacher explains a concept or principle beyond the scope of the present subject matter				
2. The teacher relates the subject of a lesson to previous or future subjects				
3. The teacher explains how the underlying process to solving a problem can be applied to a variety of situations				
4. The teacher promotes the use of work habits that are useful beyond present needs				
5. Other				

Description of MLE Activity	Not at all implemented	Negatively implemented	Sometimes implemented	Usually implemented
Mediation of feeling of Competence				
1. The teacher selects and presents material appropriate to the students' levels of development				
2. The teacher phrases questions according to the students' levels of competence				
3. The teacher encourages students to be aware of their progress relative to their own standards				
4. The teacher breaks down a complex task into its simpler parts in order to reduce anxiety				
5. The teacher praises successful steps toward completing a task				
6. The teacher rewards participation in an activity				
7. Other				

Description of MLE Activity	Not at all implemented	Negatively implemented	Sometimes implemented	Usually implemented
Self-Regulation and Control of Behavior				
1. The teacher instills in the students behavior conducive to learning-good classroom management				
2. The teacher restrains the inappropriate impulsiveness of students				
3. The teacher encourages self-discipline				
4. The teacher models respect, commitment, and perseverance in classroom activities				
5. Other				

Appendix B

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

**CHILDREN ENGAGED IN CHILD LABOR AND CLASSROOM
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES: The case of Addis Zemen First
Cycle Primary School, Addis Ababa**

Guide for interview

Date _____

Time Stated _____

Time end _____

Introduction

The main intent of this interview is to investigate the working conditions of children engaged in child labor, their learning behavior and the nature of classroom instruction in addressing their needs.

This interview guide is presented to generate pertinent data concerning children engaged in child labor and classroom instructional practices to address their learning needs. This will be significant for teachers, school administrators, parents and other concerned and interested bodies to have know-how of the extent and degree to which children engaged in child labor have benefited from classroom instructional processes. I believe that you will contribute a lot for this research to achieve its objective.

In generating data for research purposes due attention should be given to the ethical issues. Accordingly the following ethical considerations are presented to be discussed with the research participants ahead of the actual interview.

- Your participation in this study is on voluntary basis.
- You have the right to withdraw, to change your ideas or to edit your recorded ideas.
- While the information you give belongs to you, the interpretation totally belongs to me as the researcher.
- Your anonymity and confidentiality of your information holds the heart of this research ethics.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Guide for Interview with children

Part I

Demographic background

Sex ----- Age ----- Grade level-----

1. With whom are you living?
2. What is the work of your parents or employer?
3. With whom are you living?
4. In what kind of house do you live?
5. Where were you born?

Part II

Working Conditions

1. What is your work?
2. Who trains you in the skill?
3. When did you start to work?
4. Where do you work?
5. When do you work? Is it before or after school or both?
6. How many hours each day and which days do you work?
7. Where do you like to spend much of your time? Play, work, or school? Why? What about the others?
8. How do you feel about your work? Do you like it? What about schooling?

Part III

Learning Conditions

1. How does your teacher begin her every day instruction?
2. What type of instructional activities does your teacher usually provide? In which of them are you involved?
3. Do you ask and answer questions in the classroom? How frequently?
4. What do your teachers do during your involvement in classroom activities?
Recognition, reward, punishment, ...
5. What do you prefer to get from the instructional process?
6. What kind of examples does your teacher use during instruction?
7. Do you like to go to school? Why?
8. How do your teachers interact with you in and out of the classroom?

9. How is the language and speed of classroom instruction?
10. What do you learn from your teacher's personality? Who is your role model? Why?
11. How do teachers manage students discipline problems? What is your experience?
12. How is your academic performance?
13. When and with whom do you study?
14. What do you know about the relationship between child labor and education?

Guide for interview with teachers

Part I

Demographic Background

Sex ____ **Qualification** _____ **Experience** _____

Part II

1. What do you know about the background of student X?
2. What observable effect does the work have on the child's academic experience?
3. What differences do you observe, if any, in the academic performance of the child engaged in child labor in your class? How do you react to this difference?
4. How do you plan lessons and what is your reference?
5. How do you use your lesson plans during instructional delivery?
6. What kind of academic support, if any, does she or he need?
7. How do you try to address his or her educational needs?
8. What kind of educational support do you personally give for the child in your classroom? Outside?
9. How do you motivate him?
10. What kind of teaching strategies do you often use? Why?
11. How do you assess his progress and achievement?
12. What strategies do you use to manage the child's discipline problems, if any?

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not been presented for any degree in any other university. All sources of material used have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Rediet Mesfin Tadesse

Signature: _____

Date of Submission: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University advisor.

Name: Alemayehu Tekelemariam

Signature: _____

Date of submission _____

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