

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL PROBLEMS
AND OTHER CONSTRAINTS AS CORRELATES OF SCHOOL
INTERRUPTION IN EAST SHOA ZONE**

BY: GEZAHEGN GURMU

MAY, 2001

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OF SCHOOL INTERRUPTION
IN EAST SHOA ZONE**

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**BY
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ACRONYMS

CIP	-	Classroom Instructional Problems
NSP	-	Non-School Problems
CR	-	Curriculum Relevance
DLI	-	Difficulty in the Language of Instruction
FAF	-	Fear of Academic Failure
DQT	-	Dissatisfaction with Quality of Teaching
STB	-	Shortage of Textbooks
SCR/D-		Shortage of Classrooms or Desks
ECP	-	Economic Problem
PPEM	-	Parental Pressure for Early Marriage
FS	-	Family Separation / Disintegration
PNCH	-	Parental Need for Help From their Child
QT	-	Quarrel with Teachers
FP	-	Perceived Future Prospect
MOE	-	Ministry of Education (of Ethiopia)
HP	-	Health Problem
DSI	-	Duration of School Interruption

ABSTRACT

Investigation of the problem of school interruption, factors associated with interruption and its consequences, involving grades 9,10 & 11 three Senior High Schools in East Shoa Zone, Oromia Region was conducted for six months (October 2000-1April 2000a).

The data were collected by means of two questionnaire and interview as well as document study. Different methods of data analysis (including t-test and ANOVA) were used in the study.

The results indicated that school interruption was pervasive in the zone for the last three years ranging from 14.0 percent to 19.8 percent and from 20.9 to 25.6 source for males and females respectively. It was more acute for females and for grade 9 students. The major causes of interruption were identified to be (1) difficulty in the language of instruction, irrelevance of curriculum, students' fear of academic failure, dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching, and shortage of classrooms or desks on one hand; and (2) economic constraint, parental pressure for early marriage, parental need for child labor perceived future prospect for employment or for further education and family separation. The cumulative effect of factors under these two categories had influenced both males and females in all the three grade levels equally. However, selected factors such as difficulty in the language of instruction (affected grade 9 more), fear of academic failure and parental pressure for early marriage (affected males and females, respectively) and parental pressure for early marriage again affected females or males with in a selected grade levels.

Implications forwarded in terms of intervention strategies include: reviewing and improving the curriculum and methods of teaching English, professional qualification of teachers, school facilities, and building close contacts with parents, government and nongovernment institutions.

CHAPTER I

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Among the major contributors to a country's development is the system of education. Education is an essential and basic investment since the return is in the form of human resource development, which in turn, contributes to all other aspects of developmental investments. In a nutshell, an appropriate educational system results in knowledgeable, skilled and productive human resource that facilitates and enhances all forms of community services.

High schools are among the vast educational institutions in an educational system. High school education is expected to provide its graduates with knowledge and skills to be used as a means and power of achieving better life and getting acquainted with the new technology (Rumberger, 1987; Ayalew 1997; Tilaye, 1997).

High schools should avoid wastage in order to produce the expected human resource adequately. In this context, wastage refers to an educational wastage which is either an aspect of or all of the financial, material, human, or time frame resources that have been inappropriately used by educational institutions and by students.

Various resources (for instance, Ayalew 1997; Tilaye 1997; Rumberger 1987; UNESCO 1984) reported that educational wastage due to students' grade repetition and dropout rates is high for the developing countries, though the phenomena is a world wide problem.

In Ethiopian situations, students' school interruption, grade repetition, and dropping out are the forms of educational wastage in each cycle of the education system. The Educational Statistics Annual Abstract (MOE, 2000) reported that 87.3 percent and 12.7 percent of the total wastage is due to primary grades dropouts and repeaters, respectively, in 1998/99 academic year. However data was not available for the high schools. Darge (1997), in his research on primary school participation and wastage rate in different regions, contends that at national level in 1992/93, on the average, repetition rate was 10.7 percent for males and 13.2 percent for females. He emphasized that this "is indicative of not only pervasive intellectual and moral bankruptcy among individual school children but also substantial human and financial wastage at the societal levels," Darge, 1997:528). There are similar evidences when specific regions and zones are considered. In 1998/99, for example, Oromia Regional Education Bureau reported 19.2 percent and 18.8 percent primary school and secondary school dropout, respectively. In the same year, East Shoa Educational Department reported 23.5 percent repeaters and 6.6 percent dropout for high school students, grades 9-11

(Oromia Education Bureau, Unpublished Memorandum, 2000). Therefore, minimizing wastage due to repetition, interruption or dropout is important.

1.2 The Problem

Closely tied to the problems of dropouts and grade repetition is the issue of school interruption which has now days become a common occurrence in Ethiopian high schools, In many sites, for eg., in East Shoa Zone High Schools, Oromia Region), among the large number of student population that start classes in September, a lot interrupt their study two or three months later, or after the first semester tests for unknown reasons. Some of these students come back to school again the following year, or after staying out of school for one year, two or more years. Obviously, this situation is serious in terms of wastage of resources (material, financial, time, human, etc.) both at societal (institutional) and personal levels since resources are allocated for the same students for more than two or three years (in the same grade levels) per grade.

This study focuses on East Shoa Zone high school students (Oromia Region). East Shoa Zone is among the zones nearest to the capital of the country. There are 12 academic and vocational government high schools, four non-government technical and vocational schools in the zone. Most of

the high schools are located in towns along the main roads. The schools are densely populated, with the number of students in each school ranging from 2000 to 4000.

The students come from diverse background because of the variation of the population in terms of socio-economic status, socio-cultural values, religion, and ethnicity. Viewed from the economic activity perspective, the zone is largely agricultural with a few industries.

Apparently, researchers who investigated the problem of school dropouts did not give sufficient attention to school interruption separately. Probably, the issue must have been confounded with the 'dropouts' and 'repeaters' – which include 'failures.' For example, Ayalew (1997) indicates that among the total number of students enrolled in grade one in 1982/83 year, only 7 percent successfully completed grade 12 at normal time. Similarly, Tilaye (1997), based on the cohort history analysis, reported that among the 1000 students who were enrolled in grade 9 in 1996/97 in East Gojam High Schools, only about half of the number were estimated to have completed grade 12 at regular time. Such estimation, using the "cohort history" mechanism, may bring us to this end. However, this might not be conclusive as simple as this, especially, when our country's socio-economic situation is considered.

The present writer argues that all those who did not complete high school education "at the regular time", might not have dropped out once and for all, Instead they might had interrupted their study for some time or failed in one or two or more grade levels of each cycle of the education system, and come back to attend their study intermittently at the same place or at other places depending on various factors.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to assess the magnitude and problem of school interruption by high school students. It also attempts to identify the major factors contributing to school interruption in relation to school related factors such as curriculum relevancy, language difficulty, disciplinary measures, academic achievement, etc; and in relation to home-related factors such as parents' economic status, socio-cultural values, health status, educational background, etc. Moreover the study investigates the relationship between school interruption and students' sex and grade level.

More specifically, the objectives of this study are to find out:

1. the magnitude of the problem of school interruption
2. the major factors for school interruption
3. relationship of different factor with the duration of school interruption.
4. differences between interrupters and non-interrupters with respect to sexes and grade level
5. the level of the influence CIP and NSP on the interrupters with regard to sex and grade level.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In terms of problem statement, the issue at hand is expressed as follows.

1. How pervasive is school interruption?
2. What factors are related to school interruption?
3. Do the scores of the interrupters on CIP & NSP sub-scales correlate with the duration of school interruption?
4. Is there a significant difference between interrupting and non-interrupting students with regard to the effect of the following factors on attending their education?
5. Does the level of influence of the CIP & NSP vary with the following characteristics of the students?
 - a. sex
 - b. grade level (9-11)

1.4 Significance of the Study

The present endeavor to improve the country's educational system and to produce efficient human power needed for development requires continuous and thorough assessment of educational input and strategy. So, appropriate strategies should be set based on evidences from research findings. Appropriate strategy is a safeguard against wastage in educational investment (in the form of material, financial, human, etc, resources). In this regard the sporadic nature of students' school attendance (interrupting at one time and coming back other times) should be minimized to reduce unit cost for high school education.

The study is important for the following specific reasons.

1. Apparently the issue has not been investigated so far. So the results of this study can help to determine the magnitude of school interruption and its associated factors.
2. The study can provide ideas to teachers/school personnel to review their approach in teaching and in handling students.
3. The study can also offer information to the concerned policy makers, parents, and the society at large so that they become more fully aware of the reality of schools and the problems of students, and make their own effort to alleviate the problem.
4. The study can serve as a starting point for further research in the area.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

The study is limited to three high schools in East Shoa Zone, Oromia Region. This is because, relatively, there are sufficient number of high schools and students from diverse society. Since no study was conducted regarding the topic, it was believed that to be specific is the safest side for a beginning work. Moreover the writer has some experience in some of the high schools in the zone, and this would make data collection easier.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

Research works directly related to the study was lacking. Therefore, findings indirectly related to the issue such as dropouts, repeaters, etc. were used as reference materials.

Due to financial and time constraint the study is limited to three high schools. For the same reason parents of the students were not included in the study.

School interrupters were not documented well by the schools under study that data on the proportion of interrupters in the schools under study were included for 1999/2000 academic year only. The study did not treat the subjects with regard to age and residential (urban/rural factors because these characteristics were not documented by the schools.

Nevertheless, reasonable and exhaustive attempt was made to reach at plausible result. Therefore, further study may be advanced by interested researchers in line with these limitations.

1.7 Definition of Operational Terms

School Interruption	-the discontinuity of the regular attendance of schooling temporarily.
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School interrupters - Students who had discontinued attending school for a semester or certain years but resumed their education during the time of collecting data for this study.

Classroom Instructional Problems (CIP)- Problems tied to the irrelevance of curriculum, medium of instruction, testing, etc. that interferes with normal attendance of schooling.

Non-School problems (NSP)- the socio-economic constraints of students' home environment that was obstacle to students' education.

Duration of School Interruption (DSI) – the time spent between time of discontinuing and time of resuming education

1.8 Organization of the Work.

This paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which includes: background of the study statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitation and limitation of the study. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature and related research works. The third chapter contained the methodology used to collect and analyze data. The fourth chapter presents the finding, its analysis and interpretation (discussion), and the last chapter contained summary, conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As indicated in the "Introduction", there is evidently no research concerning school interruption. However, school interruption is related with dropout, absenteeism and repetition. Therefore, research findings on the problems of dropouts, absenteeism, repetition and associated student problems are deemed relevant reference materials for the present study. Actually, school interrupters may end up to be dropouts altogether, repeaters, or regularly attending students later on.

Repeaters are not only those students who fail and repeat the same grade in spite of their regular attendance but also those students who quit schooling for some reason and as a result have to repeat a grade. In contrast, the concept of school dropout refers to those students who leave school and do not come back to school again (UNESCO, 1972).

A number of writers (e.g, Fontana, 1995; Berk, 1989) indicate the negative impact of dropping out and repetition which could be a result of failure and school interruption. Ayalew (1997) used the term wastage to describe the combined effect of repetition and dropout upon resources, both at the institutional and personal level. He contends that the economic cost of

educational wastage due to repetition and dropout can take at least two categories, i.e., the amount spent directly on schooling (human, material and financial resources) by institutions and the cost to parents for the students' educational materials and other items (such as food, clothing, etc.). It seems wastage increases considerably with regard to students who repeat the same grade after interrupting one or more years. That is the cost becomes double or higher depending upon the number of times the student interrupted schooling. In a related study concerning primary schools in eight regions Darge (1997: 533) presents an estimate of wastage due to repetition as follows:

an estimation of financial wastage based on a 200 Birr recurrent unit cost ... and a 10 percent repetition rate suggests that, in 1993/94 only, a total of approximately 45 million Birr ... was under utilized or misspent on account of student repetition in the primary schools of the regions involved in the study.

School interruption also prolongs the time of graduation, thereby lowering efficiency of educational programs, and consuming the time of individual students unnecessarily.

Research (Ayelew, 1997; Rumberger, 1987) attributes the causes of school dropout and repeating grades to problems related to students' in-school and out-of-school experience, and the characteristics of students in

general. Since the central issue of this study is to find out classroom instructional problems and non-school problems that are associated with students' school interruption, students in-school and out-of-school learning experience, nature of service provision in schools and their individual characteristics are used as subheadings to assess the existing research and related literature.

2.1 Classroom Instructional Problems (CIP)

In-school factors (classroom experience) that are considered to be contributors to school interruption include: perceived irrelevance of the curriculum, difficulty in the medium of instruction, fear of academic failure, school discipline problems and problems due to the nature of service provision by the school.

a. Perceived Irrelevance of the Curriculum

Research findings, both local and overseas, indicate that perceived irrelevance of curriculum is one of the major factors for students' poor attendance and withdrawal from school (Ayalew, 1997; Tilaye, 1997; Rumberger, 1987). Farrant (1980) suggests that a problem created in designing curriculum is a factor for students' failure and dropout. Lehman (1982) also argues that an irrelevant curriculum interferes with students'

motivation to learn. That is, if pupils perceive that the curriculum is not useful for the betterment of their life, they lack meaning in the curriculum and remain unmotivated and become fed up with attending classes (Rumberger, 1987; Lehman, 1982; Gordon 1969; Dunhil, 1964).

Implementation of the curriculum requires careful consideration. Lehman (1982) contends that with an emphasis on memorization of facts and right answers, schools have failed to make learning relevant. Graybill, H. (1998) observes that an irrelevant curriculum could be improved by classroom teachers to make it adaptable to the needs and interests of the learners by carefully selecting contents from the experience of the learners in preparing lessons rather than simply following the prescribed syllabus. Dow and Whitehead (1981) argue that the school organization is a critical variable for reasonable curriculum implementation and for reducing curriculum irrelevance and frustration. These authors emphasize that if the curriculum is not implemented satisfactorily by the schoolteacher, discrepancy could exist between what is expected and what actually takes place, ending in school wastage phenomena.

b. Difficulty in the Medium of Instruction

The language (medium) of instruction has a significant role in implementing a curriculum. Many studies (e.g., Fontana, 1995; Berk, 1989)

show that communication remains a problem in education. Other research (Tilaye 1997; Taddesse, 1974) indicate that in Ethiopia, English, which is the second or third language for most of the students and medium of instruction in high schools, is one of the sources of difficulty for students. Tilaye (1997) argues that because students lack efficiency in communicating in English they may develop negative attitude toward attending school, i.e., communication gap exists and consequently students lack value in the lesson. This condition is likely to create frustration in the students and they will be inclined to interrupt their schooling.

Moreover, students spend a lot of time and effort in trying to understand the language of instruction itself while they study other subjects. That is, if students have difficulty in the medium of instruction, concept formation will be a difficult task for them. Language difficulty arises not only because English is the second or third language for the students, but also because in the lower grades (elementary schools), it is ineffectively learned and taught.

c. Students' fear of academic failure

Fear of evaluative situations can be specifically termed as "test anxiety" which is an affect or feeling of apprehension and discomfort accompanied by cognitive difficulties (Friedman and Bendas-Jacob, 1977).

Students may develop test anxiety from previous failure. Weiner, cited in Barba & Cardinale (1991: 306), has proposed attribution theory which states that “in educational situations people tend to attribute their success or failure to one of four types of cause: (a) their ability, (b) their luck, (c) their effort, or (d) the difficulty of the task.”

In line with the attribution theory these authors state that where students attribute their failure to low ability, they predict that they will fail again and will use less effort in the future. Rumberger's (1987) assertion agrees with this view. He says that poor academic achievement in school, as measured by test scores, and grade repetition, are associated with dropping out.

Other research confirms that failure influences an individual to perceive him or herself as ineffective. For example, in explaining a person's motive to choose certain actions, Mathewos & Deary (1998), argue that self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by a variety of factors including the person's previous success and failure experiences on the activity concerned.

Students' fear of evaluations (tests) can be aggravated by teachers' approach in testing. Hopkins (1981) argues that some teachers may lack a skill to orient students or they unreasonably ignore to trust their students that

testing and providing feedback are used as a method of teaching and learning and to enrich the instructional objectives of the curriculum.

In general, due to various reasons (e.g. emotional instability, lack of self-esteem, etc.) students may experience fear of failure in test situations. Such experience may, in turn, result in poor academic achievement leading the students to interrupt their schooling, either before or after they have taken the tests.

On the other hand children may retreat from taking tests due to underachievement that might be caused by environmental problems such as actual physical deprivation, including, shortage of food or extreme shortage of sleep, physical or sexual abuse outright physical rejection perhaps brought about by a broken home or alcoholism in one or both parents (Fontana, 1995).

Fontana (1995) also asserts that whenever the pressures of extrinsic motivation are too strong, children may resort to strategies like cheating, absenteeism, or feigned illness to avoid the consequences of failure.

d. School Discipline Factors

Disciplinary problems are components of the in-school factors that encourage maladaptive students to quit their schooling. Ediger (1987), in his

study on school dropouts, absenteeism and tardiness, explains that students who are liable to leave school are students with maladaptive behavior. He further explains that students with maladaptive behavior mostly use drugs and alcoholic beverages which tend to result in specific kinds of student maladaptive behaviors: loss of interest in school, changes in personality, rebellion in school (including in classroom situation), avoidance of responsibility (e.g. breaking desks and windows), etc.

According to Ayalew's finding (1996), teachers with poor lesson plan preparation and poor teaching skills are likely to face disciplinary problems. Ayalew also found out that one of the major disciplinary problems that are student – related is failure to do homework. Conversely, teachers may use “home work as punishment,” which might make students to view it as hard and unpleasant and then develop unfavorable attitude towards it (Adane & Dawit, 2000). Other disciplinary problems that are tied to classroom situations include cheating during examinations, tardiness, truancy, and similar undesirable behavior (Ayalew, 1996). According to Ayalew, in response to these problems, teachers used corporal punishment, physical exercise and forced labor.

Disciplinary problems also occur due to students' lack of books. Teachers require students to bring text- books with them in spite of shortage

of books in the school. Besides some schools may require students to fulfill certain criteria in order to obtain books from the school. Research made on 'Sinkegna' by Darge (1993:13) presents evidence for this. He emphasizes that "... the school regulations also proved to be too exacting ... the school required students ... to present two guarantees in order to be supplied with text books." Various authors warn us that schools should create appropriate and rewarding conditions to avoid students' negative attitude and the tendency to quit school. Moreover, wrongly administered devices of reward and punishment may result in adolescent aggression and school hatred (eg. Chauhn, 1998; Adane and Dawit, 2000; Ayalew, 1996).

e. Characteristics of School Facilities

Class size or shortage of classroom is among the major obstacles to classroom instruction. Tilaye (1997), Taddesse (1974), and others reported that grade repetition is associated with class-size and teacher qualification. Lockheed (1993), Eleni (1995) and others also contend that scarcity of facilities such as classroom, desks, chairs, ventilation, textbooks, quality of teachers, lack of sanitation, etc, discourage pupils' learning and aggravate school interruption.

Ethiopian schools suffer from all or most of the above shortcomings. MOE (2000) reported that except for the pedagogical centers and laboratories it can be concluded that most of the schools are not suitable to attract students.

2.2 Non-School Problems

The other constraints that may be closely related to school interruption include: home-related constraints such as parents economic problem, socio-cultural value of parents, family condition, and individual characteristics of students in terms of health, perceived future prospect, etc. Most educators agree that the home is the primary context for the development of personality. This means the “many facets of life”, i.e., parents’ socio-economic level, including their educational background their cultural value, family structure, etc, contribute to the children intellectual and social development (Fontana, 1995). A survey (Fitihalem and Mehari 1998) concerning the problems of dropouts at Debrework Senior Secondary School (East Gojjam) identified economic constraints, family life disruption (either due to death or divorce), health problem, marriage, parental need for child labor, lack of confidence in their future employment opportunity (especially employment by the government), etc as the main reasons for quitting school by students. Therefore, school interruption can partly or totally be encouraged by some or all of the reasons indicated above. These constraints are treated separately and briefly as follows.

a) Parents' economic Problems

Researchers in Ethiopian education agree that one major determining factor in restricting students' success is the economic Problems of parents (Ayalew, 1997; Darge, 1997; Adane, 1993). These authors reported that among the reasons for students to leave school, financial and material constraints are the major ones. They indicate that students who leave school are from parents of low economic status, and the cost of schooling was found to be an important factor for quitting school. Other researchers such as Cammish & Brock (1994), Anbasu & Barbara (1988), Rumberger (1987), Coombs (1985), and Taddesse (1974) found out that the direct costs, which are the prices for educational materials, clothing and consumption, school fee, etc, are unaffordable by parents.

Tied to the economic constraints, children's involvement in excessive domestic work is another major factor that detract students from regular attendance of schooling. Child labor is badly needed by parents of low socio-economic level. That is, children serve at home in different activities such as cooking household chores, farming, trade, etc. (Rumberger, 1987 and Coombs, 1985). In Tilaye's study on high school dropouts (1994) the majority of his subjects responded that they quit their education mainly for economic reasons. Explaining material deprivation as a factor for non-attendance of

school, Kerfoot and Butler (1988) pointed out that the child may lack some of the essential clothing for school ... or the basic equipment necessary to take part in various school based activities. Kerfoot and Butler (1988) also argue that parents withhold children from school because they may perceive little value in schooling and consider it a waste of time, and the child concerned may be needed at home ... to help with family employment or to assist with caring for some of the younger children. Females, particularly, elder daughters are susceptible to this pressure.

Researchers also investigated the influence of the economic constraint upon male and female students in interrupting their schooling. According to Cammish & Brock (1994), and UNDP (1989), when male and female students from low economic status are compared, it is the female students who are more likely to quit school due to their parents' economic condition. Other evidence (Ayalew, 1997) suggests that when rural and urban children of poor parents are compared, rural children are more liable to quit school. Ayalew further indicates that besides the hardships in the rural areas that require a lot of input from children to maintain life, poor children in rural areas are frequently late for school. They are also absent from school periodically since they are required to help their poor parents and then walk for hours to school.

An aspect of economic constraint that makes students hesitant to pursue their education is students' perceived unemployment opportunity. Sadik (1991) argues that when students perceive positive future prospect (employment or further education) their endeavor to complete high school increases. Conversely low employment opportunities encourage parents to withhold their children (King & Bellew, 1990). Tekeste (1996) also argues that the high rate of unemployment among secondary graduates functions as a deterrent making parents think twice before they send their children to school.

b) Parents' socio-cultural values

The socio-cultural values that are admired by parents of school children may be contradictory to the value of modern education. Parents, especially the illiterate ones, encourage their children to follow and to be involved in traditional rituals and related activities of the local society.

Taddesse (1974) speculates that modern education might be a threat to the socio-cultural values of parents who may hesitate to send their children to school. He also claims that such a situation has a more negative effect on the future of girls than boys. For example, girls are encouraged to get married earlier than boys. According to Tilaye (1994), in the traditional society, schooling is more important for boys than girls and early marriage is culturally appreciated in the case of girls. Tilaye observes that one reason for parental

eagerness to get their daughters married is the risk of unwanted pregnancy of girls, which is a common problem of female teenagers nowadays. Lack of appreciation of education by parents results in children's lack of interest in their studies. Thus they face difficulty in accomplishing tasks such as doing homework, attending classes and studying regularly.

Important figures, which the children take as model, and peer groups also, influence students' perception of the value of schooling. The models might be those people who had negative experience in school. It is common to hear the statement "Timhirt inna daget iyarefu new," meaning, 'One should climb a slope by taking rest at intervals. One should proceed in the same way while pursuing his/her education"

The degree of socio-cultural influence upon children's schooling depends on their parent's educational background. In an analytic study, Darge (1997) asserts that literacy of parents help to reduce school dropouts. Rumberger's study (1987) also showed that low level of education of parents was highly correlated with their children's dropout rate. Adane's finding (1993) confirms the same point by indicating that parents' educational level is inversely correlated with educational wastage due to repetition and dropout. These research results indicate that children of educated parents are less discouraged from continuing in school than children of illiterate parents.

c) Family Climate

Family climate influences the psychological life of the child. Ayalew (1997) indicates that compared to children in intact families, children of single parents are more likely to commonly to discontinue their education. Similarly, Brown (1980) asserts those children living with one parent only exhibit tardiness, truancy and disciplinary problems in schools. Students with this type of behavior are known to be potential school leavers. Children living in disintegrating families have difficulty in attending school regularly. Kerfoot & Butler (1988) contend that couples who display marital conflict are more likely to have children who play truant. Fontana (1995) also makes the same point. He asserts that the child may refuse to go to school because he could be afraid of physical violence between parents or that one or other of them might desert if he or she is not continually on hand. Tilaye (1994) reported that family disagreement or unstable home environment is the major factor for his subjects' dropout than separation or rejection.

In general, unhealthy psycho-social life of parents, i.e., husband-wife disagreement, drug or alcoholic addictive behavior of one or both of parents, etc. contribute to student school interruption, as child rejection is likely to occur in such circumstances (cooper, 1986).

d. Individual Characteristics of Students

Research findings indicate that there are marked variations among students in attending school because of their individual characteristics (i.e., sex, age, grade level, residential area, health problem, etc.).

Some western researchers argue that male students are more liable to quit school than female students (Rumberger, 1987). Other researchers found out that more females than males leave school because they lack appreciation from their parents and are likely to fail in school (Cammish & Brock, 1994). Research in developing countries, both local and foreign, indicate that more girls than boys quit school (Ayalew, 1997; Wanna & Tsion, 1994; UNECEF, 1992). Contrary to the above findings, UNESCO (1980) claimed no significant difference between the sexes in quitting school. A recent report by MOE (2000) argues that in all grades the rate of dropout is lower for girls than for boys.

The age of children can affect their tendency to quit school and to come back after quitting. Older students are liable to remain dropout while the younger ones come back to school. Moreover, the age of students is related to the level of the grade in which they quit schooling. Older students quit

schooling in the first grade of the high school (Grade 9) than in higher grades (Ayalew 1997).

From the analysis of statistical abstract report of MOE (1988), Ayalew (1997) concludes that problems of dropout are more serious at the beginning of a cycle and are more severe on the already deprived sector of the population, i.e., girls and children from rural areas.

Other findings support Ayalew's conclusion. High dropout rate is said to occur at the beginning of an educational cycle, (e.g., grade 1 and grade 9) (Simon, 1980; Tekeste, 1990). However, Tilaye (1997) reported that the highest dropout rate for boys occurred in grade 11.

Summary of the Reviewed Literature

Educational wastage, as a combined effect of dropout and repetition, is a serious issue, especially for the developing countries.

Both in-school and out-school factors contribute to dropout phenomena. Among the in-school factors contributing to school dropout and repetition, various authors emphasized irrelevance of curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction, fear of academic failure (test anxiety) and school discipline problems were the dominant ones.

Among the non-school factors that were associated with dropout, repetition or tardiness/truancy and excessive absenteeism, included the economic constraint of parents, socio-cultural values (such as encouragement of early marriage), excessive use for child labor, family separation, etc.

The authors claimed that there were differences between males and females in susceptibility to these factors. In Western countries boys were more liable to dropout or to repeat grades (Rumberger, 1987), while in the developing countries, the fate was for girls. However, some others claimed no difference between the two. MOE's report (2000) claims that female dropouts were less than males in the 1998/1999 academic year.

However, with the existing realities females may not be favored more than males by the factors of school dropout. Existence of the factors, seriousness of the consequence needs to be investigated. Hence, dropouts and interrupters must be identified, which is the desire of the present writer.

CHAPTER III

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects/Participants

This study involved subjects sampled from three selected senior high schools situated in different districts of East Shoa Zone. The schools were: Busheftu (Debrezeit) comprehensive high school, Hawas (Atse Gelawdiwos) Senior high school, and Zeway senior high school. These high schools are located in Ada'a, Adama and Adami-Tullu districts (*Weredas*), respectively.

The subjects included 120 students who had interrupted their study in the high schools but who were readmitted again in the last three academic years. An equal number of students who were regularly attending their study (those who did not interrupt their schooling) were also included, which means, the total number of the respondents was 240, with equal number of both sexes in both groups. The regular (non-interrupting students) were included for the purpose of comparison against the interrupting group with regard to their attitude towards factors of school interruption

3.2 Sampling

The three high schools were selected on purposive basis for two reasons. Firstly, the schools accommodated students with different socio-

economic and cultural background. Secondly, it was convenient for the researcher to have access with the schools' personnel, which made data collection easier.

Subjects for both groups, those who had interrupted- interrupters and those who did not interrupt- non-interrupters were sampled using stratified random sampling technique to include equal number of representative respondents of both sexes from grades 9, 10 and 11 from each of the three high schools.

In brief, the study included:

- i) 120 individuals from the interrupters readmitted group, with equal number of males and females (60 males and 60 females), composed of 20 males and 20 females from each grade level selected at random.
- ii) 120 individuals sampled in a similar manner from the non-interrupters/ regularly attending students.

Fifteen teachers (five from each high school) who had frequent contact with students (i.e., homeroom teachers, unit leaders, language teachers and principals) were also selected purposely. They were included in the study to confirm the information provided by the subjects.

3.3 Instruments

The measuring instruments consisted of an 18-item questionnaire requiring responses about the subjects' personal characteristics (sex, grade level), and other background information such as marital status, parents' educational and economic background, etc., and the number of years he/she quit school. A scale consisting of 34 items was also used to measure the subjects' opinion about the problems they experienced in classroom instruction and about other constraints that detract students from attending school. Of 34 items, 18 referred to perceived irrelevancy of curriculum, language difficulty, qualification of teachers, fear of failure, services, and discipline problems. The remaining 16 items were questions requiring information about parents' economic problems, socio-cultural value of parents, perceived prospect for further education or employment, distance of school from parent's home, health conditions (of the subjects) and parental need for child labor.

The items were adapted partly from the questionnaire used by Tilay(1997) in collecting data about the problems of high school dropouts and partly from Friedman & Bendas-Jacob(1997).

The instruments also included five interview items for the students. These items required the subjects to indicate why students interrupt their studies, how they return to school, how others persisted, in their studies etc.

A questionnaire consisting of 13 items was also prepared for teachers to ensure data obtained from students. The items focused on teachers' personal characteristics (such as sex, age, qualification, responsibility), relevance of curriculum, students' efficiency in language of instruction, reason for students' school interruption, and school-parent relationship. Interview questions were also included for school administrators in unstructured form.

3.4 Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis

3.4.1 Data Collection

Pilot testing of the questionnaire in its Amharic version was made on subjects similar to those to be included in the main study in Goro high school, which is one of the high schools in East Shoa Zone.

After the pilot testing, adjustment was made regarding omissions and ambiguities. Items, which were found to be unrelated to the issue at hand, were cancelled from the questionnaire. For example, the item that required information about the job of parents was readjusted as an open-ended type rather than in a closed form. Items that required ranking the factors of school interruption were also presented in two categories than in mixed form. Item analysis was also made for the scale items. Discrimination indices of the scale items were calculated and the discriminating power of the items were

checked by calculating t-test for the difference between the 20% upper and 20% lower scorers of the subjects on pilot testing.

After the items with no significant discriminating power had been left out, internal consistency reliability indices were calculated for both parts of the scale items using the Spearman Brown Prophecy formula. The calculated reliability indices, for both classroom instructional problems and non-school problems parts of the scale were .83 and .81, respectively. Some of the items with non-significant t-value were modified by restating or paraphrasing.

In the main study, the adjusted items were administered to the 240 subjects in classroom situation in the selected high schools.

The part of the questionnaire designed for the teachers were separately distributed to the fifteen teachers and collected after three days.

Interview sessions were held with 12 students, 6 interrupters (3 males & 3 females) and 6 non-interrupters (again 3 males and 3 females). Six teachers (one unit leader and one principal from each high school) were also interviewed.

Secondary data were also collected from the documents of high school record offices, Zonal Educational Department and Oromia Education Bureau.

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The study was approached both qualitatively and quantitatively. Data obtained from the secondary sources was analyzed based on averages and percentages in explaining the pervasiveness of school interruption. Data collected regarding the identification of factors related to school interruption were analyzed using multiple correlation coefficients.

With regard to testing for difference between interrupting and non-interrupting students in rating the seriousness of factors related to school interruption, t-test was used since the assumptions underlying t-tests were fulfilled.

Finally, Two -Factor ANOVA was used to analyze the effect of sex and grade difference in rating the Classroom Instructional Problems and Non-School Problems sub-scales.

CHAPTER IV

4. Findings

All the questionnaire papers distributed to the 240 students (120 interrupters and 120 non-interrupters, with equal number of males and females in each group) were collected. Except in a highly limited number of cases in which responses were missing for individual items, all the data were considered in presenting the findings. Secondary sources like the school records also offered pertinent data.

The findings regarding the specific problems that were stated at the beginning are presented as follows.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

4.1.1 The Magnitude of School Interruption

Data obtained from the secondary sources at the study sites are presented in Table 3 (below) to show the general picture of the magnitude of the number of students who interrupt their schooling at one time and resume at the other time in East Shoa Zone senior high schools during the last three years. The data for the three years may include the same individuals who had experienced interrupting and coming back repeatedly after certain laps of time.

Table 1. Percentage of School Interrupters in 12 East Shoa
Zone Senior High Schools(1997/98 – 1999/2000)

Year	Registered (interrupters/non- interrupters)	Grade Level and Sex								
		9		10		11		9-11		
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
1997/98	Interrupters	996	1376	403	561	587	452	1986	2389	4375
	Total	6108	6146	4108	3211	3032	2030	13248	11389	24637
	% of interrupters	16.3	22.4	9.8	17.5	19.4	22.3	14.9	20.9	17.8
1998/99	Interrupters	1306	1776	443	601	677	515	2426	2892	5318
	Total	6207	6216	4308	3311	3932	2232	14447	11759	26206
	% of interrupters	21	28.6	10.3	18.2	17.2	23.1	16.8	24.6	20.3
1999/200	Interrupters	1321	1999	653	825	604	497	2578	3321	5899
	Total	6558	5918	5444	4190	4665	2856	16667	12964	29631
	% of interrupters	20.2	33.8	11.9	19.7	12.9	17.4	15.5	25.6	19.9
1997/98- 1999/2000	Interrupters	3623	5151	1499	1987	1868	1464	6990	8602	15592
	Total	18873	18280	13860	10712	11629	7120	44362	36112	80474
	% of interrupters	19.2	28.2	10.8	18.5	16.1	20.6	15.8	23.8	19.4

Table 1 shows that considerable proportions of interrupting students follow their education intermittently. On the average, the total percentages of interrupters for the 1997/98, 1998/99, and 1999/2000 were 17.8, 20.3 and 19.9, respectively. In each year and each grade level, the proportion of female interrupters exceeded that of males. The magnitude of the number of interrupters was increasing over the years, except for grade 11 interrupters whose number showed decrement in the 1999/2000 academic years. The pick number of the total interrupters was in the 1998/1999 academic years, which is 20.3 percent. The participation rate, which the East Shoa Educational Department reported for the three years, i.e., 16.71, 18.94, and 21.2 percents (for 1997/98 – 1999/2000) included those interrupters.

For schools that were included in the present study, the proportions of interrupters in the 1999/2000 academic years were as follows.

Table 2 Magnitude of Interrupters Relative to the Total Number of Students at the three Study Sites in 1999/2000

School	9		10		11		9-11	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Busheftu (Debrezeit)	75* 91** 12.7***	116 766 15.1	73 555 13.2	84 538 15.6	78 525 14.8	50 356 14.0	226 1671 33.5	250 1660 15.10
Hawas (Atse Gelawdiwos)	84 659 12.7	103 712 14.5	92 720 12.7	67 485 13.8	52 503 10.3	73 495 14.7	228 1882 12.1	243 1692 14.4
Zeway	40 308 12.9	75 484 15.5	45 370 12.2	47 352 13.4	61 456 13.4	46 347 13.3	146 1134 12.4	168 1183 14.8

*number of interrupters

**total Number of Students

***percentage of Interrupters

As depicted in Table 2, similar to the proportion of interrupters at the zonal level, the proportion of female interrupters were slightly greater than the proportion of male interrupters in each of the three study sites.

4.1.2 Factors Related to School Interruption

In pursuit of finding those factors that were associated with the incidence of school interruption, emphasis is given to data obtained through the items that required the subjects to rank the specific variables considered under CIP and NSP in order of their importance in contributing to school interruption, and the subscales that required the subjects to rate the level of their agreement with the view that the specific variables (listed under CIP and

NSP factors) contribute to school interruption with certain degrees of seriousness.

4.1.2.1 The Influence of Classroom Instructional Problems (CIP)

The interrupting subjects ranked the CIP variables from first to fifth as presented in table 2 in order of their seriousness in influencing them to interrupt attending school.

Table 3 Rank Orders of CIP Factors from First to Fifth Based on Percentage Frequency of Interrupters.

CIP Factors	Rank by Grade Level and Sex											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
CR	85*	2**	90	1	100	1	90	1	95	2	50	2
DLI	90	1	80	4	85	4	95	3	70	3	70	3
FAF	95	4	75	2	75	2	60	2	90	1	60	1
TQT	80		70	3	90	3	75	4	90	4	75	4
STB	-	-		-					90	5	95	5
SCR/D	70	5	90	5	20	5	75	5				

n=20 in all cases
 *percentage of rankers (subjects)
 ** rank given by the subjects

The rank was set based on the proportion of the subjects ranking the factors. For example 90 percent of grade 9 males ranked DLI as the first major factor. However, 10 percent of them ranked CR as the first major factors and DLI as the second major factor. These were not indicated in the

factors and DLI as the second major factor. These were not indicated in the table because it was believed to be understood that the remaining proportions rank the other factors differently from the ranks given by the majority of the subjects.

Almost all male and female interrupters in the three grade levels included relevancy of curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction and fear of academic failure within the ranking range from first to third. The primary reasons for school interruption were difficulty in the language of instruction and irrelevancy of curriculum for grade 9 and 10, respectively. Both grade 9 and 11 males and females ranked the problem of curriculum as a second major factor. The prominent factor for grade 11 males and females was fear of academic failure. Dissatisfaction with the teaching quality of was ranked as the third factor by Grade 9 females and grade 10 males, and fourth factor by grade 9 males, grade 10 females and by both males and females in grade 11. Only grade 11 subjects ranked textbook as a fifth major factor, while the two grades (9 & 10) did not include the problem of textbook within the ranking range from first to fifth. Shortages of classrooms or desks were the fifth major factors for both grades 9 & 10, while grade 11 students did not consider this as a factor. All the three grades did not include disciplinary factors such as absenteeism or truancy and quarrel with teachers within the range of ranking from first to fifth.

Further investigation into the level of the influence of CIP variables was made by ranking the subjects' mean scores on the CIP sub-scale items that

required them to rate the seriousness of the factors encouraging school interruption. Table 3 shows the interrupting subjects' mean scores, on the factors ranked from first to fifth in order of their magnitude.

Table 4: Rank Order of Interrupters' Mean Scores on CIP

CIP Factors	Mean Scores and Ranks by grade and Sex*											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
CR	74	2	86	2	92	1	78	1	76	2	72	2
DLI	89	1	92	1	78	2	70	3	74	3	70	3
FAF	72	3	84	3	88	3	74	2	86	1	76	1
QT	70	4	74	4	76	4	66	5	66	5		
STB					68				72	4	66	5
TQT						5	70	4			64	4
SCR/D	66	5	72	5								

n= 20 in all cases
 *mean score of the factor
 **rank of the factor

The mean scores of each factor in each grade level are closer to each other in magnitude and the ranking of the variables in terms of these mean scores is similar to the ranking observed from the percentage frequency of ranks presented on page 28 tables 3.

In this case also the three most important factors on which the interrupters have high mean scores are difficulty in the language of instruction, relevancy of curriculum and fear of academic failure. The remaining factors had, relatively, less influence on the subjects and did not fall with in the ranking range.

On the other hand, in order to judge the co-existences of the specific factors in influencing the subjects, the inter correlation of the scores were treated using Pearson Table 5 depicts the Intercorrelation matrix of classroom instructional factors (C I P)

Table 5 Intercorrelation of Data Concerning Classroom Instructional problems by Sex.

□	CR	DLI	FAF	DQT	QT	SCR/D
CR		.42	.23	.52	.34	.42
DLI	.14		.03	.42	.04	.03
FAF	.04	.24		.24	.32	.42
DQT	.33	.32	.34		.31	.40
QT	.04	.24	.60	.51		.14
SCR/D	.03	.23	.61	.53	.5	

N. B. Values above and below the diagonal are for Fe males and Males, respectively.

From Table 5, it is clear that some of the factors are strongly related while some of them were only slightly related. For example, the intercorrelation coefficients between scores on curriculum relevancy and dissatisfaction with the teaching quality is relatively high ($r = .52$) for the female interrupters. On the other hand, their scores on difficulty in the language of instruction and fear of academic failure are almost unrelated.

4.1.2.2 Influence of Non-School Problems (NSP)

The interrupting subjects ranked the potential factors of school interruption that were identified under NSP. Data obtained from the subjects

ranking of these variables in order of their seriousness in influencing school interruption are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Rank Order of NSP Factors Based on Percentage Frequency of Interrupters

NSP Factors	Mean Scores and Ranks by grade and Sex											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
ECP	80*	3**	70	4	80	2	100	2	100	1	90	1
PPEM	60	4	55	2	35	4	65	3	60	2	75	2
FS	65	5	90	5	55	3	65	4	70	4	80	4
PNCH	75	1	65	1	45	1	75	1			95	3
PFP	65	2	75	3	45	5	65	5	90	3		
HP									75	5	85	5

n=20 in all cases

* Percentage of rankers (interrupters ranking the factor)

** rank given by the rankers (subject)

As indicated in table 6, among the interrupting students, 75 percent of males in grade 9 and 65 percents of females in grade 9, and 45 percent of males and 75 percent of females in grade 10 indicated parental need for their child labor as a first major factor encouraging school interruption. However, grade 11 female interrupters considered it the third factor while males in the same grade did not include it in the ranking range from first to fifth.

Economic problem was the first major problem for 100 percent male and 90 percent female interrupting students in grade 11, while 80 percent and 100 percent males and females in grade 10 identified it as a second factor in contributing to school interruption. Moreover, the 80 percent males and 70 percent of females in grade 9 considered the economic problem as the third and fourth factor, respectively. Parental pressure on their daughter to get

married early was identified as the second most important reason for interrupting schooling by 55 percent of females in grade 9, and 75 percent females and 60 percent of males in grade 11. Family separation as a reason for school interruption was ranked as a fourth major factor by 65 percent of grade 10 females, and 70 percent males and 80 percent of grade 11 interrupting subjects. Health problem was included in the ranking range as a fifth major factor by 75 percent and 85 percent males and females, respectively, in grade 11 only, while interrupters in other two grade levels did not consider it as a major factor.

When the ranking procedure of the NSP factors are contrasted with the ranking procedure of CIP factors, the NSP factors ranking differed greatly between grade levels and within grade levels. That is, according to this ranking only, the influence of a factor in seriousness differed across grade levels and with sex type. However, in ranking the CIP factors almost similar pattern of agreement is observed especially between males and females.

Comparing the subjects' mean scores on the NSP sub-scale also assessed the seriousness of NSP factors in influencing school interruption. Table 7 presents mean scores of variables identified under NSP factors in order of their magnitude.

Table 7 Rank Order of NSP Factors Based on Mean Scores of Interrupters

NSP Factors	Mean Scores and Ranks by Grade and Sex											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
ECP	78*	3**	80	3	60	3	86	3	84	1	80	4
PPEM	80	2	84	2	78	2	88	2	76	3	92	1
FS	68	5	68	5	72	4	82	5	76	3		
PNCH	82	1	92	1	90	1	92	1			80	3
PFP	72	4	78	4	70	5	84	4	80	2	88	2
HP									68	5	76	5

n=20 in all cases

*Mean score of the factor

**rank of the score

The interrupting male and female subjects in grade 9 and 10 rated parental need for their children's labor as the first prominent factor influencing school interruption. Almost all males and females of the interrupting students rated parental pressure on their sons and daughters to get married early was identified as the second most important reason for interrupting schooling. Grade 9 and 10 male and female interrupters also showed similar pattern of rating the seriousness of economic problem in encouraging school interruption. Data in table 6 shows that the influence of perceived future prospect was stronger for grade 11 interrupting students. The mean score related to rating the effect of health problem on school interruption is ranked fifth for grade 11 males and females, while for the other two grades mean scores on this factor is not included in the ranking range from first to fifth. Mean scores on rating the influence of family separation are ranking the fifth for grade 9 males and females, and grades 10 females. Grade 10 and 11 males, respectively, rated family separation as the fourth and third influencing

factor of school interruption while grade 11 females' mean score on this factor is not included in the ranking range.

Although there is no direct relationship between the ranking of the factors based on the percentage of rankers and the mean scores on the rating, the two procedures show almost similar pattern of hierarchy in influencing the subjects.

More over, these variables might have affected individuals by existing closely together or they might have no relationship. The following table reflects the Intercorelation coefficients between the different variables of non-school problems.

Table 8 Intercorelation Data Concerning Non-School Problems by Sex.

	ECP	PPEM	FS	PNCH	PFP	HP
ECP		.40	.40	.31	.50	.23
PPEM	.31		.10	.40	.21	.14
FS	.24	.13		.51	.14	.34
PNCH	.34	.40	.20		.20	.24
PFP	.50	.41	.14	.32		.13
HP	.30	.12	.23	.13	.34	

N. B. Values above and below the diagonal are for
Males and Females, respectively

The table depicts relatively moderate Intercorelation coefficients between the scores of the subjects on the factors in most of the cases. For example, the shared variance between scores on perceived future prospects and scores on the effect of economic problem was 25 percent for both male

and female interrupters. Conversely scores on parental need for child labor and health problem had low value of r for their intercorrelation.

In general, with the limitation of the ranking procedure and ranking range specified, the factors falling within the ranking range, for at least some of the grade level and male and female group include the following

- a). CIP factors ranking from first to fifth:
 - 1. Difficulty in the language of instruction
 - 2. Curriculum irrelevancy
 - 3. Fear of academic failure
 - 4. Dissatisfaction with teaching quality
 - 5. Shortage of classroom /desks

- b). NSP factors ranking from first to fifth:
 - 1. Economic problem
 - 2. Parental pressure for early marriage
 - 3. Parental need for child labor
 - 4. Perceived future prospect
 - 5. Family Separation

4.1.3 Contribution of CIP and NSP to the Duration of School Interruption

It seems reasonable to assume that the length of the duration of school interruption (measured in months) is either directly or indirectly related to the

seriousness of the factors contributing to school interruption. Assessment of this relationship is made by analyzing the association between the scores on the rating scale items measuring the specific variables under the two broad categories, i.e., scores on the sub-scale of CIP variables and scores on the sub- scale of the NSP. The scores on the specific variables were summed and averaged over the two sub-scales separately. The combined effect of the two category variables is investigated by calculating multiple correlation coefficients for both male and female interrupters separately. (The cumulative raw Data on CIP and NSP and duration of school interruption are attached in appendix 2). Table 9 presents brief intercorrelation matrix between cumulative scores on CIP, NSP and Duration of School Interruption (DSI).

Table 9 Correlation Coefficients between DSI, CIP and NSP.

	DSI	CIP	NSP
DSI		.68	.47
CIP	.70		.35
NSP	.56	.57	

n= 60 in both cases

N .B. values above and below the diagonals are for females and males, respectively.

From the correlation coefficients presented in Table 9, multiple correlation coefficients were calculated by deriving from regression coefficients as explained in Hinkle et. al.(1994).

Accordingly, the calculated linear multiple correlation coefficient between the duration of school interruption and the two major category factors for the females and males are $R = .72$ and $R = .73$, respectively. Hence, the proportion of variation in the duration of school interruption that can be attributed to the variation due to the combined effect of CIP and the NSP that the individual females and males had faced are 51.84 percent and 53.29 percent, respectively. Testing for statistical significance of these proportions resulted in statistically significant value for the female ($F = 30.67$, $p < .05$). Similarly, the 53.84 percent proportional variance in the duration of interruption is statistically significant for males ($F = 32.53$, $p < .05$).

On the other hand, the strength of association between the duration of interruption and scores on CIP and NSP is also assessed using partial correlation analysis procedure. Accordingly, the correlation between the length of the duration of school interruption and scores on CIP, while scores on the NSP statistically are controlled, are .62 and .56 for females and males, respectively. The correlation between duration of interruption and NSP, the other factor fixed, is .34 for females and .27 for males.

4.1.4. Difference between Interrupters and Non-Interrupters in Their Attitude Scores on Factors Related to Interruption

The scores of interrupters and non-interrupters on rating the factors related to school interruption were compared. This was to identify if there is a difference between these groups of students in rating the factors in their opinion, as highly or minimally influential in detracting them from attending school.

4.1.4.1 Attitude scores on CIP sub-scale

Table 10 shows the mean scores of non-interrupters on rating the seriousness of the CIP variables. Compared to the mean scores of the interrupters (see Table 4), these are the lesser values, which meant that non-interrupters were not influenced by the factors.

Table 10 Mean Scores and Their Ranks for Non-Interrupters on the CIP Factors

CIP Factors	Mean Scores and Ranks by Grade and Sex											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
CR	70*	1	56	5	56	5	54	5	48		52	-
DLI	56	5	62	4	68	1	60	4	56	5	60	5
FAF	62	4	64	3	66	2	76	1	68	3	68	3
QT	66	2	66	2	66	2	70	3	62	4	66	4
STB	48		44		48		24		80	1	80	1
SCR/D	64	3	74	1	54		26		46		48	
DQT	60		52			2	74	2	72	2	80	1

n=20 for each variable

*Mean Score of Factors

**Rank of the Mean Score

When the rank orders of the mean scores of the interrupters and non-interrupters are compared the two groups showed contrasting pattern of the CIP sub-scale items. For example, mean score on the 'difficulty in the language of instruction' is 2.8 and ranked fifth for the non-interrupting grade 9 males, while it is 4.0 and ranked first for the respective interrupting grade 9 males. Similar differences are seen regarding other CIP Variables. Moreover, in contrast to the interrupters, the mean scores and their ranking pattern of male and female non-interrupters within the same grade level differed while, comparatively, the interrupting subjects had similar pattern of rating the CIP sub-scale.

Interrupting and non-interrupting students were compared also in terms of the difference between their mean scores on the sub-scales. Table 11 presents the result of this comparison.

Table 11 Comparison between Mean Scores of Interrupters and Non-Interrupters Concerning CIP

CIP Factors	Interrupters				Non-interrupters				t	
	Male		Females		Male		Females		Male	Female
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
CR	4.0	1.2	3.9	1.3	2.9	1.1	2.5	2.2	3.022*	3.677*
DLI	3.8	1.3	3.9	1	3.0	1.1	3.0	.9	2.101*	2.992*
FAG	4.1	.8	3.9	.7	3.3	.8	3.1	.6	3.162*	3.881*
DQT	3.3	1.2	3.5	1.2	3.3	.9	3.6	1.2	0.000	.264
QT	3.5	.9	3.3	.8	3.2	.7	3.3	.8	1.177	.000
STB	2.8	1.1	2.8	1.0	3.5	1.2	3.4	1.2	1.923	1.78
SCR/D	3.2	1.5	3.4	1.1	2.8	1.2	3.0	1.3	.931	1.051

*P< .05 only in these cases
n=20 for all cases

The difference between mean scores of interrupters and non-interrupters is statistically significant only with regard to the first three factors displayed in Table 11. These differences were in favor of the non-interrupters; i.e., the factors were less serious for the non-interrupters. The differences were not significant with regard to the other CIP factors tested.

4.1.4.2. Attitude scores on NSP Sub-scale

Table 12 shows the non-interrupters' mean scores on NSP factors ranked in order of their magnitude. It is discernible from the table that the sizes of most of the mean scores of the non-interrupting students are lower compared to the mean scores of the interrupting students.

Table 12 Rank Order of NSP Factors Based on Mean Scores of Non-Interrupters

NSP Factors	Mean Scores and Ranks by grade and Sex											
	9				10				11			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
ECP	76*	2**	68	2	76	2	74	2	74	2	82	1
PPEM	62	5	66	4	62	4	66	3	66	3	60	3
FS	66	4	64	5	60	5	62	4	62	5	58	5
PNCH	80	3	68	2	68	3	60	5	66	3	60	3
PFP		1	86	1	88	1	92	1	84	1	82	1

n=20 in all cases

*Mean score of the factor in percentage

**Rank of the factor

The rank orders of the mean scores of the non-interrupters also markedly differ from those of the interrupters. The mean scores of grade 9 and 10 interrupters of both males and females on economic problem rank

third, while the mean scores of the non-interrupters of the same grade level on the same factor rank second, except for grade 11 female non-interrupters whose mean score on this factor ranks first among the mean scores on NSP factors rated by them. The mean scores on parental pressure on early marriage factor rank second for most of the interrupting students while for most of the non-interrupting group the mean scores on this factor rank third or fourth. However, both interrupters and non-interrupters except for grade 11 interrupters whose mean score did not fall within the ranking range rated family disintegration almost similarly. Mean scores of interrupters on parental need for their children's labor rank first except for grade 11 which rank third for the females, but which was not included in the ranking range for the males. The non-interrupters' mean scores on this factor rank third; except for grade 9 and 10 females whose mean scores rank second and fifth, respectively.

In contrast to the above pattern of comparisons, the mean scores on the perceived future prospect for the non-interrupters and interrupters are much more closer to each other. The mean scores of the interrupters on this measure rank differently across the grade levels while the mean scores of the non-interrupters uniformly rank first. This is because the mean scores of the non-interrupters are relatively higher on this factor compared to their mean scores on the other NSP factors.

In comparing the mean scores of interrupters and non-interrupters on rating the NSP factors, statistically significant difference was observed with regard to the parental pressure for early marriage, favoring the non-interrupters. Mean scores on parental need for child labor and health condition was statistically significantly differed for females of the two groups only.

Table 13 Comparisons between Mean Scores of Interrupters and Non-Interrupters Concerning NSP

NSP Factors	Interrupters				Non-interrupters				t	
	Male		Females		Male		Females		Male	Female
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
EDP	3.7	.7	4.1	.9	3.6	.8	3.7	.9	.431	1.405
PPEM	3.9	.8	4.4	.8	3.1	.7	3.3	.9	3.366*	4.085*
FS	3.6	.7	3.6	.8	2.6	.6	3.1	.8	.000	1.976
PNCH	3.8	1.5	4.4	1.6	3.3	1.5	3.1	1.4	1.054	.2735
PFP	3.7	1.4	4.2	1.1	4.2	1.2	4.3	1.6	1.213	.230
HP	3.2	1.1	4.3	1.2	3.2	.9	3.2	.9	.000	3.279*

n=60 in all cases

* p<.5, only in this case

However, differences between interrupters and non-interrupters were not statistically significant with regard to their mean scores on factors rated under non-school problems.

In general, when the mean scores of the interrupters and non-interrupters are compared, the lesser sizes of the mean scores of the non-interrupters explain that the non-interrupters rated the factors of both CIP and NSP as minimally influential than the interrupters. This implies that both the CIP and NSP factors were associated more with the interrupters than the

non-interrupters. Data obtained both from the ranking procedure of factors identified as specific measures under both CIP and NSP factors and from the mean scores on items of the two sub-scales may explain the major factors associated with school interruption.

4.1.5.Differences in Susceptibility to CIP & NSP by Sex and Grade

From the assessment of the proportion of the subjects ranking the CIP and NSP specific factors, and the size of the higher or lower magnitude of scores, students' susceptibility to the specific factors seemed to vary with grade levels and sexes. However, from computation of Two Factor ANOVA, more accurate explanation of the effect of differing in grade level or being male or female could be possible.

Considering the rating sub-scales as dependent variable, while sex and grade level are independent variables, the analysis is made for both CIP and NSP factors. This was made, first, by considering (summing up) all the scores on the specific variables categorized under either CIP or NSP (for e.g. scores on all variables under CIP taken as a unit score and scored out of 30 for an individual subject). Secondly, Two-Factor ANOVA is also made for some of the specific variables under both CIP and NSP.

4.1.5.1 Effect of Sex and Grade Level on Rating CIP

Table 14. presents data on Two Factor ANOVA on rating scores on CIP sub-scale

Table 14 ANOVA for Sex and Grade Level on Rating the CIP Sub-scale

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{obt}
Sex (s)	73.6	1	73.6	3.66
Grade level (GL)	8.45	2	4.225	0.21
S x GL.	42.85	2	21.425	1.06
Residual	2295.6	114	20.14	

P> .05, in all cases

The result shows that there was neither main effect nor an interaction effect. That is, neither sex nor grade level had an effect for differences between the subjects.

An attempt was also made to investigate whether or not the subjects differ in rating the items dealing with specific factors. Following the same procedures as in the analysis made on the total scores on CIP ANOVA was used to check if the subjects (in terms of sex and grade levels) differ in rating some of the specific factors under CIP and NSP

Among the CIP factors, scores on 'difficulty in the language of instruction' and 'fear of academic failure' were considered because differences were expected on these major factors either in terms of sexes or

grade level, or both, or differences due to interaction effect since those were the prominent factors. Table 15 presents analysis made on curriculum relevancy.

Table 15 ANOVA Table for Sex and Grade Level on Rating Language Difficulty

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{obt}
Sex (s)	2.7	1	2.70	2.04
Grade level (GL)	11.49	2	5.744	4.33*
S x GL.	3.14	2	1.569	1.18
Residual	151.125	114		

P< .05, in this case only

The table shows that sex had no significant main effect. That is, the differences between the mean scores for sexes averaged over the grade levels may be attributed to chance factor. However, the differences between the grade levels cannot be attributed to chance factor since the differences between the means are statistically significant. Differences within a grade in mean scores on rating language difficulty cannot be generalized for the grade levels differences, as the Sex Vs Grade Levels interaction is not statistically significant.

ANOVA for 'fear of academic failure' resulted in statistically significant value (F = 8.07) for difference between the mean scores of males and females indicating that sex had a significant main effect. Table 15 presents these data.

Table 16 A NOVA for Sex and Grade Level on Rating 'Fear of Academic Failure'

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{obt}
Sex (S)	5.72	1	5.72	8.068*
Grade level (GL)	2.12	2	1.06	1.495
S x GL.	0.79	2	.395	0.557
Residual	80.84	114	.709	

*P< .05, in this case only

Therefore, the differences between the mean scores for sex averaged over the grade levels cannot be attributed only to chance factor. However, the grade level main effect and interaction between sex and grade did not show significant mean difference.

4.1.5.2. Effect of Sex and Grade level on Rating NSP

Regarding ANOVA for Scores on parental need for child labor the F-test is not statistically significant for the main effect and the interaction effect.

Table 17 ANOVA for Sex and Grade Level on Rating NSP Sub-scale

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{obt}
Sex (S)	56	1	56	3.51
Grade level (GL)	24.2	2	12.1	0.757
S x GL.	24.1	2	12.05	0.754
Residual	18	114	15.075	

P> .05, in all cases

Similar to the CIP, the total score on NSP had neither main effect nor interaction effect. The F ratios are less than the critical value of 3.92=. 95 F, 114.

Among the specific factors examined under NSP, mean scores on rating, parental need for child labor and parental pressure for early marriage were analyzed using Two-Factor ANOVA. This factor was selected because the subjects' mean scores and standard deviation of scores on these factors were relatively higher.

Nevertheless, ANOVA for mean scores on 'parental pressure for early marriage' had statistically significant main effect for sex (F = 9.82) and interaction effect (F = 6.05). Table 18 presents this data.

Table 18 ANOVA for Sex and Grade Level on Rating the Influence of Marriage

Source	SS	df	MS	F _{obt}
Sex (S)	5.043	1	5.043	9.82*
Grade level (GL)	0.225	2	0.113	0.220
S x GL.	6.215	2	3.107	6.05*
Residual	58.52	114	0.513	
	2			
P< .05 only in these cases				

There is a significant main effect for the sex for which the scores when averaged over the grade levels change considerably. However, the

differences among the grade level scores averaged over the males and females are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, the effect of one of the factors, i.e., sex or grade levels in being sensitive to the parental pressure for early marriage was not the same at levels of one of the other factors, as the interaction effect is statistically significant.

4.2. DISCUSSION

4.2.1 Overview

School interrupting students could be considered as a special group of students in contrast to the regular students. This is so, because at least the interrupting students must have experienced time lag in academic achievement in addition to facing either classroom instructional problems or the other non-school problems.

It was found out that school interruption had occurred every year and in every high school of the East Shoa Zone, with the trend of increasing rate.

Among the CIP factors identified, the major ones that were rated as highly serious by the subjects include fear of academic failure, curriculum relevancy, difficulty in the language of instruction and shortage of classrooms.

Other home related factors included parental pressure for early marriage, family separation, parental need for child labor, teaching quality and economic problem. Considerable relationship were observed between the length of duration of interruption and the subjects' scores on the sub-scale measuring their attitude about the influence of the factors mentioned above.

Overall the data show that there are only slight variations, especially with regard to the CIP, between males and females, and among the grade levels with regard to the influence of the factors on their schooling. When the difference is significant, mostly it favored the male group, i.e., males scored lower on rating the sub-scales than the females did which means males had not been seriously affected by the factors since the interpretation is that the higher the score the more serious is the problem.

4.2.2 Specific Issues

4.2.2.1 Pervasiveness of School Interruption

Data from the secondary source about the magnitude of interrupting students that were obtained from East Shoa Zone Educational Department showed that in the last three consecutive years school interrupting students, who were readmitted in the respective years, formed a considerable proportion of the total number of students in the high schools of the zone.

For the respective academic years of 1997/98, 1998/99, and 1999/2000, the percentages of interrupters were 17.76, 20.29 and 19.91. The over all average number of interrupters of the last three years account for 19.38 percent of the total students in East Shoa Zone High Schools. The proportion of interrupting students also showed increment in proportion to the increment of the total population of the students.

The percentage of interrupters also differed for males and females and also for grades. In all the three years for all the three grade levels, the percentage of female interrupters were greater than that of males both at the zonal level and at the study sites except for grade 11 interrupters in Hawas (Atse Gelawdwos) high school in the 1999/2000 academic year in which female and male interrupters were equal in proportion. Interestingly, the percentage of the respective male and female interrupters in the three study sites were closely related ranging almost from 13 percent to 16 percent at the zonal level, the highest proportion of interrupters was of the females (33%) in 1999/2000 academic year. The percentages of grade 10 interrupters were relatively the lowest compared to the other two grades.

The higher percentage of female interrupters may imply that the negative influences both from school situation and non-school situation were more sever for females. With regard to classroom instruction, teachers

usually forget the females more than males, and consequently less motivated to attend school. With regard to non-school situation, interview subjects confirmed, many female students interrupt attending school because of lack of security. Roadside gangsters were said to rape the female kids especially those who joined grade 9 newly.

Moreover, the first cycle of high school education (grade 9) could be the toughest for most of the students because of their different background, which make adjustment difficult. These may include problems related to school such as curriculum relevancy, difficulty in the language of instruction, study habit, e.t.c or problems related to parents, difficulty in separation from parents, in the case of those who were coming from relatively distant place.

The consequence of school interruption is tremendous in terms of both individual student and the society. With regard to the individual, the student may face readjustment problem, for example, forgetting what had been learned, feeling about remaining behind others, difficulty in detaching one self from certain habits such as involvement in social or religious rites, etc.

With regard to societal or institutional problem, as confirmed by interview with school personnel, the frequent school interruption and readmission made teaching extremely difficult, i.e., they claimed, it

aggravated shortage of classrooms and desks, textbooks, and other educational materials. Moreover, teachers faced problem in readjusting the interrupters in terms of academic achievement because such students lag behind others, or they come with unwanted behavior, for example, smoking, lack of patience or attention in classroom, quarrel with teachers, aggressiveness, etc.

On the other-hand the ever-increasing educational cost would be doubled per interrupter for the schools and, of course, for the interrupter and parents.

4.2.2.2. Factors Related to School Interruption

4.2.2.2.1 C I Ps as Factors Related to School Interruption

The most critical factors related to school interruption were found to be relevancy of curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction and fear of academic failure. The subjects in the three grades ranked these factors from first to third in terms of their seriousness in aggravating school interruption.

Curriculum irrelevancy was among the three high-ranking factors in contributing to school interruption. Interview with the students and teachers explained that the curriculum was unrelated both to the students' interest and

their capacity to comprehend. They emphasized that most of grade 9 and 10 students interrupt attending school because it was beyond their capacity, or they lacked sufficient background. Elementary schools should have laid fertile ground in assuring students readiness to join high school. However, poor curriculum implementation might have kept the students unprepared or either the mode of teaching or the curriculum itself might have lacked linkage with the high school curriculum.

Difficulty in the language of instruction necessarily aggravates the problems in the curriculum, in particular, and classroom instruction, in general. This finding agrees with the findings of Tilaye (1997) and Tadesse (1974) on the problems of high school dropouts that High School students faced a serious problem because of lack of proficiency in English language. Interview with some of the subjects confirmed that they had not been taught the language adequately in the lower grades. Difficulty in the language of instruction leaves communication gap between student and teacher and between student and textbooks. This creates frustration and hesitation in the child that usually ends in unplanned decision to quit studying.

Analysis of interview made with both interrupting students confirmed that both the curriculum and language of instruction were beyond their understanding level. The interviewed teachers mentioned that most of the

grade 9 students who had interrupted study in the 1999/2000 academic years were unable to grasp the content of the curriculum that did not fit their educational background and mental maturity. Besides, they were expected to study in the new language of instruction that immediately replaced their mother tongue or second language that was used as a medium of instruction in the grades one to eight.

Difficulty faced with the language of instruction and curriculum irrelevancy could naturally develop a sense of facing failure in students. From assessment of student attendance it was conclusive that most of the students used to interrupt their study mainly in December and February, just after they had checked their performance on the mid-semester tests or first semester examinations. That is, students with lower achievement in these tests and examinations predetermine to interrupt on the pretext that if they continued they would fail, and they preferred interrupting to failing to be saved from being considered as failures by the school, as the school would not readmit failures or repeaters the following year due to shortage of classrooms and desks. From the ranking procedure, grade 11 interrupting students ranked fear of academic failure as the first major factor for their school interruption. This was supported by interview with school principals. They mentioned that certain number of students in grade 11 interrupt their

study in order to get sufficient time to prepare themselves for the national examination that they would face.

The ranking procedure of CIP variables indicates that dissatisfaction with teaching quality was ranked as the fourth factor by most of the interrupting subjects. Interview with interrupters confirm that the present teachers of high schools were not in a position to implement even the relevant curriculum, let alone readjusting the 'irrelevant curriculum.' School directors also stressed that it was unthinkable that school interruption intervention could be possible within the context of the reality of schools' organization and with a few professionally trained teachers who were/are expected to teach 73 to 114 students within a classroom.

Observation of disciplinary problems was made with regard to absenteeism or tardiness and quarrel with teachers. From information obtained through interview made with some of the subjects and school administrative bodies, it was understood that although absenteeism, tardiness and quarrel with teachers were the common problems, students were not forced to interrupt schooling as a result of these factors. The ranking results also did not include these factors within the ranking range of first to fifth.

4.2.2.2.2 NSP as Factors Related to School Interrupters

The percentage frequencies of rankers indicate that for the greater proportion of interrupters. Parental need for child labor, economic problem and parental pressure for early marriage were the three major factors that detracted them from attending their education. Family separation and health condition were relatively less serious as compared to the above three factors. From interview discussion with the interrupters, it was understood that they were required to serve their parents at home or at work place not only during their free time but, they said, some times they were absent from school to work the household routine chores such as cooking, cleaning, or working on farmland (in the country side) or attending shop (at towns).

School personnel also argued that they knew that some of the interrupters were working, for example, in garage shops, at market places, on farm land etc. to get money or to produce crop. The interrupting respondents stressed that if things were not conducive to carry out such income generating activities and schooling side by side, i.e., working at one shift and attending class at the other shift, they would choose working, in the hope of continuing the following year or attending night school program. The reason they suggested for this was that most of the interrupters were involved in income generating activities just to exist at subsistence level.

Marriage was found to be the second most influencing factor for the majority of the interrupters when their mean scores are ranked. Moreover, only slight variations are observed with regard to the rank given by the subjects directly. These ranking confirmed the adversity of parental pressure for marriage.

A healthy state of parents contributes to the normal schooling of a child, as it secures the psychological state of the child. The analysis of data in terms of percentage of rankers and mean score ranking procedure show that the problem of family separation in contributing to school interruption ranks the fourth or fifth factor. Of course, mean score on item measuring seriousness of family separation did not fall within the ranking range from first to fifth, which contradict with the ranking result in terms of percentage frequency of rankers for unknown reasons.

On the other hand, data on the family structure show that 46.67 percent of male and 36.67 percent of female interrupters were not living with intact family. Reasons for living without intact family, as the subjects listed, were parental negligence, parents' inability to help their children economically, or family separation due to divorce or death of parents. The problem of family separation usually causes economic problem, and other

social problems such as encouragement to marriage, involvement in income generating activities, etc., all of which encourage school interruption.

Perceived prospect to continue higher education or to get job was also found to be an important factor detracting students from school. Almost all of the school personnel interviewed mentioned 'tesfamekuret' - meaning lack of hope- as among the major factors for school interruption.

Another factor could be student's health condition, which was not considered as a major factor by most of the students. Interview with teachers suggested that students rarely interrupted because of health problem.

The other non-school factors assessed included the influence of peer group affinity. This, as a factor for school interruption, was also not included in the ranking range from first to fifth. This implies that peer groups did not influence school interruption to any important degree.

Distance of school from home also did not fall within the ranking range specified of first to fifth in both procedures of rankings in terms of their percentage frequency of rankers and in terms of the magnitude of mean score on items for rating the seriousness of this problem. Only 14 percent of the interrupters were coming from a distant place (more than 7 km away from

home) in contrast to Tilaye's finding (1997) that his subjects were used to walking one to one and half hours from home to school (in his study on dropouts in East Gojjam).

4.2.2.3 Relationship between Factors of School Interruption and Duration of Interruption

Logically, the higher the seriousness of factors of school interruption the wider the gap between time of interruption and time of re-admission and, if this is true, it might be possible to say that the strength of association was strong.

Analysis of data on CIP and NSP taken as independent variables and their correlation with the duration of interruption, as measured by months, resulted in higher magnitudes of R for both male and female interrupters. Therefore, the explained variance brought about by the combination of CIP and NSP were 53.29 percent for females and 51.84 percent for males. Although testing the proportional variance for both males and females resulted in statistically significant values (females, $F=30.67$; males, $F=32.53$, $p<.05$); the unexplained variance is also relatively high that about 47% and 48% for females and males, respectively, variation accounts for other factors. Probably the participants might have offered distorted information about the duration of interruption.

Moreover, when the effect of one of the factors was partialled out, the contribution of one of the other factor was less minimal, i.e., CIP alone accounted 38 percent for females' interruption and 31 percent for males' interruption. Furthermore, NSP alone contributed only 12 percent and 7 percent for females and males, respectively.

4.2.2.4 Attitude Difference between Interrupting and Non-interrupting Students on Rating Factors of School Interruption

The level of influence of school interruption factors was further assessed by comparing the mean scores of interrupting and non-interrupting students on rating the CIP and NSP sub-scales.

For most of the factors, the cumulative mean scores were higher for interrupting students than for the non-interrupting students. Testing for difference between the two groups resulted in significant t-values with regard to curriculum relevancy, language difficulty and fear of academic failure under the CIP category factor. It means these factors were less unfavorable for the non-interrupting group.

The two groups also differed with regard to their attitude towards the non-school problems though the difference was mainly for the females

compared to the CIP factors. Comparison of their mean scores on parental pressure for early marriage resulted in significant t-value, while the difference in rating parental need for child labor and health condition was statistically significant for females of the two groups.

The less seriousness of the factors for the non interrupters may have contributed for their persistence in regular attending of school, while it might have been the reverse for the interrupters.

4.2.2.5 Effect of Sex and Grade Level on Proneness to Factors of School Interruption

4.2.2.5.1 Effect of Sex on Proneness to CIP and NSP

a. Effect of Sex on Proneness to CIP

Modern schools are expected to encourage equal treatment of males and females. Hence, under normal conditions, the CIP as factors should govern both male and female students equally.

Data concerning rating the CIP apparently show that both males and females were equally influenced by the factors to interrupt their study. However, detection of scores on specific factors showed statistically significant difference between mean scores of male and female interrupters. With regard to curriculum problem, interview with teachers suggested that most of the

students join grade 9 without the necessary background, as the elementary school teachers lacked sufficient training in teaching the new curriculum. The problem might be more serious for the female interrupters as they may interact less and make less effort to improve as compared to males. This view agrees with Partica's finding (1994) that females show less interaction in classroom. However, the data imply that males interrupt more because of fear of failure when compared to females. Teachers' interviewee had to suggest this: usually males use strategies such as retreating from taking tests, interrupting, etc., to avoid the consequences of failure, such as lack of social acceptance when failed or school's refusal to accept the following year(s) because of failing twice.

Analysis of the cumulative score on rating CIP sub-scale using Two-Factor ANOVA explained that both male and female subjects rated the factors to the same level of seriousness in influencing them to interrupt. Sex had no significant effect.

However, variations due to the effect of sex were not observed with regard to rating the seriousness of curriculum relevancy alone as a factor. In the suggestion part of the questionnaire both teachers and students emphatically opposed the existing curriculum, which implies that all the subjects were equally prone to the problem of curriculum relevancy.

For detailed analysis of the effect of sex, ANOVA was also applied to the rating score on fear of failure. The result showed that sex had a significant main effect. However, mean score difference due to the effect of either grade or interaction between sex and grade was not observed.

b) Effect of Sex on Proneness to NSP

The effect of sex difference in susceptibility to NSP was also investigated using Two-Factor ANOVA. Similar to the analysis of CIP, application of ANOVA to the cumulative rating score on NSP resulted in non-significant main effect for sex.

However, when the specific variables were checked by the same procedure, differences were discernible. For example, the mean scores on rating the seriousness of parental pressure for early marriage as a factor contributing to school interruption showed difference with sex (main effect)

In general both of the major categories of factors CIP and NSP were likely to affect females than males, since the relationship between the duration of their interruption and scores on rating these factors were relatively more stronger, either in combination or when singled out, for females than males. Besides, comparatively, females rated the NSP sub-scale more

seriously than CIP while males, on the average, rated both of the sub-scales almost similarly.

4.2.2.5.2 Effect of Grade on Proneness to CIP and NSP

a) Effect of Grade on Proneness to CIP

The ranking result showed that the major three CIP factors were curriculum relevancy, difficulty in the language of instruction and fear of academic failure. Among these, grade 9 students ranked difficulty in the language of instruction first. While fear of academic failure was the first major factor for grade 11 students. All the three grade levels rank the problem of dissatisfaction with the teaching quality as the fourth or fifth.

Grade had main effect for the subjects to be susceptible to the influence of difficulty in the language of instruction. From the analysis of interview with teachers, grade 9 students were more susceptible to the problem of language of instruction and it was an obstacle to classroom instruction. The elementary school teachers were condemned for the students' low proficiency of English language, because the language was not taught adequately. Besides, in the elementary schools, the medium of instruction was either Oromic Language or Amharic Language.

Perceived irrelevance of curriculum had influenced all the school interrupters regardless of their grade level. Interviewed subjects suggested that they were forced to learn what they did not want to learn. On the other hand, the interviewed teachers said that most of the interrupting students were interested more in non-academic aspects of education. They mentioned that most of those students were active in dramas, games and other practical activities, such as in co-curricular leanings.

The psychological disturbance of students due to fear of academic failure had influenced students in all grade levels equally, as the ANOVA result on rating score about the influence of fear of failure does not show significant main effect of grade for the interrupters. Moreover, susceptibility to the over all influence of the CIP factors did not vary as a result of difference in grade level.

b) Effect of Grade on Proneness to NSP

Among the NSP factors on which the subjects were treated, economic problem, parental pressure for early marriage and parental need for child labor were the evidences by which the interrupting subjects were influenced to interrupt attending school, regardless of their grade level.

Although the ranking result showed that grade 11 male interrupters were more influenced by economic problem and less by the parental need for child labor, ANOVA result indicated that grade had no main effect on their susceptibility to the three NSP factors mentioned above. Moreover, ANOVA for the over all total score on NSP factors indicated that grade level had no main effect on the subjects' susceptibility to the NSP factors.

4.2.2.5.3 Effect of Interaction between Sex and Grade On Proneness to CIP and NSP

Differences between the subjects in susceptibility to the influence of CIP and NSP because of interaction effect between sex and grade level were not statistically significant except for marriage factor. Differences in susceptibility to the other factor occurred regardless of sex or grade level while with regard to marriage factor individuals were liable to interrupt their education because of pressure from parents and the pressure varies with male or female and the grade level.

CHAPTER V

5. Summary, Conclusion & Recommendations

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the pervasiveness of school interruption, the major factors associated with the occurrence of interruption, the difference between male and female interrupters and difference among grade levels in susceptibility to the factors of interruption.

In achieving the objectives, among the twelve government high schools in East Shoa Zone, Oromia Region, three of them were randomly selected to include in the study. Respondents were 120 interrupting students (with equal number of male and female) from grade (9-11) randomly sampled from the three high schools. An equal number of non-interrupting students were also included (with equal proportion of males and females from the three grade levels) for the purpose of comparison against the interrupters with regard to their attitude towards the seriousness of factors of school interruption. Fifteen teachers /school personnel/ were also sampled on purposive basis to be included in the study.

The result of investigation showed that the percentage of interrupting students in East Shoa Zone were 20.9, 24.6 and 25.6 for females and 17.6, 20.3 and 19.9 for males in 1997/98, 1998/99 and 1999/2000 academic years, respectively. These data show that school interruption was more pervasive for females than for males and the rate was increasing from year to year.

The major reasons for school interruption included both classroom instructional problems and non-school problems. Among the classroom instructional problems, the prominent ones were: irrelevancy of curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction, and fear of academic failure. Among the non-school problems were: economic constraint, parental need for help from their child and parental pressure for early marriage of their daughter or son.

Scores on rating the seriousness of these problem factors (reasons) significantly correlated with the duration of interruption. The proportional variances of the total scores on classroom instructional factors and the total score on non-school factors with the duration of interruption were 51.84 percent and 53.29 percent for females and males, respectively. The independent contribution of these factors to the variance of duration of interruption was 38.44 percent 31.36 percent for females and males, respectively, in the case of classroom instructional factors; and 1.56 percent and 7.29 percent for females and males respectively, in the case of non-school factors.

Comparison of interrupting and non-interrupting students in their attitude towards classroom instructional problems showed significant difference with regard to curriculum relevancy, difficulty in the language of instruction and fear of academic failure (for both males and females) on the other hand, they differed in attitude towards non-school factors, for example, with regard to parental pressure for early marriage (for both males and females) while differences were observed between female interrupters and female non-interrupters with regard to parental need for help from their child and with regard to health problem.

The greater percentages of female interrupters for the last three years mentioned above may make some observation for females' proneness to factors of school interruption. However, Two Factor ANOVA for the overall mean scores on CIP and NSP indicated that both males and females were equally influenced by the factors although they differed in some of the elements of CIP and NSP. For example, sex had significant main effect in rating fear of academic failure and parental pressure for marriage.

Regarding the effect of grade level on proneness to factors of school interruption grade I interrupters were more affected by difficulty in the language of instruction. Sex and grade had interaction effect on only some of the interrupting students' proneness to factors of school interruption. Among the NSP factors, parental pressure for early marriage is an example.

5.2. Conclusion

The problem of school interruption is serious and related to school factors, specifically factors of classroom instructions such as irrelevance of curriculum, difficulty in the language of instruction, testing, dissatisfaction with teaching quality, etc, being the critical issue, particularly for females, and for grade 9 students. It is also related to non-school factors, among which economic and social settings such as early marriage, excessive need for help from their child etc. are the major ones.

Both sex and grade level had no main effect on proneness to the cumulative influence of classroom instructional factors and non-school

factors. Moreover, interaction effects were not observed in both cases of the cumulative influences of the two category factors (classroom instructional factors and non-school factors).

However, sex and grade level were found to have main effects on proneness to specific factors, for example, example, in proneness to fear of academic failure and proneness to difficulty in the language of instruction, respectively.

With regard to some other specific factors, the subjects were prone to the influence of the factors because sex or grade had main effects and interaction effects, for example the subjects were prone to the influence of parental pressure for early marriage because sex had main effect and it interacted with grade level.

In general, where differences were observed, concerning the specific factors, the fate was of the female interrupters in at least two of the three grade levels.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following are recommended.

1. Review of the curriculum to improve the content, coverage, organization and its coherence and relevance to the children's background.
2. Improvement in English language teaching.
3. Improving professional qualification of the teachers in both elementary and secondary schools.
4. Improvement of school facilities, at least classrooms and desks
5. Promotion of Appropriate and child-centered teaching and achievement assessment.
6. Promotion of Parent-school close contacts to find ways and means of intervention to minimize the problem.
7. Encouraging Parents to have concern for their children's education and discourage early marriage
8. Support for needy students from government and non-government institutions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1-a

Addis Ababa University Faculty of Education Department of Psychology

Questionnaire To be filled

By East Shoa Zone High School Students

This questionnaire is designed for the purpose of research. You are required to fill in information about in-school and out-of -school factors that detract you from attending school. Your faithfulness in completing is important for the validity of the study. You need not write your name.

Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Questions about general personal background.

1.1 Your school _____ -

1.2 Your present grade level _____

1.3 Sex _____ 1.4. Age _____

1.5. Address

1.5.1 yours a, town ☐ b. Country side ☐

1.5.2 your parents' a. town ☐ b. countryside ☐

1.6. Year you joined high school (grade 9) for the first time _____

1.7. Date of interrupting high school education _____

1.7.1 Interrupted in grade 9 in _____ and resumed in _____

1.7.2 Interrupted in grade 10 in _____ and resumed in _____

1.7.3 Interrupted in grade 11 in _____ and resumed in _____

1.8 Your marital status:

a) single ☐ c. married ☐

b) promised ☐ d. divorced ☐

1.9 Your parents' estimated monthly income

a. 100 Birr and below ☐ d. 301-400Birr ☐

b. 101-200 Birr ☐ e. 401-500 Birr ☐

c. 201-300 Birr ☐

g. 600 Birr and beyond ☐

1.10 Your parents' livelihood (profession)

a) Mother (female guardian) _____

b) Father (male guardian) _____

1.11 With whom are you living?

a) With mother only ☐

c) With relatives ☐

b) With father only ☐

d) with both parents ☐

e) Other (if any) _____

1.12 If your answer for No1.11 is not "d" state your reason _____

1.13 Your first language _____

1.14 Indicate your parents educational background in the table shown below

Parents	Level of Education				
	Illiterate (below grade 4)	Literate grade 4-6	Grade 7-8	Grade 9-12	Higher institution certificate
Mother					
Father					

2. Questions related to your experience in high school and home environment.

2.1 For how many days you were absent from school this year?

a) 3 days and below ☐

b) 4-6 days ☐

c) 7-10 days ☐

d) 11-14 ☐

e) Above 15 days ☐

2.2 Write the distance from your home to school in km and the time it take to walk in hours/minutes a) km _____ b) hour/minute _____

2.3 Rank the following in order of their seriousness if they had encouraged you to interrupt or if they were the reasons for which you had interrupted.

A. In school factors

_____ a, dislike (irrelevance) of curriculum

_____ b. lack of professionally qualified teachers

_____ c. Difficulty in the language instruction

_____ d. Fear of academic failure

- _____ e. Quarrel with teachers
- _____ f. Excessive absenteeism
- _____ g. Shortage of classrooms/desks

B. Home related factors

- _____ a. Excessive involvement in household or other work
- _____ b. Parental pressure for marriage
- _____ c. Economic problem/lack of support
- _____ d. Health problem
- _____ e. Perceived negative prospect for employment or further education after
completion of high school
- _____ f. Peer group influence
- _____ g. Family separation (disintegration)
- _____ h. Distance of school from home

3. The following items refer to the problems you might have either at school or at home environment. Please rate (indicate) the level of your agreement with the seriousness of these problems in detracting you from attending school.

N.B. The rating is based on the scale values fixed as:

- 5-extremely serious
- 4-very serious
- 3-moderately serious
- 2-some what serious
- 1- not serious at all

R.No.	Problems faced in schools in classroom instructional situations	Extremely serious	Very Serious	Moderately serious	Some what serious	Not serious at all
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Dislike (irrelevance) of the curriculum					
2	The Curriculum is not adaptable to learning needs					
3	Difficulty in the language of instruction					
4	in efficiency in English language					
5	Dissatisfaction with certain test results and to improve					
6	Inability to get into desired field of study (academic stream)					
7	Discouragement due to frequent repetition					
8	Dislike of school experience (eg. doing home work, tests, etc.)					
9	Frequent (too much) absenteeism					
10	Quarrel with teachers					
11	Frequent discouragement from teachers					
12	Retreat from tests due to fear of failure					
13	Crowdedness of classroom and lack of desks/seats					
14	Inadequate supply of educational materials					
15	Shortage of qualified teachers					
16	Hesitation to take tests because if failed the school will not accept me.					
17	Inability to behave according to the rules of the school					
18	Lack of attention from teachers concerning academic problems					

R.No.	Problems faced in schools in classroom instructional situations	Extremely serious	Very Serious	Moderately serious	Some what serious	Not serious at all
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Parental disunity					
2	Health problem					
3	Family encouragement for marriage					
4	Gloomy prospect for employment or further education					
5	Parents inability to pay for schooling					
6	Preference of involvement in income generating work)					
7	Excessive involvement in household chores.					
8	Peer group influence					
9	Unwanted pregnancy					
10	Parental religious affiliation influence					
11	Parental withholding due to their low value for education					
12	Lack of encouragement from parents					
13	Distance of school from home					
14	Parental withholding due to need of labor					
15	Lack of money to buy educational materials and other needs					
16	To accumulate money and to come back the following year					

4. What actions you suggest to be taken by the following authorities to reduce the rate of high school interruption?

a. Parents _____

b. Regional and central government _____

5. Other comment _____

Appendix 1-b

**Addis baba University Faculty of Education
Department of Psychology**

Questionnaire to be filled by schoolteachers and directors

This questionnaire is designed to get information on students' school interruption and possible solution to reduce the problem. Please write the answers in the space provided or circle the alternative when provided. You need not write your name.

Thank you for your co-operation.

1. Personal Information

- 1.1 School name_____
- 1.2 Responsibility (other than teaching)_____
- 1.3 Qualification_____
- 1.4 Sex_____ -
- 1.5 Age_____

2. School students or students' parent related information

- 2.1 Do you think that the present curriculum is relevant to the capacity and needs of students a. Yes b. No.
- 2.2 What is your reason for question No. 2.1? _____
- 2.3 How do you rate the English language proficiency of the majority of your students?
- a. Very high b. High c. average
- d. Low (poor e. very low (very poor)
- 2.4 Do you think that it is easy or difficult to make contact with parents of school children?
- a) Very difficult c. Easy
- b. Difficult d. Very easy
- 2.5 Do you charge your students school fees?
- a. Yes b. No c. other (specify)

- 2.6. In which month the majority of
- 2.6.1. Were absent from school? _____
- 2.6.2. Interrupt attending school? _____
- 2.7. In your opinion, what were (are) the causes for school interruption during the last three years (and also know)?
- 2.7.1 for boys 2.7.2 for girls
- _____
- _____
- _____
- 2.8. What measures would you recommend to be taken by the following authorities to reduce the problem of student school interruption?
- a. School _____
- _____
- b. Parents _____
- _____
- c. Ministry of education and Education Bureau
- _____
- _____
- _____
- d. Government (both regional & national)
- _____
- _____
- 2.9. Other comment (if any)
- _____
- _____
- _____

Interview Items

1. For Interrupting and non-interrupting students
 - a) How do you rate the quality of high school education?
 - b) In what type of activities are you involved in at home?
 - c) What was your major reason for interrupting your study (if you had faced).
 - d) How did you decide to continue your education?
 - e) What is the average age of marriage in your locality?

2. For teachers/school personnel
 - a, what were are the major reasons for students to interrupt attending school?
 - b. How do you evaluate the quality of teaching in your school?
 - c. Which problems are more serious in your schools?
 - d. What do you say about the relevancy of the existing curriculum?

C.

Females = Grade 11				Males = Grade 11			
Individual	Scores		Duration in months	Individual	Scores		Duration in months
	CIP				CIP		
1	21	25	13	1	21	19	16
2	25	25	21	2	8	18	14
3	17	27	17	3	20	18	16
4	18	21	15	4	23	28	17
5	17	21	9	5	15	17	9
6	16	19	7	6	23	23	24
7	20	25	15	7	17	19	14
8	19	23	16	8	17	22	15
9	19	19	13	9	17	18	14
10	23	21	13	10	9	10	3
11	20	27	13	11	17	21	15
12	24	25	20	12	18	25	15
13	21	22	15	13	19	18	10
14	24	22	16	14	17	26	15
15	18	21	9	15	21	26	18
16	25	30	16	16	19	23	15
17	21	20	16	17	18	15	13
18	18	22	14	18	24	21	20
19	20	20	16	19	20	18	17
20	15	26	25	20	21	22	18

B.

Females = Grade 10				Males = Grade 10			
Individual	Scores		Duration in months	Individual	Scores		Duration In months
	CIP	QIP			CIP	QIP	
1	19	13	17	1	21	19	12
2	11	20	9	2	16	15	9
3	14	20	13	3	21	23	14
4	14	21	15	4	23	20	16
5	14	11	3	5	24	24	20
6	18	21	14	6	11	17	7
7	23	21	16	7	17	20	13
8	27	26	24	8	26	29	25
9	15	18	4	9	17	17	9
10	18	25	14	10	15	23	15
11	22	26	19	11	20	21	17
12	18	24	16	12	9	16	4
13	26	24	23	13	19	22	5
14	21	26	13	14	16	20	4
15	21	22	14	15	14	17	14
16	23	24	22	16	21	22	15
17	23	21	21	17	22	19	14
18	26	27	23	18	23	21	14
19	11	19	9	19	23	28	21
20	22	24	18	20	17	22	15

Appendix 2

Duration of School Interruption (by month) and Scores on CIP and NSP for the interrupting Students

A.

Females = Grade 9				Males = Grade 9			
Individual	Scores		Duration In months	Individual	Scores		Duration In months
	CIP	NSP			CIP	NSP	
1	23	13	17	1	21	19	16
2	19	29	14	2	8	18	14
3	13	10	7	3	20	18	16
4	24	20	16	4	23	28	17
5	20	25	17	5	15	17	9
6	25	20	16	6	23	23	24
7	19	20	15	7	17	19	14
8	16	18	9	8	17	22	15
9	18	20	15	9	17	18	14
10	19	25	16	10	9	10	3
11	23	20	15	11	17	21	15
12	21	27	18	12	18	25	15
13	27	25	20	13	19	18	10
14	18	23	15	14	17	26	15
15	20	27	18	15	21	26	18
16	23	22	16	16	19	23	15
17	16	19	6	17	18	15	13
18	27	14	20	18	24	21	20
19	22	26	15	19	20	18	17
20	21	19	14	20	21	22	18

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Declaration

This thesis is my original work, has not been presented for degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Gezahegn Gurmu

Signature



Place Addis Ababa

Date May 30, 2001

Approved by

Darge Wole



Advisor

Signature

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as
University Advisor

Name

Darge Wole (Dr)

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darge Wole', is written over a horizontal line.

Date of submission

May 30, 2001