

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## Assessing Female Students' English Performance: The Case of Ambo, Ethiopia

Yezabwork Merga

Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature,  
College of Social Science and Humanities, Ambo University, Ethiopia

### **Abstract:**

*This study was conducted in Oromia Regional State and focuses on major problems that hinder female students' performance in English classes with special reference to three secondary schools of grade 9 at West Shoa Zone. The main objective of this study is to investigate factors that affect female students' low performance in English language classes and then to forward some suggestions that may enable them to improve their performance in the mentioned target language. The methodologies used by the researcher to conduct the research were questionnaire, interview and observation. For the study purpose, data were collected from students, and teachers of grade 9 of the three respective secondary schools using questionnaire. In addition, vice directors of the three respective secondary schools were also involved in the interview part of data collection instrument. Concerning students, 5,817 were the total population of the study of which 3,139 were male and 2,678 were female students of grade nine; 2008 E.C. entry in focus. 358 were selected as sample of the study using Yamane's formula. All concerned bodies should give due attention for female students through utilizing different mechanism so that they can get different exposure to different situations through which they can get better chance to attend their education at large and their English language classrooms at particular.*

**Keywords:** Assessment, performance, motivation, Ambo

### 1. Background of the Study

Language is a means for communication in the process of learning. In Ethiopia English is used as the medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary level. It is also known that all students in Ethiopia learn English language because it is the medium of instruction in the mentioned area. Communication output refers to the activity in which it uses language as a vehicle for communication because the main purpose is to accomplish some kind of communicative skill tasks.

J. Sunderland (1992) and Spratt (1994) have mentioned that teachers hold negative attitudes about the academic potential of female students and mirrored out the society's gender biases into the classroom. According to Zimmerman and West's (1975) dominance model, in mixed-sex conversations, men are likely to interrupt women more than the reverse. According to Bailey, 1993, teachers like to promote boys most and forward girls least. This makes female students to be lower performers in English Language classes. In addition, since girls underestimate their abilities; they lack courage to participate actively in English classes (Haregewoin, 1991).

From researcher's observation, there are inequalities in opportunities as well as in performance between boys and girls and more boys continue higher education than girls. This by itself has an impact on girls English language performance. In another way, access to school is not enough, and it needs attending the class regularly and performing successfully.

#### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

As Reutzel (1991) stated, learning English is the process that goes on throughout life and can be enhanced in the classroom through practice. The teaching learning process is vital especially for those learners of English as a second language since learning English is an important issue for male and female students since they are expected to use the language in their daily activities in school. In addition, English Language is the most worldwide spoken language. Due to different reasons, female students score lower results than male students especially in English subject

A number of local studies indicate that Ethiopian females lag behind their male counterparts academically for several reasons (Genet Zewde, 1991; SyoumTefera, 1991). One major area of female academic under performance becomes visible in the classroom. While they are not intellectually inferior, female students do not recognize themselves as courageous enough in classroom discussions. Further local researches have been conducted especially on inferior academic performance of females in general. (Tsige Haile, 1991); Seyoum Tefera 1991; and Ammanuel, 1996).

The societal experience and expectation to female students at school has some impact on the level of confidence they develop and their problems of what they want to be. Here, participation plays a great role among learners themselves in order to get better information and do any activity. From teaching experience, the participation of female students in English classroom is not satisfactory when it is compared with that of their male counterparts. This condition may lead to lack of attentiveness that encourages female students to be silent, shy and passive.

Language is an indicator of the place where we live and where our culture is. For example, Zhao (2011) explored the role of gender in peer interaction in Chinese where English is provided as a foreign Language (EFL) classroom by examining students' linguistic performance interactions and observed that female and male students did not do the same thing. They oriented themselves towards different skills in doing tasks. From this finding, Zhao states that girls bring preexisting gender based identities and prejudices into their interactions, either consciously or unconsciously, which affect their language learning. In many societies including Ethiopia, males have traditionally adopted position of dominance and this has led to stereotyping of what males and females do and expect each other to do. Thus, there are inequalities in performance between boys and girls in many fields. This by itself has an impact on girls' education in general and that of English language performance in particular.

Therefore, the finding of these three high schools indicated that female students' English language performances are less when it is compared to that of males.

### 1.2. Research Questions

This research aims to assess those problems that affect female students' performance in English language learning and tries to answer the following basic questions:

- To what extent female students have attitude towards English language learning?
- To what extent teachers motivate female students to be good performers in English language classrooms?
- What factors affect female students' English language performance? and
- What possible solutions should be forwarded to encourage female students to have better performance in their English Language classes?

## 2. Methodology of the Study

This chapter presented the research method that was used to assess factors that affect female students' English language performance in grade nine of three secondary schools of West Shoa. It included: research design, the context and participants of the study, sampling and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, the process of data collection and method of data analysis.

The research design of the present study is descriptive one in which we incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research design was chosen since it is conducive in line with the research objectives. The main objective of this study is to investigate factors that affect female students' low performance in English language classes and then to forward some suggestions that may enable them to improve their performance in the mentioned target language. Furthermore, descriptive research is concerned with describing accurately and factually the characteristics of a particular individual, or a group and a phenomenon, of the subject area. It also deals with the narration of facts and characteristics relating to an individual, group or situation (Richards and Schmidt, 2010; Kothari 2004). Therefore, this research design was used to access the issues in the present study.

While quantitative method refers to the systematic and empirical investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships, qualitative methods refer to observation to gather non-numerical data.

### 2.1. Research Participants

The vital purpose of this study is to assess problems that hinder female students' performance in English language classroom in the case of grade nine students of three secondary schools of West Shoa Zone of Oromia region. The total number of the students at the three schools was 3,412. Among those, 1,819 were males and 1,593 were females of 2008E.C. entry. For this research purpose, the population of the research was 358 elected students, all English Language teachers of the three respective high schools of the mentioned Zone and six elected vice principals.

### 2.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The number of research sites and participants were only confined to three high schools and 34 English teachers of the respective high schools. Among these, 31 of them are male teachers and 3 of them are females. The researchers drive the sample size of the students statistically by using Yamane's formula as cited in Rosemary and Chicora (2011) as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size

N = Total population

e = Level of significance (0.05)

1 = constant e = error estimate (0.05%) at 95% confidence interval

$$n = \frac{3,412}{1 + 3,412(0.05)^2} = \frac{3,412}{1 + 3,412(0.0025)} = \frac{3,412}{1 + 8.53} = 358$$

The sample size consists of three hundred fifty eight female students of the three selected high schools.

The students obviously were the main participants of which the study addressed. The mentioned three secondary schools were selected purposively i.e.; based on road accessibility from 51 total High schools of West Shoa Zone of 2018 entry.

### 2.3. Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used three data collection instruments. These were: questionnaire, interview and observation. The questionnaire was designed and prepared both for sample students and teachers who were currently available in the

mentioned secondary schools. The questionnaire for students was using lottery method and that of teachers was using available sampling. This is because it needs to involve both samples in order to get adequate and reliable data from the participants. Interview which comprises both open and close ended was also prepared for both students and teachers. Thirdly, observation was carried out while the teaching learning takes place in the classrooms. Lastly, the results gained from the questionnaire part was tabulated and changed into percentage. Similarly, both the results gained from interview and observations were transcribed qualitatively.

### 2.3.1. Questionnaire

The researcher prepared both close-ended and open-ended type of questionnaires. While the questionnaire for students was all closed-ended, the questionnaires for the teachers were both close-ended and open-ended type. Next to that, it was filled by the sample grade nine female students of the three high schools who were currently available and 34 English teachers of the respective high schools who were currently teaching.

### 2.3.2. Interview

In this study, interview for six higher officials of the specific schools were conducted to validate information that was obtained through questionnaire. The mentioned participants were chosen using simple random sampling technique. The interview for the higher officials comprises ten questions; all the provided questions were chosen and these questions emphasized on female students encouragement and motivation that were given by English teachers in the classroom.

### 2.3.3. Observation

The researcher also used observation as the third data gathering instrument to triangulate information that was obtained through questionnaire and interview to identify problems which may not be pointed out via questionnaire and interview. Researchers tried to observe each class twice. This is done in order to point out whether the teachers give equal attention for both male and female students while they teach in particular and how they assess female students' performance in general.

## *2.4. Data Collection Procedures*

First, the questionnaire was distributed for the students and the students were oriented briefly on how to fill in the questionnaire before filling it out. After that, the questionnaire was distributed and collected with the help of enumerators. Similarly, questionnaire for the elected English Language teachers was distributed and collected in the same way with that of students. Second, sample school directors who were considered as higher officials were interviewed after briefing them the purpose of the research. Third, observation was carried out to know the current real classroom situation of female students' performance in English Language classrooms. After the appropriate data were gathered using questionnaire, interview and observation, the data was analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Finally, it was tabulated and presented in percentage form.

## *2.5. Data Analysis*

After the data collection was completed from both primary and secondary sources, it was processed using the basic data processing techniques. First, the questionnaire items were tallied and tabulated according to the type of items. Then, each response to the questions based on the number of respondents was analyzed in a well formatted table. The data that was gathered through interview and observation was described qualitatively in order to support the data which was gathered through questionnaire. To sum up, both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were employed while the collected data was analyzed.

## **3. Results**

### *3.1. Result Obtained From Questionnaire*

For this research purpose, both the sample students and teachers response were collected and analyzed respectively.

### *3.2. Results Obtained from Students Questionnaire*

The sample respondents' response which was used as one of the main source of information was obtained through questionnaire. Therefore, items in the questionnaire that have been presented to the sample students and their responses were analyzed and organized as follows.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.	How often does your family give you more overloaded house work than they give to your brother (s)?	200 56%	100 28%	53 15%	5 1%

*Table 1: The Frequency That Family Gives More Overloaded Housework for Female Students than They Give for Male Students*

As shown in table 1, out of 358 respondents, majority of them that is 200 (56%) of them responded that their familial ways gave them more work than they give for their brothers. Again, number of students that is 100(28%) of them

responded that their family sometimes give them more workload than their brothers so that they are unable to do their school related activities properly. Furthermore, very few of the respondents, that is 53 (15%) of them said that they are rarely given more overloaded housework than their brothers do. Almost none of them that is 5 (1%) of the respondents replied that their family never give more overloaded housework for their brothers than their female students. Based on their response, more of the work in and around the housework is accomplished by female students. Due to this reason, they said that they spent more of their time performing activities in and around the house instead of concentrating on their lessons like that of studying. As they witnessed, they want to study by going to library with their peers and the like and do their homework and assignments that may be given for them individually or in group. From this, it is possible to conclude that workload has direct influence on female students' performance of English language classrooms.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
2.	How often does your family's socio-economic status affect your participation of performance in English classrooms?	152 42.5%	148 41.3%	40 11.2%	18 5%

*Table 2: The Frequency That Female Students' Family Socio-Economic Status Affects Their Performance in English Classrooms*

As it has been indicated in table 2, 152 (42.5%) of the total respondents said that they are always affected by their families socio-economic status in the case of their participation of performance in English language classrooms. Similarly, large number of the respondents that is 148 (41.3%) of the sample respondents replied that they are sometimes affected by the socio-economic status of their family. But, 40 (11.2%) of the respondents out of the total respondents said that they are rarely affected by the socio-economic status of their family.

On the contrary, a great number of the respondents of the total sample that is 18 (5%) of them witnessed that they are never affected by the socio-economic background of their family. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that while majority of female students are affected by the socio-economic status some of them do not. Therefore, from this what the researchers observed is that the economy by itself has its own impact on majority of female students' English language performance.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
3.	How often does your background knowledge of English affects your performance in English classrooms at this level?	180 50.3%	120 33.5%	38 10.6%	20 5.6%

*Table 3: Whether Female Students' Background Knowledge of English Affects Their Performance in English Classroom at This Level or Not*

According to table 3, out of the total respondents of female students, while 180 (50.3%) of them said that they are always affected by their prior language knowledge, 120 (33.5%) of them said that they are sometimes affected by their background knowledge of the target language that is English. Only few of the respondents that is, 38 (10.6%) of the total respondents said that they are rarely affected by their background knowledge of the target language. Almost none of the respondents' that is 20 (5.6%) of the respondents said that they are never affected by their background knowledge of English language even at this level.

From this what the researchers can conclude is that students' background knowledge of the target language has direct impact on their current participation during attending language session of their respective English language classrooms. This infers that students' background knowledge of the target language has great impact on their current status and has also its own impact on female students' performance.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
4.	How often does the class size of your classroom affect your participation in English language performing activities?	190 53.1%	110 30.7%	48 13.4%	10 2.8%

*Table 4: Whether the Class Size of the Classroom Affects Female Students' Participation in English Language Performing Activities*

As table 4 indicates, 190 (53.1%) of the respondents said that they are always affected by the size of their classroom in performing activities while they learn English language whereas 110 (30.7%) of them are sometimes affected by the size of their classroom.

On the contrary, 48 (13.4%) of the respondents replied that they are rarely affected by the size of classroom while they attend their lessons in English language classrooms. Similarly, very few of the respondents that is, 10 (2.8%) of them said that they are never affected by the size of the classroom while they attend lessons in English language classrooms. Therefore, the data expresses that female students' performance is mostly affected by the size of the classroom in English language classrooms. To conclude, the class size and performance activity has direct relationship while students attend their lessons in English language classrooms.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5.	How often do you fear for making mistakes/errors during performance of English language classroom participation?	158 44%	150 42%	30 8.4%	20 5.6%

*Table 5: How Often Do You Fear for Making Mistakes/Errors During? Performance of English Language Classroom Participation*

As table 5 indicates, 158 (44 %) of the respondents have always fear of making mistakes towards performing different activities in their English language classrooms. This issue may have direct impact on their participation on their overall earning. Similarly, 150 (42%) of the respondents said that they are sometimes fear of making mistakes/errors during performance of English language classroom participation. On the contrary, 30 (8.4%) of the respondents said that they rarely have fear for making mistakes/errors during performance of English language classrooms participation. Similar to this, few of the respondents that is 20 (5.6%) of them said that they never fear for making mistakes/errors during their English lessons.

What the researchers understood from this is that female students are low performers of English language because of their fear of making mistakes/errors during performance of English language classrooms participation.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
6.	How often English teachers encourage and involve female students to participate in performing English language classroom activities?	140 39.1%	160 44.7%	58 16.2%	-

*Table 6: How Often English Teachers Encourage and Involve Female Students to Participate in Performing English Language Classroom Activities?*

As it can be seen from table 6, 140 (39.1%) of the respondents claimed that English teachers always encourage and involve female students to participate in performing in English language classroom activities. Similarly, a great number of the respondents, that is 160 (44.7%) of them said that English teachers sometimes encourage and involve female students to participate in performing English language classroom activities.

On the contrary, significant number of respondents, that is 58 (16.2%) of them said that their respective English language teachers rarely encourage and involve their female students so that they have chance to participate in English language classrooms. None of the respondents said that English teachers never encourage and involve female students to participate in performing English language classroom activities. Therefore, from this it is possible to conclude that there is support from teachers for their female students in the case of participating them in activities of English language classrooms.

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
7.	How often do your English teachers use mixed-sex group during English language classroom performing activities?	100 28%	205 57.2%	25 7%	28 7.8%

*Table 7: How Often Does Your English Teacher Use Mixed-Sex Group During English Language Classroom Performing Activities?*

As it can be seen from the above i.e.; table 7, 100 (28%) of the respondents claimed that their English teachers always use mixed-sex group while great number of them that is, 205 (57.2%) of them sometimes use this teaching method. 25 (7%) of the respondents said that their English teachers rarely use it while 28 (7.8%) of them use mixed-sex group during their stay of English language classroom performing activities. From the above data, it is possible to conclude that majority of the teachers are interested in using mixed-sex group while they teach in English language classrooms. However, very little number of teachers used the method negatively and this has little effect on their English language classroom performance of the respondents.

From the above data, it is possible to conclude that most English teachers used mixed-sex group while they teach. Table 8. How often do performing English language activities that your English teacher brings to the classroom interests you?

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
8.	How often activities of your English teacher interests you in the classroom?	100 28%	200 55.8%	50 14%	8 2.2%

*Table 8: How Often Do Performing English Language Activities That You're English Teacher Brings to The Classroom Interests You?*

As it can be seen from the above i.e.; table 8, 100 (28%) of the respondents claimed that they are always interested in the activities that are brought and used by their teachers in English language classrooms; whereas 200 (55.8%) of them said that they are sometimes interested in those activities. However, 50 (14%) of the respondents

responded that they are rarely interested by the activities of their English teachers. Only very few of the respondents that is, 8 (2.2%) of them said that they are never interested in the activities brought by their English language teachers in their respective classrooms. From the given data it is possible to conclude that majority of the respondents are highly interested in the activities that are brought to English language classrooms by their teachers.

#### **4. Result Obtained from Teachers' Questionnaire**

##### *4.1. Teachers' Personal Information*

The first question of teachers' questionnaire deals with personal information like: sex, educational qualification, and their teaching experience in teaching English and the grade that they are currently teaching. According to the data that was collected from teachers' questionnaire, majority of the respondents were men. Concerning their educational qualification, most of them were BA degree holders and even some of them were MA holders. Regarding their teaching experience, most of them have not more than ten years' experience in teaching the target language and they have rich experience related to their field of study. Lastly, the researcher recognized that the grade level of their teaching is different starting from grade nine to twelve. While some of the teachers were teaching grade 9 and 10, some of them were teaching grade 11 and grade twelve. Regarding this case, most of them were teaching grade 9 and 10 while very few of them were teaching grade 11 and 12 due to the presence of preparatory schools in the same school compound.

##### *4.2. Whether the Teachers Have Interest to Teach English and They Help Their Female Students with Tutorial Class*

Concerning the interest of the teachers to teach the target language that is English language, almost all of the respondents responded that they have interest to teach the language. According to their response, not only interest to teach the target language, but also they have initiation to provide tutorial classes for their female students to make them confident enough in the case of their performance. They also said that the situation of their female students made them to arrange this type of additional classes since most of them come from rural area and somewhat shy to express themselves in their English language classrooms.

##### *4.3. What the Degree of Female Students' and Male Students Looks Like in English Period?*

Based on the respondents' response, what the degree of male and female students looks like while English teachers teach in the actual classroom is somewhat different. While some of the respondents said the degree is equal, some of them responded that the degree of female students is less than that of their male counter parts in English language classrooms due to different reasons like that of background knowledge of the target language, culture and the states of the students' family living style. As they said, while students with educated and semi-educated family have better degree of understanding the language, those whose parents are not educated lag behind their mentioned classmates. According to the data that was collected from the sample respondent teachers, due to the mentioned and other factors too, female and male students have not similar degree in English language period.

##### *4.4. Do Female Students Have Their Own Confidence While They Perform Activities in English Class?*

Based on the response of the respondents, female students do not have their own confidence while they perform activities in English classrooms. The reasons the sample English language teachers provided were like: background of students, the learning style of the students and expectation of parents from their female students. According to the data that was collected from the sample teacher respondents, the parents of female student expect them to work around house instead of sending them to schools most of the time. Due to this reason, they face shortage of time that should be spent on educational activities.

##### *4.5. Do You Motivate Female Students When You Teach Them English?*

Based on the teachers' response, most of them usually motivate their female students while they teach them English language. The methods they use are like that of involving them in group work activities, asking them questions which are related to their daily lessons, making them group leaders for their respective groups and even their assignments and the like. From it is possible to conclude that female students got motivation from their teachers while they learn English language.

##### *4.6. Is the Mark That Female Students Have in English Language Is Equal with Male Students' Mark?*

Concerning the mark that female students have in English language, it is not equal with that of their male counter parts. Based on the responses of the sample English teacher respondents, some of the factors were: having less confidence, being shy while they participate in activities like that of speaking skills, group work and performing different tasks that were given for them to practice either in or out side classrooms.

##### *4.7. Do Female Students Do Their Homework, and Assignments in the Given Time?*

Teacher respondents replied negatively for this question. They said that their female students are not ready to do their homework as well as their assignments in a given time. They reason they provide was they depend themselves on their male classmates. They also waste their time by waiting instead of trying by themselves. According to these respondents, this is one of the places where female students exercise dependency and it should be given due attention so that they will be aware of it.

#### *4.8. Do Female Students Attend All Classes? Are They Punctual?*

The answer of respondents for this specific question is somewhat different. Even though they responded by saying the students attended all classes, all of them did not have similar answers for the punctuality of their female students and the reasons they provided is also not similar. While some of them said female students are busy on house work activities, some of the respondents replied by saying it is due to traditional influence on female students from their parents. The students are informed by their parents to go later than their male counterparts as some of the respondent teachers pointed out.

#### *4.9. In Your Opinion What Kind of Problems Do Female Students Face? What Are the Sources of the Problems? How the Problems Could Be Solved?*

As the researcher pointed out from the respondents, female students face many problems like: natural problems like that of ministration and sudden death of their family members, traditional outlook of the society for female students and so on. When they provided solution for the above mentioned problems, it can be solved by creating awareness and providing trainings for both female students and their respective parents.

#### *4.10. Do Female Students Need Additional Assistance from Their Teachers, Parents and Class Mates?*

For this specific question, most of the respondent teachers said that female students need additional assistance and they also forwarded some of the solutions like arranging tutorial classes by their teachers, assistance from their parents and follow up financial support. They also mentioned the third part and that is female students' classmates. They forwarded that the type of additional assistance that is expected from female students classmate is working and studying together to be strengthened. The combination of the above three bodies can bring the situation of their female students to better level according to teacher respondents. Based on their experience, they also said that this method can pave way even for the future career of the learners in addition to that of assisting them in English language classrooms.

### **5. Interview Result**

Here, for this research purpose, the researcher incorporated six school directors (two from each high school and one is vice director) to realize the data collected through questionnaire and to get more deep information. Based on the first question i.e. whether they give equal interest for both male and female students, most of them said that they do not give such consideration for such kind of thing. As they said, since most of the students come from far distance, preserving them at school for long time may make or create conflict with their families. On the other hand, their families also need their female students for different house holding activities.

The researcher also asked the respondents what they think some of the factors that hinder female students' performance and they found out that: life status, families' economic background, peer influence, school management, house hold activities, and cultural influence were some of the factors that hinder female students to work as they like and become more fruitful. From this, one can therefore deduce that there are a number of factors that can affect female students' performance in general and that of English language performance in particular. Some respondent teachers said that they prepared tutorial classes for their female students separately to improve their English language ability and there is also reward for those girls who score best in their classes as role model. Through such activities, they tried to encourage their female students in their school. The researchers also found out that it is very difficult to give affirmative action to all subjects and students together since the chance to cover the contents of single subject in the year is somewhat cumbersome.

Generally, from interview part the researchers observed that teachers, the school directors and other stakeholders attention towards the performance of female students in supporting, motivating, providing tutorial classes might be the way through which female students can improve their English performance in general and that of performance in their English language class rooms.

#### *5.1. Observation Result*

For this research purpose, the researcher used observation for two different times at different months. Based on the observation, the researchers got the following result.

## 5.2. Summary of Observation Result

No.	Items	Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	Do female students attend classes regularly?		
2.	Do female students have high participation?		
3.	Do female students use English language when they are learning English?		
4.	Does an English teacher encourage female students in the class?		
5.	Does an English teacher communicate with female students in English?		
6.	Do female students do class work in the given time?		
7.	Does the teacher give enough time for group discussion?		
8.	Does the teacher give equal chance for male and female students?		
9.	Does the teacher allow students participation?		
		High	Low
10.	The opportunities to practice female students' participation activities in English classroom.		
11.	Female students' interest to participate in English class?		
12.	Female students' participation in the classroom is		

Table 9: Summary of Observation Result

As it has been indicated above, during observation, most female students do not attend classes regularly and due to this case, they have less participation in their English language classrooms. Female learners also did not use the target language that is English while they were engaging in their studies. Instead, they prefer speaking in their mother tongue i.e. Afan Oromo or Amharic. While some teachers encourage their female students to use the target language, others use the same language that is similar with that of their students.

As the researcher observed, some students did not do their tasks in the given time. Here, the teachers also did not give enough time for activities like group discussion especially considering gender issue. Most of the time, they provided more chance for male students than their female students. Due to this reason, they are male students who participated more in performing activities in English language classrooms than female students. From this it is possible to conclude that teachers try to teach their students using local languages than the target language and did not give equal chance while they form group work activities. Similarly, the opportunity given for female students to participate in different activities is also different from class to class and teacher to teacher as well. While some teachers provided opportunities, others made the classrooms more of teacher centered. Due to these facts, some female students lack interest to participate as it is expected from them. Female students' active participation is somewhat low as the researchers tried to observe. Therefore, the researchers conclude that this is also another factor that negatively affects female students' English performance in their English language classrooms.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research the following conclusions have been drawn. As it is known, motivation has a paramount importance in all learning and teaching process. However, majority of female students in the study area do not get enough support and encouragement from their family and from their teachers as well. The teachers do not encourage the students to actively participate during English lessons and they do not arrange tutorial classes to let female students to participate in English classroom.

- Cultural influence in the surrounding hinders female students to improve their English performance. Because of this, they are not actively participating in the classroom. So, such cases made female students to have poor performance in their English language.
- Majority of the teachers and the schools also did not encourage and give opportunities for female students in preparing tutorial class and affirmative action.
- Economic background of the family also contributes much for the poor performance of female students. Because their families want them to participate in the economic activities of the family than sending them continuously to the school. So female students mostly absent from schools.

### 6.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the researchers have made the following recommendations:

- Teachers should try to encourage female students through different supportive or tutorial and affirmative action's in orders to enhance female students' classroom participation and to get good performance in English subject.
- Teachers and parents' discussion has an important role to create awareness in the society about gender equality and female students' performance.



- The study indicates that the interference of culture in the classroom affects female students' performance in English language. For this reason, the school principals, teachers and other concerned bodies should try to minimize community binds by giving awareness rising training.
- Therefore, all concerned bodies should give due attention for the female students through utilizing different mechanism so that they can get different exposure to different situations through which they can get better chance to attend their education at large and their language classes at particular.

## 7. References

- i. Abebayehu Alemro (1995). Women's Participation in Ethiopia (Unpublished MA Thesis) Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- ii. Agrawal, J.C. (1990). Theory and Principle of Education. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- iii. Alemthehay Tesfaye (1997). A cooperative study between men and women teachers in their managerial skills in ELT in two high schools (Unpublished BA Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- iv. Atikins J., Hailom, B & Nuru, M. (1995). Skill development and methodology (Part 1): Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University printing press.
- v. Brannon, L. (2002). Gender: Psychological perspectives (3rd ed). Needham Heights, MA, US: Allyn & Bacon.
- viii. Boron, J. (2000). The effect of over generalization of public policy (PhD Thesis), University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- ix. Day, R. (1984). Student participation in the ESL classroom or some imperfections in practice, *Language learning*, (3) 69-96.
- x. Desalegn Chalchisa (2001). Parental Socio- economic status for Educational Achievement (MA thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- xi. Ehrman, M. (1999). *Cognition plus: Correlates of language learning success*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- xii. Emebet Mulugeta (1998). Educational, problem encountered and scoping strategies employed by in Addis Ababa High School (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- xiii. Elliont, S. (200). *Educational Psychology* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Retrieved from <https://textbookequity.org/Textbooks/Educational%20Psychology04.pdf>.
- xiv. Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of English language teaching*. Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers. London/New York.
- xv. King et, Al. (1993). *Parental Education status for family Educational Achievement*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- xvi. Konjit Tadesse (1995). *Environment and Education* (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- xvii. Mathews Asfaw (2010). *Female Academic Achievement in Education* (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- xviii. Manazew Girma (2010). *Female Student's Educational Achievement* (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- xix. Mishra, R. (1985). *Women Education: A Research Approach*: Ashia: Ashia publishing house Punjabi Baghi
- xx. Mulugeta Atnafu (1999). *Socio- economic status of parents in students' Academic Performance* (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa, University, Addis Ababa.
- xxi. Purrelius, A. & Robert, K. (1978). *The Sociology of Education*. New Jersey: Prentice. Reutzell, R., (1991). *Understanding and Using Basal Readers Effectively*, pp. 254-280. In B.
- xxii. Woldu Assefa (1991). *Factors that Affect the Enrollment of High School students in Arsi Zone Achievement* (MA Thesis), Addis Ababa, University, Addis Ababa.
- xxiii. Zimmerman, D. H., & West, C. (1975). Sex roles, interruptions and silences in conversation. In B. Thorne & N. Henley (Eds.), *Language and sex: Difference and dominance* (pp. 105-129).
- xxiv. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.