



Investigating Strategies Used to Enhance Female Students Participation in Wolaitao Language Lesson in Gesuba High School

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Abstract

This study was conducted in Gesuba High School on grade 10 female students from section 'A' to 'C'. Of the 121 female students, 60 students were randomly selected and two Wolaitao language teachers were included. One of the study's major purposes was assessing factors that hinder female students' class room participation in Wolaitao language lesson. In the study, data were gathered through questionnaire and observation. The data analysis was made by using quantitative and qualitative methods. The results revealed that female students in Gesuba High School are less participant in Wolaitao language lesson compared to those of male students. Based on the study results, it was recommended that teachers, the school administrators and stakeholders should work as hand and glove to solve the problem of female students such as encouraging them to participate in the classroom learning, creating conducive classroom situation to enhance their active participation.

Keywords: female students, active participation, Wolaitao language, classroom learning

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Female students' less class participation is very common in every school ranging from primary school to the high schools; even in higher commissions (collages and above levels) as well. Particularly in high schools and below, the problem is more deep rooted and complex.

To this regard, Elliott et al (1996) noticed that many young women are less whole and androgynous when they are young. They are more appearance conscious and sex conscious. They are quieter, more fearful of holding strong opinions, more careful of what they say and less honest. They are more likely to second guess themselves and to be self critical. They are bigger worriers and effective people pleasures. They are less likely to play sport, love much. They hide their intelligence.

In deed the students less class room participation and passiveness is not concentrated only on female students but also on male students too, because of many factors faced on different ages in or out of school throughout their learning. In line with this, this study focuses on Gesuba high school female students' classroom participation in Wolaitao language lesson.

Of course, had the study included all subject areas; there would be good findings, solutions and then changes. But because of the scope, time and resource difficulty, this study is limited only to the above subject area.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The main reason for the researcher to study female students' trend of less participation in their classroom learning was her observation as a coordinator of post graduate diploma students' practical training session in Gesuba High school. Besides, in her observation, she also noted that their achievement is relatively lesser than that of their male counterparts in most courses in general and Wolaitao language subjects in particular. Therefore, she was interested to study on factors that affected female students less participations in their classroom learning and to seek the corrective solutions for their problems.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is, to find out the problem that make female students less participant in Wolaitao language lesson.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The study has the following specific objectives. It will be able to:

1. Find out factors that hinder female students' participation in Wolaitao language lessons.

2. Methods of the Study

2.1 Research Design

A descriptive research design was opted to effectively survey the process and factors that affect female students' participation in Wolaitao lesson in Gesuba high school.

2.2 Setting

The research was conducted in Gesuba high school. Gesuba town is one of the three municipal administrations found in Wolaita Zone, South Ethiopia. It is a town with more than 20,000 populations and has two high schools of which the high school under study is the older one. It is found 350 km south of Addis Ababa.

2.3 Subjects of the study

The subjects of the study were female students of grade 10 in Gesuba high school. The numbers of sections were from grade 'A' to 'C' with total number of 283 students of which 162 males and 121 females. From this total student's number, 60 female students were randomly selected; from each of the 4 section 15 respectively. The researcher used these 60 selected female students only for his questionnaire, but she used the whole class students for her observation to see their participation relatively with male students. The two Wolaitao language teachers are also used; one female and one male.

2.4 Instrument of data collection

To effectively conduct the study, the researcher used two kinds of instruments to collect the data from the students and teachers: these were questionnaire and observation.

2.4.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire was designed to collect the necessary information from informants. The questionnaire that the researcher designed has two parts; questionnaire for students and questionnaire for teachers. (10 item for students & 11 item for teachers). And the questionnaire for students were prepared in Amharic to avoid possible problems which could result from poor language ability of Wolaitao language. Teacher's questionnaire was prepared in Wolaitao but all possible efforts were made to use simple and clear language.

2.4.2 Observation

Two teachers were observed while teaching. Each of them was observed twice in the actual teaching learning process. For this purpose, the researcher used check list for collecting the data. The method helped to take (see) the students' performance activity during classroom instruction.

2.5 Sampling size and Sampling technique

The data of the study was collected from sampled Gesuba high school grade 10 students. Because of constraints of time and resources as well as the difficulty to manage the vast number of population in school, the researcher used 60 students from 121 female students of the total 283 students of grade 10 by using simple random sampling methods.

2.6 Method of data analysis and interpretation

After data was collected from the given population, the data analysis was made. Two types of data analysis and interpreting methods were used. These are qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data analysis is dealt with description of events through narration. This method is mainly used to analyze the data obtained from observation check list. It is done by primary data sources. Quantitative method is used to analyze the data gathered through questionnaire.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter the response of students and teachers were analyzed and interpreted.

2.6 Analysis of students' Responses to questionnaires

Table 1: Students' motive to ask question and answer

Items	Rating	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Your motivation to ask and answer question is	High	9	15%
	Less	30	50%
	No	21	35%

As it is seen in the above table 1, regarding the motivation of students to ask and answer questions; 15% of respondents have high motive where as 50% of the respondents have less motivation and those of 35% of the respondents do not want to ask and answer the questions in Wolaitato classroom instruction. This reveals that most of female students which are about 85% have less or no need to ask or answer question during the lessons.

Therefore, to mitigate and minimize such problem, all stakeholders should assist morally and give reward for female students in order to initiate them to be successful in their every activity.

Table 2: Students tendency to ask unclear parts of the lesson

	Frequency	Respondents
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Items		Frequency	Percentage
How often do you raise questions whenever the lesson is not clear for you during Wolaitao class?	Always	-	-
	Often	4	6.6%
	Sometimes	10	16.7%
	Rarely	22	36.6%
	No	24	40%

As it is seen in the table 2, the tendency of female students asking lessons which are unclear for them, only 6.6% of the respondents often ask any of unclear ideas in their lesson; Whereas 16.7% of respondents raise questions sometimes for their unclear lesson and the rest 76.6% respondents do not ask question despite the lessons are unclear.

So teachers must develop female students' habit of raising question whenever the lesson is unclear by initiating them.

Table 3: Students' motivation to participate in group work

Item	Rating	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Your participation in group work is	Active	7	11.7%
	Medium	26	43.3%
	Calm	27	45%

As it is shown in the above table, regarding the female students' activity on their group work, only 11.7% of respondents agreed that they are active participant in a group task but 43.3% of respondents agreed that they are medium participant, and the remaining 45% of the respondents said that they are not active participant or calm. This is to mean that it is possible to understand female students' group work participation is mostly medium or calm. So the teachers must take

time to discuss with their students by encouraging them to be active participant in their group discussion.

Table 4: Male students willing to be in a group with female students

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Are male students willing to make a group with you?	Yes	11	18.3%
	Unwilling	24	40%
	No	25	41.6%

In the table above, respondents answered that 18.3% of males have a good willing to be in one group with females, 40% of the respondents said 'unwilling' and the rest 41.6% respondents say 'no' so the stakeholders should give a piece of advice for male students and female students to participate actively in their group work.

Table 5: Female students' co-existence with male in one group

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Do you feel any fear being with males during your group task?	Yes	42	70%
	No	18	30%

As it is indicated in the above table, 70% of the respondents said 'yes' female students fear males and only 20% of the respondents said 'no' female students do not fear males. From those responses, we can comprehend that most of female students fear to be in one co-group work with males.

To avoid fear in being with male students, teachers should give chance for females to present their group task so that they can develop confidence.

Table 6: School material shortage checking

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Is there any material shortage like desk, text books to perform individual or group work in Wolaitao classes?	Yes	46	76.6%
	No	14	23.3%

In the above table, as it is clearly shown, 76.6% of the respondents responded that there was school materials shortage but the remaining respondents which are 23.3% said ‘no’ as there was not any materials shortage in school.

So the stakeholders should reduce the shortage of materials in order to make Wolaitao class more comfortable.

Table 7: Assessing students’ absenteeism

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
Regarding your absenteeism in which class are you absent?	From ordinary	19	31.6%
	From aid class	41	68.3%

In assessing students’ absenteeism comparing normal classes with aid classes, 68.3% of the respondents agreed most of the females are being absent from aid classes of their Wolaitao lesson. So this may lead them for the gapping of their Wolaitao lesson instruction. The stakeholders, particularly parents and homeroom teachers should advice and initiate females’ aid class frequently to become active learner with that of males.

Table 8: Female student’s attendance in library

Item	Frequency	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
How often have you used the school library?	Always	-	-
	Often	6	10%
	Sometimes	14	23.4%
	Rarely	17	28.4%
	No	23	38.4%

In the above table it is observed that only 10% of the respondents agreed that females are often users, where as 23.4% of the respondents agreed that they are using sometimes. The rest of the respondents agreed that females are not using the library service.

So the school director, homeroom teachers and the school library officials should award their female students about the advantage of the school library.

Table 9: The habit of using Wolaitao language

Item	Frequency	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
How often have you used Wolaitao in or out of the class?	Often	3	5%
	Sometimes	9	15%
	Rarely	10	16.7%
	No	38	63.4%

In the above table, 5% of respondents said we often use Wolaitao language in or out of classroom.15% of the respondents said we use Wolaitao language sometimes and the rest 80% of all respondents responded ‘rarely’ and ‘no’. In this regard, female students of the school do not have the habit of using the language.

If we want our students talk Wolaitao fluently, we should plan an Wolaitao day in our school. Then, we must initiate them when they speak Wolaitao with their class mate as well as with their teacher.

Table 10: Parents helpfulness

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
Are your parents helpful in moral and materials supplements?	Yes	10	16.7%
	Very less	18	30%
	No	32	53.3%

In the table 10, 16.7% of the respondents agreed that parents help them and the rest 83.3% of the respondents said, female students get very less or no parental help.

From these responses we can conclude that most female students do not get parental help for their school materials as well as for their moral, and this needs to be corrected.

2.7 Analysis of Teachers' Responses of Questionnaires

Table 11: Female students raise questions or answer questions

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
Do your female students ask or answer questions during Wolaitao classes?	Yes	-	-
	Very rarely	1	50%
	No	1	50%

As it observed in above, table all teachers responded ‘rare ‘or ‘no’. That means almost all of female students do not raise questions or answer questions.

So, the teacher should encourage the females and give equal chance for them to raise questions and answer questions.

Table 12: How active do females to ask their confusions or doubts in the instructions

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
		How often female students raise questions whenever the lesson is not clear for them?	Often
	Sometimes	-	-
	Rarely	2	100%
	No	-	-

As it is seen in the above table 12, 100% of the respondents agreed that female students raise question rarely when the lesson is not clear for them.

So, that the teacher should help them to be avoid fear and to become active participant.

Table 13: Female students in their group task participation

Item	Degree of initiation	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
How much do female students open to participate eagerly in class room work discussion?	Intimately	-	-
	Carelessly	2	100%
	Unwillingly	-	-

In case of table 13, female students’ initiation to their group work, as it observed, 100% of the respondents agreed that they were careless participant. This indicates that they might have their own problem which hinders them not to be active participant in their group task.

So, the teachers and the school director should show the way to participate eagerly in classroom discussion.

Table 14: Male students willing to be in one co- group with females

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
Are male students ok in a group work to be with females?	Yes	-	-
	No	2	100%

As it is seen in the above table, 100% of respondents responded that male students' are not willing to be in one group with female students

Table 15: Identifying what causes male students not to be with female students in a group work task

Item	Supposed impact	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
If male students are not okay to make group work with females, what impact can cause this?	Fear of culture	1	50%
	Male underestimated of females	1	50%
	Others	-	-

In the above table, regarding the impacts that hinder male students not to be in one group with female students during their group tasks, 50% respondents said fear of culture and 50% of the respondents said male underestimation of females.

Table 16: Suitability of class atmosphere for female students

Item	Degree of initiation	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
For your students the class room atmosphere including: chair, table, textbook & methods of teaching are suitable?	Very good	-	-
	Fair	-	-
	Very less	2	100%

In the table 16, 100% of respondents said the classroom atmosphere suitability is very less.

As it is viewed in the above table, female students miss their normal or aid classes most of the time.

Table 17: Teacher-parental discussion adequacy

Item	Option	Respondents	
		Frequency	percentage
Do you think the discussion you made with female student parent was frequent enough?	Yes	-	-
	Very less	2	100%
	No	-	-

As it is seen in the table above, regarding teacher’s parental discussion, all of the respondents said very less. So the female students less Wolaitao lesson participation might be associated with less teacher-parental discussion frequency

4. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the problems that affect female students’ participation in Wolaitato lesson. It is conducted in Gesuba high school grade 10 female students from the

section 'A' to 'C'. From those students 60 female students were selected. Besides, 2 teachers were selected to get important information.

The researcher used to gather data through questionnaire and observation. The data was analyzed by using qualitative and quantitative method of data analysis. The results revealed that female students are less participant in Wolaitao lesson compared to those of male students.

The problems that were shown in data analysis and interpretation are generally summarized as follows:

- ❖ The female students have less motivation to ask and answer questions
- ❖ The female students have less participation in their group task.
- ❖ Male students do not have willing to be with females in group.
- ❖ There is material shortage in their school.

4.2 Conclusion

Based on the finding the following conclusion can be drawn:

- Female students have more attendance missing or absenteeism from their formal classes, aid classes and school library use.
- Female students get very less or no materials, financial and moral supports from their parents or families.
- Teachers did not make sufficient discussion with students' parents.
- The school has furniture scarcity like chairs, text books etc.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were forwarded:

- Teachers must take time to discuss with their students by encouraging them to be active participant during their group setting as well as group task regardless of sex difference.
- Teachers must take time to make frequent discussion with their female students' parents especially with mother on:
 - ✓ Their absenteeism from normal, aid and library attendance

- ✓ Home chore burdens
- ✓ Material, financial and moral help giving
- The school administrators and stakeholders should work as hand and glove to solve the problem of female students.
- Teachers and parents' committee should strengthen their co-work to fulfill the classroom furniture's as well as school compound to be suitable and attractive for students especially for females.

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