Teachers And Directors Speak Out About School Problems

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THE PROBLEM

In recent years much concern has been expressed and many discussions have gone on about different aspects of the Ethiopian educational system. Such problems as student wastage, the deterioration in student behavior, shortages of appropriate textbooks and teaching aids, the lack of library facilities, the lack of concern on the part of school personnel for the welfare of students and the like have been raised. Different opinions as to the causes of these problems and their remedies have been expressed, usually by people far removed from the center of action. So it was felt that a survey of the opinions and thoughts of the people who had to face these problems daily might help to clarify, at least in part, some of the problems the schools were confronted with. To that end, in the summer of 1970 sets of questionnaires were designed and administered to 292 school teachers and directors from 262 different schools in all parts of Ethiopia. Since then the responses have been analyzed and the results are now presented in the following pages.

DISCUSSION

Out of a total of 292 respondents, 69.5 percent were school teachers and 30.5 percent were school directors. The median age for the teachers was 25.5 years and that of the directors was 26 years. The teachers had a mean average of 4 years of job experience, whereas the directors had 2 years' experience in their present job. Thus, both the teachers and directors were rather young and relatively inexperienced. (The spread of job experience is shown in Table 1).

Table 2 sets out the type of school the respondents represented. The number of schools totaled 262. The grade structures of these schools varied from 1-6 to 8-12. Nine out of the 262 schools were complete secondary schools. seven were junior secondary schools and 58.4 percent of them were full elementary schools. The mean average of the number of students in the 262 schools was 777.

As shown in Table 3, the number of teachers in these schools varied significantly. Twelve schools had only 2 teachers each, and only one school had as many as 185 teachers. Most of the schools had 6 teachers. Apparently the distribution of teachers is not dependent upon the number of students enrolled in a given school.

	TABLE 1				TABLE 2	
	Job Experience of the				*Types of School the Teachers*	
	Directors and Teachers				*and Directors Represented*	

Experience in years	No. of people	% of total Respondents	Grade	No. of Schools	%
Less than 1	1	0.3	1–6	153	58.4
1	40	14.0	1–8	63	24.0
2	38	13.0	5–8,		
3	88	30.1	4–6,		
4	51	17.5	8–9, etc.	20	7.6
5	37	12.7	1–12	5	1.9
6	11	3.8	7–8	5	1.9
7	6	2.0	1–4	5	1.9
9	1	0.3	1–5	4	1.5
9	1	0.4	9–12	2	.8
10	4	1.3	8–12	2	.8
11	2	0.7	6–8	1	.4
13	1	0.3	1–11	1	.4
14	3	1.0	2–8	1	.4
15	1	0.3			
Unspecified	6	2.0			

| Total Respondents | 292 | 100.0 | Total No. of Schools | 262 | 100.0 |

Respondents were asked to list the important problems their respective schools were facing in the order of importance. The result is shown in Table 4. One hundred forty three (21.5%) listed lack of sufficient qualified staff (teachers) as problem number one. This was followed by shortage of textbooks, teaching aids, skilled non-teaching staff and so on. Note also that, apart from shortages in teaching personnel and material, a lack of co-operation between school and community ranked 6th. The others in the list are those which the respondents considered important in carrying out the educational activities but which were either absent or lacking at that time.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Teachers in the Schools

No. of Teachers	No. of Schools With This Many Teachers	% of Schools
2	12	4.6
3	12	4.6
4	18	6.8
5	19	7.2
6	21	8.0
7	17	6.4
8	11	4.2
9	12	4.6
10	9	3.4
11	5	1.9
12	8	3.0
13	7	2.7
14	8	3.0
15	8	3.0
16	4	1.5
17	7	2.7
18	5	1.9
19	2	.8
20	6	2.3
21	5	1.9
22	1	.4
23	4	1.5
24	1	.4
25	3	1.5
25	3	1.1
26	4	1.5
28	3	1.1
29	2	.8
30	5	1.9
31	2	.8
32	5	1.9
33	3	1.1
34	1	.4
35	1	.4
36	3	1.1

TABLE 3 — *Continued*

Mode of School No. of Teachers	Frequency No. of Schools With This Many Teachers	% of Total % of Schools	Rank
38	1	.4	
39	1	.4	
40	1	.4	
41	1	.4	
45	1	.4	
46	1	.4	
47	1	.4	
48	1	.4	
50	3	1.1	
51	1	.4	
57	1	.4	
58	1	.4	
61	2	.8	
70	2	.8	
72	1	.4	
74	1	.4	
80	1	.4	
96	1	.4	
110	2	.8	
185	1	.4	
Unclassified	2	.8	
Total Frequency No. of Schools	262	100.0	

The question of textbook supply was also raised, and the results are tabulated in Table 5. One hundred ninety-nine (65%) of the respondents said books were rented to students, 34 (11.1%) said the books were given free of charge to poor students, and 26 (8.5%) said some textbooks were sold. In some other schools books were loaned to students free of charge (5.8%). Others lent books without charge (1.3%). The rest of the schools used a combination of the procedures listed in the table. Apparently most schools followed the rental system.

TABLE 4

Major Problems of the Schools

	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Shortage of qualified staff	143	21.5	1
Shortage of textbooks	85	12.8	2
More & better teaching aids	64	9.6	3
Better non-teaching staff	49	7.3	4
Miscellaneous	41	6.2	5
Cooperation between the schools and the community	29	4.3	6
Library	28	4.2	7
Modification of curriculum	28	4.2	7
More classrooms, desks, etc.	28	4.2	7
Cooperation between the teachers and the administration	25	3.8	10
Laboratory	21	3.1	11
Better student discipline	19	2.9	12
Sports equipment	19	2.9	12
Supervision	14	2.1	14
Better student-staff relationship	11	1.7	15
Clinic	11	1.7	15
Guidance Office	11	1.7	15
Student council	9	1.4	18
Salary increment for teachers	9	1.4	18
Payment of salary on time	7	1.0	20
Water and light	6	0.9	21
Seminar for teachers	4	0.6	22
Decrease or elimination of book rent	2	0.3	23
Revision of textbooks	2	0.3	23
Total Frequency	665	100.0	

TABLE 5

Mode of Textbook Supply

Model of School Material Supply	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Rent	199	65.0	1
Free only to the poor	34	11.1	2
Sold	26	8.5	3
Spot reading	23	7.5	4
Free of charge to all students	18	5.8	5
Lent without deposit	4	1.3	6
Some free, some sold	1	0.4	7
Lent on deposit	1	0.4	7
Total	306		

The respondents were asked to be specific about shortage of facilities in their schools. The result of their replies are tabulated in Table 6. Here again textbooks and teachers ranked first and second in the list, to be followed by library and recreation facilities, health centers, laboratories, teaching aids, running water, light, office equipment, latrine facilities (for both staff and students), bus services, guidance office, and others, including detention halls for students.

The teachers and directors in the study were also asked to be more specific regarding library personnel and facilities. Most of the respondents, (or 72%) said there was no library whatsoever in their schools; only 68 (or 28%) said there was one (see Table 7). For those schools which had libraries the average number of books was 420. As far as library utilization was concerned, the pattern is shown in Table 8. In most of the schools both staff and students utilised the libraries (65%); 16 of the respondents (24%) said only students used the libraries; in other schools only the senior students were allowed to use the libraries. In the rest of the schools only the school staff had access to them.

— 48 —

TABLE 6

Shortages of School Staff and Facilities

Item	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Textbooks	169	16.0	1
Teachers	130	12.3	2
Library	113	10.7	3
Recreational facilities	95	9.0	4
Clinic/dresser	85	8.1	5
Classrooms	82	7.8	6
Laboratory	76	7.2	7
Teaching aids	74	7.0	8
Desks, blackboards, etc.	55	5.2	9
Water and light	42	4.0	10
Staffroom, auditorium, Study hall	35	3.3	11
Non-teaching personnel	30	2.8	12
Office equipment	25	2.4	13
Latrine	14	1.3	14
Bus service or road	12	1.1.	15
Guidance office	7	0.7	16
Student council	6	0.6	17
Suitable curriculum	2	0.2	18
Disciplinary committee	2	0.2	19
Detention hall	1	0.1	20
Total Frequency	1055	100.0	

TABLE 7

Extent of Availability of Libraries in the Schools

	No. of Schools	%
Without Library	68	28
With Library	174	72
Total Schools	242	100.0

The average number of books in 49 libraries is 420.

| TABLE 8 | | | TABLE 9 | | |

Users of School Libraries *Persons in charge of Library*

Users	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Person	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency
Staff & students	43	65.2	Librarian	24	36
Students only	16	24.2			
Some of the students (usually senior classes)	4	6.1	Teachers	15	23
Teachers only	1	1.5	Director or Assistant	9	14
School personnel (including staff) only	1	1.5	Store-keeper	8	12
Anyone	1.	1.5	Others	10	15

Thirty-six percent of the respondents said that there were designated persons in charge of the libraries; the others stated that either a teacher, the school director or the storekeeper was responsible for library operations (see Table 9).

As set out in Table 10, most of the respondents (61%) reported that the libraries were inadequate for the schools needs; only 25 (31%) said they were adequate, and 6 (8%) did not reply.

It is obvious here that most of the schools represented were without any library, and the few that had one were either poorly stocked with appropriate material, or poorly organized and staffed to meet the schools' needs, while others were accessible only to a segment of the school population. This is according to expectations, unfortunately.

The main problems that students faced in the schools, as observed by the teachers and directors, was raised in the questionnaires (see Table 11). Here are the responses: transportation was problem number one for school children. The next was parents' reluctance to let their children go to school during harvesting seasons. This was followed by lack of appropriate learning materials in the schools, too much work outside school (during study hours), shortage of food, teachers' unwillingness to help students when they were faced with problems, shortage of money for purchasing school supplies, absence of library facilities, lack of any suitable study places and problems of health and shelter.

TABLE 10

Adequacy of the Libraries for School Needs

Opinion	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency
Not Adequate	49	61
Adequate	52	31
Did not say	6	8

TABLE 11

The Main Problems of Students

Problem	Frequency Mentioned	Rank
Transportation problem	253	1
Lack of permission from parents to go to school during harvest	253	1
Lack of suitable learning materials	245	3
Too much work outside the school during school hours	243	4
Shortage of food	236	5
Teachers not willing or not having time to see students with problems	323	6
Absence of laboratory		7
Shortage of money to buy school supplies	225	8
Absence of library	218	9
Lack of appropriate place for study	209	10
Health probrems	207	11
Problem of housing	204	12

The question of transportation was pursued still further. Table 12 sets out the one-way distance students travelled to attend school. These distances varied from a fraction of a kilometer to 70 kilometers. Forty-one of the schools reported that the children, on the average, travelled 10 kilometers one way per day to come to school. Twenty of the schools reported that children travelled as far as between 22 and 70 kilometers one way (perhaps here the teachers were giving the total one-way distance children had to travel without considering the question "each" day). The size of the areas in some of the Awrajas (districts) and the scattered settlement of the population in rural areas were two of the causes of the transportation hardships encountered by many of the children.

TABLE 12

Transportation Problems of Students

Distance students travel in km. (one day)	No. of schools where students traveling this distance are found	% total schools
0.5	1	.4
1	2	.8
2	5	2.1
3	10	4.1
4	13	5.4
5	18	7.5
6	6	2.5
7	15	6.2
8	12	5.0
9	4	1.7
10	41	17.0
11	18	7.5
12	14	5.8
13	4	1.7
14	9	3.7
15	28	11.6
16	5	2.1
17	2	.8
18	3	1.2
20	11	4.6
22	1	.4
25	6	2.5
28	4	1.7
30	6	2.5
32	1	.4
40	1	.4
70	1	.4
Total Number of Schools	241	

On the average 30.08% of the students travelled an average of 11.7 kms (one way).

The question of how students travelled back and forth was also raised. The responses are shown in Table 13. Most of the students (68%) travelled on foot, the rest travelled by bicycle, horse, camel, bus and mule.

This is indeed a problem for children in rural Ethiopia. This pattern of hardship at that tender age must give sufficient cause for discouragement and

eventual dropout to many children. No wonder that over fifty percent of our children drop out during their first year of schooling and that the average student wastage between grades 1 and 6 is 70 percent for the nation.

An attempt was made to find out what the causes were for student wastage, as the teachers saw it. The responses are analysed in Table 14. The most important single reason for school dropout was given as shortage of food (26%); the other reasons were: too much absenteeism to help parents on the farm or at home, doing odd jobs out of school to support self, academic failure, discharge or bad conduct, lack of textbooks and other learning materials, and frequent change of residence of parents. Obviously most of these problems are interrelated. Also, these correlate with problems mentioned earlier, e.g., that many of the children had to come long distances and that a number of these had to bring with them their simple victuals, which are less than adequate both in terms of quantity and quality. Finding appropriate shelter at prices the children can afford is another problem. (As for the others who were unable to solve these problems, they simply had to stay at home to help on the farms, and the like). The problems are compounded in rural areas (where much of this happens) because the parents do not necessarily see the long-range advantage to be derived from attending schools at the expense of the immediate assistances the children are able to give on the farm. At any rate, the student wastage during the period of primary and secondary schooling is very high and it is not difficult to discern why.

TABLE 13

Mode of Travel or Transport

Mode	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Foot	222	68.3	1
Bicycle	39	12.0	2
Horse	26	8.0	3
Camel and bus	21	6.5	4
Mule	17	5.2	5
Total Frequency	325	100.0	

TABLE 14

Main Causes of Student Wastage

Causes	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Shortage of food or shelter	169	25.5	1
Too much absenteeism because they help their parents at home	145	21.9	2
Too much absenteeism and very little time for study because students spend a lot of time doing odd jobs outside the school	130	19.6	3
Academic failure	110	16.6	4
Bad conduct	77	11.6	5
Lack of textbooks, maths instruments, etc.	30	4.5	6
Adjustment problem when parents change residence	2	0.3	7
Total Frequency	663	100.0	

The mean average of dropouts in 216 schools in a given year = 12.18%

TABLE 15

Where Students Go Upon Leaving the Particular School

Destination	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency
Another school	111	50
Home	58	26
Addis Ababa or a town to find a job	53	24
Total Frequency	222	100.0

"Where do students go when they leave school?" was another question that was raised. As can be observed from Table 15, 111 (50%) of the respondents said children go to another school, while 58 of them (or 26%) said they go back home.

To the question of the availability of recreation facilities for school children, 110 (46%) said there were none, while 58 of them (24%) said they had facilities. The rest reported that they had access to a playground in the community (sponsored by such organizations as the YMCA). It is clear here that the majority of the schools included in the study did not have recreational facilities for school children (see Table 16).

A number of the government schools have on their staff what is known as a "morals teacher". Usually this man is an old priest who looks after the spiritual or moral development of school children (in some rare cases this may be a sheikh). So in the present study we wanted to find out how many of the schools represented had a morals teacher on their staff. To this query 126 (51%) of the respondents said they had one, while 120 (49%) said they did not have a morals teacher on their staff. As to the specific functions of the morals teacher, 107 (39%) of those who responded to the question said his responsibility was to advise students (see Table 17). His other responsibilities included saying prayers at assemblies, teaching the Scriptures or the Koran, and providing advice to staff members and helping in school administration. 106 (88%) said he provided valuable services to the school, while 14 (12%) said he was not of any value to the school.

TABLE 16

Recreation Centers (outside the School)

Centers	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency
None	110	45.8
Playgrounds (other than YMCA's or YWCA's)	58	24.1
Swimming pools, team rooms, Clubs	35	14.6
YWCA or YMCA	22	9.2
Cinema or theatre	15	6.3
Total Frequency	240	100.0

The teachers and directors were asked to compare the moral standard of their current students with the morals of the older generation. Their responses appear in Table 18. All of the respondents agreed that the present students were better informed. However, when it came to such traits as respect for religion, and the general moral values of the current student population, there were differences of opinion; 191 (97%) thought the present students were respectful to

their parents and other elderly people, while 5 of them (or 3%) disagreed. One hundred and eighty-four (94%) said that young people now in school were careless about religion, while 12 (6%) of them disagreed. When it came to general moral values, 130 (66%) said that the present generation of school children did not have any, while 66 (34%) said children did have more moral values comparable with those of children of similar age in past generations. However, most of the respondents agreed that present day school children are more alert (65%), more intelligent, (65%), responsible (56%), not lazy (56%), more patriotic (69%), and more orderly (72%).

Although there was not complete agreement of opinion on any of these traits, most of the teachers and directors seemed to think that young people showed less concern for religion and traditional Ethiopian mores. Nevertheless,

TABLE 17

Duties of the Morals Teacher

Dudy	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Advising students	107	39.2	1
Offering prayers during assembly	76	27.8	2
Teaching the Bible	68	24.9	3
Advising the staff and the administration	21	7.7	4
Teaching the Koran	1	.4	5

TABLE 18

Opinion of teachers about today's young people's morals as compared to the morals of young people of past generations

Characteristic	No. of Teachers Agree	Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
Better informed	173	0	100	0
Disrespectful to parents and other elders	191	5	97	3
Careless about religion	184	12	94	6
Without moral values	130	66	66	34
More alert	112	61	65	35
More intelligent	119	64	65	35
Irresponsible	86	110	44	56
Lazy	87	109	44	56
Unpatriotic	30	66	31	69
Unruly	55	141	28	72

they were better informed and more alert to what was going on around them than students of earlier generations. This indicated that the school personnel actually did regard the current generation of students with more respect and a higher regard than is usually thought.

The study also showed that in many of the schools represented there were Parents' Committee which worked in close cooperation with the schools (see Table 19). The activities of these committees included raising funds for the schools (56%), helping maintain good discipline in the school (36%), and locating part-time jobs for school children (3%). The other activities included supervising teachers and providing funds for the purchase of awards to be given to outstanding students. As far as the values of these committees to the schools were concerned, 226 (or 92% of the respondents) felt the parents' committees were useful, while 20 (or 8%) thought they were not useful. Apparently the participation of parents' committees is appreciated by the school personnel.

TABLE 19

The Objectives of Parents' Committees

Objective	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Raise funds for use by the school	150	55.6	1
Help maintain student discipline	97	35.9	2
Build schools	12	4.4	3
Locate part-time jobs for students	7	2.6	4
Explain aim of education to the community and urge them to send their children to school	2	.7	5
Supervise teachers	1	.4	6
Buy prizes for students	1	.4	6

That the schools do have disciplinary problems with their pupils goes without saying. But we wanted to know the types of disciplinary problems and how they were handled. These disciplinary problems are shown in Table 20 in descending order of importance. The first one in that list is fighting between students as indicated by 273 (23%) of the respondents. Cheating in examination situation ranked second in importance. The others were stealing, fighting with teachers, promiscuous sexual relationships among students, disobedience to teachers, drinking, tribalistic activities, damaging school property and the like. It is interesting to note that some of the "disciplinary problems" such as smoking or gambling are thought serious by a significant number of school personnel, as is demonstrated in these responses.

TABLE 20

The Main Disciplinary Problems of the Schools

Problem	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Fighting one another	273	22.5	1
Cheating (in examinations)	252	20.8	2
Stealing	231	19.0	3
Fighting teachers	226	18.7	4
Promiscuous sexual relationships among students	203	16.7	5
Insulting, disobeying teachers	9	.8	6
Excessive drinking	4	.3	7
Tribalistic activities	4	.3	7
Damaging school property	4	.3	7
Gambling	1	.1	11
Smoking	1	.1	11
Illicit sexual relationships between teachers and students	1	.1	11
Other problems	4	.3	7

TABLE 21

Kinds of Punishments Administered by the Schools

Type of Punishment	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Keeping the offender out of class temporarily	173	28.2	1
Whipping	142	23.1	2
Asking the offender to kneel down	141	23.0	3
Expelling the offender	71	11.6	4
Asking the offender to bring his parents or advising him	44	7.2	5
Asking the offender to do odd jobs	36	5.9	6
Others	5	.8	7
Locking up the offender in a room	1	.2	8

Punishments are administered to offenders. Table 21 shows the type of punishment meted out to offenders. Number one in the list was keeping children out of class temporarily (28%). Whipping was second. The others were: making offenders kneel down, expelling them from school, requiring parents to appear for conferences or giving verbal scoldings (advising), asking offenders to perform some job in the school or, in rare cases, locking the offender in an empty room. It is of interest to note here that in our schools corporal punishment is still practised by school personnel and that there does not seem to be any objection to this practice on the part of parents.

In most cases the person who is responsible for administering punishment is the school director or his assistant. In some other schools the school director and the classroom teacher cooperate in meting out justice (see Table 22). In still other schools there was a special committee to deal with the discipline of children. In yet some other instances the director, the classroom teacher and a parent or two were involved.

TABLE 22

People Responsible for Maintaining Discipline

Persons	No. of Schools where this is so	% of Total Schools	Rank
Director or Assistant	65	29.1	1
Director and teachers	44	19.7	2
Discipline Committee	34	15.2	3
Teachers only	33	14.8	4
Director, teachers and parents	8	3.6	6
Director and parents	5	2.3	7
Director and Discipline Committee	4	1.8	8
Unit leader	4	1.8	8
Others	26	11.7	5
Total No. of Schools	223	100.0	

Student Councils

Two hundred forty-two people responded to the question whether there were student councils in their respective schools. Out of this total 196 (or 81%) of them said they had none. The rest, 46 (or 19%), said they had student councils.

The manner of student council formation is presented in Table 23. In most of the cases reported all students vote in the election of officers for the student council. In the rest students and teachers together, or senior students, or the director and his assistant or the teachers and the parents' committee did the electing. As far as the objectives of the students' councils were concerned, they were to: form clubs (such as literacy campaigns) to help the students and the people of the community, help maintain good student discipline in the school, report student problems to the school director, raise funds to buy equipment for the schools, organise and operate sports activities, represent students in the school administration and help improve student-staff relationships. Sometimes the council can punish students for misconduct and organise demonstrations against the school when student grievances are not properly dealt with by the school (see Table 24).

TABLE 23

Manner of Formation of the Student Council

Electors	No. of Schools	% of Total Schools	Rank
Students	40	88.9	1
Teachers and students	2	4.5	2
Some of the students (senior classes)	1	2.2	3
Director, Assistant, or teachers	1	2.2	3
Teachers and parents	1	2.2	3

TABLE 24

Objectives of the Student Council

Objective	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
Form clubs to help the students and the community	32	27.4	1
Maintain discipline and help in administration	30	25.6	2
Report student problems to the director	16	13.7	3
Buy equipment for the school, run sports activity, etc.	14	11.9	4
Teach students about self-government,			
Represent students	7	6.0	6
responsibility, etc.	12	10.3	5
Improve student-staff relationships	6	5.1	7

The respondents felt that the student councils do meet some students' needs and that they play constructive roles in the life of the schools. The favorable outcomes of student councils, as the teachers and directors saw them, included maintaining student discipline, educating children in self-government, raising funds to help poor students, providing a forum for exchange of ideas and opinions and arranging for programs such as film shows (see Table 25).

Thus, although the number of student councils was small, those who had had experience of them expressed appreciation.

TABLE 25

Favorable Outcomes of the Student Council

	Frequency Mentioned	Rank
Maintaining discipline	34	1
Educating children about self-government	28	2
Raising funds to help poor students	24	3
Providing forum for guest speakers or arranging film shows and community service programmes	12	4

Record-Keeping and Guidance Counseling

Most of the schools represented in the study did keep some kind of record for student accounting. Out of the total 257 (98%) reported attendance records were kept, 235 (or 89%) said they kept scholastic records, 218 said discipline records were maintained, 154 said health records were kept, and 134 (51%) reported they kept all the four different records listed (see Table 26).

As can be noticed from Table 27, in most instances the person responsible for record keeping was the school director or his assistant (38%), followed by teachers (35%), director and teachers (18%), designated record officer, (1%) and others (8%). Again, when it came to record utilization, as set out in Table 28, the director and his assistant led the rest (34%), followed by teachers (only 31%), the director and teachers (28%), and anybody interested in the child's welfare (3.2%). When it came to the safekeeping and storage of record forms, the pattern was again similar to what has been already noted. It was mainly the director or his assistant who assumed responsibility and kept them in their offices.

4*

TABLE 26

Type of Records Kept by the Schools

	No. of Schools that keep the record	% of Total Schools
Attendance	257	98
Scholastic Record Card	235	89
Discipline	218	83
Health	154	59
All four of the above	134	51
None	6	2
Total No. of Schools	263	

TABLE 27

People Responsible for Collecting Data for Records

Person	No. of Schools Where This is True	% of Schools Where This is True
Director or Assistant Director	92	38
Teachers only	86	35
Director and Teachers	43	18
Record Officer	2	1
Others	19	8
Total No. of Schools	242	100.0

TABLE 28

People Who Use the Record

	No. of Schools	%
Director or assistant	64	34
Teachers only	59	31.4
Director and teachers	53	28.2
Anybody interested in the child's welfare	6	3.2
The administration	6	3.2

As set out in Table 29 and 30, only in smaller instances was responsibility delegated either to the teachers or to specially designated record officers in the matter of record maintenance and safe keeping.

When it came to the uses made of records kept (Table 31) by the schools, the responses were as follows: for general information, to check scholastic or discipline records, for counseling purposes (5.5%, ranked 6th), for checking attendances, for evaluating and improving school programmes, and finally for grade promotion only.

From the foregoing discussions it seems that records were kept primarily for administrative purposes. This conclusion is attested by the fact that in most instances the school director or his deputy collected data, recorded, stored and consulted the information. The only thing to be hoped here is that teachers have access to these records when they want to help students. Indeed, when they were asked whether they felt there were sufficient data on students of their respective schools, 191 (73%) of them said there were not sufficient data available; only 71 (27%) of the respondents said they had enough information to help their students.

TABLE 29

People Responsible for Keeping Records

Place	No. of Schools Where This is True	% of Schools Where This is True
Only the Director	131	56
Only the Teachers	42	18
The Director and the Teachers	22	9
The secretary of the school	15	6
Record Officer	3	1
Others	23	10
Total No. of Schools	236	100

TABLE 30

Places where Records are Kept

Person	No. of Schools Where This is True	% of Schools
The Director's office	173	75.2
The store	19	8.3
The teachers' cupboard	9	3.9
A classroom	6	2.6
The secretary's office	3	1.3
The records room	2	.9
Other places	18	7.8
Total No. of Schools	230	100.0

TABLE 31

Uses Made of Records

Use	No. of Schools	% of Total Schools	Rank
For general information	73	36.7	1
For information regarding academic achievement and discipline only	40	20.1	2
For disciplinary purpose only	21	10.6	3
For miscellaneous purposes	20	10.1	4
For issuing certificates	13	6.5	5
For counseling	11	5.5	6
For checking attendance	9	4.5	7
For evaluating and improving school programmes	7	3.5	8
For promotion purposes only	5	2.5	9
Total No. of Schools	199	100.0	

The teachers and directors were asked to say who in the schools assumed the responsibility of guidance or counseling for students. The responses are set out in Table 32. The majority of the respondents (36.4%) said the director or his assistant was responsible for student counseling. This was followed by the director and teacher, "nobody", teachers only, the unit leader and the discipline committee, and the like. Thus, although the official function of guidance or counseling rested with the director, in actual practice most often students went to the teachers when they needed advice and counseling (see Table 33). The teachers, the director, the unit leader, the school dresser, and parents or friends were listed in descending order of importance as people to whom students turned in time of personal crisis. This is an interesting phenomenon, but hardly surprising. Traditionally, counseling (advising) and disciplinary administration were thought to be part of the same whole and the one individual (usually the director or a man in an administrative position) assumed the responsibility of advice dispenser. In Ethiopia, obviously, the traditional concept of "counseling", if any, is still the one mentioned above, even though functionally the responsibility was carried out by the school teachers to whom students often went for assistance of one sort or another.

TABLE 32

People Responsible for Guidance and Counseling at present

Person	Frequency Mentioned	%	Rank
The Director and his Assistant only	67	36.4	1
The Director and the teachers	38	21.0	2
Nobody	36	20.0	3
The teachers only	19	10.0	4
The unit leader	4	2.0	6
The Discipline Committee only	1	0.6	7
Others	10	10.0	4

TABLE 33

People students usually see when they have problems

Person	Frequency Mentioned	% of Total Frequency	Rank
The classroom teacher	166	42.9	1
The Director	139	35.9	2
The unit leader	39	10.1	3
The dresser	36	9.3	4
Parent or friends	7	1.8	5
Total Frequency	387	100.0	

The times during which teachers helped students are shown in Table 34. Of those who see students for counseling purposes, most of them (33%) do so after school hours, others during recess time, teacher's spare time, at weekends, before classes begin in the morning and during lunch hours. There was no specified time set aside for counseling purposes by the schools.

In response to a specific question asking whether the school should help students find another school or a job upon leaving their school, most of the respondents (54%) said "no", and 46 percent said "yes".

The teachers and directors were asked whether the schools they represented gave awards for outstanding achievements by students. Their responses are shown in Table 35. The majority of them (98%) said awards were given to students excelling in scholastic achievement, conduct (character), or sportsmanship. If this were true of the rest of the schools, it is a positive incentive in recognition of student excellence.

Finally the question of the need for organized guidance-counseling programmes in the schools was raised. One hundred sixty-four (or 84%) of the respondents said there was a definite need for such a programme in their schools. Only 32 (or 16%) said there was no need.

TABLE 34

Times when teachers help students

Time	No. of Schools	% of Total Schools
After school	93	32.7
Never	51	18.0
During the teacher's spare time	36	12.7
At weekends	27	9.5
During recess	43	15.1
Noon (lunch time)	24	8.5
Before classes begin (in the morning)	9	3.1
During the student's or the teacher's free period	1	.4
Total No. of Schools	284	100.0

TABLE 35

Honorary awards in the schools

Type	Frequency Mentioned	%	Rank
For scholastic achievement	172	32.8	1
For good conduct	172	32.8	1
For good sportsmanship	171	32.5	3
No awards given	10	1.9	4
Total	525	100.0	

Summary

IN the summer of 1970 sets of questionnaires were designed and administered to 292 school teachers and directors who were attending the summer teachers' programme at HSIU. The questionnaires covered a wide range of areas related to the school, its staff and its students.

According to the findings of the study, critical shortages were evident in the number of qualified school personnel, textbooks, laboratory space and equipment, recreation facilities for students and means of transportation to school for both teachers and students. It was also found out that a small number of schools had parents' committees working closely with the schools and that these committees were appreciated by the school personnel.

Most of the schools represented in the study had a morals teacher on their staff and most of the school personnel felt he was rendering valuable service to the respective schools. Records were also kept by many of the schools, but the purpose of record keeping was primarily for administrative and disciplinary functions. Also in most instances data for the records were collected, recorded, and utilized by the school director or his assistants, and these records were kept in his office.

As far as guidance-counseling was concerned, the concept exists in rudimentary form in a few schools, but the official position was assumed primarily by the school director or his assistant. In practice, however, given the chance, students preferred taking their problems first to the classroom teachers. However, the study showed that there were felt needs for organized guidance-counseling programmes.

It was found out also that school children in Ethiopia faced extreme hardships in travelling long distances to attend school. Others who came from far-off areas had to bring their food provisions, which were meagre at best, and try to find suitable shelter in the environs of the schools at prices they could afford to pay. Most often than not, adequate housing was not available for children to live in. Another problem students from rural Ethiopia faced was the problem of absenteeism from school. The children were required to stay at home to help out on the farm. This need to stay away from school to contribute to the economy of the peasant family was compounded by still another factor, which was lack of appreciation by some parents of the value to be derived from education. Thus one led to another, and together these variables contributed to the high student wastage characteristic of Ethiopian schools today.

To lessen the problems of student attrition and improve the living conditions of children, perhaps reorganizing some of the scattered settlements of rural people might prove helpful. Another possibility is to establish a one-teacher school in as many of the smaller settlements (hamlets) as possible. This might bring primary education near to the homes of school-age children. Also there is a need to establish some type of guidance-counseling services for at least the larger schools, both elementary and secondary, so that appropriate information and guidance services will be available to students.

FOOTNOTES

1. Both of the authors are from the Department of Educational Psychology. Dr. Teshome is the Head of the Department: Ato Darge is a Graduate Assistant.

2. Since the beginning of this year (1970-71) students have been required to buy textbooks at non-commercial prices fixed by the Ministry.