

## Impact of child emotional and behavioral difficulties on educational outcomes of primary School children in Ethiopia: A population-based Cohort study

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In prospective community studies from low-income countries, the association between child emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and educational outcomes has not been examined. An ongoing cohort of 2090 mother-child dyads was studied to see if there was a link between child EBD symptoms and educational outcomes. The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire was used to assess child EBD when the average age of the children was 6.5 years, SD 0.04, (T0) and 8.4, SD 0.5 years (T1) (SDQ). When the children were 9.3 (SD 0.5) years old, mother reports (drop-out) were acquired at T1 and school records were obtained when the children were 9.3 (SD 0.5) years old (T2). After controlling for relevant confounders, child EBD symptoms at T1 were found to be substantially linked with school absence at T2: SDQ total score: 1.01 Risk Ratio (RR); 95 percent confidence interval (CI) 1.01, 1.02; SDQ high score (14); SDQ low score (9) RR 1.36; 95 percent CI 1.24, 1.48; emotional subscale RR 1.03; 95 percent CI 1.01, 1.04; hyperactivity subscale RR 1.03; 95 percent CI 1.02, 1.04; and peer difficulties subscale RR 1.03; 95 percent CI 1.02, 1.04; and peer problems subscale RR 1.03; 95 percent CI 1.02, 1.04 (RR 1.02; 95 percent CI 1.00, 1.04). The conduct difficulties sub-scale (= - 0.57; 95 percent CI: -1.02, -0.12) had a significant negative relationship with academic achievement (SDQ = -2.89; 95 percent CI: - 5.73, -0.06).

There was no link found between EBD in children and school dropout. Child EBD symptoms were linked to higher school absenteeism and lower academic achievement in a prospective study, implying that child mental health should be considered in programs aimed at improving school attendance and academic achievement in low-income countries.

### Biography

Habtamu is a Developmental Psychologist and Mental Health Epidemiologist at Jimma University, Ethiopia. Dr Habtamu received his BSC in Biology, MA in Developmental Psychology and PhD in Mental Health Epidemiology, all from Addis Ababa University. Since January 2019, he is a postdoctoral fellow of African Mental Health Research Initiative (AMARI) and currently won research fellow of African early childhood Network (AFECN). In addition to teaching for over 15 years and supervising postgraduate students, he has served as head of department of psychology. Dr. Habtamu is also a contributor to scientific forum and lead of a longitudinal study and has publications on high impact factor peer reviewed international journals. Dr Habtamu has a strong methodological background with experiences of managing multi-site studies, including cluster randomized studies, cohort studies, formative assessments, program evaluations and large-scale survey and intervention studies. Now, Dr Habtamu is doing a research on maternal Mental health and quality child nurturing care in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as AFECN research fellow.

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