

Classroom Problems in The Primary Cycle **A field study in some primary schools in the state of Laghouat**

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Abstract:

The current study aims to identify the reality of classroom problems at elementary education in the province of Laghouat. As well as to identify the most severe classroom problems among the following classroom problems: (problems related to the teacher, problems related to the pupil, problems related to the school, problems related to parents) among pupils of elementary school schools in the city of Laghouat.

Through this study, it was concluded that the general average of the grade of class problems -173- indicates a high degree at the level of elementary schools in the province of Laghouat according to the scale adopted in this study. Moreover, the problems related to the pupil ranked first in terms of severity with a percentage of 28.24% than other classroom problems in the elementary education stage in the province of Laghouat. This is according to the opinions of the study sample.

Keywords: classroom problems, elementary school.

1- Introduction

Classroom problems are among the significant topics in which there must be many and serious studies. These problems are an issue of concern for teachers, and consume their efforts and time. Providing order and discipline in the classroom helps them to perform their tasks, and not to waste energy and time by getting preoccupied with undesirable behavioral patterns. Furthermore, the curricula, school administration and pupils' parents have an important impact on increasing or reducing the degree of classroom problems.

1-1- The study problematic :

Classroom problems have become a concern for teachers in various educational cycles, as they limit the effectiveness of the teacher and student in the classroom. Besides, these problems range from simple to severe. However, classroom problems have many and varied forms, such as frequent absence and lateness, forgetting school supplies, inattention, excessive movement, sabotage, rebellion, refusal to do school tasks and work, violating school regulations, isolation...etc.

The multiplicity of problems faced by teachers in the primary cycle is fully reflected in the next one, as long as there is no interest or agreement between the teacher and the student, the school, parents and the curriculum, as the school is the second social institution after home in terms of affecting the child's upbringing and care. Moreover, classroom problems of all kinds are among the important ones facing some families who aspire to have their children excel. There are several reasons for children, some have family or emotional problems, while others are the cause of turmoil at school or a group of friends in the classroom.

Given the importance of the topic, especially at this time when class problems have spread greatly. This made the educational administrators such as headmasters of educational institutions, teachers in various cycles, as well as inspectors insist that there should be educational psychological studies of these classroom problems in order to diagnose them and search their remedial solutions. Through the foregoing, this study came in order to identify the reality of classroom problems in primary schools in the state of Laghouat, which aims to answer the following two questions:

The first question: What is the reality of the classroom problems in the primary cycle in the state of Laghouat?

The second question: What are the most severe class problems among the following class problems: (problems related to the teacher, problems related to the pupil, problems related to the curriculum, problems related to the school)?

1-2- The study objectives:

- This study aims at identifying the reality of classroom problems in the primary cycle in the state of Laghouat?

- This study also aims at identifying the most severe class problems among the following class problems: (system problems, relationship problems, property problems, academic problems, theft, lying, aggressiveness).

1-3- The study importance:

The importance of this study lies in the following:

- Highlighting the classroom problems for those interested and those in charge of education, as well as for educators and parents in order to focus on them and find remedial solutions, because neglecting them hinders the educational process on the one hand and also has damages to learners, especially in the field of academic achievement.

- Directing researchers to this kind of problems that are prevalent specifically in the primary education cycle, which are mostly class problems, by studying, researching and diagnosing in order to reach remedial solutions that help reduce or mitigate them.

1-4- Previous studies:

There have been many studies on classroom problems in different environments, some of them were selected, specifically those conducted in the primary cycle, because they are related to the subject of the current study, they are as follows:

(Mando Rama Ahmed, 2013) conducted a study aimed at identifying the obstacles to employing learning resources in the fourth year primary school and determining the impact of gender, academic qualification on their evaluation of the level of those obstacles. Besides, the study sample consisted of 301 male and female teachers, a questionnaire was distributed to them, and 30 male and female teachers were observed. Moreover, the researcher used the descriptive analytical method. Among the results of the study, the most prominent obstacles are: program intensity, insufficient teacher training, large number of pupils in the classroom. It also showed that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean responses of classroom teachers with regard to the obstacles to employing learning resources due to the variables of gender and educational qualification.

(Shahada Raneen Ahmed Saleh, 2012) conducted a study that aimed at identifying the degree of problems facing teachers of mixed basic public schools in the northern West Bank, and also aimed to determine the differences in the respondents' responses to each of the variables (gender, educational qualification, age, number of years of experience, marital status, specialization, governorate). A cluster random sample of (230) individuals was selected, the researcher used a questionnaire consisting of (51) items divided into three fields, namely: the field of administrative problems, the field of technical problems, and the field of social problems. Besides, the researcher used the descriptive approach. The study concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in the degree of problems facing teachers of mixed basic public schools due to the variable of gender, educational qualification, specialization, number of years of experience, marital status and age.

(Khalaf, 2004) conducted a study aimed at identifying the extent to which primary school teachers are aware of the obstacles that lead to reducing and limiting the effectiveness of teaching, and the low level of efficiency of the educational process. The study sample consisted of (716) male and female teachers from all educational regions of Kuwait, and a questionnaire prepared by the researcher was applied containing nine axes: (management, technical guidance and supervision, curriculum, class time, teaching aids, school schedule, students, parents). The results of the study indicated that the most problems faced by teachers in general during their school day are parents and teaching aids, and

also indicated that the teachers most exposed to problems and difficulties in school work were of recent experience(1-5) years.

(Abu Fouda, 2008)also conducted a study aimed at identifying the problems facing classroom teachers in public schools in Gaza governorates from their point of view. The researcher used the descriptive analytical method to describe this phenomenon, and he applied a questionnaire that included the problems of classroom teachers in government schools, their number was (164) male and female teachers. One of the most significant results of the study is : that the field of problems related to dealing with students weighs (64,57%), then the one of problems related to the educational curriculum weighs (48,61%), and finally the field of problems related to classroom management weighs.(%38,59) Furthermore, there are statistically significant differences in the degree of classroom teachers' responses to the problems they face from their point of view, due to the two gender variables: (males, females), and the differences were among females. The study recommended the necessity of the presence of the supporting teacher with the class one to alleviate the burden on , give him remedial classes, and reduce the number of students in one class.

Furthermore, **(Wei, 2003)** conducted a study aimed at investigating the manifestations of negative behavior from the point of view of a sample of (146) male and female teachers. The results showed that the most prevalent forms of negative behavior among pupils were behaviors associated with verbal attacks, insulting and yelling at others, then disruptive and chaotic ones, and finally behaviors of theft and assault on the property of others, thus the mean of appearance of these behavioral forms was high among the students. Besides, **(Al-Maraziq, 2004)** conducted also a study which aimed to identify the behavioral problems of eighth, ninth and tenth classes from the point of view of a sample consisting of (582) male and female students. The results showed that academic problems occupied the first place, and that they are more in males than females. Besides, **(Cooper, 2004)** conducted a study aimed at revealing the most significant manifestations of negative behavioral problems, and identifying the most important factors affecting the emergence of these problems among primary school pupils, as the results revealed that the most important manifestations of negative behavior is speaking loudly and confusion during the teacher's speech. However, the general mean of these behavioral manifestations was low. **(Al-Rada'an, 2017: 125-126)**

There is also a study of **(Al-Khulaifi, 1994)**, which was conducted in Qatar, that aimed to identify the behavioral problems of primary school children, as the research sample consisted of (462) male and female pupils from the primary cycle. The study concluded that behavioral problems increase with progress in study and age, and showed that males have more problems than females, and those who are weak more than those who excel in school. As for the study **(Al-Barghouti, 2001)**, which was conducted in Jordan, aimed to determine the

reasons for students' lack of discipline in the classroom, one of the results of the research was that there is a correlation between academic achievement and discipline. As the higher the academic level, the higher the potential for discipline. However, one of the reasons for students' lack of discipline in the classroom is the presence of the pupil's relatives in the classroom, the desire to ridicule the teacher, and the admiration of classmates in the classroom. **(Hussain, 2007:270)**. We also find **(Sheephard's)** study on the extent of the prevalence of behavioral problems for pupils of the Buckinghamshire School in Britain as perceived by teachers. The results revealed that the severe behavioral problems of males are more than females, which are troublemaking, disorder and lack of respect for school regulations and laws. **(Nazmy, 1996:350-352)**

Whereas the study **(Al-Sahel, 2001)** which aimed at identifying the extent and type of children's problems among pupils in the primary cycle in general. The study sample consisted of (520) male and female teachers of all primary schools in the Kuwait. The study tool was a list of children's problems, it concluded that there is a wide spread of children's problems in the primary cycle, as the most common problems were: excessive movement, rapid crying, neglect, forgetfulness, neglecting school duties, insulting others, beating children, lack of cooperation with the teacher, lying, damaging school property.

The study of **(Al-Zahrani and others, 2001)**, aimed to identify the type of common behavioral problems among primary school children from the point of view of school headmasters, teachers and counselors. Besides, a scientific tool was built to measure behavioral problems in primary school children. The results of the study showed that the problem of excessive motor activity was the most frequent problem from the point of view of school headmasters and teachers, while the problem of the student's instability in his place for a long time showed high results and this from the point of view of the counselors. **(Ashraf, 2009: 318-319)**. Moreover, in the study of **(Al-Rada'an, 2017)** that aimed to identify the level of the prevalence of behavioral problems among primary school students in Kuwait from the teachers' point of view. The study concluded that there are behavioral problems of a moderate degree, as males were more likely to show behavioral problems than females.

The study of **(Jamil, 1999)** aimed to identify the behavioral problems of pupils in primary schools in Makkah Al-Mukarramah from the teachers' point of view. The study sample consisted of (412) teachers. Thus, the study results showed that the behavioral problems from the teachers' point of view are as follows: rushing to play at the expense of studying, lack of attention, evading school homework, poor academic level, and neglecting school work, however these problems appeared in an average way.

As for the study **(Abu Shehab , 1985)**, it aimed to survey behavioral problems in primary schools in Jordan, and to identify the extent to which they are related to gender, educational stage, and educational region, the study sample consisted of (236) teachers (males and female). The results of the study showed that there

were behavioral problems that appeared to a large extent among students, including: the inability to focus attention for a long time during the explanation, turning back and talking with colleagues, excessive movement, sayings that anger the teacher, and the destruction of special needs such as notebooks, books and pens, while The appearance of aggressive behavior was to a low degree.

✓ **Commenting on previous studies:**

Previous studies have contributed greatly to crystallizing the comprehensive view of the current research study. Thus, the researcher benefited from them in defining the objectives of the study, as well as in selecting the sample. Furthermore, through these studies, it was settled on using the appropriate study tool, statistical methods, and in controlling and formulating the current research questions. Moreover , it is evident from the review of previous studies that within the limits of the researcher's knowledge, there are few studies that dealt with classroom problems from the point of view of teachers in primary education in Algeria.

1-5-The study terms:

Classroom problems:

(Effat Al-Tanawi, 2011) defined classroom problems as the actions of learners that are seen by the teacher as distracting, or disruptive in the classroom, such as exaggerating speaking, speaking without the teacher's permission, inappropriate movement, and inattention or preoccupation with things rather than following the explanation and moderate aggressive actions. (Abdullah Jad, 2019: 09)

In another definition, it is a set of problems that affect children's compatibility with specific social standards of acceptable behavior, and accordingly their academic achievement and their personal relationship with teachers and classmates will be affected. (Jad, 2019: 9)

In this study, the classroom problems procedurally are defined as the total score that we get based on the classroom problems scale from the teacher's point of view.

Primary cycle :

It is a stage of compulsory basic education starting from the first year until the fifth year of primary education.

2- Method and tools:

2-1- Study Methodology:

The researcher used the descriptive survey method, which endeavours to determine the current status of the phenomenon, as this method depends on what is an object and its interpretation, it is not limited to data collection and tabulation, but rather, it goes on to more than that including some interpretation

of these data and the expression of the results of the study by statistical methods. (Obeidat et al., 2003: 201). It appears in this study through the detection of behavioral problems among primary school pupils.

2.2. The delimitations of the study were as follows:

- **Spatial delimitations:** primary schools in the state of Laghouat.
- **Time delimitations:** This study was conducted in its practical aspect in the period from January 2021 to the beginning of June 2021.
- **Human delimitations:** teachers of primary education in the state of Laghouat.

2-3- Study sample:

The study sample consisted of 400 male and female teachers studying in the primary cycle who were randomly selected from among the teachers of the primary cycle in the state of Laghouat.

2-4- Study tool: A scale of classroom problems for primary school teachers

The scale by: Dr. Boubaker Charfi is a professor at the University Center in Aflou, Laghouat.

The scale description: This scale aims at identifying the degree of classroom problems in the primary school that occur within the classroom or in the school environment. This scale consists of 45 statements that represent these problems. In front of each statement, there are five choices (very large - large - average - few - very few) thus obtaining scores (1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5). Hence, the total score of the scale ranges between 45, which indicates a very low degree of classroom problems, and 225 degrees, which indicates a very high degree of classroom problems.

- Psychometric features of the scale:

The scale reliability: The reliability coefficients of the scale and its sub-domains were verified on the basis of the coefficients of internal consistency reliability and coefficients of stability reliability.

The scale validity: It was confirmed by calculating the validity of the scale by the method of internal consistency validity (the link of the item with the domain to which it belongs, as well as the correlation of the domains with each other and with the total score of the scale) as well as by the method of the peripheral comparison validity.

Distribution of scale statements on dimensions: The scale consists of five dimensions, which are as follows:

- The first dimension: problems related to the teacher, statement from 1 to 9, total 09
- The second dimension: problems related to the pupil, statement from 10 to 17 total 08
- The third dimension: problems related to the curriculum, statement from 18 to 27 Total 10
- The fourth dimension: problems related to school administration, statement 28 to 38 Total 11
- The fifth dimension: problems related to pupils parents, statement 39 to 45 Total 07

-Scale instructions: writing information (gender, age, level, years of experience, year of teaching, specialization). (Charfi , 2019: 108-109)

2-5- How to apply and correct the research tool:

The teachers of the study sample (400 male and female professors) were contacted. as they were asked to fill out forms that include a list of class problems, which is from their point of view.

3- Discussing and interpreting the study results :

In the following, we present a detailed presentation of the results that were reached through the application of the study tool, in addition to the interpretation and discussion of the results obtained by answering the study's questions.

3. 1- Discussing and interpreting the results of the first question:

To answer the first question, which states:

What is the reality of classroom problems in the primary cycle in the state of Laghouat?

To answer this question, the mean of the scores for the sample as a whole was calculated according to the following method:

$$69193/400 = 173$$

Where :

- 69193: the total scores of the sample members in the classroom problems scale.
- 400: the number of study sample members.

- 173: the general mean of the scores of the study sample members on the scale of class problems.

Through the scale correction method, we find that the general mean of the grade of class problems 173 indicates a high degree of class problems at the level of primary schools in the state of Laghouat.

This result is consistent with the study of **(Al-Sahel, 2001)**, which aimed at identifying the extent and type of children's problems among pupils in the primary cycle in general. The study sample which was a list of children's problems consisted of (520) male and female teachers of all primary schools in Kuwait. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a wide spread of children's problems in the primary cycle, as the most common problems were: excessive movement, rapid crying, neglect, forgetfulness, neglecting schoolwork, insulting others, beating children, not cooperating with the teacher, lying, destroying school property.

Furthermore, the study of **(Wei, 2003)**, aimed to investigate the manifestations of negative behavior from the point of view of a sample of (146) male and female teachers, as the results showed that the behavioral problems were high. It is also consistent with the study of **(Al-Sahel, 2001)**, which aimed to identify the extent and type of children's problems among primary school pupils in general in Kuwait, thus the study concluded that there is a wide spread of children's problems in the primary cycle. It is also consistent with the study of **(Abu Shehab, 1985)**, which aimed to survey the behavioral problems in primary schools in Jordan, and to identify the extent to which they are related to gender, educational stage and educational area, the study sample consisted of 236 teachers and schools). The study results showed that there are behavioral problems that appeared to a large extent among the pupils. Moreover, this result did not agree with the study of **(Cooper, 2004)**, which aimed to reveal the most important manifestations of negative behavioral problems, as well as to identify the most important factors affecting the emergence of these problems among primary school pupils, where he concluded that the general mean of these behavioral manifestations was low.

This result is also consistent with the study of **(Al-Rada'an, 2017)**, which aimed to identify the level of prevalence of behavioral problems among primary school pupils in Kuwait from the teachers' point of view, thus the study concluded that there are average behavioral problems.

The high degree of classroom problems is due to several reasons, and this can be explained according to the behavioral approach, as this trend sees that behavioral problems (behavioral disorder) is an educated behavior that the individual learns from the environment in which he lives. Where this trend

considers that man is the son of the environment, with its various stimuli and responses, related to various areas of his social, psychological, biological and others , as it is formed in the individual until it becomes a part of his psychological entity. Besides, the individual learns wrong and abnormal behaviors from his social environment through reinforcement, modeling, formation and sequencing of inappropriate behaviors. **(Al-Izza, 2002: 43)**. Therefore, the behaviorists agree on the importance of the environmental conditions that surround the learner and view it as a decisive factor in learning. Moreover, they rely in a large extent on the role of the teacher in arranging the and preparing classroom to be a catalyst for learning. **(Radi, 2012, p. 229)**

(Hamada 1991) emphasises that it is important to point out that children's problems are mainly due to unsuitable environmental conditions that the child lives in, and heredity has nothing to do with creating this problem except in limited cases, as these environmental conditions may be related to the family, school, or community in which the child lives. **(Mal Mamoun, 2007: 17)**. This is also confirmed by **(Eugenie Madanat, (1992)**, as the cause of behavioral problems may be the teacher himself, the learning methods he uses, goals that do not fit the needs of the learner, the absence of specific goals, random planning, ineffective presentation, or lack of educational materials, or improper evaluation or lack of feedback, all of these reasons create and amplify the pupils' behavioral problems. **(Mel Mamoun, 2007: 52)**

Furthermore , in many cases, we find that the school neglects in its upbringing of the student his mental, psychological and social characteristics, it does not take into account the differences in preparations, abilities, tendencies and trends, and it does not take into account changes in his psychological development at every stage of his growth. However, during those periods some pupils have psychological problems and changes that may lead them to anxiety and depression, as well as some pupils who are shy or afraid of confrontation or suffer from psychological disorders as a result of family problems or some self-problems. **(Salim, 1996: 26)**. Currently, we notice in our reality only reinforces these negative behaviors due to the lack of intervention, whether on the part of the parents or on the part of the educators, and even from the community, which has not intervened in order to modify the behavior of students, which made it exacerbate and spread in a way that disturbs everyone.

3. 2- Discussion and interpretation of the second question results:

To answer the second question, which states:

What are the most severe classroom problems among the following ones : (problems related to the teacher, problems related to the pupil, problems related to the curriculum, problems related to the school, problems related to parents) in the primary education cycle ?

To answer the second question, the percentages of problems' scores were calculated according to the five dimensions of the class problems. Its classification comes as follows:

- Problems related to the pupil (28.24%)
- Problems related to school (20.5%)
- Problems related to the curriculum (21.88%)
- Problems related to the professor (16.58%)
- Problems related to pupil' parents(13.25%)

Hence, we find that the problems related to the pupil came first in terms of severity among other class problems in the primary education cycle in the state of Laghouat.

This result is consistent with the study of (**Al-Barghouti, 2001**), which was conducted in Jordan, aiming to identify the reasons for the pupil's lack of discipline in the classroom. One of the results of the research was the existence of a correlation between academic achievement and discipline, the higher the academic level, the higher the probability of discipline. It is also consistent with the study of (**Al-Khelaifi, 1994**), which was conducted in Qatar, which aimed to identify the behavioral problems of primary school children. The study concluded that behavioral problems increase with advancing study and age, and showed that those who are late in school have more behavioral problems than those who excel in school. Moreover, it also agrees with the study (**Al-Maraziq, 2004**), which aimed to identify the behavioral problems of the eighth, ninth and tenth graders from the point of view of a sample consisting of (582) male and female pupils, as the results showed that the academic problems occupied the first place.

The problems related to the pupil leads the ranking with the highest percentage, as we find this mainly due to the distraction of attention, which is confirmed by many studies. Besides, in the study of (**Abu Shehab, (1985)**), the results showed that there are behavioral problems that appeared to a large extent among pupils, including: the inability to focus attention for a long time during the explanation, turning back and talking with classmates, a lot of movement, and sayings that anger the teacher, and the destruction of special needs such as notebooks, books and pens. However, the preoccupation of the pupil with negative behaviors means that he does not focus on the lesson, as this indicates that the level of academic achievement gradually decreases, which makes the pupil fall into the category of academic retarded. This was also confirmed by a study of (**Al-Barghouti, 2001**), which resulted in a correlation between academic achievement and discipline. The more disciplined the pupil is in the classroom, the higher the level of academic achievement he has. Discipline means focus and attention to the lesson and everything related to it.

4- Conclusion

The results of the study are summarized as follows:

- The general mean of the degree of classroom problems among primary school pupils in the state of Laghouat is high, and this is based on the results of the classroom problems scale adopted in this study.
- The problems related to the pupil are the most severe classroom problems among the following ones: (problems related to the teacher, problems related to the pupil, problems related to the school, problems related to the pupil's parents) in the primary cycle in the city of Laghouat.

Through the obtained results, which show the somewhat high level of class problems in the primary education cycle, especially in the dimension related to the problems related to the pupil, that came at the forefront of the ranking with the highest percentage, so in order to reduce or mitigate these problems, some suggestions can be given as follows :

- The necessity of adapting the educational curricula to the requirements of the age stage of the learners, as all actors must be involved in building these curricula.
- Parents should work on the proper upbringing and proper education of their children, as well as accompany and follow them during the study, and work to provide the appropriate environment, whether related to the family environment or the school environment, because a positive environment is free from negative stimuli which contributes greatly to building a healthy personality for the individual.
- Educators must be very familiar with how to deal with the pupil, taking into account his age, and aware of the correct methods of education, as this can only be achieved by continuous training of what is related to their profession, so that they can behave well, and deal correctly with classroom problems within the classroom in order to reduce or mitigate them.
- The school administration should be aware and interested in the behavioral aspect of the pupil inside the school, as well as in the classroom through follow-up and coordination with parents and educators. In order to properly handle cases that suffer from behavioral problems.
- The necessity of having specialists in school psychology in primary schools in order to closely follow up on behavioral problems in terms of diagnosis and to provide the correct ways to address them in cooperation with parents and educators.

-The necessity of holding forums, symposia and study days on classroom problems in the school environment, supervised by university professors specialized in psychology, in coordination with the education sector.

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