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THE IMPLEMENTATION CHARACTERISTIC AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS TUTORIAL CLASS: THE CASE OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN ARBA MINCH UNIVERSITY, ETHIOPIA

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Abstract:
The main objective of this study was to examine the characteristic of female students' tutorial class practice in Arba Minch University and the attitude female students have toward their tutorial class. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches of investigation were employed. Data for the study were collected from heads of 38 departments, 76 teachers, and 484 year 1 and year 3 undergraduate regular students in the university using interviews, focal group discussions and questionnaire containing attitude scale. Information obtained from heads of departments and teachers through interview about the characteristic of the existing tutorial provision in the university was analyzed using tables and percentage. Supplementary information obtained from students through focal group discussions about the characteristic of tutorial class provision are presented thematically and analyzed in text. Data collected about the attitude of female students toward their tutorial class using attitude scale was analyzed using percentage, One-Way ANOVA and t-test. Findings of this study indicate that female students' tutorial class practice in the university was characterized as examination oriented focusing on preparing the students to get pass grade in courses. It was found that majority of sample female students (37.40%) have negative attitude toward their tutorial class in comparison to those who have positive attitude (23.14%), and the remaining 39.46% have neutral attitude. Significant differences observed among students in their attitude toward tutorial class in respect to their field of study, year of study, and academic achievement. Greater proportion of year 1 students in comparison to year 3 students and low academic achievers in comparison to high academic achievers have more positive attitude toward tutorial class. That is, greater proportions of year 3 students and high academic achievers have more negative attitude in comparison to year 1 and low achievers respectively. In order to improve the existing characteristic of tutorial practice and the attitude of female students toward their tutorial class, it was recommended that the School of Pedagogical

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and Behavioral Sciences in the university in its short term instructional skills training program for teachers should give due attention to include the issue of female tutorial provision in the university. Further research needs to be conducted by including teachers'/tutors' professional background variable influence on the characteristic of female students' tutorial implementation.

Keywords: tutorial class, female students, attitude

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Females are half of the society in almost all nations of the world (Abegunda, 2014). Though they are half of the society, positions they hold in economic, social, and political affairs of the society were commonly inferior to males (Transel, 2002; Vanderslice & Litsch, 1998). Education is proven as the most effective way to empower females for lifelong success. One's engagement in education especially in higher education is instrumental in determining opportunities for his/her engagement in such affairs of a society at higher levels (Eshetu, 2002; Omolewa, 2002; Aslam & Soderbom,2008; Egenti & Omoruyi, 2011; Elegbede, 2012; Tesfaye, 2011). In line with this, Aschcroft (2004) cited in Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak (2013) described education as a decisive tool to empower and improve people's standard of living. In today's world of intense competition for employment and the allocation of the best jobs to persons with educational credentials, it has to be a necessity but not option that higher institutions to pay attention to improve enrolment and completion rates of female students.

However, due to some social and cultural background influences, as grade level increases, females' participation starts to decline and thereby in higher education it becomes much lower than males in various institutions (Papadópulos and Radakovich 2005; Tesfaye, 2007a cited in Tesfaye, 2008; Mersha et al., 2009). Though there is equity and even greater extent of females' participation in higher education in some developed nations at present, in developing nations, still the participation of females remains much less in comparison to males (Mama, 2003 cited in Tesfaye, 2008). Ethiopia as developing country is not exception to this phenomenon. For instance, in Ethiopian higher institutions, in the academic year of 2003 E.C (2011/12), the number of females was 31,608, while males were 94,468 which indicates females' participation was by two third lower than males (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Oanda and Akudolu (2010) pointed out that in Sub-Saharan African countries, there is fewer enrolment and lower completion of female students in higher education studies in comparison to males. Thus, the lower proportion of females in comparison to males in higher institution participation was commonly a result of small number of females joins higher institutions plus larger attrition rate happens in comparison to males. In line with this, in Arba Minch University, as information obtained from registrar office for instance, in the academic year of 2004 E.C (2011/12), among 3956 first year

undergraduate regular students joined the university, the number of males and females was 2773 (70.10 %) and 1183 (29.90 %) respectively. In the same academic year, the rate of attrition from these enrolled students was 3.65% and 8.19% for males and females respectively. Similarly, in the year 2005 E.C (2012/13), among 3586 first year undergraduate regular students joined the university, the number of males and females was 2350 (65.53 %) and 1236 (34.47 %) respectively. In the same academic year, the rate of attrition from these enrolled students was 2.41% for males and 6.18% for females. Based on their study result, Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak (2013) described that the rate of attrition in females was higher in Ethiopian higher institutions. It is not only the rate of dropout but also the low academic performance of most retained and graduated females was a problem need to be recognized in female students' education in higher institutions. This is because, graduated with low academic performance obviously leads to inequalities in opportunity to be hired in better jobs as well as in early employability after graduation.

For developing countries like Ethiopia to achieve benefits from female education and significantly to reduce poverty, gender equality needs to be redressed in the aspects of retention, completion, access to quality education and progression to higher levels (Takyi-Amoak, 2008). Recognizing the benefit of female education for overall national development, the Ethiopian government gave emphasis to improve females' participation and success at all levels of education through establishing strategies in its education and training policy (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1994). Strategies have been formulated for affirmative actions need to be implemented to improve the participation and success rate of females in higher education. Among these supportive mechanisms during the students' study in universities, tutorial program is considered as an important tool to improve their academic achievement. Accordingly, universities are expected to give due attention to provide tutorial classes for female students in order to retain and make successful those who joined their institutions.

However, during discussions in meetings of university council and senate on teaching learning practice and students' academic results in Arba Minch University, Gender Directorate director in the university has always complaining about the inadequate practice of tutorial class for female students in the university. In such discussions regarding the practices of teaching-learning process in general and female students' tutorial provision and attrition rate in particular in the academic years of 2012/13 and 2013/14, some department heads repeatedly expressed that most female students did not come to attend tutorial classes when they have been called for it by teachers for they have no interest to attend. They further pointed out that mainly graduating class and academically well performing female students seem to have no interest at all to attend tutorial classes. These observations and experiences could lead one to raise questions as how female students' tutorial classes are implemented in the university and what attitude do female students have toward their tutorial classes. Therefore, it seems important to carry out an empirical study to answer these questions.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Currently, female education is a highly targeted issue especially with regard to gender equality and access to education, and its role to the alleviation of poverty (Olayiwola, 2012; Tansel, 2002; Olabisi, 1998). Now in Ethiopia, there is an increasing trend in enrolment of female students to universities. In contrary to this progress in enrolment, as mentioned so far in the study background section of this research, attrition rate of female students in universities is still higher in comparison to males. Provision of tutorial classes for female students is well recognized in the Education and Training Policy as well as in higher education proclamation of the country to improve their academic performance and thereby to minimize the attrition rate and maximize opportunity to be hired in better jobs. In this regard, universities and teachers working there are expected to implement tutorial classes for female students as one of the regular and important activities to be carried out in their teaching learning process in every semester. More specifically, teachers are expected to include tutorial classes for female students in their course outline and implement it as part of their regular teaching learning process in a course.

Experiences of this researcher at Arba Minch University indicates that Gender Directorate Office and some academic administrative bodies such as academic affairs vice president, deans and department heads usually express complains during academic affairs meetings about the inadequacy of female student's tutorial implementation in the university. On the other hand, some teachers and heads of departments during such meetings repeatedly express that female students are not willing to attend tutorial class. They justify it by expressing, when the students are called by teachers for tutorial class, they usually did not come to class.

It would be imagined that tutorial class provision can result in significant improvement in academic performance of students if it is planned and practiced based on the needs of the students. More specifically, relating the approach (time, content and method) of tutorial class provision to the needs of students is expected to have a positive influence on their academic performance and attitude to attend tutorial classes. Learners' backgrounds in field of study, year of study, academic achievement and assertiveness seem to be important variables need to be considered when one tries to examine learners' need and attitude toward tutorial class in higher institutions. In this regard, whether the existing tutorial practices for female students in Arba Minch University does consider the needs of the students or not, what kind of attitude do female students have toward their tutorial class, and whether the students' background variables such as; field of study, year of study, and academic achievement have a relation or not with their attitude toward tutorial classes were not researched empirically. Therefore, this study has tried to examine the characteristic of the existing tutorial provision for female students and the attitude female students have toward their tutorial classes at Arba Minch University.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to be answered by this study

1) How does female students' tutorial class practiced in Arba Minch University?

2) What kind of attitude do female students have toward their tutorial class?
3) Does female students' attitude toward their tutorial classes vary with their
    a. field of study,
    b. year of study,
    c. academic achievement.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The study attempted to examine characteristic of female students' tutorial class provision and the attitude of female students toward their tutorial class in Arba Minch University. The study attempted to address the following specific objectives:

1) To disclose characteristic of the existing tutorial class practice for female students in Arba Minch University
2) To examine the attitude of female students toward their tutorial class.
3) To assess variations in female students' attitude toward their tutorial class with regard to their field of study, year of study, and academic achievement.
4) To examine whether there is a relationship between female students' attitude toward their tutorial class and their academic assertiveness.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Since the study addresses uninvestigated problem of female students' higher education learning, it is expected to have the following significance.

1) It will provide clear picture about the characteristic of the exiting tutorial class provision to female students in Arba Minch University.
2) It will initiate departments and teachers in the university to rethink on the approach of tutorial class provision for female students.
3) It will serve as a base for establishing a guideline for female students' tutorial class provision in universities.
4) It will initiate other research works on female students' tutorial class provision in universities.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

If the data for this study had been collected by taking samples from various public universities in the country, the result would have more external validity. However, due to an intention to include students from different years and fields of study in university, only Arba Minch University, which is more accessible for the researcher was used. It was also assumed that the public universities have similarities in characteristic of service delivery to students in various aspects including tutorial class provision for female students. Similarity seems to exist among public universities mainly for two reasons. First, all public universities work within the general framework established by the Ministry of Education. Secondly, there was consultative meeting in every three months among public universities which was guided by Ministry of Education that aims to harmonize change management activities of all the public universities.

1.7 Definition of Terms

- **Academic achievement**: The University grade point average (GPA) of the students based on their academic performance.
- **Attitude**: Scores obtained about the students' attitude toward tutorial classes by using a Likert type attitude measurement scale.
- **Characteristic of tutorial provision:** refers to the context of three elements; such as the time of tutorial provision in a semester, criteria used in selecting contents or topics to be treated and method of teaching employed in tutorial classes.
- **Field of study**: Students area of study under which their department is found such as Engineering, Natural and Computational sciences, Health sciences, Agriculture, Business and Economics, and Social sciences and Humanities.
- **Tutorial class**: Remedial or enrichment teaching classes arranged for female students support other than the regular classes and curriculum-based tutorial sessions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Role of Female Education in Development

Gender equality is believed as an important issue to sustainable development of a nation and is one of the international agenda to reduce poverty (Olayiwola, 2012). Women's education is one of the major explanatory variables behind the rates of social and economic development, and has shown to have a positive correlation with both. Both individuals and countries highly benefit from women's education. Thus, investment in the education of girls will be the highest return investment available in developing countries (Elzabeth & Anne, 1998; Klasen, 2002).

Various sources of information (Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak, 2013; Tansel, 2002; Olabisi, 1998) show that females are half of the society in almost all nations in the world and in that the necessity of their role in realizing successful development of any country is unquestionable. Since they are half of the society in nations, their engagement and success in all spheres of work is crucial for the successful development of a nation. Therefore, assuring females' engagement in social, economic, and political affairs of a society at different levels seems a necessity but not an option for a nation's development. In line with this, Barack Obama, US former president, in his public speech in New Delhi said; *"Nations are more successful when their women are successful. No country that wants to succeed economically can afford to 'ignore the talents of half of its populace. When women are able to work then families are healthier and communities are wealthier, and the entire country becomes more prosperous."*

The global agenda for development addresses gender inequalities and is trying to empower women through education. Reducing poverty for women by minimizing gender inequalities requires to invest in support systems most importantly in education (Fennel & Arnot, 2008). Participation as well as success of an individual in most professions is usually related to his/her level of education (Eshetu, 2002; Aslam &

Soderbom, 2008; Mersha et al., 2009; Egenti and Omoruyi, 2011). Therefore, educating females up to their maximum talent is detrimental for their participation in higher status jobs and positions and thereby their successful contribution to development of a nation. Generally, unrecognizing the importance of female education likely to impede development of a nation as a whole (Klasen, 2001).

Recognizing the importance of equity for females' education in access and success, Bernard (2002) pointed out that governments and education institutions should have broad understanding of the range of barriers affecting girls' access and persistence in education and thereby need to design strategies to minimize the influences of such barriers. Nelson (1993) described that counselling and providing staff training to initiate teachers to support female students is one of the important measures which promote female students' success in higher education.

2.2 Female Participation and Achievement in Higher Education Learning in Ethiopia

Ethiopia as one of the developing countries, though there is improvement in females' participation in higher education learning currently, still the proportion of females is by far lower in comparison to males. Recognizing the negative impact of a lower female participation in education on the development of a nation, the Ethiopian government in its education and training policy which was launched in 1994 has well addressed the issue of females' education at all levels (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1994; Tesfaye, 2008; Wudu and Getahun, 2009; Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak, 2013). In general, gender issues have received high priority in the education policy in Ethiopia since 1990s. This new Education and Training policy of the country gives due attention in raising the enrolment rate and retention of female students. A specific objective of the Education and Training Strategy of the country in respect to gender is to use education to change attitudes towards the role of women in development (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2002).

Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE, 2003) in its Article 33:1 state that disadvantaged students including females have to be provided with support both in the entrance process to higher institutions and during their stay in the institutions which shall be determined by the Ministry of Education. Accordingly, higher education reform strategies were outlined and various measures have been taken to increase females' participation. To increase females' participation in universities, an affirmative measure has been designed and implemented by Ministry of Education through lowering the lower cut-off point of entrance examination score for female students for university entrance (Tesfaye, 2008). The strategy of lowering the entrance examination score cut-off point was just aims to improve the participation rate. Regarding support for success or better achievement during their study in universities, various supportive mechanisms such as financial, material, life skill training, and tutorial programs have been identified and implemented (Demise, Shinebaum, & Melesse, 2002). As a result of the affirmative actions at entry and during study period in universities plus some measures like tutorial programs to improve participation and achievement of females' education at secondary

school level, recently in higher education, the number of female students is drastically increasing. For instance, in public universities, in the academic year of 2007/8, the total number of female students was 15,770, and this number rose to 31,608 in 2011/12 academic year, which indicates a 100% increase within four years duration (Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak, 2013).

Though there is implementation of affirmative actions for female students in higher institutions in Ethiopia, there is unevenness in the practice of such affirmative actions among various universities in the country (Tesfaye, 2011). Such variations in the implementation of female students' tutorials among universities or fields of studies within a university seem to create different universities to have different characteristic in implementing tutorial classes which in turn might have an influence on female students' attitude towards their tutorial class.

Despite the proportion of female students in participation and in high academic performance was lower in comparison to male counterparts in universities, there were some few female students who are among top scorers. For instance, in the case of Arba Minch University, among 224 first and third year female students in 2014/15 academic year who included in this study as high achievers, the first semester GPA for first year and the cumulative GPA for third year 32 students were 3.5 and above which was labelled as great distinction in university performance status of students, and from these 32 students, 3 students scored above 3.75 which was levelled as very great distinction in university performance status of students. This is an indicator and encouraging for universities to offer female students' tutorials not only for low achievers to prevent failure but also for high achievers to support them to excel in their field of study to become scientists nationally and internationally.

Even though there is a progress in females' participation and better academic performance in Ethiopian higher education, still their proportion is by far lower than males, mainly due to the rate of attrition was higher in females. In line with this, Bekele, Melesse, Mikre, Chibsa, and Nemeta (2007) and Tesfaye (2008) clam that the Ethiopian higher education system in general is ineffective in addressing gender equality through affirmative measures especially tutorial implementation. Similarly, supporting this idea, based on their study result, Abebayehu (1998) and Asegedech and Tesfashbamlak (2013) described that most of female students who enrolled in higher education institutions were unable to complete their study at the time set for the curriculum. A significant number of female students were dismissed or dropped out just after one academic year of their admission, and those who survived the first year continued to be dismissed or dropped out at the end of each semester until few remained for graduation.

These all show that still there is a large variation among males and females in participation, achievement, and attrition in higher education learning and thereby in the opportunity to be hired in better jobs as well as early employment after completion of the study. Thus, there is still a strong need of revisiting and thinking about the existing implementations of supportive actions to minimize the gender gap in participation and achievement in higher institutions learning in Ethiopia.

2.3. The Purpose and Characteristic of Tutorial in Teaching Learning Process

Tutorial is a part of teaching learning process and is characterized by more interactive and specific than a regular classroom lecture, and seeks to teach by examples**.** The tutorial method of teaching has long history since been a partial answer to the drawbacks of the traditional classroom especially in colleges and universities. Tutorial system offers considerable opportunities to the students to meet their needs. The purpose of tutorial is to develop an individual student's capacity to think in depth about a subject area, and to operate with growing confidence within its techniques and methodologies, with the expectation that the process will promote increased understanding of the subject matter of the study (Mukalel, 2003). To achieve this purpose, tutorials should be organized and offered based on the needs of the students which obviously depend on the nature of subject matters of a course and level of student's mastery of these subject matters. This indicates that tutorial class contents and methods of teaching should consider the students' capacity of learning, which commonly manifested in their rate of learning as fast learners or slow learners and in achievement as high achievers or low achievers that again indicate the student's level of attaining the course objectives or performance level in matters that have been learnt in the course (Mukalel, 2003).

Besides the provision of guidance and counseling, tutorial classes and different trainings, student to teacher relationships also play a significant role in female students' academic performance. Provision of guidance and counseling service for students in university is crucial for their success in their academic and non-academic endeavors as university female students, especially during first year study when they are new to the environment, free from family control and they face a number of academic, personal and social problems (Mangal & Mangal, 2007). According to pedagogy, every teacher is a guidance person for his/her students (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Tutorial classes which commonly entertain small number of students in a class and interactive in its nature has a power to provide wider opportunity for a teacher to support the students in academic affairs and other personal problems through incorporating teaching, guidance and advisory or counselling services during tutorial sessions.

Literature indicates that the relationship between students and their education institution is an important variable which influence the students' social and academic development. That is, the way teachers and school personnel treat the students fairly or unfairly with regard to their background has a positive or negative influence respectively on the students' performance and development in learning (Apple, 1980, Mendro, 1998). From this, one can understand that the approach of teaching in regular class period as well as in tutorial classes has to be characterized in a manner to align with the need of a group which originates from their background (Brophy, 1998; Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997). Tutors are expected to be skillful at establishing rapport with tutees and empathizing with students' needs and struggles to solve their challenging problems. In general, tutorial class approach shall be different from the regular class lecture technique considering the basic needs of the tutorial at hand. Such interactive approach of tutorial delivery has a power to encourage and develop self confidence in learners in studying

the course which lead to better achievement (Mukalel, 2003; Bergin & Bergin, 2009). However, effective implementation of tutorials is hindered due to lack of time, voluntary nature and lack of awareness from teachers and thereby implemented inconsistently (Yasin, 2013). Generally, more effectiveness of tutorial class is attributed to differences in pedagogy between tutorials and traditional lecture class sessions (Mukalel, 2003; Robinson, 2009). These all seem to indicate that for tutorial classes to have benefit to learners, the methodology employed needs to be interactive in its nature and focus on identified needs of the learners.

2.4. Background Information about Female Students' Tutorial Provision at Arba Minch University

As information obtained from Gender Directorate Office of the university, the idea and practice of female students' tutorial class came into agenda in the university in the year 2005. Information obtained from this office indicated that beginning from 2005 academic year, president, academic vice president and college deans in the university were pushing department heads and teachers through discussions in academic council meetings to offer tutorial classes for female students in order to minimize their dropout rate in the university. However, it seems not implemented properly in a planned manner, rather based on enforcing communications from the officials during meetings. In line with this, Habtamu (2004) and Tesfaye (2010) pointed out that the Ethiopian higher institutions' teachers and officials are not convinced of the need for affirmative action, and as a result, they seem to be not effectively implementing the necessary academic and material support for female students as indicated in the affirmative action program.

In the year 2008, a project known as "Water Aid Ethiopia" from the international aid collaborative organization from Germany, United King dam and China was introduced in the university addressing capacity building activities for female students in Water Technology study field. The university has extended this project to serve for female students in all other fields of studies too. Accordingly, in this project implementation, each year female students in all departments were given opportunity to select two courses in a semester which they perceive as harder courses for them in learning in order to provide tutorial class using one-hour contact in a week throughout the semester. Teachers who assigned from departments to offer tutorial classes in this modality were paid at the rate of part time class teaching service payment for teachers in the university. This project had been phased out after 2011 academic year. Then, immediately after end of the project period, the university has decided to continue the project's approach of offering tutorial class on two courses for female students in all departments in each semester.

In the university, it was not only for two selected courses but for every course teachers are expected to offer tutorial classes for female students based on the gaps or needs of learners in a course as identified through continuous assessment mechanism during the regular class teaching sessions. However, this researcher during his stay in the university as teaching staff and special assistant for academic affairs vice president

has observed that until the time of commencement of this research work at the beginning of the year 2015, there was continuous debates and criticisms among academic administrators of the university mainly academic vice president and college deans with heads of departments and teachers during academic staff meetings on the agenda addressing the practice of teaching learning process and students' academic achievement in each semester. Especially at the university's half year and yearly work performance report evaluation meetings of the university council as well as at the university administration board meetings on the same, while discussing on students' attrition rate in a semester or year, mainly for female students, repeatedly there were hot discussions criticizing about the inadequacy of female students' tutorial delivery in the university. In this regard, a lot of criticisms forwarded toward departments and colleges about the inadequacy of tutorial provision for female students. Despite these claims about the inadequacy or even no practice of tutorial class at all in some courses, heads of many departments described that students are not interested to attend tutorial classes unless examination time approaches. However, no research has been done empirically concerning these sayings and perceptions of the staff in the university.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Area

Arba Minch University is located in Arba Minch town which is at a distance of 505 km in South West from Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. The university was established in1986 as Institute of Water Technology and after opening different engineering and other fields of study, in 2004 it became a full-fledged university. In 2014/15 academic year when this research work began, the university had five different campuses placed at five different sites in the town. In the same academic year, the university had five colleges (College of Natural and Computational Sciences, College of Health and Medicine, College of Agriculture, College of Business and Economics, College of Social sciences and Humanities) and one institute (Institute of Technology). In all the colleges and the institute, totally there were 42 departments and 89 academic programs (49 undergraduate, 39 masters, and 1 PhD). The total number of students in the year was 24817 (23398 undergraduate, 1414 masters, and 5 PhD). Among 23398 undergraduate students, 16620 were regular (12133 males and 4487 females) and 6778 non-regular (4950 males and 1592 females). Among 1414 master students, 637 were regular (572 males and 75 females) and 767 non-regular (704 males and 63 females). And all 5 PhD students were regular students and all of they are males.

In every academic year, at the beginning, there was induction training on instructional skills for all newly hired teachers for 36 hours and higher diploma training for 8 months for all teachers who have no higher diploma certificate for teaching. These trainings for teachers were organized and run by the School of Pedagogical and Behavioral Sciences in the University. These trainings aim to acquaint the teachers with basic instructional skills to enable them to become successful in their teaching. Content

of the training constitutes planning for teaching, teaching methods, techniques of learning assessment and classroom management.

3.2 Design of the Study

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches of investigation have been used in this study. Qualitative description has been used to analyze the data collected from heads of departments and teachers through interview and from students through focal group discussions about the characteristic of tutorial class implementation for female students. Quantitative techniques have been employed in presenting and analyzing the data about the kind of female students' attitude toward tutorial class, variation of their attitude with regard to field of study, year of study, and academic achievement.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The necessary data for this study were collected from heads of 38 departments, 76 teachers (2 from each department), and 484 female students. Among a total of 42 departments under six fields of study in the university, 38 departments were included purposefully for they have at least three batches of students and the remaining 4 departments (Pedagogy, Forestry, Anesthesia, and Medical Radiology) were excluded for they are newly opened and have less than three batches or some have no regular students in 2014/15 academic year. Two teachers from each department were included on the bases of having at least two years of teaching experience in the department and who were available at the moment of interview session in their department.

Year 1 and year 3 undergraduate regular female students were used for the study. Year 1 and Year 3 were selected purposefully to examine the variation in attitude toward tutorial class due to year of study. Year 3 was selected because in most departments the education programs were a three-year study program. Non-proportional stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the sample from year 1 and year 3 students. Stratification was made on the bases of department and academic achievement (First semester grade point average for year 1 students and cumulative grade point average up to third year first semester for year 3 students). Regarding stratification on academic achievement, students were selected randomly from high achievers (2.75 & above) and low achievers (below 2.50). Before data collection for this study, 189 year 1 female students who have GPA below 1.5 were left the campuses for readmission or dismissal and not included in the study. Depending on the number of students whose GPA or CGPA below 2.50 and 2.75 and above in each field of study, the number of students taken for the study varies for each field of study in the higher as well as in the lower academic achievers. Accordingly, 508 female students were selected from the various fields of study. For focus group discussion with female students in each of six fields of study, 7 to 9 available and volunteer female students at the time of focus group discussion from year 1 and year 3 were used.

To obtain data about the students' attitude toward tutorial class, attitude scale was administered to the sampled 508 (256 year 1 and 252 year 3) female students. Among 256

year 1 students who received the scale, 9 and 4 students did not return and properly fill it respectively. Similarly, among 252 year 3 students who received the scale, 8 and 3 students did not return and properly fill it respectively. That is, 484 (95.28%) of the sampled students properly filled and returned the scale. Thus, analysis for the study was made on information collected from 484 (243 year 1 and 241 year 3) students.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used to collect information for this study were document analysis, interview, focus group discussion, questionnaire containing attitude scale. Interview schedule which constitute a total of 4 close and open-ended items were designed by the investigator and used to collect information from heads of departments and teachers. The content of this interview this was about the time of tutorial provision, criteria used to select contents or topics for tutorial classes and methodologies employed in tutorial classes. The content of focus group discussions with the students was about the time of tutorial and methodologies used in tutorial classes plus their attitude towards tutorial class for female students in the university.

To assess attitude of students toward tutorial class, 22 items of five-point scale was designed by the investigator based on ideas forwarded by Freeman (1962) regarding the nature and content of a scale to measure attitudes. To evaluate clarity and appropriateness of the scale to measure female students' attitude toward their tutorial class, it has been provided to six experienced teachers (five and one from the departments of psychology and pedagogy respectively at Arba Minch University). These assessors have also evaluated the alignment of the translated Amharic version of the scale with the English version. To assess clarity of the items to the respondents and to test reliability level of the scale, pilot study was conducted on 15 first year Forestry program female students in the department of Forestry in College of Agriculture in the university who were not included in the main study. Cronbach alpha has been employed to test the reliability level of the scale based on responses from the pilot students. The level of reliability obtained was 0.87 which indicates the scale is strong enough to elicit accurate and valid information from the respondents.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The interviews with heads of departments and two teachers from each department were conducted by the researcher at their offices. Focus group discussions have been made with 7 to 9 female students from year 1 and year 3 separately from each college/institute. These participants for the focus group discussion from different departments in colleges/institute have been arranged by the students' union leaders in each campus. The fourth week of the second semester in the academic year of 2014/15 was used to conduct the focus group discussions, because this time appears when students are relatively not busy with course works. Discussions were run by the researcher getting the students at their campuses.

Lists of year 1 and year 3 female students and their cumulative grade point average were obtained from heads of the respective departments during the second week of second semester in the academic year of 2014/15. High and low academic achievers were identified from the lists obtained. After giving orientation to heads of departments at their office about the purpose of collecting the information and how students have to respond on the scale, the scale was provided to the heads to administer it to the selected students in his/her department by his/her own time.

3.6 Data Analysis

The information obtained from heads of departments and teachers through interviews about characteristic of the existing practice of tutorial provision for female students in the university have been summarized and analyzed using percentage. Information obtained from female students through focal group discussions in order to supplement the information obtained through interviews about the characteristic of tutorial provisions and their attitude towards the tutorial class for female students have been analyzed using qualitative description.

Data collected through a rating scale about a kind of female students' attitude toward their tutorial class were summarized as scores. To categorize the obtained attitude scores of respondents as positive, neutral, or negative, the Bloom's cut-off point (60% – 80%) was employed, in which above 80%, within 60% - 80%, and below 60% scores are classified as positive, neutral, and negative respectively. To assess the variation in students' attitude toward tutorial class with regard to field of study, One Way ANOVA was employed. To assess variations with regard to year of study and academic achievement level, t-test was used.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Before the necessary data were collected for the study from the respondents and informants, they were informed about the research objectives and procedures to be followed in carrying out the research. Thereby consent was obtained. Further, anonymity was maintained throughout the research activities.

4. Results and Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to assess characteristic of the existing tutorial class practice for female students and the female students' attitude toward their tutorial class in Arba Minch University. The necessary information for the study were collected from heads of departments, teachers and female students in the university using interviews, focal group discussions, and questionnaire which contains attitude scale. The collected information is presented, analyzed and discussed in this section as follows.

4.1 Characteristic of Tutorial Implementation for Female Students in Arba Minch University

The first research question that guided this study was concerned with the characteristic of tutorial class implementation for female students in the university. In this study, characteristic of tutorial has to be understood in respect to three elements in tutorial class provision; such as time of tutorial provision in a semester, criteria used in selecting contents or topics from the course to be treated in tutorial class and method of teaching employed in tutorial classes. To answer this question, necessary information was collected from heads of 38 departments and 76 teachers using interview. To supplement the information collected from heads of departments and teachers, focus group discussions were made with groups of 7 to 9 female students from each field of study separately. The responses of heads of departments and teachers in the interviews regarding time, content, and method of tutorial provision are summarized and presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3 respectively as follows.

Table 1: Proportion of Heads of Departments and Teachers in Their Response on Time of Tutorial Provision for Female Students

Item	Response	Heads of Departments (38)		Teachers (76)	
		N	%	N	%
When do teachers provide tutorial?	During a week or two weeks before final examination start	35	92.11	64	84.21
	When time approaches to tests, mid examinations, and final examination	3	7.89	12	15.79
Sum		**38**	**100**	**76**	**100**

As indicated in Table 1, in the interview with heads of departments, for the item about the time of tutorial provision for female students in a course, among 38 heads, 35 (92.11%) responded that a common experience in all the departments and teachers is that female students' tutorials provided during a week or two weeks before the beginning of final examination and the remaining 3 (7.89%) responded that teachers offer tutorials when the time for final examination, mid examination, and tests approach. In the interview with teachers for the same item, their responses were similar to the responses from heads of departments, that is, among 76 teachers, 64 (84.21%) responded that it is usually offered during one or two weeks before final examinations schedule. The remaining 12 (15.79%) responded as it is offered when time for examinations or tests approach. Among 76 teacher respondents, 17 teachers pointed out some more information saying that though tutorials provided during times approaching to examinations, there was no regularity in time in providing tutorials for female students. In other words, it is not provided in a programmed manner.

During the interview, some teachers disclosed that they provide tutorial only before examination because students are not interested to come for tutorial classes unless the time approaches to examinations, and even unless the tutorial lessons concentrate on

contents from which examination items to be constructed, for the next tutorial calls, they are not willing to attend. The responses from the students in all focal groups' discussions regarding the time of tutorial provision are in line with the responses of heads of departments and teachers. That is, the students expressed that teachers who offer tutorial classes, commonly offer when the time of examination approach or to the class end of a semester.

Table 2: Proportion of Heads of Departments and Teachers in Their Response on What Criteria Teachers Use in Selecting Contents or Topics for Tutorial Class

Item	Response	Heads of Departments (38)		Teachers (76)	
		N	%	N	%
What criteria do teachers use in selecting contents or topics for tutorial class?	Contents or topics from which the coming examination or test to be prepared	34	89.47	59	77.63
	Contents or topics preferred by the students to whom the tutorial to be provided	1	2.63	17	22.37
	No criterion, simply take some contents or topics tentatively from the previous lessons	3	7.89	0	0
Sum		**38**	**100**	**76**	**100**

Table 2 shows that in the interview with heads of departments about the criteria teachers use to select contents or topics of a course to be treated in female students' tutorial sessions, among 38 heads of departments, 34 (89.47%) responded that only the contents or topics from which the coming examination or tests to be prepared are selected for tutorial provision, and 3 (7.89%) responded that there is no any regular criterion used by teachers in selecting contents or topics rather they tentatively take certain content or topic from the previous lessons which is sufficient for one- or two-hours tutorial class he/she is trying to teach. The remaining 1 (2.63%) heads responded that contents or topics are selected by the students for whom the tutorial class is to be offered. In the interview with teachers for the same item, the responses were more of similar to the responses from heads of departments, that is, among 76 teachers, 59 (77.63%) responded that the contents or topics from which the coming examination or tests to be prepared are selected for tutorial provision. The remaining 17 (22.37%) responded that contents or topics for tutorials are selected by the students for whom the tutorial class is to be offered. In all focal discussion groups, female students disclosed that in tutorial sessions, teachers teach the contents or topics which will appear in the coming examination or test. Students also described that in tutorial classes, teachers teach some contents or topics which they prefer from the contents covered in previous regular classes. They further pointed out that in courses like mathematics, physics, and other computational sciences, teachers use tutorial classes to work out some more exercises on some items in worksheets of the course work. For the question item about their view toward tutorial classes, some year 3 female

students expressed that attending tutorial class wastes their time reasoning out that teachers seem to offer female students' tutorials classes for they have been forced from department offices to do it. For that they simply repeat some contents as they like in similar approach to regular class lecture.

Table 3: Proportion of Heads of Departments and Teachers in Their Response on Methods Employed in Tutorial Class

Item	Response	Heads of Departments (38)		Teachers (76)	
		N	%	N	%
What kind of teaching methods do teachers employ in tutorial class?	Lecture method with question and answer technique	36	94.74	69	90.79
	Class Exercise with Discussion	2	5.26	7	9.21
Sum		**38**	**100**	**76**	**100**

As Table 3 indicates, regarding methods of teaching used in tutorial class, among 38 heads of departments, 36 (94.74%) responded that teachers use lecture method in the form of summary and they also employ question and answer technique. The remaining 2 (5.26%) responded that teachers employ more of student-centered teaching techniques such as giving class activity and then conducting discussions based on students work results of the class activity. For the same item, among 76 teachers, 69 (90.79%) responded similarly as the responses of the majority of respondents from heads of departments, that is, teachers use lecture method which is commonly used in the regular class sessions, in the form of summary. The remaining 7 (9.21%) responded that some teachers usually do worksheets and exercises during tutorial classes giving more time for students to try themselves on questions in the worksheet. In focal group discussions with students regarding methods employed in tutorial classes, in all groups of the different fields of study students disclosed that teachers use more of lecture method and sometimes they use question and answer technique. In some focal groups, some female students expressed that some teachers do worksheets or exercises on contents or topics from which examinations or tests will be prepared. Here, in general, the focal group students' responses support the responses of teacher respondents. That is, in tutorial classes, teachers employ lecture method as well as question and answer technique which they commonly use in regular class teaching.

All the above presentation of the data indicates that, characteristic of the female students' tutorial implementation in the university as assessed in respect to time, content and method of tutorial provision, discloses that it was not employed in a planned manner rather commonly provided at once when a time of tests or examinations approach. Regarding the criteria used in selecting contents or topics to be treated in tutorial classes, the selection was not based on information obtained through continuous assessment about the gaps in the students' mastery of main subject matters or objectives, rather in most cases contents or topics from which the coming test or examination items to be

prepared were selected. In rare cases, contents were selected by the students. In respect to methods employed in tutorial classes, mostly lecture method in summary form and question and answer technique were employed. Doing worksheets and other exercises was also employed in some courses in the field of natural and computational sciences.

Thus, the findings indicate that the culture of time of tutorial provision in the university was at the end of the semester for few hours which mainly aims to enable the students to have pass grades in the course examination, rather than aiming them to master the major and important contents of the course at each phase of the course work as per the course objectives. Here, the finding supports the sayings of some department heads in the university during the university council meetings which expressed as female students do not come to class when teachers call them for tutorial provision unless it is scheduled for the times near to tests or examinations weeks. Regarding content selection from a course for tutorial provision, the findings disclose that female students' tutorial provision in the university seem to be examination or test oriented instead of focusing on enabling the learners to master basic subject matters of the course or to enable them to excel in their learning in the area of their study, which has to be a basic need that learners have to reduce. This finding is inconsistence with the main purpose of tutorial or supportive programs for low academic achievers or talented students which aims to enable the learners to learn and achieve maximum up to their potential (Mukalel, 2003; Harmin, 1994).

In respect to teaching method used in female students' tutorial classes, the finding discloses that teachers dominantly employ lecture method and to some extent question and answer technique. In other words, teacher centered approach was dominantly used with insignificant extent of using student centered or active learning techniques. This character of tutorial provision in the university is inconsistent with literature ideas about the characteristic of tutorial class teaching learning methodology which indicate that tutorial teaching approach should be learner centered in its nature through incorporating guidance and advisory services with various learner centered techniques of teaching learning process (FDRE, 2003; Mangal & Mangal, 2007; Bergin, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2000). From the view point of teaching principles, it is understandable that tutorial or remedial class offering should not be a pure lecture as repeating the methodology used in the regular class period, participatory approach of teaching in which teachers' roles are more of facilitator or supporter of students in exercising or demonstrating on a given activities or on questions they raise based on the gaps or needs they have in understanding subject matters of their regular class lessons. In line with this, Mukalel (2003) and Robinson (2009), pointed out that in comparison to regular class, tutorial class provides more opportunities for interactive approach of teaching learning process, and the more effectiveness of tutorial class is attributed to differences in pedagogy between tutorials and traditional lecture class sections. Similarly, Yasin (2013) indicated that tutorial classes should be more interactive in nature and motivate students to develop more scholarly approaches to their area of study which further lead them to have better participation and performance in their learning. However, effective implementation of tutorials

commonly hindered due to lack of time, voluntary nature and lack of awareness from teachers and thereby implemented inconsistently.

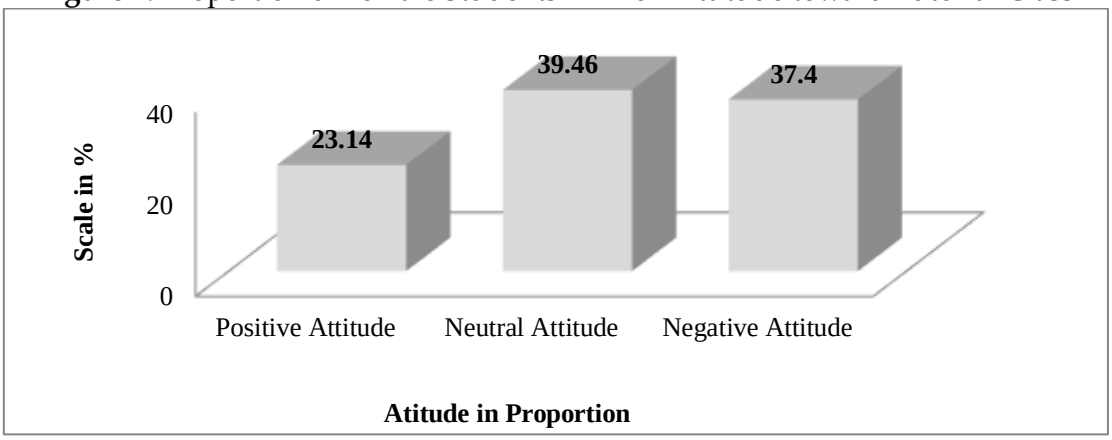
To sum up, the findings indicate that tutorial classes for female students was not implemented in a planned manner in respect to time of provision, way of content selection and tutoring methodology used for tutorial classes. As a result, it seems that the characteristic of the existing tutorial class provision practice in the university was not attractive and effective for female students to attend and achieve respectively. It seems no attention was given by heads of departments to guide and encourage teachers to include tutorial provision schedule as one element in the components of their course outline and thereby to deliver it in a planned and organized manner. In line with this finding, local studies, Habtamu (2004) and Tesfaye (2010) pointed out that the Ethiopian higher institutions' teachers and officials are not convinced of the need for affirmative action, and as a result, they seem to be not effectively implementing the necessary academic and material support for female students as indicated in the affirmative action program. Bekele, Melesse, Mikre, Chibsa, and Nemeta (2007) and Tesfaye (2006) also claim that the Ethiopian higher education system in general is ineffective in addressing gender equality through affirmative measures especially tutorial implementation.

This suggests that in teachers' short-term trainings in the university through Instructional Skills Induction Training and in Higher Diploma Training, trainers have to focus on issues based on what criteria teachers have to select contents and teaching methodologies for tutorial classes in order to enhance students' attainment of course objectives and thereby to improve quality of education. Supporting this, Nelson (1993) pointed out that counselling and providing staff training to initiate teachers to support female students is one of the important measures which promote female students' success in higher education. It is also understandable that the leadership and guidance activity of heads of departments could encourage teachers to give attention for females' tutorial provision beginning from their work phase of course outline preparation and thereby provide it in a well-planned and organized manner in time, content and methodology aspects.

4.2 Female Students Attitude toward Their Tutorial Class

The second research question which guided this study addresses the kind of attitude female students have toward their tutorial class. Data were collected from 484 sample female students using a Likert type of five-point scale which consists of 22 items. The possible minimum and maximum scores to be obtained using this instrument are 22 and 110 respectively. However, the obtained minimum and maximum scores from the sample measure are 32 and 102 respectively. The mean attitude score of the whole 484 sample female students was 72.48 which is within Bloom's cut-off point (60% – 80%) leveled as neutral, that is, between positive and negative attitude. Based on this Bloom's cut-off point, the attitude scores obtained for 484 sample students have been categorized as positive, neutral, and negative attitude. Accordingly, the proportion of sample students categorized as positive, neutral, and negative attitude is indicated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Proportion of Female Students in Their Attitude toward Tutorial Class



As it can be observed from Figure 1, among 484 sample students, 112 (23.14%) students' scores are above Bloom's cut-off point which indicates that they have positive attitude, 191 (39.46%) scores are within the cut-off point which indicates that they have neutral attitude, and the remaining 181 (37.40%) are below the cut-off point which indicates negative attitude. Here, the data shows that a larger proportion of students have negative attitude in comparison to those who have positive attitude. It also shows that from the total sample (484), only less than one fourth female students (23.14%) have a positive attitude. In line with this result from the attitude scale measure, for the question about their view toward tutorial classes, during focal discussion with female students, some students expressed that attending tutorial class wastes their time reasoning out that teachers seem to offer tutorials for they have been forced from department offices to do it. For that, teachers simply repeat some contents as they like in similar approach to regular class lecture.

This finding supports the views expressed by heads of departments at Arba Minch University during academic discussions in meetings as well as views expressed by other universities' leaders at national level meeting organized by Ministry of Education. That is, in various semesters at university council meetings of Arba Minch University, at the point of discussions on the semester performance evaluation on the issue of the extent of female students attrition rate and the tutorial classes provided for females, repeatedly heads of departments expressed that female students are not happy on their tutorial classes and do not come to attend it when teachers call them for tutorial class. Similarly, in 2013/14 academic year, in public university presidents meeting at the Ministry of Education meeting hall with the Ministry, State Ministries, and its other officials, regarding issues raised about female students support in universities particularly tutorial provision, some university presidents expressed that female students are not willing to attend separate tutorial classes arranged for them.

From this finding and experiences, one may understand that for female students to have positive attitude toward their tutorial class, some measures need to be taken to make it attractive to them. More specifically, based on this study findings on characteristic of tutorial class provision in respect to; time of provision, criteria of content

selection, and method of teaching need to be improved by giving due attention to the needs or background of the students. That is, for high academic achievers, the provision should focus on to enrich their attainments with advanced subject matters of the course content area which means attainment of developmental objectives while for low academic achievers the tutorial should address to fill their gaps in attaining the basic objectives of the lessons during regular class sessions. Moreover, methodologies employed in tutorial sessions in general should be more of student centered than repeating the lecture method which dominantly employed in regular class sessions. Again, regarding the students' needs or backgrounds, years of study seems an important variable, for instance, first year and senior students' experience levels in university learning has also be considered in tutorial class provisions. To equip teachers with such skills of how to teach or provide tutorial for students with different needs or backgrounds (high achievers and low achievers) in the same classroom at the same time, instructional skills induction training and HDP training for teachers in the university should give due attention. Moreover, as ideas indicated by some scholars (Mangal and Mangal, 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2000), teachers who are gender sensitive and more skilled in employing variety of teaching techniques which are relevant to the content nature and students' background under the tutorial program should be selected and assigned to offer tutorials. Such teachers tend to include provision of guidance, advisory or counselling services while they are dealing with contents of the course for the tutorial.

In general, this study finding that the greater proportion of female students have negative attitude in comparison to those who have positive attitude toward their tutorial class could be explained by the unattractive characteristic of female students tutorial provision in the university which seems examination oriented rather than focusing on equipping the learners with basic knowledge and skills as per the course objectives. Methodologies employed and contents treated in tutorial classes does not consider the needs of students with various backgrounds such as high and low academic achievers, and year 1 and year 3 students who have different extent of university study experience based on the duration of their stay in the university.

4.3 Variation in Female Students' Attitude toward Tutorial Class with Regard to Field of Study, Year of Study, and Academic Achievement

The third research question which guided this study concerned with whether there is variation in female students' attitude toward their tutorial class with regard to the variables of field of study, year of study, and academic achievement. The findings of this study in general indicate that there is variation in female students' attitude toward their tutorial class in respect to these variables. The data show that in the whole sample students' attitude scores, the minimum score is 32 which is from year 1 high achievers in the College of Agriculture and the maximum score is 105 which is from year 1 low achievers in the College of Business and Economics. That is, the range of the attitude scores for the whole sample is 73. The mean score for the whole sample students' scores is 72.48 with a standard deviation of 7.54 which is levelled as neutral according to Blooms

cut-off point (60% - 80%). The minimum/lowest/ mean score from the various fields and years of study and high and low academic achievers is 49.90 with a standard deviation of 8.78 which is for year 3 high achievers in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities and the maximum mean score is 95.23 with a standard deviation of 7.32 which is for year 1 low achievers in the College of Business and Economics.

Regarding the variation in female students' attitude toward their tutorial class in respect to field of study, analysis of One-Way ANOVA has been carried out and presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Difference in Attitude toward Tutorial Class among Students in Different Fields of Study

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig
Between Groups	4098.85	5	819.77	2.32	0.04
Within Groups	168795.90	478	353.13		
Total	172894.75	483			

* P≤ 0.05

As indicated in Table 4, analysis of the scores from attitude measure using One Way ANOVA indicate that in general there is statistically significant difference among the students from various fields of studies F (2.32, P≤ 0.04). To identify among which fields of study the difference exists, Post Hoc Tests of Multiple Comparison using Tukey HSD has been employed. The result shows that attitude of engineering students differ from attitude of agricultural sciences, business and economics, and social sciences and humanities students (F(5.67, P ≤ 0.43); F(5.23, P ≤ 0.47); F(8.02, P ≤ 0.02)) respectively and attitude of natural sciences students differ from attitude of social sciences and humanities students F(5.05, P ≤ 0.40), while all the remaining mean differences observed among students from the various fields of study are statistically not significant. This inconsistency could be explained for the differences in the level of difficulty or complexity of subject matters in the different fields of study and difference among teachers' approach of tutorial provision based on their professional experience. Further in-depth study seems important in this regard.

Another focus under the third research question of this study was assessing whether there is variation in attitude toward tutorial class due to year of study and academic achievement status. In this regard, based on the data collected, proportions of participants from year 1 and year 3 who have positive, neutral, and negative attitude toward tutorial class were identified. The data show that more proportion of year 1 students 75 (30.84%) have positive attitude in comparison to year 3 students 37 (15.35%). A close observation of the data demonstrates that in the case of year 1, the largest proportion of students 96 (39.51%) have neutral and the lowest proportion 72 (29.63%) have negative attitude while in the case of year 3, the largest proportion 109 (45.22%) have negative attitude and the lowest 37 (15.35%) have positive attitude. t-test has been employed to examine significance of the difference in attitude scores between year 1 and year 3 female students as presented in Table 5 below.

Regarding the variation in female students' attitude toward tutorial class in respect to academic achievement status; the data indicate that more proportion of low academic achievers 88 (34.24%) have positive attitude in comparison to high achievers 24 (10.57%). A close observation of the data regarding the proportion of students in their kind of attitude (positive, neutral, and negative), in the case of low achievers, the highest proportion of students 147 (57.20%%) have neutral and the lowest proportion 22 (8.56%) have negative attitude while in the case of high achievers, the highest proportion 159 (70.05%) have negative attitude and the lowest proportion 24 (10.57%) have positive attitude.

Table 5: Difference in Attitude towards Tutorial Class in respect to Year of Study and Academic Achievement

Variable		N	Mean	SD	t	df	P
Year of Study	Year 1	243	76.56	18.42	4.883	482	0.000
	Year 3	241	68.36	18.55			
Academic Achievement	Low achievers	257	83.65	12.47	17.75	482	0. 000
	High achievers	227	59.83	16.92			

* $P \leq 0.05$

Table 5 shows that the difference in the mean scores of attitudes toward tutorial class between year 1 and year 3 female students found to be statistically significant, favoring year 1 students, $t(482) = 4.883$, $P = 0.000$. That is, the mean score for year 1 students is higher than the mean score for Year 3 students, which means, year 1 students have more positive attitude toward tutorial class than that of year 3 students. The possible explanation for the more positive attitude of year 1 female students' to toward the tutorial class in comparison to year 3 students could be since year 1 students are new comers and have no any past semester experience about the university in that they lack confidence about their success in their learning which in turn makes them to have a need for support programs like tutorial class. On the other hand, more negative attitude of year 3 students toward tutorial class in comparison to year 1 students be possibly explained by year 3 students experienced unattractive approach of tutorial provision during their past two and half years (five semesters) stay in the university. That is, inadequate and inappropriate approach of female students' tutorial practice in the university experienced by year 3 students and the lack of commitment of teachers in providing tutorial classes in attractive manner could lead the students to have negative attitude. In general, this finding indicates that as the year of study or duration of stay in the university increase, the interest of female students to attend their tutorial class decrease. This result is consistence with the sayings of academic staffs during council meetings which expressed as graduating year female students are not willing at all to attend female students' tutorial class.

Regarding significance test for the variation in attitude toward tutorial class in respect to academic achievement status, Table 5 indicates that the mean attitude score for low achievers is higher than the mean score for high achievers and it discloses that this

mean difference observed among low and high achievers is statistically significant, t (482) = 17.75, P = 0.00. That is, low achievers have more positive attitude toward in comparison to high achievers. On the other hand, high achievers have more negative attitude. The possible explanation for the more positive attitude of low achievers in comparison to high achievers could be, in tutorial provision, teachers tend to address the needs of students who have low academic achievement focusing to enable them to get a pass grade in the coming examination and no focus on the needs of high achievers, that is no attention to capacitate the high achievers to excel in their area of study through treating advanced matters on the contents. But, in the existing tutorial provision practice for female students in the university, whether high or low achievers, all female students who are taking the course are invited to attend tutorial class. Thus, from the existing tutorial practice, high achievers seem to be not benefited significantly which in turn lead them to have negative attitude. Regarding this, various studies (Bropy, 1998; Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997) pointed out that the approach of teaching in regular as well as in tutorial classes has to be characterized in a manner to align with the needs of a group of learners which originates from their background. In this regard, here it is substantial to recommend that short term trainings need to be provided to teachers on how to address the needs of both high and low achievers in tutorial provision for female students in the university.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of the present study was to examine the characteristic of female students' tutorial provision practice in Arba Minch University and the attitude female students' have toward their tutorial class. The data collected and analyzed shown that characteristic of female students' tutorial provision practice in the university in respect to time of provision, content selection, and teaching methods used for the tutorial class found to be not planned and attractive. The study also disclosed that majority of female students have negative attitude toward their tutorial class. The kind of attitude female students have to wards their tutorial classes vary in respect to the students' field of study, year of study, academic achievement status. As year of study and academic achievement increase, female students tend to have negative attitude toward their tutorial. More specifically, first year students and students who have low academic achievement tend to have more positive attitude toward female students' tutorial class than the third-year students and students who have high academic achievement respectively.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researcher recommends that the School of Pedagogical and Behavioral Sciences in the university in its short time instructional skills training programs for teachers should give due attention to include the issue of female students' tutorial provision in the university mainly in respect to time of provision, criteria of content selection, and methodologies to be used in tutorial classes. Further

detail research needs to be conducted by including teachers/tutors professional background influence on the characteristic of female students' tutorial implementation in higher institutions.

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