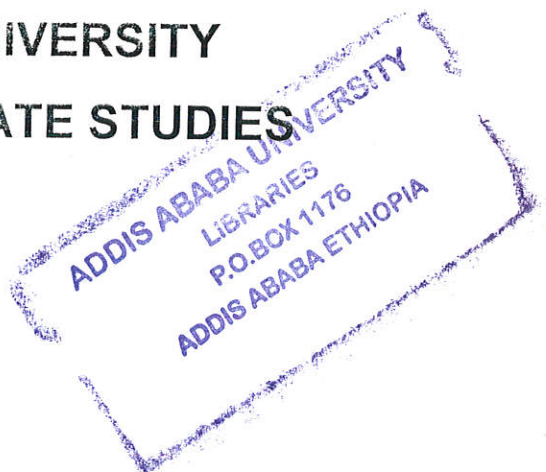


**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**THE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS TO QUALITY
EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF DESSIE
TOWN**

**BY
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**The Perception of Teachers to Quality Education
in Secondary Schools of Dessie Town**

**By
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THE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS TO QUALITY EDUCATION IN SECONDARY
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Abbreviation and Acronyms

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
ESDP	Education Sector Development program
ETA	Ethiopian Teachers Association
ETP	Education and Training Policy
GEQIP	General Educational Quality Improvement Program
GI	Group Interview
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCES	National Centers for Education Statistics
NEA	National Education Assessment
SIP	School Improvement Program
STURE	Study of Teacher Utilization in the Regions of Ethiopia
TDP	Teacher Development Program
TESO	Teacher Education System Overhaul
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perception and commitment to improve the quality of education and their attitude towards the quality improvements reform. The participants of the study were teachers, instructional leaders (vice principals and unit leaders) and students of four government secondary schools of Dessie town. From these schools 74 teachers were selected randomly. Twelve instructional leaders were selected as a sample purposefully due to their position to. Moreover, 4 group interviews of students (1 group from each school) were included. As a method of data gathering tools questionnaire, interview and group interview were employed. To analyze the collected data, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The result of the study revealed that teachers conceptualized quality of education in the conventional way (in terms of input, process and output factors). It also revealed that teachers believe that the key to improve the quality of education is in their hands. The study also showed that teachers in the sample schools have low commitment to student learning. Regarding teachers attitude to wards quality improvements reforms, the study disclosed that teachers have generally negative attitude towards most of the reforms. Low salary, lack of incentives, lack of respect from the society and the government, shortage of resources, low student interest to learning and absence good governance were the major factors that affect teachers' commitment. Based on the findings the following recommendations were forwarded: teachers should get incentives; ensure good governance in the school and at the woreda level, and involve teachers in reforms that affect education and their life.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Both in developed and developing countries, quality of education has become a more critical issue. This is because education in general and quality education in particular is a means for economic, social, cultural and other developments. The provision of quality education in developing countries [like Ethiopia] is a serious issue where these nations strive to expand access together with maintaining quality. Leu (2005) states that educational quality in developing countries has become a topic of intense interest, primarily because of countries efforts to maintain quality/or reserve the decline/ in the context of quantitative expansion of educational provision.

For example, in May 2003 the government of Uganda announced the following: “The battle for access has been won. The government now declares the battle for quality education” (Wabwire, 2003:5).

In the challenging environment people face today, access is only the beginning. The education that people has access must be of good quality in order to provide skills needed to operate successfully in complex, democratic societies with changing labour market (World Bank, 1999). If people are not gaining knowledge, skills and values they need, resources invested in teaching and learning are wasted.

Much concern about the quality of education derives from the belief that poor quality will frustrate efforts to use education as an effective lever of economic growth and development in this age of accelerating globalization (Pigozzi, 2008).

The term quality is perplexing to define. Accordingly, different scholars define quality differently. For example, Rao (2007) defined quality as that which best satisfies and exceeds customers needs and wants. He also added that quality can be said to lie in the eyes of the beholder.

Garvin (1984) cited in Jusoh et al. (2004) on his part classified the definition of quality into five major groups. These were transcendent, product-based, manufacturing-based, or value-based. Transcendent means something that is intuitively understood but nearly impossible to communicate such as beauty or love. For Sallis (1993) quality is what makes the difference between things being excellent or run-of-the mill.

Cheng and Tam (1997:23) summarized some of the definitions given to quality by different authorities as follows:

The term quality has different meanings and has been variously defined as excellence (Peters and Waterman, 1982), value (Feigenbaum, 1951), fitness for use (Juran and Gryna, 1988), conformance to specifications (Gilmore, 1974), conformance to requirement (Crosby, 1979), defect avoidance (Crosby, 1979), meeting and / or exceeding customers expectations (Parasuraman et al, 1985).

Although the above conceptions are highly correlated, it seems that there is no consensus in reaching a single definition for quality.

Similarly, education quality is vague and controversial concept to define. To different people, the definition may be different and so the indicators used to describe education quality may be different (Fuller, 1986; Hughes, 1988) in Cheng and Tam (1997). For example UNICEF (2000) and UNESCO (2002) in their definition of quality in education recognize five dimensions of quality: learners, environments, content, processes and outcomes, founded on the rights of the whole child, and all children, to survival, protection, development and participation.

Much discussion of educational quality centered on system inputs, such as infrastructure and pupil-teacher ratios, and on curricular content. In recent years, however, more attention has been made to educational processes-how teachers and administrators use inputs to frame meaningful learning experiences for students their work represents a key factor in ensuring quality school process (UNESCO, 2002).

Nagel (2003) argues that definitions of quality given by UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank are narrowly focusing on some aspects like the input (books, school buildings, teacher training) and output (learning output). But what happens in between in the "black box" is not explained.

Moreover most people view quality of education as the learning outcomes of students which are the primary concern of all stakeholders. But to achieve the desired quality, the antecedents, that is the input and process should also have quality in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, excellence, and social justice. The quality education output can be achieved only if quality is ensured at each level of the educational process (Mirza, 2003).

The Ethiopian education system has been criticized for its various limitations starting from the 1950s. Among other things, quality, access, relevance and equity are the major points of criticism. As reported by Solomon (2008) with regard to the quality of outputs at all levels, there is resemblance between the committee's (Committee appointed in 1953) finding and the current situation in that the output of each level currently is below the requirement of the next higher level.

According to Seyoum(1996) due to the deep crisis in the quality of education by the 1980s; students, teachers, the public and the state seem to worry about the quality of education. The Education and

Training Policy (1994:2) also described the education situation as: “to date it is known that our countries education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity.”

To address problems related to access, equity, relevance and quality of educational provision, the new Education and Training Policy was introduced (TGE, 1994). Furthermore, subsequent educational sector development strategies that follow the education and training policy echoed the emphasis given to the improvement of quality of education. Accordingly, Ministry of Education affirmed that throughout the education system, the increase in enrolment would be complemented by improvements in quality-from better trained and motivated teacher, more relevant curricula, more books, improved school environment, and improved internal efficiency, to examinations which provide feedback to schools to help improve classroom teaching (ESDP_I,1997).

Although the Education and Training Policy intended to improve the quality of education (ESDP-II, 2002) it was reported that due to different factors, the Ethiopian Education System is facing a great problem. The level of quality of education is being the concern of parents, teachers, employee agencies and the community in general (ETA, 2006).Moreover, as indicated in ESDP-III, efforts made to improve the quality of education are offset by the greater push given to increasing enrolment.

Furthermore, with regard to students result, in Ethiopia there are many problems. MoE (2007) in Seid (2009) reported that no result has been achieved as it is expected to be and different studies indicated that students’ achievement at all level is very low. The third National Learning Assessment indicated that, less than 14 percent of the students could be considered proficient,24 percent are basic and the majority,61 percent, falls below basic (Takele et al. 2007 in Amare(2009). It was also reported that similar results were observed in secondary schools

performance. Accordingly, the mean score of students in the EGSECE (Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination) is only 38.09 percent, confirming a poor achievement status (NEA, 2007) in Amare (2009).

Furthermore, very poor result was reported in South Wollo. According to South Wollo Education Department 1st quarter report (2007) out of 16597 10th grade regular students who sat for the national exam in that year (2007), 13,183 (79.4%) failed the exam. This situation has been worsened by the year 2008 in which out of 23,350 students who took the examination, 19,793 (84.8%) failed the exam (Seid, 2009).

In an attempt to cope up with the situation, the government has come up with another strategy, what is called General Educational Improvement Program (GEQIP). The objective of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) for Ethiopia is to improve the quality of general education throughout the country (www_bweduconsult_org).htm

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In many countries, notions of professionalism have changed as national priorities have focused more closely upon teachers' accountabilities for student achievement as defined by national tests and examinations (Day and GU, 2009). Leu (2005) states that with the expansion and reform taking place at the same time, a sever burden falls on teachers to be flexible and reject traditional ways of performing their duties. Similarly Rosenhotlz (1989) asserts that in the context of school performance, the contributions of effort, loyalty, and involvement from teachers are the most vital resources required. Moreover, UNESCO(2004) cited in Leu (2005) pointed out that , what goes on in the classroom and the impact of the teacher and teaching, has been identified in numerous studies as the crucial variable for improving learning outcomes. It is also indicated

on the 32nd UNESCO ministerial conference that, participants reaffirmed their position as: “We find indispensable the role of teachers as purveyors of knowledge and values and as community leaders responsible for the future of our young. We should do everything in our power to support them and to learn from them” (P.1).

In improving students learning outcomes the role of teachers is decisive. The Ministry of Education in its school improvement program /SIP/ document has put the decisive roles of teachers in improving quality of education(by improving students learning outcomes) as:“ለትምህርት ቤት መሻሻልና የተማሪዎች ውጤት እድገት በትምህርት ስራ ላይ ከተሰማሩ አካላት ይበልጥ መምህራን ቀዳሚውን ስፍራ የሚይዙ ናቸው::Roughly translated as :for School improvement and to increase of students result, teachers take the first position than any stakeholders working in education (MoE, 1999).

Similarly, Yalew (2004) explained that in any setting of school system, teachers play a paramount role in student learning. No matter how good the curriculum may be and how well it is organized, and whether or not teaching materials are available, ultimately the quality of education rests mainly on the methodology of instruction employed by the teachers.

The most important indicators for measuring the quality of education are the quality of teaching staff and the quality of learning in the classroom. Whether that education takes place under the shade of a tree or in a very expensive classroom, it is the processes of teaching and learning that are the key to quality education (Quality assurance- Ethiopia, 2005) in Seid, (2009).

Here, the issue of commitment becomes more important. Commitment has been defined in the literature as the degree of psychological attachment teachers have to their profession. Its outward expression is to be found in teachers who are motivated and who believe that they can

make a difference to the learning and achievement of their students (Chapman, 1982) in Day and GU, 2009. Increasing the commitment of teachers is an important first step in the process of school reform: professionalization of teachers will result in higher commitment, which will positively affect teachers' performance, which will ultimately lead to improvements in student learning.

There is an agreement among scholars that teachers' understanding of the goals of the curriculum, competence in using new classroom methods, confidence in grasping their subject matter, positive attitude and ethical behavior, concern for students' welfare and a firm sense of professional identity and professionalism are important factors in improving teachers performance (Livingstone, Leu & Wood, 2002).

Despite the different efforts made by the government to improve the quality of education the current students' achievement especially at the national examination is below standard (see P.5). The different programs and strategies like the different components of GEQIP (ICT, TDP, CPD, and SIP to name some) may not bring change to the quality of education unless teachers have appropriate perception and intrinsic commitment towards improving quality of education because teachers are the sole implementer of most of these strategies.

Researches on education reforms show that reforms initiated by governments fail to bring impact due to lack of acceptance by teachers. Evans (1996) argues that in schools that have supposedly undertaken reform, it is easy to find teachers who have made only minor changes or none at all. He added that in schools everywhere; it is easy to find those who remain strongly opposed, even when reform aims to empower them.

Similarly Omah (2002) cited in Adu and Olatundun(2007) argue that it is uncommon to discover that teachers are sabotaging the efforts of

government via their perception and characters towards their profession, the result of which has adverse effect on the academic performance of the student.

The argument here is any initiative to improve the quality of education should get the sincere consent of teachers. That is where the importance of commitment becomes apparent. In support of this Fullan (1982) asserts that reform efforts will only succeed with the consent of the teachers who must implement them.

The current shift in emphasis from access to quality and the introduction of several reforms in the education system should also take into consideration the perception and commitment of teachers towards improving quality of education so that cumulative effort of stakeholders will gear towards common goals.

In Ethiopia some researches have been conducted on the issue of quality of education. A study on 'The Perception of Ethiopian Teachers and Principals on Quality of Education' by Amare et al. (2006) reported that teachers and principals view quality of education in terms of input, process and output. Another study by Seid (2009) on 'factors that affect the quality of education on secondary schools' reported that teachers lack appropriate professional competency. Similarly, a study by ETA (2006) found out that attitude of teachers towards the teaching profession as well as their motivation seems to be low.

Neither of these studies assesses the level of teachers' dedication towards the improvement of the quality of education. Furthermore, the researcher has not come across local study which addresses teachers' commitment to improve the quality of education.

Therefore, this study attempts to fill the gap by addressing teachers' level of commitment to implement the reforms to improve the quality of education in the secondary schools.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess teachers' perception and commitment to quality of education in general secondary schools. Accordingly, it mainly aimed at:

- i. Assessing teachers understanding of what quality education is in the government general secondary schools of Dessie Town.
- ii. Investigating teachers concern and sense of responsibility to improve quality of education.
- iii. Identifying major obstacles that may diminish teachers' commitment to improve the quality of education.

1.4 Basic Questions

To address the above objectives, the following basic questions were formulated:

1. How do teachers perceive quality of education in the secondary schools?
2. Are they committed to improve quality of education?
3. How do teachers understand their role in improving quality?
4. What is the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement reform programs?
5. What are the major factors that affect teachers' commitment to improve quality of education?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study will be helpful:

- i. For educational stakeholders (Woreda, Zone, and Region Education Bureau) to see the level of secondary school teachers perception and commitment to quality of education so that future reforms and new strategies will be examined from the teachers perspective.
- ii. In providing information about teachers' current readiness and the effectiveness of the various reforms undertaken to improve quality of education.
- iii. Serve as a spring board for those who want to pursue at the regional and country level on the same issue.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

This study was conducted in four government general secondary schools of Dessie Town. The study focuses on only teachers' perception and commitment to quality of education in relation to student learning. It does not include the other dimensions of teachers' commitment namely: commitment to the profession and commitment to the school.

1.7. Limitation of the study

The researcher had faced some problems during data collection. There were frequent interruption during interview with vice principals and unit leaders. As a result, the researcher was obliged to make the interview again by revising the part of the conversation made before the interruption. The patience and concern of the interviewee helped the success of the interview. Lack of office or quiet place for the group interview with the students was another problem that makes recording

very difficult. In addition, lack of local researches conducted on the issue limited in depth exploration.

Finally, the research does not include the feelings and opinions of teachers in the rural areas to make generalization at the regional or national level.

1.8. Definition of Terms

Quality of education: *refers to inputs (number of teachers, amount of materials, number of text books), processes (extent of active learning, level of student participation) and output (test scores or achievements, graduation rates) (Adams (1992) in Chapman and Adams, 2002:2).*

Perception: refers to teachers' belief about quality of education.

Conception: refers to teachers understanding (cognitive aspect) of quality of education.

Commitment: refers to the willingness, dedication and personal devotion of teachers to improve quality of education.

Attitude: refers to the opinion and beliefs or inclinations of respondents towards GEQIP expressed during face to face interview and open-ended questionnaire (Edggar & Sedgwick, 2002).

General secondary Schools: refers to schools with grades 9-10 in the current educational structure.

Preparatory schools: refers to schools with grades 11-12 in the current education structure.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Concept of Quality

Different writers have tried to explain quality. Sallies (1993) view that quality can be used both as absolute and a relative concept. In the absolute definition, things, which exhibit quality, are of the highest possible standard, which cannot be surpassed. This is to indicate that quality products are things of perfection made with no expense spared. Quality as a relative concept is the sense in which it is used in total quality management. The relative definition views quality not as an attribute of a product or service, but as something which is ascribed to it.

According to Rao (2007) quality can be defined as that which best satisfies and exceeds customers' needs and wants. This is sometimes called 'quality in perception.'

Hoy, Bayne-Jardine and Wood (2000) on the other hand assert that in each case quality is inherent in the product-indeed, quality is itself a product, and not a process. To suppose otherwise is to misunderstand the nature of quality. They further stated that quality results from the system that produced it, and is an attribute of that system as much as of the product itself: of its processes, its people, the way they work together. They also argue that quality cannot be defined as a particular procedure, nor can we guarantee quality simply by controlling each stage in the process; rather quality stems from the way in which the product takes shape as it moves through the system.

Some of the definitions given by scholars differ in terminology than meaning. For example Parri (2006) categorized the definition of quality as exceptionality (excellence), quality as zero errors, quality as fitness for

purpose, quality as transformation (reshaping), quality as threshold, and quality as enhancement. Similarly, Ashcroft (1995) discussed quality in terms of excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money and transformation.

Sallies (1993) viewed quality, as “we all know quality when we experience it, but describing and explaining it is a more difficult task.” Similarly Harvey and Green (1993) in ETA (2006) view quality as inevitable and irrefutable-a person recognizes quality instinctively.

This later conception of quality seems inclusive to the wider society especially in the consumer service. It is common to hear the word quality used as an adjective in nearly most of television advertisements: ‘we produce quality...; we import quality...; if you want quality..., visit us; we give quality training; we give quality education; quality is our identity; what differs us from others is the quality... we provide.’ The assumption behind this frequent use of the word ‘quality’ by companies, training centers, educational institutions and other organizations is that the audience (mass) have some concept of quality-an idea supported by Harvey and Green (1993).

Having a divergent view of what ‘quality stands for’ to the extent that one cannot make a common understanding is good for nothing. In line with this Sallies (1993:21) cautions not to make ambiguity to the meaning of quality:

It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the various meanings of quality; otherwise there is a danger that it becomes a mere catch phrase, a word with high moral tone but little practical value. There is the danger that much of its validity can be lost if it is subjected to too much academic analysis.

Therefore, it is vital to conceptualize quality in the context one intends to make discussion and limits the discussion in the boundary one wants to vitalize it. Otherwise the bullet may miss the target it intends to hit.

2.2 The Concept & Definition of Quality in Education

Hoy, Bayne-Jardine and Wood (2000) define quality in education as an evaluation of the process of educating which enhances the need to achieve and develop the talents of the customers of the process, and at the same time meets the accountability standards set by the clients who pay for the process or the outputs from the process of educating. Similarly McDer Mott (1988) cited in ETA (2006) asserts that quality of education is one that enables children to reach high level academic outcomes.

The common views of quality in education given by educators and policy makers, according to Adams (1993) cited in Assefa (2002) are:

- i. Quality as reputation—the existence in the minds of most people folklore about which are the best educational institutions in a country. However, the basis for reputation often includes information or assumptions about inputs and out puts.
- ii. Quality as a process—reflects not only inputs or results, but also the nature of the intra institutional interaction of students, faculty and others; the whole institutional environments.
- iii. Quality as resource and inputs—fiscal resources, number and qualification of teachers, student quality, size of pedagogical materials and curriculum, extent of facilities and overall prestige.
- iv. Quality as content—reflects the particular bias of a community, an institution or a country toward a body of knowledge, skills or information.

- v. Quality as outputs or outcomes _achievement in knowledge, skills, entrance ratios to next level of education, income, and occupational status of graduates. This shows how well institution prepares students to become responsible citizens in skills, attitudes and values relevant to the country's needs.
- Vi. Quality as value added—a major of change—how the students have changed because of the learning program, the culture, and the norms of the institution; how the institution helps students to achieve their potential or enlarge human capacities. The value added consists of learning gain and the increased probability of income-earning activity.

In the word of UNICEF (2000) today, considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education. These includes: healthy learner; healthy, safe and protective environment, relevant curriculum, a process where child- centered approaches, well managed classrooms and skillful assessment to facilitate learning is found and goal oriented outcomes.

This conception of quality is a bit broad and does not focus on the in school factors. Moreover, it is not clear as to how some of the dimensions like healthy learner and healthy environment can be well dealt with the daily school routines.

According to Peters (1977) in defining quality there could be product and process judgments of quality. The product judgment of quality is related to the degree to which those who had been at school or a college satisfied the multiple criteria involved in 'being educated.' The process judgment of quality took careful account of the state of students before they entered such institutions and measured the extent to which they had progressed towards being educated from a given baseline (Ibid).

Of the factors that contribute to education quality, quality of teaching is recognized as the key, without which other quality inputs are unlikely to be successful (UNESCO, 2004, 2006; USAID, 2004, 2006, cited in Leu 2006).

Quality teaching is the result of the process of teaching. Quality essentially is part of the learning process; a learning process that is the purpose of educational organization (Wood, 1999) cited in Yohannis (2005). Similarly, Aggarwal (1996:25) has explained the relationship between quality teaching and quality education and the practical application of effective teaching as follows:

Quality teaching (also known as effective teaching) is the chief instrument of quality education. It is essentially concerned with translating the objectives of education into action and practice. Moreover, it is concerned with how best to bring about pupil learning by various activities.(Aggarwal 1996:25).

This indicates that there is a tendency to give emphasis to the process factor (instruction) in the discussions of quality of education. Recently the new way of looking at quality focuses on the process within the school and classroom. Greater attention is given to the ways in which the inputs interact at the school level to shape quality of learning (UNESCO, 2000; World Bank, 1994 cited in ETA, 2006).

Grisay and Mahick (1991) Cited in Mitiku (2004) contend that the notion of quality should take into account the determinants of student achievement (inputs and process) rather than considering students' results (output) alone, if our ambition is to improve quality of education.

In all of the above discussions some of the scholars focus on input and outcome, others on one of them and the rest on the process. This implies be it the input or the outcome or the outcome variables, they will not have that much result without the process variable, where all the inputs

are changed into outcomes. This is because it is the process that determines effective or quality teaching thereby being an instrument to bring about educational quality.

It is an established fact that a quality process can yield a quality product. The Amharic saying 'አለባብሰው በያርሱ በአረም ይመለሱ ያልዘራደውን አታጭድም።' It can be translated as (If you are shallow in the process, you will be obliged to do more in the second phase; and you don't harvest what you don't cultivate). It signifies the role the process factor plays in improving quality. That means the abundant availability of input cannot guarantee to get quality product. Nevertheless, materials resources are often scarce. Therefore, it is very essential to focus on the process factor—the effectiveness of instruction.

2.3. The Quest for Quality in Ethiopian Education

The issue of quality has always been high agenda especially from the beginning of secondary education to Ethiopia. In relation to this Seyoum (1996) states that due to the deep crisis in the quality of education by the 1980s students, teachers, the public and the state seem to worry about the quality of education. Because of the pressure and the intensity of the situation, Ministry of Education (1986) has formed a committee for Evaluative Research of the General Educational System in Ethiopia (ERGESE) so as to make recommendations to improve the quality of education. The recommendations made by the committee ranged from steps to be taken to improve the teaching profession down to the setting up of counseling and guidance services for students (Ibid).

Seyoum (1996) also explained that towards the collapse of the socialist regime, the relevance of the curriculum had become questionable; the quality of education had become suspect, and accessibility and equity to educational opportunity left a lot to be desired. Similarly, the Ministry of

Education (1994) states that the quality of education, which was quite reasonable at the beginning, gradually declined and sustained a pronounced fall in the past two decades.

In addition the education sector strategy (ETP, 1994) described the problem of the time that educational system in Ethiopia was inundated with a number of problems and could be considered to be in crisis. The strategy further elaborated that the few schools that were functioning were poorly equipped; overcrowded and badly managed as well the curriculum was irrelevant.

Furthermore, the Education and Training Policy adopted in 1994 explicitly uncovers the deep rooted problem of the education system. It states that to date, it is known that our country's education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity which are featured low. Inadequate facilities, insufficient training of teachers, overcrowded classes, shortage of books and other teaching materials, all indicate the low quality of education provided.

It is understood that among other things, it is the need to improve quality of education that necessitates the emergence of the 1994 education and training policy of Ethiopia. However, the introduction of the education and training policy does not alleviate the problem of low quality of education. In explaining the decline of quality of education, Ministry of Education in its Second Education Sector Development Program (MoE, ESDP II, 2002:25) states:

In Ethiopian situation, enrolment has increased substantially resulting in over-crowded classrooms. Although there are remarkable improvements, schools still lack sufficient books and facilities. The abilities of teachers are put to evermore rigorous test given the increasing section size.

It is also expressed by the Ministry of Education (ESDP III) that efforts made to improve the quality of education are off set by the greater push given to increasing enrolment.

The above discussion shows that the problems of our education system are more or less the extension of the earlier problems. Furthermore, reforms initiated at different times to solve these problems do not bring substantial improvement to our education.

2.4 The Role of Teachers in Quality Education

Every society has certain explicit or implicit measures or status indicators of educational quality such as educational inputs, educational outputs and educational processes (ETA, 2006). Of these measures or status indicators of quality education the greatest measures of agreement on quality is found at the classroom level (Beeby, 1966) in ETA (2006). Similarly, Leu (2005) asserts that if the school is the important functional locus of efforts for improving quality, certainly the most critical factor within the school in facilitating student learning is the teacher. This indicates that the classroom situation (the process of teaching and learning) significantly determines the quality of education.

In relation to this MoE (2002) stated that although much discussion of educational quality centered on input (infrastructure, pupil-teacher ratio and curricular content) recently more attention has been paid to educational processes. Moreover, it was discussed that how teachers use inputs to frame meaningful learning experiences for students as their work represents a key factor in ensuring quality school processes. Quality of teaching determines the improvement of the quality of education (Livingstone, Leu & Wood, 2002).

The quality of education which is mainly determined, among other things, by quality teaching is related to the quality of the teaching force and their efforts in the classroom. As a statement By MoE (2006) in Seid (2009:17) explains:

The most important indicators for measuring the quality of education are the quality of the teaching staff and the quality of learning in the classroom. Whether that education takes place under the shade of a tree or in a very expensive classroom, it is the process of teaching and learning that are the key to quality education.

In the policy and other consecutive government documents teachers are considered to be key factors in improving quality of education (MoE, 1994 & 2007). Similarly, Elliot (1993) asserts that teachers are responsible for change and the performance of the pupil on test is the result of teachers' effectiveness.

Similarly, Green (1994) cited in Seid (2009) suggested that the ultimate guarantee of quality in the interaction process must be in the attitude, knowledge and skills of the individual teacher themselves. He added that teachers who feel enthusiasm for their job, and who are well qualified and expert in what they teach, are the only essential ingredients in teaching quality.

Livingstone, Leu and Wood (2002) have pointed out that teachers' understanding of the goals of the curriculum, competence in using new classroom methods, confidence in grasping their subject matter, positive attitude and ethical behavior, concern for students' welfare and a firm sense of professional identity and professionalism are important factors in improving teacher performance.

From this we can conclude that nearly all the scholars agree in that teachers play uncomplimentary role in the teaching learning process.

Hence, the improvement of the quality of education depends on the effort of teachers.

2.5. Teacher Commitment

Commitment has been defined in the literature as the degree of psychological attachment teachers have to their profession (Chapman, 1982) in Day and Gu (2009). Similarly, Taylor and Frankenberg (2009) state that according to the literature, committed teachers are those who are willing to go above and beyond basic professional requirements. This implies that committed teachers show additional effort on their daily career requirements.

Some scholars cited in Jusoh et al. (2004) have nearly the same views to teacher commitment. For example, Beeker (1960) and Lacey (1997) define commitment as the investment in a particular career, in this case teaching. Lortie (1975) cited in the same authors, regards commitment as the willingness an individual enacts in investing personal resources to the teaching task.

Tyree (1996) in Abdulhakim (2006) views teacher commitment as teacher identification with, involvement in, and loyalty to the school as a formal organization. In addition, their commitment should be to the extent of being a positive bond between the teacher and the school. A respondent to the study of 'teacher commitment & engagement' (n.d.) described a committed teacher as: 'someone who is striving to improve on their practice and looking at pedagogies and looking at research. Trying to see what could be better.' This conception of commitment focuses on commitment to the school and the profession.

According to Taylor and Frankenberg (2009) scholars have identified various types of teacher commitment; including teachers' different levels

of dedication to their students, to their specific schools, and to the profession generally. In other words, teacher commitment consists of three dimensions. These are commitment to students, commitment to the school and commitment to the profession (teaching).

The above definitions used words 'willingness, investment and dedication' which sounds well to be employed in the activities of the school that are totally in the control of the teacher. The level of teacher commitment is considered to be a key factor in the success of current educational reform agendas as it heavily influences teachers' willingness to engage in cooperative, reflective and critical practice.

Teacher commitment cannot be directly measured. Instead, descriptions of behaviors of a committed teacher are figured out. Teachers are asked to respond to the level of their engagement statements of characteristics of a committed teacher (both in open-ended & closed-ended questions). In addition colleagues and heads of teachers are asked to rate the teachers (to give witness) against the statements of the behaviors of committed teachers.

Some of the behavior indicators of teacher commitment according to Crosswell and Elliott (n.d. p.6) include:

- i. Teacher commitment as an investment of time (extra time) outside of contact hours with students.
- ii. Teacher commitment as a focus on the individual needs of the students.
- iii. Teacher commitment as a responsibility to impart knowledge, attitude, values and beliefs.

In addition teacher commitment to students is characterized as teachers who act outside the role of 'teacher' and support students in mentoring and coaching roles (Nias, 1981; Bilken, 1995; Tyree, 1996; Young, 1999

in Teacher Commitment and Engagement, n.d. p.3). Other aspects of practice that were seen to be behaviors of a committed teacher included: working as a member of a team, being appropriately prepared for class, being a reflective practitioner and being accountable (p.4).

2.5.1 Commitment to the School

Commitment is generally defined as a high level of attachment to an organization, activity or person. According to Kanter (1974) cited in Abdulhakim (2006) commitment is the process through which people become willing to give their loyalty and energy to a particular social system, because that particular system is “expressing the needs and nature of the person”. According to Park (2005) organizational teacher commitment has three major components: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong intent or desire to remain with the organization.

A Multiple Analysis by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 1997) proposed that teacher commitment was “the degree of positive, affective bond between the teacher and the School.” In addition, teachers who are committed to the goals of the school are more likely to work collaboratively, cooperatively and collegially with other teachers in the school and seek ways to promote the school and the teaching profession (Ebmeier and Nicklaus, 1999) in Jusoh et al.(2004).

The above conceptualization can be summarized as teacher commitment to the school includes teachers’ willingness and dedication in putting great effort to the realization of the missions and goals of schools.

2.5.2 Commitment to Students

Nias (1981) in Crosswell (2006) discussed the notion of commitment as caring, which similarly appears to focus on the emotional labour of caring for students and helping others. This focus on commitment as caring for students has the tendency to escalate to high levels of involvement in the profession or more simply put, to let “ Teaching take over your life.” Teacher commitment to students includes teachers’ willingness to help students and take responsibility for student learning and school life.

Tyree (1966) in Jusoh et al. (2004) suggests that Teachers who regard students as individuals may be more likely to attempt to individualize learning and assessment. Both Nias (1981) and Tyree (1996) in the same authors suggest that many teachers see students’ welfare and development as a core part of their commitment and their professional practice. Similarly, Chan (2005) views that teachers who are dedicated to teach would facilitate school based innovations or reformations that are meant to be beneficial to students learning and development. These views of commitment indicate that teachers committed to students do everything they can if they believe that it helps students. Moreover, teacher commitment to students serves as a fertile condition to implement new reforms in schools.

Kushman(1992) in Dannetta (2009) states that commitment is a significant factor in efforts to improve school out comes, especially student academic achievement. He further explained that commitment to student learning includes teacher dedication to helping students learn regardless of their academic difficulties or social back ground. Conceptually, this type of commitment focuses in learning and academic achievement, particularly for students who are academically at risk.

According to this view committed teachers strive to address the needs of individual students.

This shows that teacher commitment is crucial to student learning because, teachers show extra devotion to students learning even when students are below standards expected to the level. Moreover, teachers who are committed to students make investment of personal resources and work extra time to change their students.

2.5.3. Commitment to the Profession

Teacher commitment to the teaching profession as an occupational commitment is a positive affective attachment to one's occupation (Somech & Bogler, 2002) in Park, (2005). This indicates the extent to which one is engaged in carrying out the specific tasks in the workplace or the degree of importance that work plays in one's life.

Day (2000) cited in Crosswell and Elliot (n.d.) suggested that to sustain their energy and enthusiasm for the work, teachers need to maintain their personal commitment to the job. He also stated that teachers who are so committed are taught to view teaching to be not 'just a job'. They remain loyal to the moral purpose of the profession, even though this commitment may entail significant personal cost. Tyree (1996) in Jusoh et al. (2004) viewed commitment as loyalty to teaching as a profession.

A professional commitment appears to be highly influential for not only a teacher success during times of change but also for systems is seeking to bring about change (Crosswell & Elliott, n.d.). According to Firestone and Pennell (1993) committed teachers feel that their work has a "special meaning and importance" in their lives.

By extending these views we can understand that commitment to the profession is essential for both the teacher and the school. The higher the commitment of the teacher to his profession, the greater he or she invests to develop his or her profession. This in turn maximizes performance. Moreover, the teacher will have great emotional attachment to the profession.

2.6. The Role of Secondary Schools in Development

According to Delores Report to UNESCO (1996) in Nkinyangi (2004:4) secondary education is seen as:

A crucial point in the lives of individuals: it is at this stage that young people should decide their own future, in light of their own tastes and aptitudes, and that they can acquire the abilities that will make for a successful adult life.

Similarly, ESDP-III document described that secondary education is an important part of any industrialization and modernization program. It asserts that expansion of secondary education is purely determined by the demand for trained human power at middle and higher level.

The document indicated that the first cycle of secondary education is the source for producing trainable persons who would either join training for amid- level labor force or university preparatory program. Secondary education is also a half way station between elementary school and higher learning, which concentrates on preparing students for college and various vocations. That means high schools are educational institutions that prepare adolescents for higher education or the world of work. Consequently, what happens to the students at this level determines the fate of both the students and the country. Therefore, emphasis should be given to the quality of education offered at this level. Other wise any deterioration in quality of education will end up with 'abortion' of middle level as well highly skilled man power.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

3.1 Design of the Study

Since the principal objective of this study was to assess and describe teachers' perception and commitment to quality education in general secondary school (9-10), a descriptive survey approach was used as this method helps to reveal teachers' level of commitment and the major factors affecting teachers' commitment to improve quality of education. According to Creswell (2003) a survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalizes or makes claims about the population.

3.2. Population of the study

The target population of this research were 225 teachers and 25 instructional leaders (vice principals and unit leaders) of the four government general secondary schools of Dessie Town.

3.3 Sample size and Sampling technique

From the total population of 225 teachers, 33% (74 teachers) were selected as a sample from the four schools proportionally. Taking one third of the population from a relatively homogeneous population is appropriate to get representative sample. In addition from 25 instructional leaders (vice principals and unit leaders) 12 were selected purposefully. Moreover, gender of teachers was considered in order to have fair representation of the two sexes.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants in the Study

No	nts Informa	Schools	Population in each school			Sample taken		
			M	F	T	M	F	T
1.	Teachers	Gerado	17	5	22	6	2	8
		Hotie	64	8	72	21	3	24
		Kidame Gebeya	50	12	62	15	4	19
		Nigus Michael	53	16	69	18	5	23
		Total	184	41	225	60	14	74
2	Instructional Leaders	Gerado	5	-	5	3	-	3
		Hotie	8	-	8	3	-	3
		Kidame Gebeya	7	-	7	3	-	3
		Nigus Michael	4	1	5	2	1	3
		Total	24	1	25	11	1	12

There are 4 general secondary schools in Dessie Town in 2002(2009/2010). These are Hotie secondary, Kidamie Gebeya, Nigus Michael and Gerado secondary schools.

According to Dessie Town Education Department, in 2002 E.C, there are 225 Teachers in the 4 schools. A total of 74(33%) teachers were selected as sample proportionally from each school to fill the questionnaire. Samples from each school were then selected using simple random sampling technique.

The sample size was proportionally taken based on the size of the population in each school. A total of 12 instructional leaders (one vice principal and two unit leaders from each school) were purposefully taken as a sample for interview. Due to their position, they make frequent interaction with the teachers. For example they give supervision support, they monitor the activities of teachers and they are close observer of the

teaching learning process. Therefore, they have better access to witness the behaviors of teachers displayed in the teaching learning process.

3.4 Data Gathering Instruments

In this study questionnaire, interview, and group interview (GI) were employed for collecting the data pertinent to the study. This is because using more than one data gathering instrument is advised to assure the reliability of the data (Yalew, 2006).

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire was utilized to collect data from teachers. According to Best & Kahn (1999) questionnaire enables to secure factual information about opinions and views and also appropriate instrument to obtain a variety of opinions within a relatively short period of time. The questionnaire has three parts. The first part contains background information about the respondents. The second part containing 35 closed ended items was prepared to gather information about teachers' perception and understanding of quality of education and their perceived commitment. It consisted of five point scales with strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with values of 5, 4,3,2,1 respectively. This is to give respondents a range of alternatives to show their level of responses.

The third section of the questionnaire consists of 5 open ended questions. This was aimed at giving the respondents the opportunity to list and reflect as much idea as possible regarding issues related to quality of education and teacher commitment.

3.4.2 Interview

According to Best and Kahn (1999) the major way in which qualitative evaluator seeks to understand perception, feeling and knowledge of people in program is through interview. Moreover, interviews are found to be important instrument to understand people's awareness and attitudes using their words and gesture.

In this study the interviews were conducted with instructional leaders (vice principals and unit leaders). Accordingly, 4 vice principals (one from each school) and 8 unit leaders (two from each school) were interviewed.

The interview items were unstructured and meant to gather data about teachers' commitment as expressed by their immediate leaders and colleagues.

3.4.3 Group Interview (GI)

Group interview were held with students selected from grade 9 and 10. Four group interviews (one group from each school) were held. This was aimed at gathering supplementary data about teachers' perceived role and level of personal commitment to improve quality of education as expressed by students. According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992) in Lewis (2000) interviewing more than one person at a time sometimes proves very useful; some young people need company to be emboldened to talk, and some topics are better discussed by a small group of people who know each other.

One group consists of eight students for Hotie and Nigus Michael, and six students for Kidamie Gebeya and Gerado secondary schools. Two high achiever students were selected from one section purposefully. This is because they are identified by the school as representative of their respective sections affairs. The GI was partly recorded; due to lack of comfortable places for discussion some of the GI was not recorded.

The GI was conducted in such a way that ideas are either supported or opposed by participants so as to reach on an agreement. The final idea that was the stand of all participants was taken as the final point. This enabled the researcher to get inaccessible information that may not be obtained by other data gathering instruments.

3.5 Data Gathering Procedures

The data gathering instruments were prepared by the researcher from different sources, works and by taking idea from review literature. Moreover critical comments from my advisor and colleagues (teachers of Dessie Teachers College) were included. Before the actual implementation of the questionnaire a pilot test was conducted in Memhir Akalewold Preparatory School. The question papers were distributed to twenty teachers to fill them. Then the question papers were collected and organized for reliability test. Finally, SPSS (Statistical Programs for Social Sciences) was used to compute the reliability of the items. The reliability of the questionnaire items was found using Cronbach alpha and the result was found to be 0.705. Based on the pilot test results amendments were made for some items: the number of items was reduced, items with similar message were merged, language clarity was reconsidered and difficult words were avoided.

Finally, the questionnaire was administered with the support of friends and unit leaders in each school. Except 3, all the question papers were properly filled and collected. Three question papers from Gerado secondary school were not returned.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative data was tallied and categorized in groups to get the frequency distributions across the five scales. Then the percentage and

mean values were determined and used for analysis. For simplicity only three scales-agree (agree +strongly agree), undecided, disagree (disagree + strongly disagree)-were used in the analysis.

The qualitative data were organized into themes to make ready for analysis. The qualitative data which are related to the quantitative data (positively or negatively) were analyzed by integrating with the quantitative data. The qualitative data obtained through open ended items were analyzed separately as it consists of ideas which were not included in the quantitative data. When data were transcribed, pseudonyms (unreal names) were used to cover the identity of the respondents.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of data. The data gathered through questionnaire, interview and group interview are analyzed as follows.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The following table shows the distribution of samples by sex, experience and qualification.

Table 2. Background of the Respondents

No	Subjects	Sex			Teaching Experience					Qualification		
		M	F	T	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Above 20	Diploma	Degree	MA
1.	Teachers	57	14	71	3	29	9	9	21	7	63	1
2.	Instructional leaders	11	1	12	-	8	-	-	4	-	12	-

As Table 2 shows that 57(80.28%) of the samples are males. Female samples constitutes 14(19.72%) of the total sample. This shows that the number of female teachers in the secondary schools is low.

The table also shows that majority of the teachers (54.93%) have 11 and above years of experience where as 32(45.07%) of the teachers have 10 and below years of experience. The number of teachers who are in the induction phase is very low (3). From this we understand that the majority of teachers have a good mix of experience.

Sixty three (88.73%) of the teachers are degree holders. The remaining 7(9.86%) and 1(1.41%) are diploma and master holder respectively. Although majority of the teachers have appropriate qualification, nearly 10% of the teachers are under qualified for the level. This will have an impact on the quality of education.

Regarding respondents leadership position only one female is on the post of instructional leadership. This shows the presence of gender gap in school leadership.

It also indicated that the majority 29 (66.67%) of the instructional leaders have 6-10 years of experience. The remaining 4(33.33%) of the instructional leaders have above 20 years of experience. In general all the instructional leaders have appropriate experience.

Regarding qualification all samples of instructional leaders are degree holders which can be taken as satisfactory for the moment.

4.2. Teachers Conception of Quality Education

Teachers were asked about their understanding of quality of education as to when they say there is quality of education. They have listed several instances. Some of them described it as *there* is quality of education when students show interest to their learning and accept what the teacher is teaching. *Some* others described it as there is quality of education if students learn by themselves with little support from their teachers as well as if students make their own notes. This conception of quality of education focuses on the process factor. Still some others conceptualized quality of education from the output point of view. For example one respondent reported the following:

There is quality of education when we see students with better achievement in the final exam, national exam and when

they have better ethics; when students solve problem by using knowledge gained from the school; when learners have minimum learning competency level to the particular grade level

/ A teacher from N.Michael /

The other description of teachers to quality of education is related to the attainment of educational goals. For example one respondent reported: 'it can be said that there is quality of education if objectives and goals of education achieved in producing skilled man power that are responsible and accountable and also when it fulfills standards'. */A teacher from KG.school/*

In relation to this Nayaka and Rao(2007) state that a quality education provides the foundational skills that students need to become productive citizens capable of civic engagement and sustaining competitive employment.

The other point raised by teachers as an indicator of quality of education focuses on teacher-related factors. One of the respondents pointed out that quality education can be attained: "if teachers are encouraged and motivated; when they use variety of teaching methods; when teachers are involved in the process of curriculum development and policy formulation; and when teachers are respected by the society."/a teacher from N.Michael S.S. / Another teacher added that quality of education can be maintained if teachers are competent enough in the subject they are teaching.

The teachers conception of quality of education and the way forward to improve it can be generalized as the quality of education can be attained if necessary conditions are fulfilled to teachers; if students show interest for learning and accept their teachers; and also if teachers are fully engaged in every educational activities. At the end of the day, this has to

lead the production of skilled manpower (in terms of high achievement in exams, better ethics, problem solving ability, skill of independent learning, attainment of minimum learning capacity).

The following table shows the quantitative data obtained from teachers regarding their understanding of the quality of education.

Table 3. Teachers’ Conception of Quality of Education

No	Item	Responses on rating scales					X
			A	U	D	T	
1	Quality of education actively seeks out all learners and assist them to learn using a wide range of modalities.	F	60	4	7	71	4.01
		%	84.5	5.64	9.86	100	
2	What the learner brings to her/his own learning and to that of a group is extremely important.	F	61	5	5	71	4.14
		%	85.92	7.04	7.04	100	
3	The issue of quality is not in teachers, rather in the hands of others.	F	8	7	56	71	1.97
		%	11.27	9.86	78.87	100	
4	Quality of education process uses learner centered teaching and learning method.	F	57	7	7	71	4.09
		%	80.28	9.86	9.86	100	
5	The quality of task has a strong relationship with the quality of classroom practice.	F	58	2	11	71	4
		%	81.69	2.82	15.49	100	
6	I feel that co-curricular activities are less important in the teaching learning process.	F	12	6	53	71	2.24
		%	16.9	8.45	74.65	100	

Note: A=agree, U=undecided, D=disagree, T=total, X=mean

As depicted in Table 3 (item 1), 60(84.5%) of the respondents agree that in quality of education all learners should be active and need assistance to learn using a wide range of modalities. While four (5.64%) of the respondents do not make decision, nine (9.86%) of the respondents rated their disagreement. This indicates that majority of the teachers due acknowledge (are aware of) the need of active participation of all learners and the need to use a wide range of modalities. In relation to this, Pigozzi (2008) states that a quality education has to consider the learner as an active participant and a central part of educational efforts learners bring

to their learning, and to that of a group in which they participate, a large diversity of experiences characteristics skills.

Regarding the contribution of individual student (see Table 3 item 2) 61 (85.92%) of the respondents are aware of the contribution of every student to both his own learning and to that of a group. A small section of the respondents do not decide and disagree with the contribution of the individual learner (7.04% each). From this we can say that a large majority of teachers recognize the importance of the contribution of individual learners to the learning process. In support of this Dyer (1973) in Crosswell (2006) reported that for student learning, inputs consist of all the characteristics a student brings to the learning process such as his or her physical make up, past learning, interest values, feelings about him or herself and others.

As to who has the upper hand to improve the quality of education (Table 3 item 3) eight (11.27%) of the respondents agree that the issue of quality of education is not in the hands of teachers. While 7 (9.86%) of the respondents neither agree nor disagree, 56 (78.87%) of the respondents agree that the quality of education is not on the hands of others. Here, once again, the majority of teachers believe that determining the quality of education is by and large lies on teachers.

Supporting this idea MOE (ESDP- III) states that qualified and committed teachers are essential since it is in the classroom that the real learning takes place. Without a competent teacher, no curriculum can be implemented effectively and quality education will not be attained.

Regarding methods (see Table 3 item 4) fifty seven (80.28%) of the respondents agree that quality education process uses learner- centered teaching and learning method. Equal portion of the respondents 7(9.86% each) rated undecided and disagree to the use of learner-centered

approach to quality teaching and learning. From this one can conclude that majority of the teachers do acknowledge the need to use learner-centered approach to elicit quality teaching and learning. However, the data obtained through group interview revealed that majority of the teachers do not use learner- centered method. The students reported that 'since the teachers believe that we (students) do not carry on most of the activities, they (teachers) prefer to do by themselves.' /Students in KG.S.S. /

The data on Table 3 (item 5) shows that 58 (81.69%) agree that there is a strong relationship between the quality of a task given to students and the quality of classroom practice where as 11(15.49%) of the respondents disagree to the strong relationship between the quality of task and the quality of classroom practice. A very small portion, 2 (2.82%) failed to decide.

Although the majority of teachers show awareness of the relationship between task quality (appropriateness of the activities given to students) and practice quality (the level of students' engagement in working on the activities) a significant number of respondents, 11 (15.49%) do not see such relationship. This indicates the gap that exists on the part of teachers to accept at least in principle, the need to use variety and appropriate methods and tasks (activities) to display better classroom practice. In relation to this Elliot (1993) suggests that the performance of schools and teachers intrinsically manifests educational quality if the performance satisfies appropriate quality criteria (procedural principles).

Concerning the importance of co-curricular activities (Table 3 item 6) twelve (16.9%) of the respondents rated that co-curricular activities are less important in the teaching learning process. While 6(8.45%) of the respondents rated don't know', 53 (74.65%) of the respondents rated 'disagree' with the statement. This shows that most of the respondents

believe that co-curricular activities are important in the teaching learning process.

4.3. Teachers Perception of Quality of Education

Teachers were asked to reflect their belief on the current status of the quality of education and the ways it can be improved. In the response the teachers expressed their frustration of the current status of the quality of education. They feel that it becomes the works of others and teachers have been thrown to a corner as if it can be improved without the consent and active participation of teachers. One of the respondents believed it as *'in a short period of time it is not possible to bring change given the current trend of undermining the role of teachers.'*

As the quantitative data show (see Table 4) the teachers' loss of hope emanates from the external forces and not from their lack of awareness or lack of competency on how to improve the quality of education.

Table 4. Teachers' Perception of Quality of Education

No	Item	Responses on rating scales					X
		F	A	U	D	T	
1	I believe that teachers are the most determinant element to improve quality.	F	64	2	5	71	4.25
		%	90.14	2.82	7.04	100	
2	I believe that material resources are a very essential elements to improve quality.	F	56	6	9	71	3.94
		%	78.87	8.45	12.68	100	
3	Teachers can yield quality of education even in poor school conditions.	F	38	8	25	71	3.29
		%	53.52	11.27	35.21	100	
4	I believe that I can improve quality education in my immediate environment.	F	41	12	18	71	3.38
		%	57.75	16.9	25.35	100	
5	I have great expectation to student learning.	F	62	4	5	71	4.23
		%	87.32	5.63	7.04	100	
6	Positive aspects about teaching outweigh the negative aspects.	F	44	18	9	71	3.61
		%	61.97	25.35	12.68	100	
7	I am personally responsible for part of the education of every student I teach.	F	66	2	3	71	4.46
		%	92.96	2.82	4.22	100	

Regarding determining factors to improve the quality of education (see Table 4 item 1) majority of the respondents (90.14%) believe that teachers are the most determinant element to improve the quality of education. A very small (2.82%) number of respondents fail to decide. Only 5(7.04%) of the respondents do not agree with the idea that teachers take a very central position to improve the quality of education.

Concerning material resources, (see Table 4 item 2) fifty six (78.87%) of the respondents convinced that material resources are very essential element to improve quality of education. While 6(8.45%) of the respondents are not sure; 9(12.68%) of the respondents 'disagree' with the determinant of material resources to improve quality of education. This shows that although majority of the respondents due recognize the decisive role of material resources to improve quality of education, a significant portion of the respondents don't give central role for material resources.

As Table 4 (item 3) shows 38(53.52%) of the respondents are confident that teachers can achieve quality of education even in poor school conditions. Whereas 8 (11.27%) of the respondents are not sure; 25(35.21%) of the respondents 'disagree' to the possibility of achieving quality of education in poor school condition.

Again from this we can understand that the majority of the respondents view the key role of teachers in achieving better result even where conditions in the schools are not that much conducive. In relation to this Yalew (2004: 18) says "... whether or not teaching materials are available, ultimately the quality of education rests mainly on the methodology of instruction employed by the teachers." Similarly it is said that whether the education takes place under the shade of a tree or in a very expensive classroom, it is the process of teaching and learning that are the key to quality education (Quality Assurance, 2005) in Seid (2009).

As we can see from Table 4 (item 4), 41(57.75%) of the respondents believe that they can improve quality of education in their school. While 12(16.9%) of the respondents do not know if they can improve or not. The remaining 18(25.35%) do not believe that they are capable of doing so. This implies that the majority of the respondents believe that they have the upper hand to change situations in their immediate work environment. In relation to this, Kent (2004) in Abdulhakim (2006) asserted that at the school level the individual teachers determine the extent to which any innovation occurs.

Regarding their expectation to students learning (see Table 4 item 5) sixty two (87.32%) of the respondents have great expectation to student learning. 4(5.63%) and 5(7.04%) of the respondents rated 'do not know' and 'disagree' respectively to the idea. From this we can (understand) that the majority of teachers have great expectation to student learning. In relation to this it is indicated that the expectations teachers have for their students and the assumptions they make about their potential have a tangible effect on student achievement. Research "clearly establishes that teacher expectations do play a significant role in determining how well and how much students learn" (Bamburg, 1994 in Lumsden (n.d). Similarly, Ross & Gray argue that teacher efficacy contributes to achievement because high efficacy teachers try harder, use management strategies that stimulate student autonomy, attend more closely to low ability student needs, and modify students' ability perceptions.

As depicted in Table 4 (item 6) 44(61.97%) of the respondents view positive aspects of teaching outweigh the negative aspects. Whereas 18(25.35%) and 9(12.68%) of the respondents rated 'don't know' and 'disagree' respectively. This implies that majority of the teachers do accept their profession positively.

Table 4 (item 7) also shows that 66 (92.96%) of the respondents are aware of their responsibility for part of the education of every student they teach. A very small portion of the respondents [2(2.82%) and 3(4.22%)] rated undecided and disagree respectively. This implies that the very large majority of teachers accept in principle their special responsibility to the learning of every student they teach. However, the data obtained through interview and group interview revealed that majority of the teachers do not take any responsibility to student learning. As the participants of the group interview put it. “በክፍል ውስጥ ያሉ አንድ ወይም ሁለት የሚንቀሳቀሱ ተማሪዎችን ተከትለው ነው የሚጓዙት። ስለቀረው 99% ብዙም አይጨነቁም ሊገባቸው አይችሉም ብለው ተስፋ ቆርጠዋል፡፡” (this can be roughly translated as: the teachers follow one or two interactive students. They don't care for the remaining 99%). /students in k.G:School/. Regarding this Elliot (1993) argued that teachers are responsible for change and the performance of the pupil on test is the result of teachers' effectiveness.

4.4. Teachers Commitment to Quality of Education

Teachers and instructional leaders seem less sympathetic to the quality of education. The following expression shows their frustration.

For your sake let us help you because you have to get your masters. Regarding the quality of education it is a dead matter. Forget it. A lot has been said but we don't see any measures being taken.

/Comment given by instructional leaders in X-school during orientation on the purpose of the interview/.

The data obtained from interview revealed that most of the teachers show low level of commitment to improve the quality of education. This is what Getachew had to say: “If you ask me to list the teachers who are committed to help their students, I can name them as X, Y, Z. But if you ask me their proportion, they are insignificant, may be less than 0.01 percent of the total staff.” Similarly Tsehay reported: “You can get one or

two teachers who take self initiative to help students. They prepare worksheets and different tasks by their own will. As to the majority it may be a petty to talk about commitment. What type of commitment are you talking about while many regular classes have been wasted.” However, Batu in the other school asserted that teachers in his school began to show improvement in implementing the school improvement program. He viewed this as a positive move towards better commitment.

The following table shows teachers response to issues related to teacher commitment.

Table 5 Teachers’ commitment to quality of Education

No	Item	Responses on rating scales					
			A	U	D	T	X
1	I would like my students to learn more.	F	65	1	5	71	4.49
		%	91.55	1.41	7.04	100	
2	I like to spend a lot of energy to make my classes interesting.	F	51	5	15	71	3.82
		%	71.83	7.04	21.13	100	
3	We teachers can improve the quality of education if we are determined to do so.	F	55	5	11	71	3.99
		%	77.46	7.04	15.49	100	
4	I have the determination to improve quality of education in my instruction.	F	56	4	11	71	3.99
		%	78.87	5.64	15.49	100	
5	It is my responsibility to contribute to the improvement of quality of education	F	59	4	8	71	4.07
		%	83.1	5.64	11.27	100	
6	I always worry about the effectiveness of my instruction.	F	48	5	18	71	3.69
		%	67.6	7.04	25.35	100	
7	I feel disappointed when my students score low in exams.	F	57	2	12	71	4.01
		%	80.28	2.82	16.9	100	
8	Teaching is usually challenging and demands commitment.	F	62	3	6	71	4.32
		%	87.32	4.22	8.45	100	
9	Wasting time at work makes me feel uncomfortable.	F	38	4	29	71	3.18
		%	53.52	5.64	40.84	100	

As shown in Table 5(item 1) 65 (91.55%) of the respondents would like their students to learn more. Only one (1.41%) and five (7.04%) of the respondents responded 'undecided' and 'disagree' respectively. This shows that the majority of teachers want their students to learn more to reach their capacity. In relation to this Rubbins and Burrige (1994) believe that a positive attitude towards the students by teachers and the principal, highly committed teaching staff, high expectations and standards, and an emphasis up on high achievement in subject characterizes an effective school.

Regarding making classes attracting fifty one (71.83%) of the respondents spends a lot of energy to make their classes interesting. Whereas 5(7.04%) and 15(21.13%) of the respondents rated 'don't know' and 'disagree' respectively (see Table 5 item 2). This shows that more than two third of the teachers spend a lot of energy to make their instruction attractive. However, the data obtained through interview from instructional leaders, and students through group interview do not support the teachers' self- assessment. The witness given by Tsehay reads as "if you go to the classroom you will get teachers either giving note or reading and translating a text in to Amharic. That is all, nothing else."

Concerning teachers' self efficacy fifty five (77.46%) of the respondents have high self efficacy to improve the quality of education. Whereas 5(7.04%) and 11(15.49%) of the respondents rated 'don't know' and 'disagree' respectively (see Table 5 item 3). This indicates that majority of the teachers believe that they can improve the quality of education if they intend to do so. In line with this Nkinyangi (2004) suggested that teachers must be at the fore front of educational reform since the quality and effectiveness of an educational system ultimately depends on the quality and nature of the interaction between teachers and students.

Regarding their determination fifty six (78.87) of the respondents believe that they have determined to improve the quality of education. A small number of respondents (5.64) remain undecided. The remaining 11 (15.49%) of the respondents believe that they are not yet determined to improve the quality of education (see Table 5 item 4). Moreover, the response given to the open ended questions by the teachers themselves hinted that they (teachers) are not ready to bring tangible (concrete) change for the time being.

Although the majority of the teachers feel determined, the data obtained from interview and group interview does not support this assessment. The following descriptions about teachers given by their colleagues and immediate heads indicate that teachers lack the determination or commitment to improve quality of education.

They live in it because they don't have any where to go. They don't like to stay in the school compound. They see it (teaching) as a spring board to other offices.

/Tsehay 16.07.2002 E.C/

They try to associate everything to one thing (politics) and push to a corner as if it doesn't concern them. Whatever reforms and directions come they are very quick to reject it.

/Getachew 30.07.2002 E.C/.

In the group interview, students explained that the teachers do not have trust on students' ability to learn. One student described as "teachers do not accept our questions and they do not give appropriate answer for our questions. Once they (teachers) have concluded that we can't show any improvement, they (teachers) don't want to waste their time and energy."/Students in H.school/.

In another study a similar view was reported by Secondary school teachers as follows:

This is not our business. How can we save people who are already dead? They died not here but there in primary school and come to us for grave... Even if we feel responsible to help such academically deficient students there is nothing we help by way of remediation unless we re-teach the content of primary curriculum as a whole./Teachers from Oromia, in Solomon,2008/.

In relation to this, Kushman (1992) in Dannetta (2009) states that commitment to student learning includes teacher dedication to helping students learn regardless of their academic difficulties or social background.

Teachers implied in the open-ended question that they are not ready to improve the quality of education in their respective schools. One of the respondents suggested: *“unless the living conditions of teachers are improved; and until the government listens to what teachers say, the quality of education will not be improved under the existing situation.”*

/ A teacher from G. school in the open-ended items/.

Regarding responsibility majority (83.1%) of the respondents recognize that they have responsibility to contribute to the improvement of quality of education. Whereas 4(5.64%) of the respondents fail to decide, the remaining 8(11.27%) of the respondents believe that they don't have responsibility to make contribution towards the improvement of quality of education (see Table 5 item 5).

As it is depicted in Table 5 (item 6) majorities 48(67.6%) of the respondents believe that they are always sensitive to the effectiveness of their instruction. While 5(7.04%) of the respondents were not able to make decision on the idea. A quarter (25.35%) of the respondents does not worry about the effectiveness of their instruction. This significant disagreement itself indicates a problem to our education which should not be ignored.

Although majority of the teachers expressed their concern to the effectiveness of their instruction, the data from interview and group interview shows that their concern is ideal. Students in the group interview reported as follows: “when we ask questions, most teachers tell us to look for answer from the text. They [teachers] say you will get it in the book. Look at it. They [teachers] do not give answer for our question” /students from H.school/

As shown in Table 5 (item 7) majority of the respondents expressed that they don't want to see their students scoring low in exams. Very small respondents (2.82%) remain neutral. The remaining 12(16.9%) of the respondents disclosed that they don't bother if students score low. This shows that most of the teachers want their students to score high.

Concerning the nature of teaching majority (87.32) of the respondents are aware that teaching is a challenging job and it needs commitment. Three (4.22%) of the respondents do not make decision. The remaining 6(8.45%) of the respondents do not view teaching as a challenging job and as such it needs commitment. From this we can infer that most of the teachers understand the challenging nature of teaching (see Table 5 item 8). In relation to Elliot & Crosswell (n.d.) assert that teaching is a complex and demanding work and there is a daily need for teachers to fully engaged in that work with not only their heads but also their hearts. Similarly, in Crosswell and Elliott (nd.) one teacher reported that ‘because teaching has become such a demanding and stressful job she couldn't see “how you could do it unless you were really committed.” Moreover, Chan (2005) asserts that the quality of teaching is not only governed by the qualification, knowledge and skill competence of teachers but also their enthusiasm, dedication and commitment in teaching.

Regarding the use of time a slight majority (53.52%) of the respondents expressed that they are not comfortable in wasting time at work. A small number (5.64%) of the respondents prefer not to decide. A very significant number (40.84%) of the respondents do not mind wasting time at work (see Table 5item 9). This implies that there is problem of both time concept and effective use of it. In relation to this in the interview, Mesfine had the following:

Last year some teachers miss class very often. We used to deduct from their salary for the wasted periods. This year, the new principal tried to follow another approach to minimize the problem and restrained from deducting from salary. We were expecting teachers to strictly use their classes. Unfortunately, nothing has been changed. Periods have been wasted. Now, we are deducting from their salary for the wasted classes. This doesn't solve the problem. What is more we are reconsidering serious disciplinary measures.

/Mesfine 08.08.2002 E.C/

This shows that there are teachers who do not exert minimum effort expected of them let alone investing extra time and effort. This has an implication to the challenge towards improving quality of education.

4.5. Teachers' Perceived role to Quality of Education

Instructional Leaders expressed their dissatisfaction with the current role of teachers in the teaching learning process for example Batu expressed in the following way:

There is one teacher. He comes 5 minutes before his period and asks teachers to finish before time this is because he has to attend the introduction of the plasma teacher. If he missed the introductory part, he cannot facilitate because he does not make preparation to the lesson in advance.

/Batu 16.07.2002 E.C/

Similarly Tsehay complained the weak role teachers are playing in the teaching learning process. He described as:

I do not know what could be done. Unless the current attitude of teachers is changed, there will not be any substantial improvement in the teaching learning process. There is no

difference between the performance of teachers be it in the use of active learning methods, continuous assessment, tutorial sessions in televised lessons and none televised lesson. The same holds true with those subjects that have materials and equipments, and those which have shortage of materials. For example we have a complete science laboratory but teachers do not use it.

/Tsehay 16.07.2002 E.C/

This shows that teachers perceived roles to improve the quality of education are not at the expected level to instructional leaders.

Table 6- Teachers Perceived Role to Quality of Education

No	Item	Responses on rating scales					X
		F	A	U	D	T	
1	I set goals for myself and achieve them.	F	51	6	14	71	3.72
		%	71.83	8.45	19.72	100	
2	I utilize my full capacity in my job.	F	52	9	10	71	3.94
		%	73.24	12.68	14.08	100	
3	I always strive to be effective in my instruction.	F	58	5	8	71	4
		%	81.69	7.04	11.27	100	
4	I re-teach a lesson whenever the result of continuous assessment is un satisfactory.	F	33	8	30	71	3.08
		%	46.48	11.27	42.25	100	
5	I shouldn't be blamed for poor quality of education in any way.	F	19	9	43	71	2.46
		%	26.76	12.68	60.56	100	
6	I frequently use continuous assessment techniques to check my students learning.	F	58	3	10	71	3.99
		%	81.69	4.23	14.08	100	
7	I as, a teacher, have contribution for the poor quality of our education.	F	38	10	23	71	3.28
		%	53.52	14.09	32.39	100	

Regarding goal setting majority (71.83%) of the respondents expressed that they set goals and achieve them. Six (8.45%) of the respondents do not decide. A significant number [14(19.72 %)] of the respondents responded that they do not set goals themselves (see Table 6 item 1). This shows that although majority of the respondents assert that they set

goals, one- fifth of the respondents do not set goals. Regarding goal setting, Leu, Livingstone& Wood (2002) expressed that among other things, setting high standard for self is one important attributes and characteristics of a professional.

Although majority of the teachers indicated that they set goals, the data obtained through interview do not support the above point. The instructional leaders explained that at the school level they set goals to improve students' achievement by average at 10% in each subject. From the first semester performance assessment they found that they failed to meet the goals they set. For example Mesfine had the following to say:

We intend to improve the students' achievement by 10% on average in every subject and we discussed it with the staff on September. But now the semester performance shows us we went back to negative.

/Mesfine ,08.08.2002 E.C/

Similarly Tsehay made the following remark: "*we set goals at the school level to improve achievement by average 10% on each subject but we don't see that to happen at least by the first semester*".

/Tsehay,16.07.2002 E.C/

The data in Table 6 (item 2) shows that, majority of the teachers disclosed that they utilize full capacity (effort) in their job (teaching). While 9(12.68%) of the respondents kept undecided; the remaining 10(14.08%) of the teachers responded that they are not utilizing their full capacity in teaching. From this we can understand that majority of the teachers utilize their full capacity in teaching. Nevertheless, the informants of the interview do not see teachers' utilization of maximum effort. They argue that teachers openly resist a single shift system. They do not want the usual two shifting system to go. This is because the single shift system will reduce their spare time.

It is only one school that has single shift system in this study. The informants of that school explained that teachers express their discontent with the single shift system.

As depicted in Table 6 (item 3) majority of the teachers (81.69) asserted that they try to be effective in their instruction. Only 5(7.04%) of the respondents made no decision. The remaining 8(11.27%) of the respondents disclosed that they don't try to be effective in their instruction. From this it is possible to conclude that most of the teachers struggle to be effective in their instruction. However, the data obtained from interview and group interview does not support the above conclusion. One informant reported that students rejected some of the teachers and prefers not to have teachers of such kind at all. Another informant reported the following:

I see neither the will nor the effort displayed by teachers to be effective. If there is any effort (at all) to be effective, where is the influence it produces? We conducted supervision and found nothing new. It is business as usual.

/Tsehay, 16.07.2002 E.C/

The data in Table 6 (item 4) indicates that 33(46.48%) of the respondents responded that they re-teach a lesson based on the result of continuous assessment. Whereas 8(11.27%) remains neutral. A considerably significant (42.25%) number of respondents disclosed that they don't re-teach a lesson irrespective of the results of continuous assessment. The later is supported by the data obtained through group interview. Participants in GI reported that most teachers give series tests and record the better score, but they don't make revision. They added that some teachers make discussion on the test questions (items). Similarly one instructional leader reported the following:

Teachers complain students' lack of basic skills or background knowledge but they don't try to fill some of the gaps. Tutorial sessions are nominal. They are not different from the regular program both in content and approach. Most teachers use tutorial program to cover the content. As a result most of the students do not like to attend tutorial classes.

/Mekonnen 18.07.2002 E.C/

The data shows that nineteen (26.76%) of the respondents believe that they do not accept any blame for poor quality of education. Some others (12.68%) of the teachers failed to decide. The majority (60.56%) of the teachers share the blame for poor quality of our education. The data shows that one quarter of the teachers believe that they don't have any contribution for poor quality of education. This indicates that most of the teachers take some responsibility (see Table 6 item 5).

As to the use of continuous assessment the majority (81.69%) of the teachers expressed that they use continuous assessment techniques frequently to check students' learning; 3 (4.23%) of the respondents failed to decide. The remaining 10(14.08%) of the teachers disclosed that they do not use different continuous assessment techniques (see Table 6 item 6). This shows that most teachers use different continuous assessment techniques.

Regarding their contribution thirty eight (53.52%) of the respondents admit some responsibility for their contribution for poor quality of our education. Whereas ten (14.09%) of the respondents make no decision. On the other hand, more than a quarter (32.39%) of the teachers keeps themselves away from having any contribution to the existence or occurrence of poor quality in our education (see Table 6 item 7). In relation to this Crowell and Elliot (n.d.) described that some of the

behaviors of committed teacher includes: being appropriately prepared for class, being a reflective practitioner and being accountable. From this we can understand that majority of the teachers do believe that they have contribution to the poor quality of our education. Unfortunately, twenty three (32.39%) of the respondents do not believe that they have their own contribution. This shows that a considerable number of teachers lack accountability.

4.6. Factors that Affect Teacher Commitment

Teachers were asked to list the factors which affect their commitment in the open ended questions. They have listed several factors .The first and most frequently mentioned factor is low salary and lack of incentives. One of the respondents described their lives as: “we are living at the bottom line of the living standard of the public. Who cares for us and we can’t do anything either”. / Ahmed, 08.08.2002 E.C/

The second major problem reported is lack of respect to teachers and their profession by the society and the government. Teachers are especially anxious about the societal value given to teachers. One of the interviewees described the situation in the following way:

When the farmers [parents] meet us they used to ask us “አስተማሪነህ ወይስ የመንግስት ሰራተኛ” (are you a teacher or government worker?) as they consider teachers inferior to other government employees. They also have low expectation to teaching. Their initial belief was that the need for education is to lead better life. However, when they compare the life of teachers and the life of those ‘uneducated people’ in their surrounding, they come to conclude that sending their children to school is not as such essential.

/Kassaw, 08.08.2002 E.C /

Another factor mentioned by teachers is lack of good governance both in the school and at the woreda level. They complain that there is unnecessary interference by woreda heads. They also expressed that school heads are not fair and just. However respondents of one sample school praised the school leadership as a positive development.

Furthermore, teachers feel that they are denied of their right to make decision on issues that affect them. They complain that they are neither consulted nor oriented when new reforms are initiated. Rather (they say) "we are instructed to implement." For example one informant expressed his view as: "Even they don't ask us what we lack and we need. They don't make need assessment and pilot study either. They simply threaten teachers a consequence if we do not implement what they bring to us."

/Sisay,01.08.2002 E.C/

Similar factors were reported by different researchers. A study on "Valuing Teachers' Motivation and Perceptions on their Profession in Ethiopia" by Sarton, Lalla - Maharajh and Parsons (2009:468) reported the following: "The most important three issues that affect teachers motivations were, that teachers salaries were in adequate, that respect and status of teachers throughout society were low, and that management and leadership were considered poor."

Another study-Study of Teacher Utilization in the Regions of Ethiopia (STURE) reported that:

Teachers spoke most often about the following: (i) their perception that there was lack of respect for them at all levels- the students, the community, and the administration;(ii) governance and poor administration, especially at the woreda level; (iii) grievances about salary, both in terms of salary scales and the extent to which these were not implemented correctly or efficiently.

/STURE in Sarton, Lalla-Maharajh and Parsons, 2009:471/

The other major factor mentioned by teachers and instructional leaders is low motivation and lack of background knowledge of students. Teachers complained students not showing any interest to their learning and not acquiring basic skills in the lower grades. Petty (1998) asserts that motivation is regarded by experienced and inexperienced teachers alike as a prerequisites for effective learning, the greatest challenge that many teachers face is to make their students want to learn. He further suggested that if students do not want to learn, their learning efficiency will be so low that they may learn virtually nothing. He also advised that “if you know how to motivate students, you can hugely increase their learning rate.”

Table 7. Anticipated Factors that Affect Teacher Commitment

No	Item	Responses on rating scales					X
			A	U	D	T	
1	Students show low motivation for learning.	F	59	4	8	71	4.28
		%	83.1	5.63	11.27	100	
2	Teachers are autonomous in the teaching learning process.	F	39	7	25	71	3.19
		%	54.93	9.86	35.21	100	
3	There is favorable working condition in the school.	F	23	6	42	71	2.56
		%	32.39	8.45	59.16	100	
4	There are opportunities for professional development in the school.	F	23	8	40	71	2.63
		%	32.39	11.27	56.34	100	
5	Changes in the curriculum and related areas are very rapid.	F	27	9	35	71	2.9
		%	38.03	12.68	49.29	100	
6	Teachers do not get appropriate support from school leadership.	F	35	5	31	71	3.15
		%	49.3	7.04	43.66	100	

Fifty nine (83.1%) of the respondents agree that students motivation for learning is low. While four (5.63%) remains neutral, eight (11.27%) of the respondents insist that students' motivation for learning is not low. From

this we can understand that majority of the teachers are not happy with their students' motivation for learning. Moreover, the informants of the interview also reported that one of the major complain reflected by teaches is low motivation of students for learning. This view was also supported by participant students of the group interview, although their blame hit back to teachers themselves.

Thirty nine (54.93%) of the respondents believe that teachers are autonomous in the teaching learning process. While 7(9.86%) remains undecided a significant number (35.21%) of the respondents do not feel comfortable and are in disagreement with the statement (see Table 7 item 2). This shows that majority of the teachers believe that they are autonomous in their profession. However, more than a quarter of the teachers don't believe that they are autonomous. Again this issue should be given due attention, if we need to mobilize every teacher in each school in a good sprit.

Twenty three (32.39%) of the respondents believe that there is favorable working condition in their schools. Some (8.45%) of the respondents responded 'don't know'. Most 42(59.16%) of the respondents indicated their disagreement (see Table 7 item 3). This indicates that majority of the teachers believe that there is no favorable working conditions in their respective schools.

Twenty three (32.39%) agree that there is opportunity for professional development at the school. While 8(11.27%) remains neutral, 40(56.34%) of the respondents do not see any opportunity for professional development at the school level (see Table 7 item 4). From this, one can infer that majority of the teachers do not recognize one of the governments initiative (CPD) which is aimed at improving the quality of education. In relation to this Rosenholtz (1989) asserts that there is a

perception among teachers that opportunities for professional growth influenced teachers' commitment to student learning.

Twenty seven (38.03%) of the respondents responded that changes in curriculum are very rapid. Whereas 9(12.68%) and 35(43.29%) rated 'don't know' and 'disagree' respectively (see Table 7 item 5). This implies that majority of the teachers don't see potential problem due to changes made in the curriculum area. This may be a positive view of teachers. However, a very significant number of teachers don't seem comfortable with the undergoing changes. This kind of feeling will have a negative impact on the teaching learning process and the implementation of newly introduced changes.

In relation to this Evans (1996) argues that in schools that have supposedly under taken reform, it is easy to find teachers who have made only minor changes or none at all. He added that in schools everywhere; it is easy to find those who remain strongly opposed, even when reform aims to empower them.

As depicted in Table 7 (item 35) 35 (49.3%) of the respondents responded that teachers do not get appropriate support from school leadership. Five (7.04%) of the respondents remain neutral. The remaining 31 (43.66%) of the respondents expressed that teachers get appropriate support from the school leadership. This implies that nearly half of the respondents either don't get support from the school leadership or are not happy with the help they have received.

4.7 Teachers Attitude towards Quality Improvement

Reform Programs

The data obtained from interview affirm that most teachers are not in favor of the quality improvement (GEQIP) reforms. However, there is no

uniform opinion towards the components. While most teachers are against CPD (Continuous Professional Development), they show no opposition to SIP (School Improvement Program).

Regarding teachers attitude towards CPD, Getachew reported the following:

Teachers view CPD as a strategy placed by the government to keep teachers away from thinking other things (politics issues) by making them busy for something which is good for nothing. Even some of the teachers described CPD as 'continuous professional diseases.'

/Getachew,30.07.2002 E.C/

Teachers and instructional leaders have noticed some limitations in the government's approach. They complain that teachers have been obliged to go through CPD in order to promote in the career structure. No effort was made to convince teachers about the merits of CPD.

Both teachers and instructional leaders agree in that the reform programs in general and CPD in particular are "not contextualized." One of the respondents explained his belief in the following way: "The government copied it from some were and imposed on teachers. It (the government) always follows 'one size fit all' approach. For example CPD is not appropriate for science teachers."

/Batu,17.07.2002 E.C/

From this we can draw at least two shortcomings of the implementation process of the reforms. First teachers were not consulted about their needs and deficiencies .Secondly, substantive orientations were not given for teachers to increase their awareness of the why of the reforms. In relation to this Evans (1996) warns that school reforms falls a fierce paradox: its essential agents of change teachers are also its targets and some times, its foes.

Regarding the implementation of TDP the respondents have some reservation. In the in-service program they complain unfair practices in giving a chance for upgrading. The opportunity for post graduate study is almost negligible.

Teachers view the pre-service program as devastating to the profession. This is what one of the teachers had to say: "teaching is now becomes a profession that does not require that much competency. Today low achievers in the grade 12 national examination have an easy access to join it."

/Kassaw,08.08.2002 E.C/

Contrary to CPD and TDP teachers showed positive attitude towards SIP and Civic and Ethical education programs. One of the instructional leaders reported as: "teachers have accepted SIP and Civic and ethical education. Especially in the civic and ethical education we began to see some positive changes." Similarly, another respondent described his satisfaction in the following way: "regarding SIP we are implementing well. Teachers show a good gesture. We arranged teachers in to four groups and assigned them to each component of SIP."

/Alemu,05.08.2002 E.C/

Generally, the above discussions indicate that most teachers have negative attitude towards many reform initiatives although the degree of resistance varies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess the teachers' perception and commitment towards the improvement of quality of education in the general secondary schools of Dessie Town.

The issue of quality of education has been the concern of all the stakeholders. Various reforms were and have been initiated in the name of "improving quality of education." In spite of these efforts it seems that no sign of getting out of the situation has been yet observed. Accordingly, public frustration has been observed in various occasions. This was backed by the evaluative researches conducted by MoE especially on the national learning assessment of students' achievement in grades 4 and 8, which shows that quality is being deteriorated in steady of showing improvement. In addition, the data obtained from south Wollo Education Department revealed that 79.4% and 84.8% of students failed in grade 10 national exams in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Therefore, it is necessary to investigate as to why we are not able to improve the quality of education while we have been implementing different reforms. To this end the study was aimed at assessing teachers' perception and commitment to improve quality of education in the secondary schools.

To address the issue the study raised the following basic questions.

1. How do teachers perceive quality of education in the secondary schools?
2. Are they committed to improve quality of education?
3. How do teachers understand their role in improving quality?

4. What is the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement reform programs?
5. What are the major factors that affect teachers' commitment to improve quality of education?

In dealing with the basic questions related literature were reviewed, prominent stakeholders who have strong relationship in the implementation of quality of education: teachers, instructional leaders (vice-principals and unit leaders) and students were used as source of information.

In order to collect relevant information for the study multiple methods of data collection (questionnaire, interview and group interview) were used. The questionnaires were distributed to 74 teachers. The data analysis was made based on the correctly filled and returned 71 papers.

In addition information was obtained through interview from four vice principals and eight unit leaders. Moreover, group interview were conducted with students. Accordingly a total of 4 group interviews (one from each school) were held. One group consists of 6-8 students. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to analyze the data. The data obtained from interview were analyzed qualitatively together with the data obtained from questionnaire.

Based on the analyzed data the study came up with the following findings:

1. Secondary school teachers in the sample schools perceive or conceptualize quality of education in terms of factors related to input, process and output factors. They emphasize the development of citizens with all rounded personality which is the

goal of every educational endeavor. This finding was consistent with Amare et al. (2006).

2. The commitment of teachers in the sample schools was found to be low. Teachers themselves expressed that they are not motivated and not as such concerned about improving the quality of education. Moreover, the instructional leaders reported that it is hard to find a significant number of committed teachers in their schools.
3. Teachers place themselves as key element as a way to improve the quality of education. They believe that the key to improve the quality of education is in their hands although they feel that they are dispossessed their roles by the government.
4. The data revealed that teachers have negative attitude towards most of the quality improvement program components. While teachers express their discontent to CPD in public they have shown no objection to the school improvement program. The reasons behind such attitude were lack of appropriateness of the program and also lack of orientation about the need and objective of the reforms.
5. Teachers show opposition to a single shift arrangement.
6. The major factors that affect teachers' commitment were: low salary, lack of incentives, students low motivation, lack of respect from the society, unnecessary interference from local politicians, lack of good governance and lack of opportunity for professional growth.
7. Teachers lost sense of ownership of their profession where they are supposed to be front runner. This mainly attributed to the 'failure of the government' not to involve teachers in different reforms.
8. Most teachers usually apply the traditional (teacher-centered) method in their instruction.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the major findings presented above the following conclusions were made.

Teachers have immense roles to play in improving the quality of education. Moreover, both the implementation and success of educational reforms depend on teachers' effort. The way teacher perceive things affects the effort they employ. As Pratt (1980) argued a new education program can succeed only if teachers accept it. In this study teachers have good understandings of issues of quality of education. However, there is a gap between what teachers conceptualized and the actual practice in the schools. Therefore, there is a need to bridge the gap between conception and practice.

Teacher commitment is very crucial for the effectiveness of any educational innovations. According to Rosenholtz (1989) in the context of school performance, the contributions of effort, loyalty, and involvement from teachers are the most vital resource required. In this study, the commitments of teachers were found to be low. In addition, teachers seem to have little empathy to the quality improvement programs. The supply of necessary materials to schools and introducing appropriate reforms could be a right first step to be accomplished by the government. But this is only a beginning to the end. Most importantly, winning the hearts and minds of teachers need to be emphasized. This leads to raise teacher commitment. Otherwise, acquisition and counter acquisition will not solve much of the problems. Who has the monopoly to decide everything regarding education? Who should take the lions share in improving the quality of education; who should initiate change (reform) remain major questions to be dealt with in further study.

5.3 Recommendations

In order to improve teachers' commitment and raise the quality of student learning, the following actions need to be taken by the government (MOE) and administrative organs at each level.

1. Improving the living condition of teachers is helpful to raise their commitment but it requires budget. However, under decentralized system of administration there are possibilities of giving incentives for teachers (like transportation fee, house allowance, plot of land to build house) depending on local context and potentials.
2. Promote good governance both in the school and at Woreda level: assigning competent school leaders; respect the autonomy of teachers; ensure minimum learning competences of students in each level; fair access to further education; encourage those teachers who work hard irrespective of their personal affiliation; revisiting the reform practices could be useful to draw lessons for giving remedy and avoiding future failures.
3. Helping teachers develop sense of ownership to education: involving teachers in issues that affect them and education; teachers need to be encouraged to freely figure out solutions for the problems they and their students are facing; consult teachers whenever reforms are initiated and conduct pilot study before full implementation; and include feedbacks given by teachers; empower teacher association at every level to play the leading role in tackling educational problems; provide opportunities for professional development for teachers.
4. Teachers should also know that their personal safety and gains depend on the improvement they bring in the education system. Therefore, they have to take the initiatives to improve the quality of education by achieving the most out of the reforms.

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Appendix A
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional
Development studies
Questionnaire for Teac-s

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about teacher's perception and commitment to quality of education. The information obtained through this questionnaire will be used only for research purpose. So you are kindly requested to give genuine answer for the questions given here under.

Thank you in advance!

Part I. Personal information

Name of School _____

Qualification: A. Diploma B. Degree C. Masters

Experience A. 0-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 16-20 E. above 20

Part II

Directions: Listed below are a number of items that describe how a teacher might feel about or react to various aspects of his/her job. Please use the scale to the right of each item to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item.

SA-Strongly agree A- Agree UD- Undecided D- Disagree SD- Strongly Disagree

No	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD
	Conceptions of quality					
1	Quality of education actively seeks out all learners and assist them to learn using a wide range of modalities					
2	What the learner brings to her/his own learning and to that of a group is extremely important					
3	The issue of quality is not in teachers, rather in the hands of others					

4	Quality education process uses learner centered teaching and learning method					
5	The quality of task has a strong relationship with the quality of classroom practice					
6	I feel that co-curricular activities are less important in the teaching learning process					
	Understanding/perception of quality					
7	I believe that teachers are the most determinant element to improve quality of education.					
8	I believe that material resources are determinant element to improve quality of education.					
9	Teachers can yield quality education even in poor school conditions.					
10	I believe that I can improve quality of education in my immediate environment.					
11	I have great expectation to students learning.					
12	Positive aspects about teaching outweigh the negative aspects.					
13	I am personally responsible for part of the education of every students I teach					
	Teacher commitment to quality					
14	I would like my students to learn more					
15	I like to spend a lot of energy to make my classes interesting					
16	We teachers can improve the quality of education if we are determined to do so					
17	I have the determination to improve quality of education in my instruction					
18	It is my responsibility to contribute to the improvement of quality of education					

19	I always worry about the effectiveness of my instruction					
20	I feel disappointed when my students score low in exams					
21	Teaching is usually challenging and demand commitment					
22	Wasting time at work makes me feel uncomfortable					
	Teachers Perceived Role					
23	I set goals for myself and achieve them					
24	I utilize my full capacity in my job					
25	I always strive to be effective in my instruction					
26	I re-teach a lesson whenever the result of continuous assessment is un satisfactory					
27	I shouldn't be blamed for poor quality of education in any way					
28	I frequently use continuous assessment techniques to cheek my students learning					
29	I as, a teacher, have contribution for the poor quality of our education					
	Anticipated Factors that affect Teacher Commitment					
30	Students show low motivation for learning					
31	Teachers are autonomous in the teaching learning process					
32	There is favorable working condition in the school					
33	There is opportunities for professional development in the school					
34	Changes in the curriculum and related areas are very rapid.					
35	Teachers do not get appropriate support from school leadership					

Part III. Give your Comments for the following questions

1. How do you describe quality education?

2. When do we say there is quality of education?

3. What are the factors that affect teacher commitment?

4. What is your view about the need and appropriateness of the general education quality improvement reforms? (Please list advantages and limitations).

5. How do you evaluate the current status of the quality of education?
What do you suggest to improve it?

Appendix B
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional
Development studies

Questions for Interview with Instructional Leaders

1. What is your Assessment of Teachers level of Commitment in your school?
2. Do Teachers have sense of ownership to the educational issues?
3. What factors affect Teachers Commitment?
4. How do teachers respond to the reforms in GEQIP?

Appendix C

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional

Development studies

Questions for Group Interview

1. How do you describe teachers' commitment to help students?
2. How do you express teachers' methodology they use in class?
3. Do you think that you are benefited from tutorial programs?
4. What is your assessment of teachers concern to the improvement of students learning?

Appendix D

Reliability Result of the Pilot Study

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	95.2
	Exclude d(a)	1	4.8
	Total	21	100.0

a Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.705	.765	35

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Q1	4.4500	.75915	20
Q2	4.0500	.88704	20
Q3	3.1500	1.38697	20
Q4	3.7500	1.06992	20
Q5	4.2000	.95145	20
Q6	3.4000	1.18766	20
Q7	4.2000	.95145	20
Q8	4.3000	.73270	20
Q9	3.1500	1.38697	20
Q10	4.3500	.81273	20
Q11	4.3000	.80131	20
Q12	4.4500	.75915	20
Q13	4.6500	.48936	20
Q14	2.4500	1.09904	20
Q15	4.3000	.80131	20
Q16	4.4500	.60481	20
Q17	4.3000	.80131	20
Q18	4.1500	.81273	20
Q19	4.2500	1.06992	20
Q20	4.4000	.75394	20
Q21	3.6500	1.53125	20
Q22	4.1000	1.02084	20
Q23	4.0500	.99868	20
Q24	4.4000	.50262	20
Q25	3.6000	1.18766	20
Q26	2.7000	1.38031	20
Q27	4.1000	.91191	20
Q28	3.8500	1.08942	20
Q29	2.7000	1.26074	20
Q30	4.2500	1.06992	20
Q31	3.5500	1.23438	20
Q32	3.0500	1.05006	20
Q33	1.9500	.99868	20
Q34	2.5000	1.39548	20
Q35	3.1000	1.44732	20

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.779	1.950	4.650	2.700	2.385	.491	35
Item Variances	1.081	.239	2.345	2.105	9.791	.303	35
Inter-Item Covariances	.069	-.874	1.924	2.797	-2.202	.078	35
Inter-Item Correlations	.085	-.587	1.000	1.587	-1.703	.069	35

The covariance matrix is calculated and used in the analysis.

Declaration

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and that all sources of the materials used for the thesis have been properly acknowledged.

Name: Mohammed Omer

Date: 15/06/10

Signature: 

This thesis has been submitted for examination by my approval as a university advisor.

Name of the advisor: Dr, Ambissa Kenea

Signature _____

Date of submission _____



Declaration

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and that all sources of the materials used for the thesis have been properly acknowledged.

Name: Mohammed Omer _____

Date: 15/06/10 _____

Signature:  _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination by my approval as a university advisor.

Name of the advisor: Dr, Ambissa Kenea

Signature _____

Date of submission _____

