

THE ROLE OF ACTION RESEARCH IN ENHANCING QUALITY
OF EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SOME SELECTED SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN CITY GOVERNMENT OF ADDIS ABABA

BY

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*Addis Ababa
University*

(Since 1950)



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY, THE SCHOOL
OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

JUNE 2010

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Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to praise God the Almighty for His help in each steps of my life and in this study.

Next, I express my sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor, Ato Firdissa Jebessa for his tolerance, unreserved guidance and constructive advice.

My deepest thanks and appreciation goes to my friends Ato Dejene Ermeno, the owner of Pyramid Construction Company for his financial support, and Ato Samuel Hailu for his provision of a computer.

Let my gratitude reach all the providers of data that spent their time to supply me with the necessary information.

Finally, I express my great indebtedness to my wife, W/ro Zerfinesh Abera who has shouldered all the burdens and responsibilities of our family and rendered me continuous support and encouragement during my study.

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Questionnaire to be filled by CGAAEB Secondary School Teachers.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect relevant information from CGAA Secondary School teachers about enhancing quality of education through action research that enables to diagnose the facilitation and/or hindering condition in CGAAEB. For this reason, your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is undoubtedly valuable for the study. Since your response will be kept confidentially, please feel to answer all questions genuinely as much as possible.

Thank you!

Direction:

- a. No need of writing your name
- b. Please try to answer every question in accordance with the instruction provided

Part I: General Information

1. Sex ----- age ----- 2. your educational background (Qualification) -----

3. Name of your school -----
4. Number of periods you are teaching ----- 5. Your years of
service in teaching -----

Part II

Instruction: please circle the letters of your choice

1. Have you ever taken research methodology course during your university/ college study?
2. If your answer for question number 1 is “Yes” how do you evaluate its usefulness of the training/couse in making you conduct educational research?
3. How often have you participated in any seminar workshops or in-service training to update your research skill? A. Frequently B. Sometimes
C. Rarely D. Never

4. If your answer for question number 3 is A or B, how do you evaluate its usefulness in making you conduct it practical research work (action research)?

A. Very useful B. Useful C. Not useful

5. How often have you read educational research books as well as research reports? A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

6. How often have you shared educational research related information with your colleagues?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

7. Have you ever conducted educational research to solve educational problem in your school? A. Yes B. No

8. If your answer for question number 7 is “No” what do/does hinder you from undertaking educational research? Please rate the degree of impact

	Item	Degree of Impact				
		Very High	High	Not decided	Very low	low
i	Lack of awareness about the contribution of action research for quality of education					
ii	Lack of knowledge and experience how to do research (research competence)					
iii	Lack of motivation or recognition for previous research work by local education governing bodies (principals, Sub-City Educational Officers)					
iv	Lack of financial support (incentives, reward and recommendation)					

v	Overload in teaching and in other committee activities					
vi	The absence of research culture in the school					
vii	Discouraging working conditions (like unsafe school environment)					
viii	Lack of research facilities (library reference, material research guide or model etc.)					

If any other, please specify -----

Instruction: the question number from 9-18 will be filled by teachers who have conducted action research individually or in collaboration since 2000/01 – 2008/09 G.C.

9. What were the major priority areas of your research work?

- A. School wide academic issue (students' achievement, school efficiency---)
- B. Specific classroom skills
- C. If any other, please specify -----

--

10. Please write the title of your action research works that you have done since 2000/01-2008/09 G.C. in this school.

11. Who does/do initiate you to conduct action research in your school? More than one answer is possible.

- A. The educational problem itself
- B. The school principal/ the school educational research committee
- C. SCEO/CGAAEB officers (supervisors, research coordinator etc)

D. SC/CGAAEB Teacher Association

E. If any other, please specify -----

12. Which of the following conditions contribute positively for your educational research work at school level? Please give rank from first

to eighth the following conditions according to their contribution to your research work.

A. The different courses you had taken during your university/ college study.

B. Research workshops, seminars, in-service training etc.

C. Your private reading of research reports and research guidelines for updating yourself

D. The school principal support/ feedback

E. The collaboration of your colleagues

F. SCEO officers (especially the supervisor, the educational research coordinator) support/ feedback

G. CGAAEB officers support

H. SCEO Teacher Association support

13. Have you developed action strategies in your research work and testing them by putting in to practice

A. Yes B. No

14. If your answer for question number 13 is “Yes” how do you evaluate in bringing the desired change or solution?

A. The problem was solved completely

B. Some improvement is observed

C. No improvement is observed

15. If your answer is “No” for question number 13, please mention the reasons, -----

16. Have the results of your research been disseminated to the targeted audience (teachers within and/or neighboring schools, students or others)?

17. If your answer for question number 16 is “Yes”, in what ways has been disseminated to the targeted audience?

A. In seminar discussion

B. In short leaflet (news letter)

C. In journal

D. If any other, Please specify -----

18. What kind of incentive (reward) did you get for your action research work? More than one answer is possible

A. Satisfaction by trying to solve the problem (the work itself)

B. Career Promotion

C. Letter of recognition

D. A&C E. If any other, please specify -----

19. How often does the principal lighten the workload for those teachers who conduct educational research?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

20. Is there any research coordinating committee and net work in your school?

A. Yes B. No

21. If your answer for question number 20 is “Yes” how do you evaluate its contribution in fostering educational research activities?

A. Very high B. High C. Low D. Very low

22. How often do your staffs discuss how to achieve goals like seeking ways of improving students’ achievement and its determinants

through educational research?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

23. How often does your school use research reports and findings in making decisions?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

24. How often do the educational officers (supervisors, educational research coordinators etc) participate in action research activities at you

school?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

25. How often does the school principal support action research activities in your school?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

26. How often does your school identify the causes of educational problems and seeking sometimes with action research?

A. Frequently B. Sometimes C. Rarely D. Never

Part III

Direction: Following are s

Statements that need your opinion about enhancing quality of education through action research. For each statement, please indicate your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick (X) mark on a rating from “1” to “5” key: 5. strongly agree 4. Agree 3. Undecided 2. Disagree 1. Strongly Disagree.

No	Items	Degree of Agreement and/or Disagreement				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Action research contributes little in solving practical educational problems					
2	Action research can improve students’ academic achievement					
3	Action research cannot develop positive teaching-learning atmosphere in school					
4	Action research can have positive contribution in strategy					
5	Action research can sustain or promote good shared school value					
6	Action research cannot build strong ties with parents and local community for involvement in school matters					
7	Action research empowers self-evaluation potential of quality of education					

8	Action research cannot create reliable path for quality of education					
9	Action research is helpful for planning and decision making					
10	Action research improves little teachers' professional development					
11	Teachers should seek solution for educational problems by action research					
12	Educational research should only be conducted by professional researchers, not by school teachers					
13	Educational research should only be conducted by higher institutions, not by secondary schools					
14	Teachers participation in educational research should be one criteria for career promotion					
15	In spite of limited resources and skill teachers may possess, they can conduct in their own level					
16	Teachers cannot improve their methods of teaching even if they involve in educational research					

Part IV

Please, feel free to add below any comment or views what you thin that have not been covered in this questionnaire concerning the contribution of action research for quality of education

1. What are the achievement of your school if any, in terms of production, utilization and dissemination of action research for educational quality -----

2. What are the challenges that hinder teachers' involve in action research in your school? -----

3. What do you suggest to overcome these challenges at school level? -----

4. To strengthen action research for quality of education, what do you think would be the role of principals, SCEO/CGAAEB officers (supervisors, educational research coordinators, Teachers Association, Parent Teacher Association)? -----

5. What measures need to be taken to get involved more teachers in undertaking action research? -----

Interview Guide

An interview guide to CGAASS principal

The main purpose of this interview is to gather information from secondary school principals in CGGAAEB about the practice of enhancing quality of education through action research and identifying change and prospects. Hence, your cooperation to answer question and share your experience and opinion is very important for the study. Since your response will be kept confidentially, please feel free to answer all questions frankly as far as possible.

Thank you!

Questions

1. How is the status of your school in conduction and utilizing educational research to enhance quality of education since 2000/01 G.C?
 - ✓ Is there a trend of identifying the causes of educational problems and seeking solutions with action research in your school?
 - ✓ Do you use research findings (report) in planning and in making decision?
2. Is there any research coordinating committee in your school? If there is how do you evaluate the contribution in fostering educational research activities?
3. How do you evaluate the teachers' perception in engaging action research in your school?
 - ✓ Are they reluctant or cooperative? If they are reluctant to engage in research, what are the causes and what measures have your school taken
4. Have you ever done (engaged) in educational research and reflective practices since 2000/01 G.C? If your answer to question number 4 is "Yes" what was your research priority area (school wide issues/ specific classroom skills/ others)?
Would you let me see it?
5. How often does your school prepare seminar and workshop to promote and update teachers' research competence?

- ✓ Is there any relevant in-service training with issue of quality of education and educational research? If there is, how do you evaluate it in enhancing quality of education?
- 6. How often do the school staffs discuss about the ways of improving students' achievement?
- 7. What are the achievements if any, of your school in terms of production, utilization and dissemination, the results of educational research at your school level?
- 8. Does your school have motivational strategy to remunerate best teacher researchers and disseminate best practices? If any, please mention
- 9. What challenges, if any, do you face to enhance the quality of your school through action research?
- 10. What measures need to be taken to improve or to tackle these challenges?

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate
Institute Educational Research

Interview

An interview guide to SCEO.CGAAEB Officers and TA Chairperson in CGAAEB

The main purpose of this interview is to gather information from secondary school principals in CGGAAEB about the practice of enhancing quality of education through action research and identifying change and prospects. Hence, your cooperation to answer question and share your experience and opinion is very important for the study. Since your response will be kept confidentially, please feel free to answer all questions frankly as far as possible.

Thank you!

Questions

1. How is the status of production, utilization and dissemination of educational research to enhance the quality of education of secondary schools in SC/CGAAEB?
 - ✓ How do you evaluate the trend of action research practices of teachers in secondary school since 20000?
 - ✓ Have you or your SC/CGAAEB ever done educational research on secondary schools? If you have conducted, what was the priority area of your research work? Can you mention your major findings?
 - ✓ Have you observed some improvements after you have suggested or recommended?
 - ✓ Would you let me see the research paper? How do you evaluate the trends of your SC/CGAAEB secondary schools in identifying the causes of educational problems and seeking solutions using educational research?

2. How do you evaluate the secondary teachers' perception in engaging action research?
 - ✓ Have you tried to identify secondary school teachers need to have to conduct action research?
 - ✓ How often do you organize in- service training, workshop or seminar to update teachers' skill and to empower those teachers who have lacked adequate research competence?

3. Is there a research coordinating unit in all SC or in CGAAEB? If there is, how do you evaluate its contribution in promoting educational research for making quality education?

4. How often do you/your office give surprising and/or inspecting service to secondary school?
 - ✓ How do you evaluate the conduciveness of secondary schools in terms of facilities to make quality of education through action research?

5. does your SC/CGAAEB office have motivational strategy to remunerate best teacher researchers and disseminate best practices to similar school at SC and/or CGAAEB level?
 - ✓ What techniques do you/your office use to select best teacher works?
 - ✓ In what ways does your office disseminate best practices and research findings (seminars style discussion, written report leaflets--)
6. What challenges do you observe in secondary schools in their involvement of educational research?
7. What measures need to be taken to improve or tackle these challenges?

Checklist for Document Analysis

The purpose of this checklist is to diagnose the main trend of CGAAEB

In identifying educational problems and seeking solution using educational research. For this reason, an attempt is made to weigh the relevance and significance of the research words and examine related reports and printed materials for enhancing quality of education

1. Are the issues of quality of education (students' achievement, school efficiency school wide goal etc) presence in the action research works?
2. Which areas of quality of education were given the most attention by the teacher research works (school level/classroom. officers)?
3. Has the school identified school wide priority area and documented with respect to monitoring students' progress?
 - ✓ What have the students achievement record looked like since 2000?
4. Are priorities of research works aligned with the central goal of the school?

5. In what way has the research works been disseminated to targeted audience?
6. Has the research work been done in privately in collaboration?

General information

1. Name of school -----
2. Number of teachers M ----- F ----- T -----
3. Qualification MA M ----- F ----- T -----
 BA/BSc M ----- F ----- T -----
 Diploma M ----- F ----- T -----
 Others M ----- F ----- T -----
4. Average teachers teaching load per week -----
5. Teacher pupil ratio -----
6. School performance in terms of students achievement in National examination

Year	Grade				
	10 th passed >2: 00 in percent		T	12 th passed > 2:00 in percent	
	M	F		M	F
2000/01	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
2002/03	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
2003/04	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
2004/05	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
2005/06	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

2006/07	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----				
2007/08	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----				
2008/09	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----				

7. Educational research production and/or utilization

Year	Number of research works	
Major issues		
2000/01	-----	-----

2001/02	-----	-----

2002/03	-----	-----

2003/04	-----	-----

2004/05	-----	-----

2005/06	-----	-----

2006/07	-----	-----

2007/08	-----	-----

2008/09	-----	-----

FGD Guideline

The purpose of this FGD interview is to explore in depth the key themes and issues derived from the questionnaire with some school educational research committees below are questions that seek the participants view and their schools practice in terms of using educational research for quality of education

1. What do you think the need for action research to enhance quality of education?
2. How do you evaluate the contribution of in-service training workshops and seminars, if any, to promote educational research in your school?
3. How do you see teachers' commitment to participate in action research and related activities in your school?
4. How do the principal and educational officers, like supervisors, research coordinators and teacher Association involve in educational research activities?
 - ✓ Do they themselves engage in conducting research and reflecting practices?
5. Do you think your school educational research activity is effective?
 - ✓ Have the understandings gained from research been tested through practice?
 - ✓ Does your school use research reports, finding and conclusions in making decision and planning?
6. To what extent is an action research finding being disseminated to stakeholders in your school, SC and CGAAEB level?
 - In what way has it been disseminated (oral presentation, leaflet, etc)?
7. What kind of incentive (reward) has been given to teacher researchers in your school, SC and regional level? How do you evaluate?
8. How do you evaluate your school research facilities (research guide and model, reference books etc)?
9. What challenges do you face, if any, when you conduct and/or utilize research in your school?

10. In your opinion, what measures need to be taken to improve or to tackle these challenges?

የጥናታዊ ጽሑፎችን መገምገሚያ ቅጽ

የጽሑፉ ርዕስ -----

የጸሐፊው/ዎች ስም -----

ወረዳ ----- ት/ቤት -----

የሚገመገመው ባለሙያ ስም ----- ፊርማ ---

----- ቀን -----

መስፈርት	ከፍተኛ (3)	መካከለኛ(2)	ዝቅተኛ(1)
1. የጥናቱን ርዕስ በተመለከተ 1.1. የርዕሱ አቀራረብ/ቃላት አጠቃላይና ግልጽነት 1.2. አስፈላጊነት/ወቅተኛነት 1.3. ውስንነት 1.4. ችግሩ ጎልቶ እንደታይ የተደረገው ጥረት			
2. የቀረቡት ወሰኔታዊ ጥያቄዎች አቅጣጫ መጠቀም ብቃት			
3. የቀረበው ተዛማጅ ጽሑፎች 3.1. የተሟላ መሆኑ 3.2. በርዕሱ ዙሪያ የተሠራ መሆኑ			
4. ጥናቱን ሳይንሳዊ ለማድረግ የተደረገ ጥረት 4.1. የመረጃ ምንጮችን በሳይንሳዊ ዘዴ ለመወሰንና ለመምረጥ የተደረገ ጥረት			

4.2. በጥናቱ ውስጥ መግባት ያላቸው የመረጃ ምንጮች መጨመራቸው			
4.3. በጥናቱ ውስጥ መግባት የሌላቸው የመረጃ ምንጮች አለመጨመራቸው			
4.4. መረጃው የተሟላ መሆኑ			
5. መረጃ ትንተና			

የግብ መልስ መስጫ

ቁጥር -----

ቀን -----

ለ ----- ት/ቤት

ጉዳዩ፡- ጥናትና ምርምርን ይመለከታል

ከላይ በርዕሱ ተመለከተውን ጉዳይ በተመለከተ ከት/ቤታችሁ በ20000 ዓ/ም -----

----- በሚል ርዕስ በእነ አቶ/ወ ----- ተሠርቶ

የተለከውን የትናትና ምርምር ሥራ በወረዳ ግምገማ ኮሚቴ ታይቶ የተላከውን

አስተያየት በመስጠት ተልከላችኋል።

1. -----

2. -----

3. -----

4. -----

5. -----

6. -----

7. -----

8. -----

9. -----

10.-----

መሆኑን እንገልጻለን።

ከሰላምታ ጋር

ግልባጫ፤

ለት/ቤቱ ጥናትና ምርምር ኤክስፐርት

አ.አ.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Action research is defined differently by different educators. Its different conceptions, nevertheless, imply its roles to enhance the quality of education in general and that of teaching and learning in particular. Mills (2003) defines action research as any systematic investigation conducted by teachers, administrators, counselors or others with a vested interest in the teaching- learning process, for the purpose of gathering data how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how students learn. Action research is said to be a process of investigating a practical school or classroom condition in order to understand and improve the quality of action or instruction (Wallace, 1998; Hensen, 1996; McTaggart, 1997; Schmuck, 1997).

Action research shows practical approach in its very nature of pragmatic implications, for reflective inquiry in actual learning process to empower all participants in educational process to improve practices within educational experience (Hopkins, 1993).

Action research is very important for improving teaching learning activities in developing and evaluating participants' own practice. It enables to improve the quality of education. It also realizes the complex social situations to bring the practicing classroom teacher into the research process as the most effective person to identify problems and to find solution (McKernan, 1991).

As reflective practitioners the teachers can achieve greater capacity of the evaluative process by becoming systematically self-assessing together with external assessment processes (Zuber-Skerritt, 1982).

As a systematic approach of study, action research approach introduces improvement in teaching and learning. This activity can be practiced by using the teacher as dual role player of producer and user of educational theory. In this way action research generates knowledge and advances teaching-learning practice. The processes of action research activities are conducted by bringing theory and practice closer together (Carr and Kemmis, 1986).

The aforementioned accounts entail that action research has instrumental role for quality of education. Cognizant of this fact TGE/ETP (1994) have given prominent place for research. It indicates also that research is important component for educational quality improvement. The policy gave greater emphasis on research because it enhances education quality and contributes to the overall development of the society. Action research, as part of other research methods, is greatly needed to be practiced consistently in schools. Various educational institutions are supposed to facilitate action research as the trend of participatory approach to obtain quality of education as intended in general policy of the nation.

As indicated in MOE (2004) and TGE/ETP (1994), teachers in all levels have responsibility to conduct action research for the development of their academic profession and educational potential in enhancing the quality of education. According to MOE (1999) teachers are expected to perform research for their promotion. One of the criteria is conducting research for teachers to get any access for career and incentives that enable them.

To have general information about the setting, some indicators should be mentioned here as a background. The population of Addis Ababa currently under the new census is estimated to be 3 million in 2009 which grows of the rate of 2.1% per year. The capital has 10 Sub-Cities and 99 urban Kebeles where there are some rural farmers associations in the peripheral areas of the city. The economy of Addis Ababa mostly depends on industry, trade, etc. there are large and small-scale factories and numerous handicrafts and cottage industries which play a great role for the development of the city. Commerce and Tourism also play great role for the contribution to the city's economy.

Despite all the above facts, more and more arrival of population, growing urbanization and industrialization puts continuous pressure on the civic administration. Moreover, it is not uncommon to observe low economic conditions, minimum social services, object poverty, declining living standard, unemployment, poor health conditions, inadequate dwellings, etc. among the inhabitants of the city.

The education sector of the City is the responsibility of the Addis Ababa Education Bureau. Under the new plan of the bureau, there are three core work processes: Core work process of Teachers and Educational Leadership Development, Educational Quality Assurance, Curriculum Development and Teaching-learning. There are also five support work processes: Study, Plan and budgeting, Finance Administration; and Procurement, Audit, Human Resource, Communications and one college of teacher education, Kotebe College of Teacher Education. The above mentioned working processes and college are directly accountable to the Bureau.

In Addis Ababa at the end of Education Sector Development Program (ESDP III, 2009), there were 969 KGs, 693 Primaries, 154 Secondary Schools, 265 ABECs and Adult and non formal education centers. The access, participation/Coverage/, efficiency, quality and equity of education sector in the city administration is the most concentrated achievement.

Each Sub-City has education offices with various staffs with their respective secondary schools. All Sub-City education offices and secondary schools are homogeneous in their stratification and structural set up. According to CGAAEB Educational Abstract (2007/2008) there are 45 secondary schools in CGAAEB (34 are 9-10 and 11 are 11-12). Since the Sub-City, Schools and teachers are similar in their stratification and structure, Nefas Silk Lafto Sub-City Education Office and Three Government secondary schools were selected in random sampling technique. In Nefas Silk Lafto Sub-City there are 4 secondary schools and 255 teachers.

At the Sub-City level there are three core work processes: core work process of teachers and educational development, educational quality assurance, curriculum development and teaching- learning in all 10 Sub-City Education offices which directly control Kebele Education offices. Secondary schools and teacher training institutes in the Sub-City and consequently the Kebele Education Office directly controls the activities of KG, Primary and Alternative Basic Education Centers (ABEC)s. There are three school principals assigned also in school level to facilitate core work processes. Principal, two vice principals are responsible for administration, teacher development and students' affairs, and teaching- learning academic issues respectively (CGAAEB Annual report, 2009).

The study had been concentrated on Nefas Silk Lafto Sub-City secondary schools. There are 23 private and Government secondary schools in the Sub-City, however, this study is specifically concentrated on Government secondary schools.

To make action research practical at school level, City Government of Addis Ababa Education Bureau (CGAAEB) has assigned educational research experts in all ten Sub City Education Offices (SCEO). The major task of these experts is facilitating necessary conditions for conducting and utilizing educational research and disseminating best teacher research works in their Sub- Cities.

The expected indicators of the educational quality are students' performance in developing their active learning, teachers' professional development in obtaining potential of research, and productions of educational findings for the further improvement of the curriculum. According to the policy of the country and regulation of Education Bureau, this kind of experience is highly expected in various schools consistently for the implementation of quality of education.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

To enhance quality of education, action research should be conducted in schools practice of actual teaching-learning process. Adequate assessment should be made to motivate the teachers, school principals and other supportive staff members in order to conduct research that may contribute to implement quality of education. In order to enhance quality of education in the society, adequate attention must be paid to research activities.

The central focus of this study is to explore how to develop the important experience of teaching-learning process in schools for the contribution of quality of education through action research. For this the involvement of practitioners' is the core issue to solve educational problems by using local resources that actually occurring recurrently. This practice of schools is very essential to perpetuate quality of education.

The problem solving trend should be undertaken through action research at all levels of educational activities. The following four points substantiate the problem of the study area that focused on City Government of Addis Ababa Secondary Schools.

1. Exploring the research competence of teachers is needed in order to conduct action research adequately in CGAASS.
2. Assessing the role of action research is essential for the contribution of quality of education in CGAASS.
3. The trend of utilizing of action research results for activating teaching -learning process should be examined.
4. Inquiring the role of leadership is necessary to realize the facilitating conditions to conduct action research and utilize the results of action research for quality of education at all levels of CGAASS.

Thus, school related problems and need for quality education still exist in CGAAEB unsolved (in consistence students' achievement, high education wastage, students' disciplinary problems, students' and teachers' lateness and absenteeism, teachers' turnover etc.) are not yet systematically studied and solved. This study is needed to realize the current status of research activities in CGAASS to solve educational problems. To motivate teachers' research competence Ministry of Education set regulation for their promotion and career status (MOE, 1999).

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives are to:

1. Assess the levels of teachers' research competence in conducting action research for quality of education;
2. Identify the contribution of action research in enhancing quality of education;
3. Activate the schools to utilize action research production to develop problem-solving experience as central focus;
4. Contribute for reflective and self-evaluating of teachers and active learning situation for students obtaining knowledge;
5. Investigate leadership role in facilitating conditions for research activities and promoting action research results; and
6. Identify factors that affecting and/or facilitating action research activities in CGAASS.

1.4. Research Questions

1. To what extent are teachers competent in reflecting and self-evaluating in conducting action research to achieve adequate teaching-learning in CGAASS for quality of education?
2. How does the practice of action research identify educational problems and seeking solution in SCEO/CGAASS for enhancing quality of education?
3. What are the roles that leadership plays in providing facilitating conditions to conduct action research and utilize the results of action research for enhancing quality of education in CGAASS?

4. What conditions that affect and/or facilitate the practices and results of action for quality of education in CGAASS?
5. What measures need to be taken to ameliorate the challenges and effectuate consistently and adequately conducting action research in CGAASS?

1.5. Significant of the Study

Educational research, in general and action research in particular are vehicles to obtain quality of education. For lack of research trend, to most schools the reason of failure to achieve the intended goal. Still very little educational research works had been performed in the field of action research. Thus, this study gives important direction to many research works in various ways.

1. Since the study is informative and timely practitioners' especially, teachers and principals' role may contribute some practical insights that are quite valuable to make their schools successful and their profession progress through action research.
2. It leads education leaders to be able planners and decision-makers at various levels to notice the different factors (in school and out-of-school) that negatively or positively influence conducting and disseminating educational action research results.
3. It is also significant to put forward recommendations to sustain the best practices in school proper practice and to ameliorate the weaknesses for improving overall quality education through educational action research.
4. It may serve as a stepping stone for additional study in the area. It may also serve as a valuable source of literature on the subject study which strengthens the capacity of practitioners to conduct their own research on issues that matters them.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

It would be essential that to study the whole schools of the City Government of Addis Ababa and other parts of the country. However, a large scale study requires much resources, time, and human power. Therefore, the scope of this study was confined to some selected Government Secondary Schools in City Government of Addis Ababa Secondary Schools at Nefas Silk Lafto Sub-City, (one of the Sub Cities of the City Government), at three secondary schools in order to make the study manageable. This was randomly selected for the study to manage the research in a short time frame.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

It is impossible to be certain that the study can be free of limitations. One of the limitations that encountered in this research work was inadequacy of the indigenous literature works on the subject. Due to this, much of the literatures of this study had built on foreign- based experiences of making of effective educational quality. Most of the time the educational officers of SCEO, CGAAEB and principals were not available for necessary information in their offices due to several meetings. The researcher overcame this kind of limitation with continuous follow up and negotiation.

1.8. Definitions of Terms/ Phrases

1.8.1. Action Research: It is the combination of both action and research. A systematic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical and undertaken by participants in the inquiry.

1.8.2 Situational action research: is the method in action research concerned with diagnosing a problem encountered in a specific on-the-spot situation and different attempts to solve it.

1.8.3 Collaborative action research: is teams of researchers and practitioners need to work together with their diverse experiences that are put together to bring a refined effect.

1.8.4. Cyclic action research: is a similar step tending to recur in similar sequences. Planning, action, observation and reflection are the main steps that action research follows.

1.8.5. Participatory action research: is all people affected by the problem participate or take part in the research. In schools for instance, teachers, pupils, administrators, and parents take part in school action research.

1.8.6. Self-evaluative action research: is the process in action research continuous and evaluated within the situation. This makes the method to be flexible and adaptable.

1.8.7. Classroom-based Inquiry: It is known as action research, or classroom research in education. It is a better teaching situation for the teacher and a better learning situation for the students in the classroom. The research is carried out by the owner of the practice, the teacher.

1.8.8. Educational Research: “Educational research is a formal systematic application of scientific method to the study of educational problems” (Gray and Airasian 2009: In Befekadu, 2009). Educational research is aimed at improving the quality of education.

1.8.9. Professional Development: It is a process in the strategy for continued professional and personal development. Teachers who engaged in action research tend to develop professional development. Teachers improve their instructional profession through action research.

1.8.10. Teacher Development: It is equipping teachers in in-service courses, seminars and workshops to empower their professional improvement with the elements of curricular materials. Teachers need

different educational developments to enhance their activities in new technologies giving recent information to change their attitude towards the curriculum.

1.8.11. Teacher Researchers: All teaching should be based upon research and that research and curriculum development is the preserve of teachers. Action research enables teachers to learn from experience and become better at teaching through out their careers. This is an attempt of increasing practical knowledge of teachers to improve educational practices through self-evaluative investigation.

1.8.12. Triangulation: Method of making the research findings more reliable by collection and analyzing the data using more than one research method.

1.9. Organization of the Study

This study has five chapters. The first chapter of the study is introduction: containing the background, statement of the problems, objectives, research questions, significance, limitation and delimitation of the study.

The second chapter of the study is the reviewed of related literature, which contains the concept and historical existence of action research, types, characteristics/features, the role of teachers, the role of leadership, impeding factors to conduct action research, and contribution of action research. The third chapter is theoretical framework of the research methodology, research design, instruments of data collection and data analysis, while the fourth chapter deals with presentation and analysis.

The fifth chapter is a summary, conclusions and recommendations. This chapter focuses on the discovery of the research and possible solution for educational problems based on the results of the study.

CHAPTER TWO:

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Historical Existence and Concepts of Action Research

Authors such as Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), Zuber-Skerrit (1992), Holter and Schwartz-Barcott (1993) state that action research was originated by Kurt Lewin, American psychologist. As McKernan (1988, cited in McKernan 1991) action research has evolved as a method of inquiry of the literature indicates that root derivative of the scientific method refers back to the scientific investigations in education. McKernan (1988) above states that there is evidence of the use of action research by a number of social reformists prior to Lewin, such as Collier in 1945, Lippitt and Radke in 1946 and Corey in 1953.

Despite the obscured origins of action research, Kurt Lewin, in the mid 1940s constructed a theory of action research, which described action research as “proceeding in a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of planning, action and the evaluation of the result of action” (Kemmis and McTaggart 1990:8). Lewin argued that in order to “understand and change certain social practices, social scientists have to include practitioners from the real social world in all phases of inquiry” (McKernan 1991:10). This construction of action research theory by Lewin made action research a method of acceptable inquiry (McKernan, 1991:9).

The origin of action research practice in different disciplines has its essential historical background. Action research was first introduced as methodology in educational action research in 1950s (Corey, 1953). It has gained acceptance; mainly with the teacher quality improvement. At the same time, many leaders in the field have attempted to redefine

teaching as practice-centered in inquiry to redefine teachers as researchers (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Grossman, 2005; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1999). In response to this movement, pre-service teacher education methodology courses and experiences in both undergraduate and graduate professional programs help teachers with the result that new teachers are able to study and analyze classroom practice or plan for action or change (Prince, 2001; Valli, 2000).

McKay (1992) describes action research as a six-step cyclical process: (1) identifying an issue or problem to study; (2) gathering and reviewing related information; (3) developing a plan of action; (4) implementing the plan; (5) evaluating results; and (6) repeating the cycle with a revised problem or strategy derived from what was learned in the first cycle, until the question is answered.

As McCutcheon and Jung (1990:148) define action research: “A form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.” According to Kemmis and McTaggart, (1990:5): “Action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework.” In action research definitions there are four basic themes: empowerment of participants, collaboration through participation; acquisition of knowledge; and social change.

Furthermore, one of the definitions of action research as indicated by Hopkins (1995:10) clearly shows: “Action research is the systematic study of attempting to improve educational practice by groups of

participants by means of their own reflection upon the effects of those actions.”

These different opinions of various scholars enabled the technical and methodical aspects of action research to achieve educational quality development. Most educators realized that action research is as the educational base as self-reflective approach to share common features, and developing flexible and participatory decision-making. In its nature action research is to empower the participants develop collaboration through participation to acquire knowledge for change (Firdissa, 2009).

The conditions which are set out there as individually necessary and jointly sufficient for action research to exist are:

1. the project takes as its subject-matter a social practice, regarding it as a strategic action susceptible to improvement
2. the project proceeds through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting; observing and reflecting, with each of these activities being systematically and self-critically implemented and interrelated; and
3. the project involves those responsible for the practice in each of the moments of the activity, widening participation in the project gradually to include others affected by the practice and maintaining collaborative control of the process (Grundy and Kemmis 1981 cited in Grundy 1988:353).

Action research is surfaced as a methodology in response to the growing need for more relevance and practical knowledge in the social sciences. It bridged the gap between academic research and day-to-day applications (De Zeeuw, 2003). Traditionally existing practitioner-related fields in the health and social sciences, action research has acquired particular concentration in the field of education. Educators see it as a practical systematic research method to investigate their own teaching and their students' learning in and outside the classroom. There are different

movements that had philosophical as well as historical impacts on the development of action research especially in the field of education.

As Schon (1983) expressed, reflection-in-action is suitable to some research results of problem- solving in different complex situation. The competency to transfer knowledge from one context to another need to use analogical way to evaluate and develop the knowledge on the basis of that condition.

According to Schon (1983: 68f) reflection-in-action indicates that completely action can make one researcher understand more educational problems.

When someone reflects-in-action; he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and techniques, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to deliberation about means which depends on prior agreement about ends. He does not keep means and ends separate but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which must later convert to action. Because his experimentation is a kind of action implementation is built into his inquiry.

The main emphasis here is to maintain theoretical base of knowledge into practice. All research findings should indicate the way of practicing the new experience in order to solve problems in teaching learning process. Subsequently, action research has gained a significant foothold both within the realm of community-based and participatory action research, and as a form of practice-oriented to the improvement of educative encounters. In education, the history of action research can be situated with in broad and differing traditions in educational innovations (Boyd, 1957).

2.2. Types of Action research

Grundy (1988:353, as cited in Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988) discusses three modes of action research: technical, practical, and emancipatory. Similarly, Holter and Schwartz-Barcott (1993: 301) discuss three types of action research, that of a technical collaborative approach, a mutual collaborative approach and an enhancement approach.

2.2.1. Technical Action research

The goal of this type of action research is the testing of an intervention based on a pre-specified theoretical framework. The researcher is questioning whether the selected intervention can be applied in a practical setting (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993). The researcher acts as an outside expert who aims to gain the practitioner's interest in the research, and agreement to assist in the implementation of the intervention (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1998).

Furthermore, technical Action Research is based on experience and observation, is positivist and predictive, and tries to control human situations through rules based on empirical laws. The nature of the collaboration between the researcher and the practitioner is technical and facilitatory (Grundy, 1987).

2.2.2 Practical Action Research

This type of action research involves the researcher and practitioner coming together in order to identify potential problems, underlying causes and possible solutions or interventions. The researcher

encourages participation and self-reflection of the practitioner (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

The goal of practical action research understands teaching practice and solving immediate problems. It aims towards generating understanding, and focuses on human interpretation, interactive communication, deliberation, negotiation and detailed description (McKernan, 1991).

2.2.3. Emancipatory Action Research

This type of action research involves all participants equally with no hierarchy existing between the researcher and practitioner. The researcher aims to decrease the distance between the actual problems identified by the practitioner and the theory used to explain and resolve the problems. The researcher also facilitates reflective discussion with the practitioner to identify underlying problems and assumptions. This assists the researcher to become a collaborative member of the group (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

It is through the development of critique that the mediation of theory and practice is possible. Emancipated strategic action research follows from the disposition of critical intent. Critical intent is the disposition which motivates action and interaction at all stages of emancipatory action research and is particularly important in the development of the theoretical perspective which informs and underpins a project (Grundy, 1982). The central purpose of critical theory is emancipation, which enables people to take control and direction over their own lives (Hopkins, 1996). This type of educational Action Research should aim to be socially responsive, democratic, equitable, liberation and enhancing (Mills, 2003).

Generally, action research is an alternative social science research approach which aims to link theory and practice in solving practical problems for practitioners in the field.

2.3. Characteristics/Features of Action Research

There are a number of characteristics which distinguish action research from other forms of research. These include collaboration between researcher and practitioner, solution of practical problems, change in practice, theory development and publicizing the results of the inquiry (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993).

Action research exhibits its own unique features. Different authors attempted to express the characteristics/features of action research in different times from its context and setting point of view. Action research involves using some essential steps such as asking questions to identify a problem, deciding the data that to be collected; collecting and analyzing the data and describing the findings in a way to be used; and applying to solve a certain problem (Johnson, 2002).

To indicate, this general traditional research reality to relate with action research McKernan (1988:155) lists four important features of action research for clear explanation against fundamental or traditional definition of research:

1. It assists participants in gaining and increasing their own understanding of personally experienced educational or curriculum problem.
2. Action research as opposed to fundamental research focuses on problems of immediate concern.
3. Action research is geared toward practical short-term solution thus; it is a form of operational or applied research.

4. Action research encourages (though it does not have to be collaborative) collaboration of a number of participants on an equal footing. It is for equality of simply in engaging of participants in a cooperative partnership, not research enterprise.

The main concern of educational action research is to solve problems that occur in teaching-learning process. The feature of action research is focused on practical way of solving educational problems immediately.

Action research is based on concrete problems in a school situation. It does not attempt to study out of school environment and from the regular day activities and problems. Action research studies the problem as it arises in the classroom with primary objective of improving instruction. The outcomes of the action research are based on the behavioral change that the researcher benefits and the teacher participate in the research and improve their practice are positive outcomes (McKernan, 1991).

On the other hand, action research depends on interaction between individuals and groups for flowing ideas and application of solving problems. The participants as part of research team come up with idea that concerns with practical problems. It generalizes the educational problems for only specific situation vertically. The researcher makes generalization only for a particular classroom, for that teaching situation, for students similar to those involved in the study not for all the students, at all times (Courtney, 1965).

Furthermore, Elliott (1991:9) believes that the teacher-based action research is a characteristic feature of a certain kind of curriculum-reform process. He summarizes in six points as follows:

1. It is a process which is initiated by practicing teachers in response to a particular practical situation they confront.
2. The practical situation is one in which their traditional curriculum practices have been destabilized and rendered problematic by the development of student resistance or refusal to learn.
3. The innovations proposed arouse controversy within the staff group, because they challenge the fundamental beliefs embodied in existing practices about the nature of learning, teaching and evaluation.
4. Issues are clarified and resolved in free and open collegial discourse, characterized by mutual respect and tolerance for others; views, in the absence of power constraints on the discussion's outcomes.
5. Change proposals are treated as provisional hypotheses to be tested in practice within a context of collegial accountability to the whole staff group.
6. The management facilitates a "bottom up" rather than a top-down' approach to the development of curriculum policies and strategies.

By implication the quality of curriculum development and the quality of teaching depend on the development of teachers' reflective powers. Above all, action research by its nature is known for empowering everyone who involves in its activities.

The extent of learning from experience needs consideration to dynamics of learning the process of knowledge through critical expressions and applications of learning to practice. Teaching, research and staff development are all about learning, but learning in all these areas needs to be embedded in the cycle of reflection and action based on appropriate evidence and integrated into on-going experience. The emphasis on action research is compatible as a key understanding of pedagogical concept that enables to improve in good teaching as continuous engagement with one's own practice (Macdonalds, 2002).

Furthermore, Cohen (1984:179) puts some stages of action research:

1. It requires the identification, and formulation of the problem perceived as critical in everyday teaching or school management.
2. It calls for initial discussion and agreement among the interested teachers and researchers.
3. It involves reviewing the relevant related literature to find out what can be learned from the studies- their objectives, procedures and problems encountered.
4. It may require a modification or redefinition of the initial statement of the problem in light of the review of literature.
5. It needs the selection of research procedures such as sampling, administration, choice of materials, and allocation of resources.

Actually, action research is aimed at supporting teachers and group of teachers in tackling educational challenges and problems to carry out the practices and reflections. It enables teachers to achieve remarkable findings in line with supportive opportunities. It is for the purpose of passing the products of teachers' findings to colleagues, students, parents and to the wide public. Action research enables the teacher to construct his strength and to improve his weaknesses, raising his self-confidence, improving performance and professional satisfaction (Alrichter and Somekh, 1993).

According to Lawrence and Manion (1984) the main features of action research are: being situational, collaborative, participatory, self-evaluative, empirical, cyclic and relaxed approach to research methods.

2.4. The Role of Teachers in Action Research

As teachers have roles in development and change of curriculum, they have also roles in educational research in general and action research in

particular. Teachers are supposed to be researchers and at the same time, great contributors of curriculum development involving in educational action research. Attitudes and practices of teachers must become more firmly grounded in educational theory and practice. The professional autonomy must be extended to include the opportunities to participate in the decisions which they operate, i.e. professional autonomy must be regarded as collective as well as individual matter (Carr and Kemmmis, 1986). It is very clear that the professional development of teachers at this juncture is not only involved extending the range of their autonomous judgment but also the range of clients to whom they have responsibilities and obligations.

According to Dunham (1992) the result of teacher matters the school conditions in facilitating active learning process to bring educational improvement. The participation of teachers in action research is important due to their access to teaching learning process as most important components of role-players. In this essential involvement that schools and education quality enhancement can be practical (Gabel, 1995). According to Mckernan (1996:42. In Befekedu, 2009:545), “teaching is a profession, and that we can no longer continue to view schools and teachers as mere distributors of knowledge. Schools and teachers are producers of knowledge.”

Teachers as researchers continue their activities to strive in systematic way of intentional inquiry. This means that every lesson should be an inquiry for the teacher (Goswami and Stillman, 1987). The teacher’s research is useful for ones own experience as base of professional development. Each school and classroom is supposed to be a laboratory in which the curriculum and problems practiced by teachers is subject of empirical examination by practitioners (McKernan, 1988). Teachers generally are supposed to develop their professional career making

themselves teacher-researchers through out the world (Hubbard and Power, 1993). This is in using classrooms as laboratories and students as collaborators.

In order to enhance the quality of education in secondary schools, teachers need to be more involved in curriculum development and evaluation through action research (Hopkins, 1993). Effective teacher research empowers teachers, giving them greater confidence in their ability to individually and collectively promote change. Generally, teacher research is driven by the practitioner's desire to improve his or her own practice with respect to a specific problem and a specific set of students. Thus, students obtain immediate benefits from the teacher's learning.

Similarly, teachers' research concerns that participant observation and recoding of students learning, teachers teaching, and the interrelationship between teachers and students. Teachers should expect large scale practical research to challenge decision-makers and small scale classroom research to indicate directions to their own work. This is to keep balance between policy makers and classroom practice to the political nature of educational issues. It is one way of teachers' reflection of their own work with students through research (Mitchell, 1985).

In conducting action research teachers bring the values and theories of their practice which is the totality of their former experiences that shape the present experience with everyday practice and decision making. The teacher's teaching experience and students' experiences are essential key elements of teaching learning process to improve educational problems. Hence, it is important for the teacher to conduct research and having access information that provides a more accurate picture of the situation (Macdonalds, 2002).

School administrators, specialists, in teacher preparation, and others are emphasizing that teachers be encouraged to use research methods for a number of reasons, two of which are particularly strong. These points are the base of knowledge transferring to each other through scientific investigation of educational problems by teachers from time to time.

1. Classroom teachers are in the best position to test some scientific principles and theories because they know their own and their pupils needs, and because they can weigh the practical results. In education we must continue to depend on research specialist pure or highly technical research but if teachers do not accept their findings are not likely to change educational practice, no matter how informative or valuable they are. Like the rest of us, teachers are more firmly convinced by seeing for themselves whether a principle works out well in practice. Moreover practices that get good results for one teacher are often picked up and tried by others.
2. There are indications that teachers who use scientific methods in studying their own practices are more likely than others to study the findings of scientific research in an effort to improve their work. Such study in turn increases their knowledge skill in using scientific methods. As become well informed, they can pass their knowledge on to others and help correct misinterpretations (Courtney, 1965:251).

Most educators and parents consider the classroom teacher to be the most influential in the learning pattern for the individual students. As Hawes (1976: 177) further expressed, indicating the need for a teacher to be researcher:

The classroom teacher as a potential research-worker starts his task with very great advantages. He knows his own local conditions better than anyone else is likely to do; he has the support and confidence of those with whom he works: the children, the parents, the community members...

For educational quality implementation, qualified and committed teachers are needed. Without competent and academically intent teacher the curriculum cannot be effectively implemented, and quality of education will not be attained. Group based-service training will generally focus on dynamic learning methodology, continuous assessment, action research etc. (MOE, 2005). Action research depends on participation of the classroom teacher. The involvement of teacher in practice of research in actual situation, there will be behavioral change (Macdonalds, 2002).

It is natural for teachers to observe their activities and explore problems to attain improvement in their academic career. Action research is also a kind of teacher's investigation which is preplanned, structured and collaborated with others (Foshy, 1998; Tomlinson, 1995).

2.5. The Role of Leadership in Action Research

Each educational action research has a part to play in the development of teachers' profession action researchers should be able to make disseminated the educational theory which is incorporated in their practice. Administrators of action researchers should be able to show their activities to sustain or improve the quality of education for pupils in their institutions. The administrators are supposed to motivate and facilitate the teachers' action research activities in various schools (Whitehead, 1985).

The improvement of professionals' life-style for educational administrators by itself cannot attribute to research but there will be need of change of economic order. The attention of educational administrator is very important for the presentation of research findings

in fully developed way. The administrator should have been to assess the immediate potential implication of research for his authority to make the best of it. Research is a valuable subject that has potential to make an essential contribution to effective education administration. To enable the work of research to be relevant, the educational administration is readable and realistic (Bennet, 2004; Drysdale, 1985).

According to Drysdale (1985) educational administrators have role on research facilitating responsibility. To accomplish their role the following guiding principles are indicated:

1. It is essential to select the right projects, those which will make a positive contribution to the thinking which authorities have to do now or will obviously have to do in the near future.
2. The emphasis in projects should be chosen to reflect the kinds of decision with which authorities (members or officers) are faced.
3. The right people must be chosen to do the research. This may well mean teaming someone with research skills with a partner experienced in education management or administration.
4. The right research methods have to be chosen. In general this means those which will obtain the most reliable results in a time scale which will allow those results, when published, still to have currency.
5. The results must be presented in ways which allow the main conclusions to be readily appreciated together with their implications while still providing the supporting evidence for use as appropriate.

These general research principles are cited here to give base for general research procedure that educational administrator should follow and implement. This can also be implemented.

It is not only selecting the right issues, the research should also identify the aspects of the problem are the real existing apprehension to administrators. The accessibility of good, practical, well-presented

research in this area could be worthwhile. The presentation of research result with pleasure is vital to satisfy the attention of administrators (Drysdale, 1985). The teachers, supervisors and administrators would make better decisions and engage in more effective practices; if they conducted research as a basis for these decisions and practices (Sidhu, 1984). A school administrator conducts action research to improve his administrative behavior.

The individual school people can undertake research to assist them make better conclusion and evaluate events that have to do with their own teaching or administrative problems. A large proportion of the problems faced by teachers, administrators, and supervisors cannot be solved unless a number of people change their opinions and practices. One great improvement in making action research cooperative is that, involvement of many people in problem identification and analysis, in hypothesizing, and in data collecting and interpreting increases the prospect that there will be strong commitments to change behavior of the consequences of the study indicate change is acceptable. The people who directly teach pupils, supervise teachers, or administer school systems are to solve their practical problems by using action research (Corey, 1953).

Schools with reluctant teachers to discuss their professional problems with one another and administrators who rarely admit their responsibility are in difficult situation to solve educational problems. This circle should be broken, by educational leaders for improvement of educational quality through action research. The responsible leader plays a decisive role in providing encouragement for the researching teacher. The administrator should encourage the careful and conscious experimentations that practically achieved by school teachers by providing different incentives to develop competence trend (Corey, 1953).

2.6. Impeding Factors to Conduct Action Research

Action research is the most important educational activity for teachers' development. The capacity of reflecting and the result is very essential in doing research. The capacity to reflect is one of the natures of action research which can be affected by conditional constraints/obstacles, such as work overload, innovation, knowledge or skill level, self confidence, response to negative criticisms etc.

On the other hand, lack of professional learning culture affects the research capacity. Promoting the culture of inquiry contributes the professional learning culture for students and teachers; hence, action research can be occurred. This nature of state continues to professional development of teachers (Day, 1999).

There are many barriers to secondary school teachers to participate in action research. Among these hindrances are institutional and other teacher related problems. According to Mckerman (1996: 44), lack of time, lack of resources and school organizational features are some of those related to schools. On top of this, calling up on teachers to conduct action research requires two essential conditions: teachers should understand and possess research skills which generate data, and the findings should inform teachers in such a manner as to compel them to take action research. These problems are more related to teachers themselves.

According to (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988:35 as cited in Grundy, 1994.):

A rational struggle for the improvement of education would include a systematic and interlinked set of struggle for education: a struggle over language ... a struggle over

educational activities ... and a struggle to create new information of social relationships in education (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988: 35 as cited in Grundy, 1994).

This implies that the members of school community should involve actively in a struggle to improve the quality of education.

According to Yusuf (1972 E.C.: 60-73; cited in Seyoum, 1998:1-18) many reasons given for not conducting research can be true for action research too:

- (1) Absence of conducive research environment in schools;
- (2) Inadequacy of research skill;
- (3) Lack of financial and material resources in schools;
- (4) Bureaucratic red-tape;
- (5) Lack of interest in research; and
- (6) Absence of government policy with regard to academic freedom.

On the other hand, to tackle the problem of less participation of teachers in action research the following basic points are suggested by Elliot (1991: 69):

1. Teachers themselves have to be interested in the research activity.
2. They need to have the research skill.
3. They need to be encouraged by school officials.
4. They have to be provided with time and finance.
5. They need to have research materials such as Professional journals, reference books etc.
6. There has to be a means for the dissemination of research results.

Concerning culture of research in secondary schools, there are few studies made in Ethiopia. For example Adane (2000), Yalew (2000), Hussien (2000), and Seyoum (1998) have attempted to investigate the research trend in all levels. The main efforts of Yalew and Hussien are the factors that hinder teachers to do research in primary and secondary school. In addition Seyoum (1998) studied the factors affecting teachers' research motivation in Addis Ababa secondary schools. These studies indicate that teacher's involvement in traditional research rather than action research in schools specifically (Befekadu, 2009).

Generally, the above studies show that the attention for action research conducting in secondary schools was low in general. Moreover, some realities indicate that teachers' participation in action research and essential benefits to solve teaching learning problems hindered in schools. The current status of action research in secondary schools is very low. Thus, exploring the status, challenge and opportunities for further improvement through research to make secondary schools as a center of scientific knowledge is needed (Befekadu, 2009).

2. 7. Contribution of Educational Action Research

An action research enables practitioner to be critical, by looking into ways to improve the practice of teaching-learning within the various constraints of the existing situation by changing agents of those constraints. Action researchers are responsible to facilitate learning process and to disseminate the results of the research. Action researcher contributes to the teacher to be participative in the way of that being partner working with and for those affected by the problem and the way in which it is tackled. As an action researcher the teacher should understand the level and nature of students in order to maintain

essential balance between external causes that affect structure and control by affecting students' freedom to be autonomous in their learning activities (Duffy and Jonassen, 1992; Kolb, 1984; Boud, et al, 1985).

The practitioners involved in the mutual collaborative approach to action research gain a new understanding of their practice; the changes implemented tend to have a more lasting character. However, the changes tend to be connected to the individuals directly involved in the changing process, and therefore the interventions tend to be short lived when these individuals leave the system or there is an entry of new people (McKernan, 1991).

Action research has the potential to generate genuine and sustained improvements in schools. It gives educators new opportunities to reflect on and assess their teaching, to explore and test new ideas, methods, and materials, to assess how effective the new approaches were; to share feedback with fellow team members, and to make decisions about which new approaches to include in the team's curriculum, instruction, and assessment plans.

In line with line Courtney (1965:253) indicated the importance of action research to improve curriculum and teaching in helping students to learn:

All day and every day teachers make decisions that affect what and how children learn. We should assume that the quality of their decisions improve as they discover for themselves better ways of working and of finding sound answers to their questions about educative process. The main function of action or on-the-job research in the school is to help educators improve curriculum and teaching by systematically examining and evaluating their own work in helping children learn.

Generally, the purposes of researchers are to discover something new or to make a contribution to a field of knowledge, and to clarify a societal concern and also to test a method, program or policy for possible recommendations to practitioners to solve the problem. Action research is known as applied research in which practitioners attempt to solve a certain problem. Action research can be done in such a way that practicing educational activities judge the worthiness of textbooks, curriculum (Patton, 2002).

The primary purpose of action research is as a tool for solving practical problems experienced by people in their professional, community or private lives (Stringer, 2000). The problem is defined in relation to a specific situation and setting determined by the group, community or organization. A variety of data collection methods can be used to identify the problem, like, observation, interviews and questionnaires (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993). The results and insights gained from the action research should not only be of theoretical importance but also lead to practical improvements in the problem areas identified. The theories and solutions which are produced from the action research should be made public to the other participants and also to the wider community who may have an interest in that work setting or situation (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992).

The change in practice will depend upon the nature of the problem identified. An important goal of action research is that the results assist the researcher to develop new theories or expand existing scientific theories. Through the process of action research, practitioners are able to develop a reasonable justification for their work. The evidence gathered and the critical reflections which occur help a developed, tested and critically-examined rationale for the practitioner's area of practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

Moreover, action research has great contribution to enhance quality of education. The question of quality of education can be measured to the extent of teachers' professional skill, teachers and students ratios, educational expenditure and students' achievement as the indicators (Lasonen, 2005). To bring educational quality school improvement program should be practiced. The major focus areas of school improvement program will be school leadership and management, parent and community partnership, student-centered learning, professional development and collaboration and quality instructional program (Altrichter, 1993; MOE, 2005).

Even though there is remarkable attempt to maintain the opportunities and quality of educational development, still unsuccessful to most African countries education system. There must be assessment, curriculum reforms and improvement in teaching and learning in order to develop mastery learning. Mastery learning can ensure quality learning through continuous assessment and appropriate creative measures and can be helpful to reach the mass. Despite the fact that quality of education in all Africa is an attainable reality, is not more than a dream (UNESCO, 1999). To ensure quality of education all role-players should understand the dynamics of teaching learning process to enable the learners intervene placing them at the center.

Moreover, Altrichter (1993:207) indicated here some points about the contribution of action research:

1. the professional development of individual teachers who improve their practical theories and competence in action through reflection and action;
2. curriculum development and improvements in the practical situation under research by developing quality of teaching and learning through new and successful action strategies;

3. the collective development of the profession by means of opening up individual practice to scrutiny and discussion and thus broadening the knowledge base of the profession;
4. the advancement of educational research.

Action research is both practical means for professional development and contribution for the development of educational theory of practitioners. It ensures the practical relevance of educational theory, by solving the fundamental problems of traditional educational research. There is similarity between teachers' action research and stages of knowledge reflection and testing.

Action research combines the research function with teacher growth in such qualities as objectivity, research skill, habits of thinking, harmonious group work and professional spirit. On the other hand, action research in line with improving school practices, improves those who are to improve the practices. Many educators agree that action research is one of the most promising pathways for teacher development, professional improvement and the development of enhanced system of education. Research helps the teacher obtain new interests, new motives and new insights that will replenish his energies and enthusiasms and regenerate his instructional dealings (Sidhu, 1985).

Generally, action research experience strengthens the profession. The practitioners remain helpless if they are deprived of research based theories. The progress of sincere interest in research will help the teachers establish better relationships with colleagues, administrators and parents. The research that conducted in schools is to enhance and enrich the teaching learning process which contributes to the improvements of quality of education (Seyoum, 1998).

Educators in general recognize that the function and importance of action research in improving teaching and the curriculum as a means of bridging the gap between teacher preparation and classroom practice, between the findings of research and beneficial change in the classroom. The systematic study and experimentation on-the-job by teachers and curriculum workers does increase their knowledge of the educative process and help them improve their practices (Courtney, 1965).

The cooperative research development and achievement can serve three purposes: firstly, it will highlight one of the ways of the resources devoted to educational research are increasing. Secondly, it may stimulate some of the readers to consider the source of support for their own research. Finally, it will provide a base point from which a proposal for research goals and needs can be projected for future. Both basic and applied researches are the key for the school and education improvement cooperative research soundly expressed the value of basic research as foundation for educational quality improvement (Courtney, 1965).

In day-to-day class activities teachers and students work together for reflective learning to bring educational development. As far as teacher continued assessment of teaching process in certain subjects there would be curriculum development. The aim of covering a certain subject is to gain concepts and factual knowledge in-depth. In teaching learning process methodological improvement is very essential by exploring continuously (Overall and Sangster, 2006).

The dissemination of research product is important to get new insights and new meanings which lead to the development of new theories and practices in education. Research production also helps to conceptualize the fact, facility and have good teaching experience. The researchers will be able to use new understandings of theory in relation to classroom

experience, the induction of new staff and curriculum development. In order to identify the necessity of that society the research should be conducted. Therefore action research plays a vital role in establishing the function of school in curriculum development and instructional improvement (Macdonalds, 2002).

Action research that conducted by teachers, supervisors or by administrators to show classroom and school condition to get new findings for improvement to make possible decisions. In facilitating action research focusing on practical school problems there will be improvements in their practices. Unless teacher feels to talk freely about difficulties that they are facing there will not be results of new practices. For this there must be teachers' pertinent participation to conduct action research (Corey, 1953; Courtney, 1965).

On the other hand, the school system that has encouragement of teachers to conduct action research gives many opportunities for the development of innovative ideas about new change in educational quality. This is the important part of action research. This helps teachers to say: "If I introduce this change in my teaching, my problem will be solved or the difficulties at least reduced."(Courtney, 2002:257).

Action research has great importance for professional development. It is through research that knowledge is increased and basis for improved practice. In the effort to develop a sound basis for professional activity, research has got greater attention in educational literature and in teacher preparation. One of the fundamental needs in strengthening education is the development of a more adequate action research basis. Educational action research is supposed to be practiced in daily activities of classroom teacher, supervisor, and school principal. Action research

has importance to solve the educational problems equally as highly trained research specialists.

By and large, action research is very important for teachers' own practice to implement educational practices to enhance quality of education. The schools practice of teaching-learning process helps a lot for educational development. Action research has great contribution for educational development to implement educational quality.

CHAPTER THREE:

Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Design of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore and enlighten the current understanding of enhancing quality of education through educational action research. To this end, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were employed. In order to draw sound conclusion about the research problem raised in the study, triangulation procedures to validate the study qualitative data was selected.

3.2. Participants of the Study and Sampling Techniques

The participants of the study were secondary school teachers, principals, research coordinating committees, from the three sample secondary schools with their respective SCEO; SCEO and CGAAEB. About 180 teachers from three sample schools, six principals, two CGAAEB and three SCEO officers were also selected as participants for the study through purposive sampling technique because they were directly connected to the educational activities of the study.

3.3. Data Gathering Instruments

In order to get adequate and complementary information for the study, diverse set of data gathering instruments were employed. These were: questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussion (FGD), and document analysis were major data gathering instruments.

3.3.1. Questionnaire: This was used to collect data from teachers, since it is the most proper means to gather the necessary information from

larger sample size within short time. The questionnaire comprises four parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of personal data (bio data) of the respondents. The second part contained eighteen multiple items, two open-ended questions, eight items for ordering (ranking), and eight items in a Likert scale with sub-themes of facilitating condition and/or major problems encountered by both teachers who did and/or did not conduct action research respectively. The third part consisted of fourteen statements that helped to measure teachers' perception on a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

The contents of these perception statements were about the role of action research for quality of education and what roles teachers can play. The last part of the questionnaire was open-ended items. The major purpose of these items was to give opportunity for teachers to convey their experience, feeling, perception, problems and intention about enhancing educational quality through educational action research. This enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive information about the issues raised in the study.

The researcher distributed the questionnaire with his assistant data collectors in order to provide the necessary clarification. In general from 180 copies of questionnaire distributed, 153 were filled and returned. The return rate was 85%. However, four copies of the returned questionnaire were incomplete and they were excluded.

3.3.2. Interview: In order to obtain important information from school principals, Sub-City Education (SCEO), and CGAAEB educational officers about the practice of research activities as a whole on their secondary schools, interviews were made with face to face basis. The interview guide comprised four themes: factual information seeking,

perception, problem identification, and to triangulate data with related questions to questionnaire. These interview questions were stemmed from the teachers' questionnaire. Because of the respondents' different background, the interviews were prepared in English and translated into Amharic to avoid language barrier during discussion. Each interview was taped and transcribed with the respondents' permission. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes on average. The educational officers' of SCEO and CGAAEB interviewees had been given codes from IL₁ to IL₅, while the principal respondents were coded as IP₁ to IP₆.

3.3.3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD): two different focused group discussions (FGD) interviews were held with purposely selected teachers and research coordinating committee. The FGD guides consisted of teachers' perception towards action research, teachers' research skill and impact of institutional factors, which are stemmed from teacher's questionnaire. The questions were developed in English and then, translated into Amharic language to avoid language barrier during discussion. The focus group discussions were taped with the permission of participants and transcribed. The participants name in focus group discussion was coded from P₁ to P₁₅.

The first FGD with five GSS (9-10) teachers and research coordinating committee was held on 12/03/2010, at 3:00 – 4:30 PM. All participants preferred this time. The second FGD session was held with 5 GSPS (11-12) teachers and research coordinating committee on 13/03/2010 at 4:00- 4:55 AM, during tea break. And the third FGD session was held on 16/03/2010, at 8:45- 3:55 AM. All focus group discussion sessions were moderated by the researcher in order to control the discussion mood and to receive first hand information.

3.3.4. Document analysis: to examine the major trends of CGAAEB, SCEO in identifying educational problems and seeking solutions, document analysis is also used as data collecting instrument. Moreover, research works, related and available reports and printed materials were consulted and used as a secondary source.

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

Firstly, the researcher went to CGAAEB having a letter of cooperation from IER, AAU and introduced himself to the head of Bureau and other educational officers to open the path for further communication. This scanty gave the researcher conducive atmosphere for the study. Then the researcher contacted the SCEO and various sample secondary schools' principals with the cooperative letter from CGAAEB for further facilitation of the study.

3.5. The Pilot Study

After the questionnaire had been developed and tested for relevance, clarity and simplicity for compliance with basic rules of questionnaire construction (Sidhu, 1984; Oppenheim, 1996), the first draft was given to the advisor and two graduate colleagues for scrutiny and suggestions. Based on the feedback obtained, some items of the instrument were changed and some were reshuffled and refined. Then, the instrument was tried out for its suitability, reliability and validity in Limat Minch Preparatory School in Lideta Sub-City before the main study was commenced. Twenty teachers were selected using random sampling technique as participants of the pilot study. After collecting the questionnaire, refinement was made on three items based on the hints obtained from the pilot study. The item analysis was computed using

Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability coefficient of perception items, educational research practice items, and affecting factor items were 0.85, 0.76 and 0.73 respectively. Thus, the instrument was found reliable to use for the main data collection.

Then, it was administered as it was scheduled. To make the study more reliable all interviews and focus group discussions were carried out by the researcher, whereas the questionnaire was distributed to and collected from the respondents with the help of assistant data collectors. Before each interview conducted, the key interview guidelines were given to the interviewees for their consideration and preparation.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis

Different methods of data analysis pertinent to the variables in the study were employed. Mixed approach, qualitative and the quantitative were employed to substantiate the study. Hence, the questionnaire was first collected, organized, tabulated and coded in SPSS version 15. Items of questionnaire were classified in to different tables based on their issues of similarities for demonstrating the results and providing interpretation. The following statistical procedures were employed for numerical interpretation:

- Descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, and percentage) were used to analyze basic information and distribution of scores. Mean score and standard deviation were employed to rank the factors that hindered teachers from doing action research on the basis of their degree of impact. Besides, statistical tools used to compare the calculated mean with the nearest given rating value. This helped to determine agreement of the majority of the respondents on the item. Moreover, percentage-based on frequency

counts was applied to analyze nominal and ordinal characteristics of data to determine their relative standing such as bio data information, teacher's research competence, and research experience.

- The Chi-square was computed to check whether there was significant difference or not between dichotomy (pair) of items. The level of significance in each case was set at 0.05 Alpha levels in order to tolerate the error.

- The total (Grand) mean score was computed to the given Likert scale value that helped to determine the teacher's research competence, leadership support, and research practice (culture). The mean value of the Likert scale (3.0) was used as a reference point for determining the teachers' perception as positive (above 3.0) and negative (below 3.0). This facilitated an easy understanding about the level of teachers' perception towards making quality of education more effective through action research.

The data collected through open-ended questions, interviews focus group discussions and document were summarized and analyzed qualitatively to substantiate and validate the quantitative information.

**CHAPTER FOUR:
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

4.1. QUALITY INDICATORS AND RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

4.1.1 Quality and Internal Efficiency

According to the CGAAEB Educational Sector Development (ESDP) III (2009) document, input variables like share of qualified teacher for the level (10-12), student/section ratio, student/teacher ratio etc. have decisive role to determine students' achievements as an output, which are significant indicators for the enhancement of educational quality. Having this in mind, an attempt was made to assess the performance from what had been achieved in grade ten national examinations of the 2005/6 and 2008/9 years of students' result as a case in point. Table 1, shows some indicators of quality and internal efficiency conditions.

Table 1: Quality and Internal Efficiency Indicators

No	Indicators	Years	
		2005/6	2008/9
1	Share of Qualified Teachers for the level (10-12)	59%	74%
2	Student/teacher ratio	1:55	1:24
3	Student/section ratio		
	Grade 9 th -10 th	1:80	1:51
	Grade 11 th -12 th	1:81	1:42
4	Student/textbook ratio	1:2	1:1
5	Student/who score > 2.00 (grade 10 EGSELE)	73%	56.2%
	(grade 12 who passed to university)	95%	87%
6	Dropout (9-12)	12.9%	4.9%

Indications shown in Table 1, shows, quantitative achievement has been observed in the percentage of qualified teachers for the level (9-12) and student/teacher ratio. In addition, dropout rates have also reduced from 12.9% to 4.9% in 2008/9. However, this quantitative growth could not improve students' achievement in grade 10th national examination had been dropped from 73% in 2005/6 to 56.2% in 2008/9.

The EGSECE and EHEECE pass rate was not evenly distributed over the three sample schools. Table 2, below shows the number of students who scored passing point (2.00) and above for 2005/6 to 2008/9.

Table 2: Sample school performance in National Examination in CGAASS (10th 2005/6 to 2008/9)

No	School	2005/6 passing	2006/7 passing	2007/8 passing	2008/9 passing
1	Higher 23	55%	65%	75%	62%
2	Ginbot 20	82%	52%	85%	51%
3	Lafto	75%	86%	87%	89%

As depicted in the Table above, a fluctuating trend was observed in the percentage of students, who were capable of scoring passing mark in all three sample schools (school documents, 200/6-2008/9). The percentages of students who scored passing mark in all schools, for example were not constant, except Lafto.

4.1.2. Bio Data of the Participants

Table 3 below indicates bio data of teachers, principals and educational officers included in the study.

Table 3: Characteristics of the Participants

No	Characteristics		Participants							
			Teachers		Principals		SCEO		CGAAEB	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Sex	Male	108	70.6	6	100	3	100	2	100
		Female	45	29.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Total	153	100	6	100	3	100	2	100
2	Age	18-25 years	62	40.5						
		26-32 years	50	32.7						
		33-39 years	18	11.8	2	33.3			1	50
		40-46	11	7.2	3	50	1	33.3		
		>46	12	7.8	1	16.7	2	66.7	1	50
		Total	153	100	6	100	3	100	2	100
3	Qualification	Diploma	1	.7						
		BA/Bsc/BEEd	150	98	2	33.3	1	33.3		
		MA/Msc/MEd	1	.7	4	66.7	2	66.7	2	100
		Total	153	100	6	100	3	100	2	100
4	Teaching Load	Per week	7	4.6						
		<10 periods	72	47.1						
			66	43.1						
		10-15	8	5.2						
		16-20	153	100						
		21-25								
5	Work Experience									
		1-5 years	72	47						
		6-10 years	32	20.9						
		10-15 years	27	17.6	1	16.7			1	50
			8	5.2	3	50				
		15-21 years	7	4.6	2	33.3	3	100	1	50
			7	4.6						
		21-25 years	153	100	6	100	3	100	2	100
	>26 years									
	Total									

As illustrated in Table 3, 70.6% (108) of the teachers were male while 29.4% (45) were female. The majority of teacher respondents, about 85% (130) were in the age range of 18-39 years, while 15% (23) were at age level of 40 years and above. With respect to academic qualification, 98% (150) of the teachers had their first degree, whereas, 0.7% (1) was diploma holder and .7% (1) holder of masters degree who have been teaching subjects within their qualification.

Concerning teaching load, 90% (138) respondents reported that teachers handled 10-20 periods per week, whereas, 5.2% (8) had more than periods 20 and 4.6% (7) carried less than 10 periods per week respectively. As most teachers wrote in open ended part of the questionnaire, teaching overload was one of the most challenging factors that hindered them from performing educational action research.

In accordance with data in Table 3, the majority of the teacher respondents, 47% (72) reported that they were newly deployed and their teaching experiences were not more than 5 years. The proportion of teachers whose teaching experience fall between 5-10 years was 20.9% (32) while teaching experience fall between 10-15 years were 17.6% (27) respectively. On the other hand, 4.6% (7) of the teacher respondents reported that they have served more than 26 years in teaching profession.

As far as the principals were concerned, all of them in the sample schools were male, holding their first degree (2) and masters degree (4) respectively. One, out of six principals, was under range of 10-15 years, 3 principals, were 15-21 and 2 principals were 21-25 years of teaching and principal ship experience. As indicated in Table 3, all educational officers (CGAAEB and SCEO) were male. As regard with the qualification of educational officers, 1 had first degree and 4 masters degree from

university. In relation to their service in educational activities (administration, supervision and teaching), the higher proportion of the participants was in the range of 21-25.

4.2. CGAAEB Teachers' potential to Conduct Action Research

4.2.1. Teachers' Perception towards Action Research

It is believed that perception is one of the influential factors that can play a great role to determine individual's engagement in any activity. Thus, to identify the perception of CGAASS teachers towards the role of action research in making the schools more effective; respondents were asked to show their reaction to statements by choosing one among the given five points Likert scale alternatives ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1).

Table 4: Teachers' perception towards the Role of

No	Items	Responses										Mean	SD
		5		4		3		2		1			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Action research contributes little in solving practical educational problems	1	0.7	8	5.2	18	11.7	52	34	74	48	4.24	0.903
2	Action research can improve students' academic achievement.	92	60.1	53	34.6	6	3.9	2	13	-	-	1.46	0.639
3	Action research cannot develop positive teaching-learning atmosphere in school.	1	0.7	4	2.6	10	6.5	52	34	86	56.2	4.42	0.784
4	Action research can have positive contribution in strategy.	92	60.1	51	33.3	5	3.3	1	0.7	4	2.6	1.52	0.82
5	Action research can sustain or promote good shared school value.	98	64.1	45	29.4	6	3.9	4	2.6	-	-	1.45	0.697
6	Action research can contribute very much for educational quality.	117	76.5	31	20.3	4	2.6	1	0.7	-	-	1.27	0.541
7	Action research empowers self-evaluation potential of teachers to bring quality of education.	114	74.5	34	22.2	4	2.6	1	0.7	-	-	1.29	0.549
8	Action research cannot create reliable path for quality of education.	1	0.7	3	2	12	7.8	56	37	81	52.9	4.39	0.771
9	Action research is helpful for planning and decision making for educational improvement.	97	63.4	51	33.3	4	2.6	1	0.7	-	-	1.41	0.579
10	Action research improves little teachers' professional development.	2	1.3	2	1.3	13	8.5	68	44	68	44.4	4.29	0.785
11	School leaders and educational officials do not have responsibility for action research activities.	-	-	1	0.7	24	15.7	50	33	78	51	4.34	0.762
12	Action research should only be conducted by professional researchers, not by school teachers.	-	-	3	2	13	8.5	65	43	72	47	4.35	0.719
13	Action research should only be conducted by higher institutions, not by secondary schools.	-	-	6	3.9	16	10.5	50	33	81	52.9	4.35	0.822
14	Teachers' participation in educational research should be one of criteria for career promotion.	93	60.8	48	31.4	11	7.2	1	0.7	-	-	1.48	0.66
Grand Mean											2.66		

As indicated in Table 4: 76.5% and 74.5% of the respondents reflected their strong agreement on action research contribution for quality of education, and for empowering teachers respectively. Apparently, 60% of the respondents also showed their strong agreement for items such as sustaining or promoting good shared school value, helping for planning and decision-making, teachers' participation in educational research, improving students' achievement, and contribution in strategy of action research. On the other hand, more than 30% of the respondents also showed agreement on above items.

Similarly, 56.2%, 52.9%, 52.9% and 51% of the respondents showed strong disagreement on the items negative ideas that presented issues of action research cannot develop positive teaching-learning atmosphere, cannot create reliable path for quality of education, action research should only be conducted by professionals, and school leaders and educational officers do not have the responsibility for action research respectively. As observed from Table 4, the mean rating of half items was more than agreed (4). These items were: little contribution of action research, action research cannot develop positive teaching-learning, action research cannot create reliable path for quality educational, action research improves a little for teachers' professional development, action research should only be conducted by professional researchers, and action research should only be conducted by higher institutions not by secondary schools.

However, the mean rating of positive contribution of action research, sustaining or promoting good shared school value, contribution of much educational value, improving of self-evaluating, helping for planning and decision-making, and the criteria of teachers' participation in action

research were below the rating of value disagree (2) and above the rating value of strongly disagree (1).

The standard deviations for all items were relatively small. This indicates that most teacher respondents were similar to one another in terms of their perception towards the role of action research for enhancing quality of education.

As per the data discussed above, respondents confirmed that the majority of the respondents about 76.5% and 74.5% strongly agreed for the items that action research can contribute very much for educational quality and empowers self-evaluation potential of teachers. Similarly, more than 60% of the teacher respondents perceived positively on the items: action research can sustain or promote good shared school value; is helpful for planning and decision-making for education improvement can improve students' academic achievement; can have positive contribution in strategy; and teachers' participation in educational action research should be one of criteria for career promotion.

Therefore, teachers should seek solution for educational problems by using action research.

On the other hand, more than 50% of the respondents strongly disagreed on items: inability of developing teaching learning; inability of creating reliable path; irresponsibility of school leaders, and secondary school participation on action research that presented negative idea of action research; whereas, 50.3% of respondents disagreed on the items: irresponsibility of school leaders and 44.4% respondents strongly disagreed, and disagreed on item, little improvement of teachers' professional development of action research. This data showed that the majority of teachers know the usefulness of action research for quality of education in general. In contrast, most discussants and interviewees

believed that all stakeholders did not give equal value for practical implementation of action research to enhance quality of education.

Table 4 indicates that the overall Grand Mean score of the respondents was nearly equal to the rating value of the not decided ($M= 2.66$). This implies that even though understanding of the importance of action research is promising in general, teachers who had positive and negative perceptions were equal in number with the role of teacher researchers.

In general, teachers' perception had a significant contribution to the teachers' involvement in action research to enhance quality of education. Similarly, teachers who had positive perception towards educational improvement activities were found to be more committed than those who had negative ideas towards educational action research.

4.2.2. Teachers' Research Competence

In order to involve in action research, teachers should be equipped with basic knowledge and skill. Accordingly, a question was posed to teacher respondents whether they had taken research methodology course or not during their university/college study.

Table 5: Teachers' Attendance in Research Methodology Course

No	Items	Responses				
			No	%	Chi-square (X ²)	
1	Taking training on action research during University/College study				102.12	
		Yes	139	90.8		
		No	14	9.2		
2	If answered is "yes" for question number 1, how do you evaluate?	Responses				
			Very useful	Useful	Not useful	Others
		No	104	40	1	8
		%	68	26.1	0.7	5.2

*p<0.05; CV=3.82

Table 5 shows that out of 153 teachers who participated in the study, 90.8% (139) confirmed that they had taken methodology course and the remaining 9.2% (14) admitted that they had not taken such course. The Chi-square test for significance indicated the presence of significant difference between two groups since the calculated Chi-square (X² = 102.12) is greater than the critical value (cv = 3.84) at 0.05 Alpha level. This implies that the proportion of the respondents who had taken the methodology course was greater than who did not take the course during their university/ college study. Out of 139 respondents who took the methodology course, 74.8% (104), confirmed the course as very useful and useful in enabling them conduct action research for improvement of their profession and quality of education.

Based on the above findings, it is possible to sum up that significant percentage of teachers in City Government of Addis Ababa Secondary

Schools had at least the basic research knowledge and skill to be engaged in research activities.

According to Seyoum (1998), similar finding was reported that secondary school teachers had at least significant basic knowledge and skill on educational research in his study in Secondary Schools in Addis Ababa.

Table 6 below, shows the extent of teachers' attempt to update their research competence through questions that posed to teachers whether they participated in seminars/workshops, read action research books and shared action research information to their colleagues or not.

Table 6: Teachers' Effort for Updating their Research Knowledge (N=153)

No	Items	Highly	Moderately	lesser	Never	Mean	SD
1	To what extent do you participate I In seminar/ workshops?	23 (15)	90 (58.8)	21 (13.7)	19 (12.4)	2.24	0.857
2	To what extent have you read Action research books?	22 (14.4)	101 (66)	22 (14.3)	8 (5.2)	2.1	0.699
3	To what extent do you share action research information?	4 (2.6)	38 (24.8)	99 (64.7)	10 (6.5)	2.79	0.655
Grand Mean						2.38	

Out of the total of 153 teachers who participated in the study, 15% (23) highly and 58.8% (90) (Moderately) had the chance to participate in workshops, seminars and in-service trainings concerning action research. However, 26.1% (40) of the respondents claimed that they

rarely had got any training to enable them to improve their knowledge and skill. Out of those who confirmed that they had research training through seminars and workshops had confirmed that the training was very (useful) to carry out educational action research independently.

The question further posed to the respondents to what extent they had read education research books and research reports. As indicated in Table 6, about 66% (101) reported that they had moderately read action research issues and 14.4% (22) responded that they highly read. On the other hand, 5.2% (8) had never read action research issues in research books or research reports. Accordingly, the finding seems to be promising for reading research books, journals and research reports.

Moreover, the teacher respondents were asked to what extent they had shared action research related information with their colleagues. It was found that out of 153 respondents, 64.7% (99) replied that they rarely discussed about action research related information with their colleagues, while, 24.8% (38) and 2.6% (4) responded that they had moderately and highly discussed with their colleagues respectively.

As data discussion indicated, the Grand Mean score ($M = 2.38$) is between the rating value of rarely (2.0) and the rating value of moderately (3.0). This shows that the majority of the respondents had not participated in seminars, workshops, in-service training, and did not read educational research books or reports, and did not share research related information with their colleagues.

4.3. The Practice of Solving Educational Problems in CGAASS by Using Action Research

This part of discussion presents the practice of CGAASS in identifying educational problems and seeking solution by using action research. It also discusses the efforts made by school principals and Sub-City Education Officers to improve and sustain (cross-fertilize) best educational practices among secondary schools.

4.3.1. The Practice of Action Research Production in CGAASS

Table 7: Production of Action Research by CGAASS Teachers

No	Items	Responses		Chi-square (X ²)
		No	%	
1	Have you ever conducted action research to solve educational problem in your school?	33	21.6	36.05
	A. Yes	73	47.7	
	B. No	30	19.6	
	C. Never heard	17	11.1	
	D. Others	153	100	
	Total			
2	What were the major priority areas of your action research work?	21	70	
	A. Students achievement	2	6.7	
	B. School efficiency	3	10	
	C. Methodology assessment	4	13.3	
	D. Specific classroom	-	-	
	E. If any other	30	100	
Total				

*p<0.05; CV=7.82

Teachers were asked if they had ever conducted educational research in their current school. Accordingly, from 153 teachers who were included in the study, 47.7% (73) confirmed that they have never conducted action research in their schools. Only 21.6% (33) replied that they had conducted action research. As shown in Table 7, the calculated Chi-square ($X^2 = 36.05$) is greater than critical value ($CV=7.82$) at the 0.05 Alpha level. This indicates that there was a significant difference between the frequencies of teachers who had conducted action research and those who had not conducted action research.

The documents and reports of CGAAEB and SCEO confirmed that teachers' involvement in action research activities has been decreasing from time to time, even though training and workshops were offered. There were several reasons to the outcome. Among these reasons that action research involvement decreased were: lack of motivation (incentives), teaching load, and lack of plan for action research from educational leaders. As realized from interviews, most of the officers of CGAAEB, SCEO and principals had no clear information and follow up to encourage teachers to conduct action research.

Teachers who had conducted action research were also asked to indicate the titles of their action research works that had been done. Accordingly, 33 respondents listed 30 different titles. Out of 30 different titles, 7 (23.3%) were team research works, while, the remaining 23 (76.7%) were done individually. The majority of the respondents 70.4% (21) of the research works priority area were academic issues, such as, students' achievement and discipline, while 6.7% (2) were school efficiency.

However, 20% (7) focused on methodology assessment and specific classroom problems. It can be learnt from the listed titles by the respondents, most of the major issues included in the category were

academic issues. This shows that attention was given for school wide academic problems as compare with school efficiency, methodology and specific classroom skills.

It was found that all titles listed by teacher respondents were confined to six major issues. These were students' dropout and lateness, achievement in specific subject, disciplinary problems, female students' achievement, students' participation in co-curricular activities and miscellaneous. In some of the action research products; the method widely used was traditional quantitative approach, percentage.

As researcher noticed, almost all sample schools had not developed action research strategic plan. Most of the principals of sample schools were newly assigned who could not know what was happening in their schools concerning action research. Some teachers did action research by their own initiative/motivation. Hence, there was little trend of identifying educational problems and seeking solution through action research. Almost all educational leaders in all levels were occupied with several meetings rather than school wide academic problems.

4.3. 2. Research Culture in CGAASS

If there is an understanding that action research has a contribution in order to improve educational quality, the existence of supportive research culture in the school setting could be mandatory. In this regard, teachers in the study were asked if there was research coordinating committee (unit) in their schools.

Table 8: Availability of Action Research Coordinating Committee in CGGAASS

No	Items	Responses					
			Yes	No	Other s		
1	The presence of action research coordination committee in school	No	26	117	10		
		%	15.7	76.5	6.5		
2	If answer is “Yes” for question number 1, how do your evaluate?		Very high	Highly	Mode rate	Low Very Low	
		No	1	2	-	15	8
		%	3.9	7.7	-	57.7	30.75

According to Table 8, the majority of the respondents 76.5% (117) confirmed the absence of research coordinating committee in their schools. However, 19.6% (30) replied that there was research coordination committee in their schools.

Similarly, the documents and reports of the schools, SCEO and CGAAEB confirmed that there were few research coordinating committees in the sample schools, yet they were not performing properly as expected. There should be research coordinating committee in all secondary schools, for they have responsibilities to motivate and plan for research works. This clearly signifies that the research coordinating committee in sample schools have played little role in fostering educational action research activities and encouraging the teachers for the research.

In line with this, teachers who had replied “yes” were asked to evaluate the contribution of the committee in fostering educational research

activities. As indicated in table 8, 57.7% (15) and 30.75% (8) evaluated its contribution in fostering educational research activities in their school setting as very low and low respectively. Only 3.85% (1) and 7.7% (2) replied the contribution was very high and high respectively. This finding cannot make a surprise by the response of those responded negatively or “no.” This indicates that there were few committees; yet, they were not effective in motivating and coordinating the research work in schools for enhancing quality of education.

Table 9: Research Related Activities in CGAASS

No	Items	Reponses					Mean	SD
		Very High (5)	High (4)	Moderately (3)	Lesser (2)	Never (1)		
1	To what extent do your staffs discuss how to achieve goals like seeking ways	-	1 (0.7)	18 (11.8)	122 (79.7)	10 (5.6)	2.96	.55
2	To what extent does your school identify educational problems and use action research in making decision for quality of education	-	3 (2.0)	25 (16.3)	116 (75.8)	9 (5.9)	2.88	.61
Grand Mean							2.92	

In order to probe into the school research practice, two additional questions were posed to the teachers. Out of 153 respondents, 11.8% (18) confirmed that their staff had discussed moderately, about seeking

ways of achieving educational quality through action research. On the other hand, 79.9% (122) of the respondents indicated that their staff had discussed lesser (rarely). Similarly, the majority of the respondents, about 75.8% (116) responded that their schools had lesser (rarely) utilized the research reports and findings in making decisions, whereas, about 16.3% (25) reported that their schools had moderately utilized research reports and findings to make-decisions. As the majority of the respondents ensured that the tradition of identifying educational problem and seeking solution to enhance quality of education was very poor.

As shown in Table 9, the Grand Mean score is nearly in between the rating value of lesser and moderately ($M = 2.92$). This implies that the practice of seeking solution for educational problems, using research reports and findings in making-decision process, and staff discussion on how to achieve quality of education goals through action research is found to be less promising.

As the existing body of literature in the field indicated, for the action research work, considering it as a process of educational quality improvement needs to focus on schools as social and educational institutions as well as teachers' pedagogical practices. The importance of recognizing schools as a professional community, with the responsibility for quality of education, gives distinct identity (Grundy, 1994). For this to happen, a research coordinating unit in a school might be necessary to facilitate conditions for sustaining the best school practices and solving educational problems by using action research. This can be true if the school uses the findings of the research for planning and decision-making process on educational improvement program.

As shown in Table 9, however, the results of teachers' questionnaire revealed that the practice of solving educational problems with action research in the sample schools was discouraging. The results of the interviews and focus group discussions also supported these findings. Hence, possible reasons and explanation can be mentioned from the interviews and focus group discussions. As explained earlier, some of the sample schools had organized the educational action research coordinating committees (units) even though the committees had not played meaningful role in the process of research for quality of education.

Concerning the presence of research coordinating committee in all sample schools, educational officers of Sub-City (L₃ and L₄) confirmed that the establishment of research units in different schools and office level was practical for few years. Through these units, there were many activities done, reported and utilized. But due to structural change there is not relation with school coordinating committees and monitoring mechanisms. Now, the line of relationship is disconnected (15/03/2010). As all interviewees agreed, the performance of the research coordinating committees'/units in SCEO and CGAAEB level was almost ineffective. There are some coordinating units in school level in the form of research clubs.

4.4. Leadership Role in Promoting Action Research for Education Quality

4.4.1. The Practice of Educational Authorities Involvement and Support in Action Research

In the process of making education more qualified (improved) through action research, teachers who have conducted and/or supposed to conduct action research, need support from school principals and educational officers. The support expected from principals and officers might range from updating teachers' knowledge and skills, giving feedback and facilitating necessary research conditions.

Table 10: Involvement of Principals and Educational Officers in Action Research

No	Items	Responses				Mean	SD
		Highly	Moderately	Lesser	Not at all		
1	To what degree the educational leaders do participate in action research activities at your school	7 (4.5)	7 (4.5)	90 (58.8)	49 (32)	3.18	.720
2	To what degree does the school principal support action research activities in your school	10 (6.5)	18 (11.7)	86 (56.2)	39 (25.5)	3.01	.799
Grand Mean						3.095	

It can be seen from Table 10 that the support at schools as well as SCEO and CGAAEB levels was low. For example as shown in Table 10, 90.2% (139) of the respondents claimed that educational officers, especially, the supervisors and educational research coordinators had lesser/never given the necessary support to school teachers.

Similarly, 81.7% (125) of the respondents, reached consensus that the school principals had lesser/never support teachers to conduct action research by reducing workload. Moreover, 65.4% (100) felt that the principals had lesser/never involved in action research activities. As a result of study indicated, the school principals and educational officers had not provided and did not fulfill the necessary support which initiates teachers' commitment to conduct action research for quality of education since the Grand Mean (3.095).

The above finding shows that the involvement of the principals and SCEO/CGAAEB officers in action research was found generally minimal. The support provided to teachers who had done and supposed to do action research was also considerably low. In a related issue, one of the principal interviewees, (IP₂) mentioned the following:

Even though I am the principal of the school, I have no idea how to conduct and plan for action research. I must know first, the concept of this kind of research. The educational officers should train and equip all factions concerned in all levels. Otherwise, teachers cannot do anything individually. Since action research is very important to enhance quality of education, all educational leaders in different levels must internalize the concept and methodology (20/03/2010).

As per information obtained from the documents, interviews and focus group discussions, the participation of educational officers of SCEO and CGAAEB was very restricted.

On the other hand, detail information could not be obtained about their research practices because most of the principals and educational officers were newly assigned.

4.4.2. The Practice of Dissemination of Research Findings in CGAASS

As discussed in the literature part, dissemination of the findings of action research helps to “cross fertilize” and sustain the best practices among the targeted audience in similar institutions of the system. To deal with the practice of disseminating the research findings, a question was posed for teachers who had conducted action research, if the results of their research work disseminated to the intended audience.

Table 11: Dissemination of the Research Findings in CGAASS

No	Items	Responses		Chi-square (X ²)
		No	%	
1	Have the results of your action research been communicated to the targeted audience?			9.65
	1. Yes	10	30.3	
	2. No	20	60.6	
	3. Other (s)	3	9.1	
	Total	33	100	
2	If your answer to question number “1” is “Yes” in what ways?			
	A. Through seminar discussion	15	68.2	
	B. Through short leaflet	2	9.1	
	C. Through journal	2	9.1	
	D. Other (s)	3	13.6	
	Total	22	100	

*p<0.05=3.84

Accordingly, only 30.3% (10) of the respondents confirmed that the result of their research work was disseminated to the targeted audience, while 60.6% (20) replied that their research findings were not disseminated.

Chi-square was employed to test the difference between teachers whose research findings were disseminated and whose research findings were not disseminated to targeted audience. The result showed that there was significant difference between the two groups since the calculated Chi-

square value ($X^2=9.65$) is greater than the critical value ($CV = 3.84$) at 0.05 Alpha level.

As Table 11, depicts, teachers who replied that their research findings had been disseminated were further asked in what ways their research findings were being disseminated. Among teachers who conducted action research 68.18% (15) reported that their research result was disseminated in seminars, while, 9.09% (2), 9.09% (2) and 13.64% (3) indicated that their research findings were disseminated through short leaflet, journal and other means respectively.

According to the above data, disseminating the results of the research is part of the problem. It is essential to share the best practices with schools in the region. As utilization process, dissemination of the findings to the intended audience seems neglected. As discussed so far, there was no trend of disseminating best research works to the targeted audience through seminar, written reports, etc. at Bureau and Sub-City levels.

The interviewees of CGAAEB and SCEO (IL₂ and IL₃) accepted that there was negligence to utilize the result of the research. The reasons they provided were associated with shortage of human resource in CGAAEB and SCEO, and shortage of budget. However, the SCEO said that the way of arranging a mechanism to disseminate the research products among clusters in order to exchange knowledge to each other, as IL₅ expressed (15/03.2010).

4.4.3. The practice of Remuneration in CGAASS

Teachers who conducted action research were also asked about the kind of incentives/reward that they received for their research work.

Table 12: Remunerating best Teacher Researchers in CGAASS

Item	Responses	
	No	%
What kind of incentives (reward) did you receive for your action research work?		
A. satisfaction by trying to solve problems	40	57.1
B. Career promotion	6	8.6
C. Financial support	5	7.1
D. Letter of recognition	15	21.4
E. Other(s)	4	5.7
Total	70	100

Surprisingly, the majority of the respondents, 57.1% (40) reported that they had satisfaction by trying to solve the educational problems. Only 8.6% (6) of the respondents confirmed that they had career promotion, while 21.4% (15) replied that they had received letter of recognition, and 7.1% (5) obtained financial incentives. On the other hand, 5.7% (4) responded that they had different achievements such as successful completion of courses at university/college study in doing research works.

At this juncture, work related rewards/incentives may serve as motivational strategy for teachers to perform certain activity, like conducting action research in school setting. In this regard, Grundy

(1987) has reiterated that by engaging in action research, teachers should find professional satisfaction in pursuing their own desires and ideas about the nature of teaching and students' learning.

There must be an incentive to those who conducted action research, which in turn implies that motivated teachers can perform their tasks in a better way than these de-motivated. As IP₆ described, the incentives make teachers more motivated in day-to-day activities and in overall educational improvement as they are key role players (29/02/2010).

4.5. Conditions that Facilitate and/or Hinder Teachers' Involvement in Action research

In order to probe the facilitating conditions, teacher respondents who had conducted action research were asked to indicate items from first to eighth based on level of importance. These items were analyzed on the basis of their level of importance to give each a numerical score as presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Factors Facilitating CGAASS Teachers' Engagement in Action Research

No	Facilitating Factors to do Action Research	Responses	
		Mean	Rank
1	The different courses you had taken during your university/college study	2.85	1
2	Research workshops/seminars, in-service training	1.83	5
3	Your private reading of research reports and research guidelines for updating yourself.	2.52	2
4	The school principal support.	1.95	4
5	The collaboration of your colleague	2.25	3
6	Sub-City Education Office (SCEO) support	1.63	7
7	City Government Addis Ababa Education Bureau CGAAEB officers support	1.55	8
8	SCEO Teacher Association support	1.75	6

As Table 13 presents, the majority of the respondents indicated that the different courses they had taken during their university/college study was the most important factor to help them conduct action research. In this regard, a single case can be taken from the focus group discussion

that was held in 15/03/2010 as a case in point. As P₅ remembered the situation bitterly, two years ago (2008), when he was a fresh teacher, the Induction Course Module that demands conducting action research was given to him without any supporting materials and guideline. He confirmed that no one helped him during his production of action research, except the course he had taken during his study and his personal effort of reading different research related materials.

The second important factor was the teacher's private reading of research reports and research guidelines. The collaboration of teacher colleagues was placed the third important position. Following this, the school principals and research coordinating committees' support was also the fourth important element for facilitating action research in schools to enhance quality of education.

Perhaps the most surprising result for this part was comparatively low score of the research related workshops, seminars and in-service training. Similarly, most respondents felt that the support of SCEO (especially, the supervisors and the educational research experts) gave very low support. The contribution of CGAAEB and SCEO Officers' support was insignificant and teachers who had conducted action research ranked them 7th and 8th, being the least.

However, the Sub-City Offers who were in charge of facilitating the schools' research situation confirmed that they were offering different workshops and in-service training for teachers. The training and workshops were made for teachers inviting one teacher from each school. The purpose of this training was that those teachers who got training would train the rest of the teachers and promote educational research activities in the schools (IL₃ and IL₄, 17/03/2010).

On the other hand, the CGAAEB Officials who were included in the study admitted that the fragmented training and workshops they had offered for teachers and principals and their supervisory service was not adequate (IL₁ and IL₂, 14/03/2010). Therefore, all the above situations cannot make someone surprise the teachers' dissatisfaction on the support of SCEO and CGAAEB Officers.

Table 14: Factors Negatively Affecting CGAASS Teachers' Engagement in Action Research

No	Items	Responses	
		Mean	Rank
1	Little recognition by principals, SCEO/CGAAEB	3.50	6
2	Lack of knowledge and experience to do action research.	3.24	7
3	Lack of awareness about the contribution of action research for quality of education	3.81	5
4	Absence of research trend in the school	3.20	8
5	Lack of research facilities (library, references, material research guide or model, etc.)	4.08	2
6	Lack of financial support and reward	3.87	4
7	Little enabling environment	3.89	3
8	Overload in teaching and in other committee activities	4.19	1

As indicated in Table 14, overload in teaching and lack of knowledge and experience were rated, above the rating value of high (4) and ranked first and second respectively. The mean rating of items little enabling environment, lack of financial support, and lack of awareness about the contribution of action research were closer to rating value of high (4) and ranked from third to fifth, while items little recognition, lack of knowledge and experience, and absence of research trend were the rating value of the average (3) and ranked from sixth to eight respectively.

This shows that none of the factors listed have been seen as the lesser impact on teachers engagement in action research even though they have different degree of impact.

Among the factors which were considered as impediment for teachers to conduct action research overload in teaching and in other committee activities, lack of knowledge and experience of research, and little enabling environment were mainly identified by the respondents as the most serious factors that deter them from engaging in action research activities.

Moreover, the factors such as lack of financial support, lack of awareness about the contribution of action research for quality of education, and due to little recognition and motivation for previous research works by the local educational authorities by the respondents as serious factors that made the teachers refrain from involvement in action research activities to enhance to bring educational quality in CGAASS.

On top of this, the responses of teachers on the factors such as discouraging working conditions, lack of research competence, and lack of awareness about the contribution of action research for quality of education, were markedly characterized by indecision (uncertainty). This ambivalent position denotes that teachers' poor involvement in action research might be due to neither discouraging working condition research incompetence, nor lack of awareness about the role of action research.

However, this tendency of choosing ambivalent position does not mean that the factors do not have negative impact on teachers' engagement in action research. Instead, it signifies that since those teachers distanced themselves from involvement in action research due to various reasons,

they may have skeptically seen their awareness about the contribution of action research for educational quality improvement, their research competence, and working conditions of the school.

In other words, it seems that teacher respondents did not prefer to stand on either side. As depicted in Table 14, vividly, from the major twin factors (personal and institutional) which, were perceived as impediment, the institutional factor (external) were identified by teacher respondents as the top four most serious factors, whereas, the personal factors were placed by the teacher respondents as the bottom two least influential factors.

Based on the above data, one can easily conclude that overload in teaching and in other committee activities, lack of research facilities, limited research environment, and lack of financial support were the most serious impediments for most CGAASS teachers to involve in action research. Similarly, these findings seem to be congruent with what Seyoum (1998) reported regarding constraints of research activities among secondary school teachers in Addis Ababa.

Concerning institutional (external) influential factors, recent study by AED/BESO II (2007) on the Ethiopian primary school teachers' involvement in action research had also revealed similar findings. However, as this study revealed, personal factor like research knowledge and skill (research competence), lack of adequate training about the contribution of action research were found to be the major impediment that deter teachers from involvement in action research.

On the other hand, as the result of interview with principals and educational officers confirmed, personal and institutional factors

impeded teachers from involvement in action research even though variations were observed on the degree of impact.

The results from principals' interview, teachers' explanation showed overlapping in institutional factors like school research culture, overload in teaching and other activities, and lack of financial support had more negative impact than personal factors on sample school teachers. This was, however, difficult for educational officers (interviewees, IL₃ and IL₄) to agree. For example, educational officer interviewee, IL₂ believed that most CGAASS teachers have mainly lacked educational research competence, awareness and attitude towards action research that belong to personal factors. He further expressed that teachers had seen their involvement in educational action research as tiresome and tedious activity that could not bring any comparative advantage for them as researchers. Some teachers have little knowledge and skill to do action research for educational improvement. Even some teachers do not have positive attitude about action research (10/03/2010).

One of the interviewees of CGAAEB officers (IL₂) also felt that most CGAASS teachers' awareness was not that much encouraging. According to his observation, they have perceived that involving in action research as a huge task that demands special knowledge and extra time (29/02/2010). The result of interviews with IL₂ and IL₅ which were held on 19/03/2010 respectively, aligned with above argument.

The teacher respondents were also asked in open ended questions to give their suggestions on what they think was worthwhile to overcome the above problem and promote action research among teachers in CGAASS.

- ❖ The schools must discuss thoroughly with teachers about how to solve educational problems through action research. The reports must be utilized by teachers themselves and schools.
- ❖ Schools and SCEO/CGAAEB should initiate and encourage teachers to involve in action research. Incentives should be given to those strived in resolving educational problems through using action research.
- ❖ School libraries should be well organized and equipped with adequate and relevant research materials and current research journals.
- ❖ Workshops and in-service trainings should be given to all levels consistently to update their understanding on research activities.
- ❖ Educational researchers should present their research works to stakeholders and /or send a copy of their findings to research settings. Teachers should also strive to update themselves by frequently reading research books, journals and share research related materials with their colleagues.
- ❖ School principals and SCEO/CGAAEB should have the necessary knowledge and skills about the relevance of action research and how to conduct. This knowledge enables them to facilitate research conditions.

Generally, the above suggestion from teachers implies that the members of school community should involve actively in a struggle to improve the quality of education.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the current CGAASS in enhancing quality of education through action research. To accomplish this purpose, the study has attempted to enlighten the issues, prospects and challenges of the practice with the intention of recommending possible solutions which would help to sustain best practices and ameliorate the challenges. As indicated on page six, five basic questions were formulated to facilitate the study on:

- teachers' research competence for quality of education,
- research practices to identify and solve educational problems,
- role of leadership in enhancing quality of education,
- factors affecting and/or facilitating action research;
- and measures to be taken to ameliorate challenges and effectuate adequate action research works in CGAASS.

In order to find out answers to the basic questions and provide substantive conspectus of the research setting, a variety of data gathering instruments, such as, questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were employed. Interviews were held with three SCEO Officers, two CGAAEB Officers, and six principals. Three focus group discussions were held with 15 participants, school "A", "B" and "C" teachers and research coordinating committee members. To this effect, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for data collection and data analysis.

Before beginning the actual data collection from teachers, the questionnaire was piloted with twenty randomly selected teachers in one of the CGAASS, Limat Minch preparatory school which was not included in the main study. Then, item analysis was computed by 'Cronbach's Alpha and the reliability coefficient was 0.85, 0.76 and 0.73 for perception, research practices, and affecting factors respectively.

After refining the three items contained in the questionnaire, it was distributed to 180 teachers in the three sample schools. Even though 157 copies of the questionnaire were returned, four of them were incomplete. Eventually, 153 cases were used for data analysis.

The analysis of numerical data, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and percentage), Chi-square and total mean score were computed. Based on the results of quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the major findings were summarized as follows:

1. The majority of teacher respondents (76%) had shown positive perception towards the contribution of action research for quality of education. For example, 74%, 64% and 63% of the respondents had indicated that action research can be useful for empowering self-evaluation potential of teachers to bring quality education, sustaining or promoting good shared school value and planning and decision-making for educational improvement respectively.
2. The study revealed that the majority of teacher respondents (90.8%) had confirmed that they had taken research methodology course during their university/college study. Among the teachers who had taken methodology course, 93.5% of all, confirmed that the course was useful in conducting action research. On the other hand, however, most teacher respondents seemed to have real problem solving research skills in the natural setting. Even though

most of them had the chance to participate moderately (58.8% and 66%) in workshops and in-service training, and read research books and journals had less competence respectively. At the same time, 64.7% of the respondents admitted that they had lesser shared research related information with their colleagues.

3. It was also observed that only 21.6% of the teacher respondents replied that they had conducted action research in their current schools. The majority of the respondents with the rating of 78.4% had not involved in action research. Some of the reasons, which impeded these teachers from involvement in action research, were overload in teaching and other committee activities, lack of research facilities, lack of conducive environment, lack of financial support, and insignificant recognition by SCEO/CGAAEB.
4. The findings of the study showed that 70% of the action research titles listed by teacher respondents were school wide academic issues, such as, students' achievement, discipline and school efficiency while 20% of them focused on specific classroom problems. This indicates that teachers gave priority for school wide academic issues than other issues.
5. Research coordinating committees were not formed in most sample schools, SCEO and CGAAEB. As a result of this and adequately action research plan was not structurally implemented, hence, unable to bring educational quality.
6. The results of this study portrayed that the practice of solving educational problems using action research in CGAASS was found very poor. For example, 75.8% of the teacher respondents replied

that their schools did not utilize the research findings for enhancing quality of education and decision- making purposes.

7. The results have shown that 81.7% of the respondents showed dissatisfaction on the school principals' lenience to reduce overload of teaching for teachers who conduct action research. Moreover, 90.8% felt that educational officers did not provide the necessary support to school teachers. Furthermore, 62.4% believed that the principals did not directly involve in action research activities.
8. Out of the teacher respondents who conducted action research, 64% reported that their research works were not disseminated to the targeted audience. Most of them replied that seminar like discussion was the means of dissemination of their research works.
9. The majority of the teacher respondents who conducted action research (57.1%), claimed that they did not receive any incentive or proper recognition, except professional satisfaction obtained from doing the research.
10. The findings of this study demonstrated that the major facilitating conditions that helped teachers to do action research were the different courses that they had taken during their university/college study, their private readings of research reports and research guidelines, and the collaboration of their colleagues.
11. The results of this study depicted that among the factors perceived as impediment were: absence of supportive research culture in the schools, lack of financial support (incentives, rewards and

remuneration), overload in teaching and in other committee activities, and lack of research facilities were identified by the teacher respondents as the most serious factors which deter them from engaging in action research activities.

12. Another crucial challenge for improving quality of educational activity with action research in CGAASS was found to be the unsupportive educational research culture. The findings of this study depicted that the practice of identifying the causes of educational problems and seeking sustainable solution by using action research was at undeveloped stage. Moreover, the tradition of utilizing action research reports and findings for planning and decision- making purpose has not yet been developed in most CGAASS.

This study uncovered that the involvement and support of the principals and educational officers in promoting action research in CGAASS, to make schools more effective was minimal. However, the effort of giving written feedback in SCEO, for school teacher researchers' works seemed to be not encouraging. Based on the above findings, one cannot conclude that CGAASS are well equipped with the necessary theoretical and practical research knowledge and skills.

5.2. Conclusions

The summary given above highlights the major points in the different aspects of enhancing quality of education through action research in CGAASS. The conspectus of these findings leads to the following major conclusions.

The study can be concluded that teachers in CGAASS had positive perception towards action research and its role for quality of education. Even though the majority of the respondents had taken useful research methodology course during their university/college study, most of them had not updated their action research knowledge and skills by further reading relevant research books or journals, sharing educational research related information with their colleagues, and getting chance to participate in research seminars or workshops.

The study revealed that the involvement of CGAASS teachers in action research for quality of education has not yet been significant. Besides this, the trend of action research in CGAASS was not treated with training manual and evaluating criteria of the research works to make schools enable to enhance quality of education. Moreover, the CGAASS lacked action research strategy, implementation and evaluation of its effectiveness.

The findings of the study also portrayed that the effort of local educational authorities' making CGAASS teachers' research works disseminate was found very minimal. Similarly, the motivational strategy for action research works in all levels was found as a major cause of dissatisfaction for most CGAASS teachers.

The findings of this study confirmed that the major impetus that help CGAASS teachers to conduct action research for the purpose of making education more effective were the research courses they had taken in Teacher Education Institutions, their private effort to read research books and materials, and collaboration with their colleagues.

On the other hand, the study also indicated that there was a high degree of agreement among teachers with overload in teaching and in committee

activities, lack of educational research facilities (reference materials, research guideline or model etc), lack of financial support and absence of research culture in the schools, were the major impediments for teachers to carry out action research for enhancing quality of education in CGAASS.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions drawn above, the following recommendations have been forwarded to educational authorities and other concerned stakeholders to practice action research for enhancing quality of education by using:

1. The endeavor of general quality of education improvement with action research could have been more successful, if all concerned stakeholders had jointly worked for quality of education. To this effect, the school principals should envision to create supportive research culture in the schools to ameliorate the challenges of school wide academic problems through action research. Moreover, SCEO or higher educational management bodies (CGAAEB/MoE) must find ways and means to promote and cultivate the effects of schools in identifying educational problems and seeking sustainable solution using action research.
2. Short-term refresher courses on practical educational action research should be designed and organized at CGAAEB, SCEO and school levels to make teachers stay current and advance their career. These refresher courses can be more effective if they are given by professional researchers together with best school teacher research performers.

3. The school principals and SCEO officers should “cross-pollinate” best research practices among the targeted audience at various levels. The school principals and SCEO/CGAAEB should also properly utilize the results of the research findings for planning and decision- making process.
4. In order to initiate and facilitate conditions for action research, cost effective contextual motivational strategy of the basis of the research quality should be designed at school and SCEO/CGAAEB levels. This mechanism is related to remuneration that needs to be accepted by all levels of stakeholders. To alleviate budgetary limitations:
 - o The schools should strive to make the local community to raise funds from various sources, such as, former students, etc. as a source of financial support for schools’ facilities and remuneration for best research performers.
 - o The SCEO/CGAAEB should allocate budget for action research activities and/or mobilize professional resources for this purpose. Moreover, the local educational authorities should strive to search for local NGOs for sponsorship.
5. Involving in action research demands personal efforts, commitment and sufficient time. Hence, it might be difficult for those teachers, who are overloaded in teaching and committee activities to engage in action research properly. Thus, there should be a systematic and wise use of time allocation by negotiation with work-overloaded teachers. Working in teams could be considerable to ease the burden of teachers in this regard.

6. Policy makers must give due attention to improve barriers of action research to promote teachers' participation and make schools as centers for knowledge.

7. The study was delimited to some aspects of the role of action research only to enhance quality of educational issues in CGAASS which did not revealed the picture of all problems. Thus, the problems require further investigation and thorough examination by other researchers.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU:	Addis Ababa University
ABEC:	Alternative Basic Education Center
AED:	Academic Educational Development
CGAA:	City Government of Addis Ababa
CGAAEB:	City Government of Addis Ababa Education Bureau
CGAASS:	City Government of Addis Ababa Secondary Schools
EGSECE:	Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination
EHEECE:	Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Certificate Examination
ESDP:	Educational Sector Development Program
ETP:	Education and Training Policy
IER:	Institute of Educational Research
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
MOE:	Ministry of Education
SC:	Sub-City
SCEO:	Sub-City Education Office
TGE:	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UNESCO:	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of action research in enhancing quality of education in CGAASS. To this end, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used for data collection and analysis. The subjects of the study were 153 teachers, 6 school principals 2 CGAAEB Officers, 3 SCEO Officers, and 15 FGD participants. A Questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers. Interviews were held with principals and educational officers to complement the information obtained through questionnaire. Focus group discussion was conducted with 15 teachers who were not included in questionnaire and research coordinating committee/unit members from three sample schools. Document analysis was also made to validate and triangulate information from different sources. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and percentage), Chi-square and total mean score were used to analyze quantitative data. The result of teachers' questionnaire, principals' interviews and focus group discussion were found significantly consistent on the issues raised. However, discrepancy was observed between the results of educational officers' interview and the information from teachers' regarding (perception and research competence) towards the role of action research. Teachers' potential towards action research was found not promising for 21.6% of them engaged in action research. The majority of the research works (70%) focused on fragmented and specific classroom skills rather than unified school wide academic issues. The practice of identifying the cause of educational problems and seeking solutions with action research was found at infancy stage in CGAASS. The involvement and support of the principals and educational officers in promoting action research for educational quality in CGAASS was found minimal and low. The major factors that impede teachers from involving in action research were: overload in teaching and other committee activities, unsupportive trend, lack of financial support, and lack of facilities in school for research work. Hence, it was recommended that the school principals and educational officers at various levels should create supportive research culture to overcome the challenges, short term practical refresher courses should be designed at SCEO and CGAAEB levels to build the capacity of the teachers for research competence. Principals and educational officers at SCEO and CGAAEB should promote best research works through structured and best research performances must be motivated in order to enhance quality of education.