ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

THE ENGAGEMENT OF TEACHERS IN ACTION RESEARCH AT PREPARATORY SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF BOLE SUB-CITY, CITY GOVERNMENT OF ADDIS ABABA

BY

MEGABIT NIGUSSA TOLERA

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APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS:

ADVISOR	**SIGNATURE**	**DATE**
EXAMINER (INTERNAL)	**SIGNATURE**	**DATE**
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ACRONYMS

AED: Academic Educational Development

BSC: Bole Sub-City

BSc: Bachelor of Sciences

CGAA: City Government of Addis Ababa

MOE: Ministry Of Education

MSc: Master of Science

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

TGE: Transitional Government of Ethiopia

ETP: Education and Training policy

UK: United Kingdom

UNESCO: United Nation Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to search the current status of teachers' engagement in action research in preparatory schools of Bole sub-city in the city of Addis Ababa government and to assess the present knowledge and skills of preparatory school teachers concerning action research. To conduct this study, systematic random sampling techniques was applied. The sample size includes 60 preparatory school teachers from different subjects of teaching, 6 school principals and 2 woreda education officers. Quantitative data has been collected concerning the knowledge and engagement of teachers in action research. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and this was supplemented by synthesis of the interview and document data to validate and triangulate information from different sources. Though 71.6% of the respondent teachers were engaged in action research and related activities, the level of their engagement was found very minimal, i.e., only estimated to 5% of their working time. This indicated that regardless of its importance in building baseline for the new generation, time given to action research in both schools is negligible. Moreover, the study indicated that, 94% of the teachers and 100% of principals confirmed that they had taken action research as a course during their university or college level education, however, significant number of the respondents confirmed that the knowledge and skills of teachers in conducting action research is not sufficient. Lack of research experience, lack of in-service research training, lack of skills in research methodology, lack of support and encouragement from the top management, lack of commitment to work collaboratively in conducting research among teachers and different personal factors were identified among the most important attributing barriers that hindered teachers' engagement in action research. In addition to this, teachers were not given the chance to take part in any short term training like workshops and seminars. Therefore, it seems to appear that teachers need to have training and hands-on practices to engage in action research activities so as to possess the required knowledge and skill to improve the status of current learning process. Teachers' effort to learn from their own experience and improve their practice in engagement and doing action research is an important means to teacher empowerment, school improvement and educational change.

CHAPTER ONE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Research is a systematic inquiry to describe, explain, predict and control the observed phenomenon (Babbie, 1998). It is the orderly investigation of a subject matter for the purpose of adding to knowledge. Research can mean 'research' implying that the subject matter is already known, but for one reason or another, needs to be studied again. Alternatively, the expression can be used without a hyphen and in this case it typically means investigating a new problem or phenomenon (Kenneth, 2005).

Within the realm of educational planning, many things are always changing: the structure of the education system, curriculum and textbooks, modes of teaching , methods of teacher training, the amount and type of provisions to schools such as science laboratories, textbooks, furniture, classroom supplies, and so on. These changes may lead to an improvement, or a worsening, in the quality of an educational system. Sometimes, they may result in no impact upon quality – in which case major government expenditures on such changes have been wasted. The educational planner working within this kind of environment must be able to undertake assessments of the effects of major changes and then provide policy advice that will consolidate and extend the post productive courses of action, and also intercept and terminate existing practices that are shown to be damaging and wasteful (Kenneth, 2005). Such higher education's issues and other bottleneck problems of the community require systematic investigation. Thus, educational research especially action research in educational institutions has much significance in this regards.

Action research is defined as any systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, administrators, counselors, or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or environment for the purpose of gathering information about how their

particular schools operate, how they teach, and how their students learn. More important, action research is characterized as research that is done by teachers for themselves. It is truly a systematic inquiry into one's own practice (Johnson, 2008). Action research allows teachers to study their own classrooms, for example, their own instructional methods, their own students, and their own assessments in order to better understand them and to be able to improve their quality or effectiveness. It focuses specifically on the unique characteristics of the population with whom practice is employed or with whom some action must be taken. This, in turn, results in increased utility and effectiveness for the practitioner (Parsons and Brown, 2002).

Among the other types of research, action research is directed to find the solution of immediate, specific and practical problems. It is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis 1986). It is a research initiated to solve an immediate problem or a reflective process of progressive problem solving led by individuals working with others in teams or as part of a "community of practice" to improve the way they address issues and solve problems. Kincheloe (1991) stated that if we are pushing teachers towards participation in educational research, we are in a position to evaluate the teaching-learning process and then defeat a bad teaching habit.

Over the years, action research has begun to capture the attention of teachers, administrators, and policy makers (Mills, 2011). Educators at a variety of levels have embraced it as something that makes conducting research a more "manageable" task and that brings about results that are more informative and have immediate and direct application. The general ideas underlying action research have been applied to a wide range of purposes: from trying to make organizations more efficient to generating healthier social groups, and addressing major social problems. In applications to education, action research addresses the problem of organizational effectiveness in school improvement application while simultaneously addressing the need to create a more

collegial and satisfying workplace so as to reduce the isolation that has separated teachers from teachers and teachers from administrators and community members.

The ETP has mentioned the importance of research and related competencies such as problem solving, creative thinking, and all rounded personality of the citizen. As indicated in article 2.2.6. (TGE, 1994) of the policy, emphasis is given to make education, training and research be appropriately integrated with development by focusing on research. The policy also emphasized the need to integrate and coordinate teaching with research and development.

Hence, action research is a practical approach and professional inquiry in a social situation. It also represents a scientific approach to problem solving that is considerably better than changes based on the effectiveness of untried procedures and infinitely better than no change at all. It is a means by which teachers can attempt to improve the educational process, at least within their environment. It is believed to have a potential value to enhance professional development of teachers and to improve students' learning. However, (Seyoum, 1998) put it quite nicely, "... it may be true that to date research activities in our high schools may not be common and popular". This idea also refers to the current preparatory teachers in Bole sub-city. Even though teachers as well as schools and woreda educational officials believed on the value of action research, the implementation of the Education and Training policy is not as such an easy task. Moreover, involvement of teachers in action research activities, and perceptions and facilities of schools for action research undertaking are said to be not an easy matters.

Academic for Educational Development has indicated that school teachers, apart from their responsibility of teaching, are expected to conduct action research in order to solve the day to day practical problems of education. This is a professional requirement for all teachers at all levels. Moreover, teachers are obliged to conduct action research for their professional growth and development, and promotion to the next professional career based on teaching and research outcomes (AED, 2006).

At high school and preparatory school levels, there is also high expectation that teachers can do action research. However, there were few evidences that indicate the extent to which teachers conduct action research to solve real educational problems in classrooms/schools (MOE, 2002). Hence, this study aims at examine in the engagement of school teachers in action research undertaking in preparatory schools of Bole sub-city in Addis Ababa. In this regard, the following basic research questions are entertained in the study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The issue that triggered my interest to undertake this study was the absence of any evidence that indicates the extent to which, the conditions under which, and the purpose for which preparatory school teachers conduct educational action research.

In the Ethiopian context, although the Education Training Policy recognizes action research as one of the priority tools to improve the teaching-learning process in schools, little is known about the practices and intensity of action research in the settings of preparatory schools. Thus this research study is initiated to bridge this gap and attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the knowledge and skills of preparatory school teachers concerning action research?
2. What is the level of teacher's engagement in action research at preparatory school?
3. What are the factors that enable or hinder teachers' engagement in action research?
4. What can be done to improve teachers' engagement in action research?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to assess the level of preparatory school teachers' engagement in action research.

More specifically it intends to:

- assess the knowledge and skills of Bole sub-city preparatory schools teachers concerning action research;
- determine the level of preparatory school teachers' engagement in action research;
- identify factors influencing preparatory school teacher's engagement in action research;
- identify directions to improve the status of engagement of preparatory school teachers in action research activities;

1.4. Significance of the Study

The result of this study will address the main pressing issues in preparatory school and might be used as an input to all the stakeholders. Particularly, teachers benefit from this study to improve their skills and knowledge to conduct action research. The findings of the study may also provide some feedback to practitioners and policy makers as well as concerned education officials such as managers at all levels in the sub-city on major issues related to the status of action research undertaking among teachers of preparatory schools. Therefore, it could optimize successful operation of action research in preparatory schools. The findings of this study may also serves as a stepping stone for further study in the field, and add insights to the already existing knowledge by providing some important ideas.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses only on the current teachers' engagement in action research in government preparatory schools in Bole sub-city, city administration of Addis Ababa. The reason behind selecting this sub-city is that; first, because the researcher has been working in the sub-city over a decade, he knows the seriousness of the problem regarding action research activities among preparatory school teachers in the sub-city. Secondly, since it is very difficult or if not impossible for the researcher to conduct research having a wider scope for he may face shortage of time and money; he is obliged to delimit the study to the selected sub-city. The study also delimited to investigate the knowledge and skills required of teachers to engage in action research, availability of resources and sustainable school culture.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

All teachers at different level of education are expected to conduct action research in Ethiopia. This study only focused on the practices of teachers doing action research in Bole sub-city preparatory schools of CGAA, which is mainly due to resource/logistic limitation. Regardless of the possibility of achieving many objectives at a time in a given research, this research is limited to exploring the magnitude of action research that has been conducted as a practice in major preparatory schools of sub-city. It is hoped that further studies would do more investigations covering other goals of research.

In this study, very limited numbers of preparatory schools were considered; hence it may lack external validity because of the sample size taken for the study. Therefore, it is advisable that future studies may need to take appropriate/representative sample size in to account to help and produce accurate result about the existing situation of the subject matter in the study areas.

1.7. Organization of the study

The study has five chapters. Chapter one of the study provides background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, organization of the study and definition of terms. Chapter two presents a review of related literature. Chapter three consists of the research methodology and design, chapter four comprises discussion and findings of the study and chapter five includes summary, conclusions and the recommendation.

1.8. Definition of Terms

The following are key terms and phrases, which are used in the context of the study.

Action research: Is the process of studying a real school or classroom situation to understand and improve the quality of actions or instruction (Henson, 2002).

Government school: a school fully runs by the government as per proclamation No. 260/1984. In this case schools run by either woreda education officers or regional education bureau.

Preparatory school: A school comprised of second cycle of secondary education (grades 11 and 12), article 3.2.3 (TGE, 1994).

School principal: Administrative head and a professional leader for school, who is subject to school system, policy and manages the school`s total program. For this study it refers to both principals and assistant principals (Dejnozka, 1984).

Teacher: A person employed in an official capacity for the purpose of guiding and directing the teaching experiences of pupils or students in public or private educational institutions (Good, 1973).

Woreda Education office: The immediate administrative level in which schools directly report to.

Woreda Education officers: Those officers who are working in the woreda education office. For the study it includes: Woreda education office head and woreda educational supervision section head.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

It is difficult to offer a comprehensive definition of the term action research for usage of the term varies with time, place and setting. However, if we carefully consider many of the definitions there are common basic themes: empowerment of participants; collaboration through participation; acquisition of knowledge; and social change.

2.1 Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Action Research

The origins of action research are unclear within the literature. Authors such as Kemmis and McTaggart (1990), and Zuber-Skerrit (1992), states that action research was originated by an American psychologist, Kurt Lewin. According to Freideres (1992), the concept of participatory research emerged in the 1970s from development work in low income countries and mentions names such as Fals-Borda and Freideres. Despite the clouded 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). According to McKernan (1991), action research as a method of inquiry has evaluated over the last century. Literature shows that action research is a root derivative of the scientific method reaching back to the science in education movement of the late nineteenth century.

Lewin's integration of action-taking into experimental social science research was published in 1946 in “Action Research and Minority Problems” and in 1947 in “Group Decisions and Social Change”. Both articles define action research as a three-step spiral process of (1) planning, which involves “reconnaissance or fact-finding”; (2) taking actions; and (3) fact-finding about the results of the action (Lewin, 1948).

Many educators believe that there is a close relationship between teaching and research in higher education. For example, Perry (1987) as cited in Berhanu (2008) holds the view that good teaching at both undergraduate and graduate level must be enlivened by the lecturer's own research and scholarly pursuits.

Teaching is the primary duty of teachers but there are also other activities that should be done by the teachers in the school compound. Action research is one of these activities. If the teaching learning process is not supported by action research, it won't give us the intended outcome.

According to Husen and Postlethwnite (1994), action research aims to help practitioners investigate the connections between, their own theories of education and their own day-to-day educational practices; it aims to integrate the research act into the education of setting so that research can play a direct and immediate role in the improvement of practice; and it aims to overcome the distance between researchers and practitioners by assisting practitioners to become researchers.

Nowadays, the close link between teaching and research is called up on to make schools the right educational center. Because teaching and research is a new genre and it is different from traditional research in terms of how it approaches the process of doing research in the classroom setting by teachers. It is school-based research focusing on the importance of teachers as knowledgeable experts about their own students and classroom. Conducting classroom based research increases or expands the view of the teacher's role as decision makers, consultants, curriculum developers and classroom researchers, and it enables teachers to improve their understanding of the context of educational change. Teacher research thus has the potential power to maximize both teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Kemmis and McTaggart, (1990) 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." This construction of action research theory by Lewin made action research a method of acceptable inquiry (McKernan, 1991).

Movements that have had historical and philosophical influences on action research are:

1) The science in education movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in which the scientific method was applied to education, notably in the work of Bain (1979), Boone (1904) and Buckingham (1926).

2) The experimentalist and progressive educational work, especially of John Dewey, who applied the inductive scientific method of problem solving as a logic for the solution of problems is such fields as aesthetics, philosophy, psychology and education (McKiernan, 1991).

3) The group dynamics movement in social psychology and human relations training was used in the nineteenth century to address the social problems of this era through qualitative social inquiry (McKiernan, 1991). It was again utilized in the 1940s to address some of the problems (such as the onslaught of World War II, inter-group relations, racial prejudice, and social reconstruction) being experienced at this time. One of the noted researchers of this time was Kurt Lewin. He discussed action research as a form of experimental inquiry based upon the groups experiencing problems. Social problems should serve as the locus of social science research. Basic to Lewin's model is a view of research composed of action cycles including analysis, fact-finding, conceptualization, planning, implementation and evaluation of action (McKiernan, 1991). In the fifties and, early sixties action research was used in the study of industry, it developed a committed following in the USA at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in the UK at the Tavistock Institute (McKiernan, 1991).

4) By the end of the 1950s action research was in decline and under attack. Sanford (1970) suggested that the decline was directly related to the split between science and practice which was supported by the movement, and to the shift towards the establishment of expert educational research and development laboratories. This shift highlighted the separation of theory and practice. Professional researchers were insulated from the teaching ranks and were prevented from studying problems in the field (McKiernan, 1991).

5) The teacher-researcher movement. This movement originated in the UK, with the work of (Stenhouse, 1975) and the humanities curriculum project. He justifies that teaching should be based up on research and that research and curriculum development were the preserve of teachers (McKernan, 1991). He also states that "other significant teacher research developments include the Ford Teaching Project, and the Classroom action Research Network."

2.2. Definition and Purpose of Action Research

It is difficult to offer a comprehensive definition of the term action research for usage varies with time, place and setting. However, if we carefully consider many of the definitions, there are common basic themes such as empowerment of participants; collaboration through participation; acquisition of knowledge; and social change.

According to reports in (McKiernan, 1991), "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." Clift et al. (1990) define action research as "a way of thinking that implies the use of reflection and inquiry as a way of understanding the conditions that support or inhibit change, the process of change, and the results of change." Changing one's own practices, therefore, is one of the chief features of action research.

According to (Zuber-Skerrit, 1991), the process that the researcher goes through to achieve aforementioned themes is a spiral of action research cycles consisting of four major phases: the planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Action research is concerned with diagnosing a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it in that context: it is usually collaborative- teams of researchers and practitioners work together on a project: it is participatory- team members themselves take part directly or indirectly in implementing the research and it is self-evaluative- modifications are continuously evaluated within the ongoing situation the ultimate objective being to improve practice in some way or other (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

According to Cohen and Manion (1994), the purpose of action research in school and classroom fall broadly into five categories:

1) It is a means of remedying problems diagnosed in specific situation or of improving in some way a given set of circumstances;

2) It is a means of in-service training there by equipping the teacher with new skills and methods, sharpening his analytical powers and heightening his self-awareness;

3) It is a means of injecting additional or innovatory approaches to teaching and learning into an ongoing system which normally inhibits innovation and change;

4) It is a means of improving the normally poor communications between the practitioner (teacher) and the academic researcher and of remedying the failure of traditional research to give clear prescriptions; and

5) Although lacking the rigor of true scientific research it is a means of providing a preferable alternative to the more subjective impressionistic approach to problem-solving in the classroom.

- Promotes the selection of research questions that are personally meaningful
- Encourages teacher-researchers to be active learners
- Increases willingness to accept research findings for use in teaching
- Encourages more critical and responsive consumers of research
- Increases teachers' knowledge about situations and contexts

Facilitates defense of pedagogic actions

- Strengthens connection between pure and applied research
- Increases commitment to goals they have formulated themselves rather than those imposed on them
- Increases opportunity to gain knowledge and skill in research methodology and applications

Grundy and Kemmis (1981), state that there are three minimal requirements for action research. These requirements incorporate the goals of improvement and involvement which characterize any action research-project.

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;

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,1982).

2.3. Concept of Action Research

Although, different authors give different definitions, it seems that there are general agreements in the conceptualization. According to Greenwood and Morten (1998), for instance, action research is a social research carried out by a team encompassing a professional action researcher and members of an organization or community seeking to improve their situation. As such action research promotes broad participation in the research process and supports action leading to a more just or satisfying situation for the stakeholders. Reason and Bradbury (2001), say that action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowledge in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory world view. They note that the basic assumption of action research is that people can learn and create knowledge on the basis of their concrete experience, through observation and reflecting that experience, by

forming abstract, concepts and generalizations, and by testing the implications of these concepts in new situations, which will lead to new concrete experience and hence to the beginning of new cycle.

2.4. Concept of Educational Action Research

The origin of action research is the social setting where social settings have to be improved. Hence the context becomes an important part of the issue under consideration. The state of educational research shows that the great majority of educational investigators are primarily interested in traditional scientific or what some call fundamental research. The reports of these imply that they believe that the primary purpose of educational research is to establish new generalizations stated as observed uniformities, explanatory principles or scientific laws. They try to test hypotheses in such away as to justify conclusions extending beyond the populations and situations studied. They make extensive use of sampling Theory and describe, within stated limits, population or situation universes. They are interested in discovering 'the truth (Corey, 1988).

The efforts of an educational investigator who is engaged in action research have different primary purposes. He / She does not immediately concerned with adding more 'truth' to that body of educational knowledge which appears in articles, monographs, and books. The action Researcher is interested in the improvement of the educational practices in which he he/she is engaged. S/he under takes research in order to find out how to do her/his job better –action research means research that affects action. His/her investigations are conducted in the situation which s/he wishes to handle more capably (Corey, 1988). This does not mean that the action researcher denies the importance of research which Establishes generalizations describing within stated limits. The educational action researcher works in a specific, dynamic situation and with specific and identifiable persons. In her/his studies the researcher tries to find out what ever s/he must in order to do a better job of, let us say, teaching a class of primary school pupils or specific

classroom situation. These intentions modify the nature of the statistics s/he uses in treating her /his data.

Context may dictate the working definition of educational action research (Reason and Bradbusry, 2001). Accordingly, situations in which action research may occur may include the following:-

- When teachers have to reflect and improve or develop their own work and their own situations by tightly inter linking their reflection and action.
- When teachers are to make their experience public not only to other participants but also to other persons interested in and concerned about the work and the situation.
- If data gathering by participants themselves or with the help of others in relation to their own questions is required.
- When participation in problem posing, in answering questions and in decision making is significant.
- If collaboration among members of the group as a ‘critical community' (of teaching) is required.
- When self-reflection, self-evaluation and self-management by autonomous and responsible persons and group sis considered.
- When learning progressively (and publicly) by doing and by making mistakes in a 'self-reflective spiral' of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re planning etc. are valued.
- If reflection which supports the idea of the '(self-reflective)’ practitioner is needed.

The above description elaborates the concept of educational action research. Zuber Skirt (1986) uses the acronym "CRASP" to describe action research. According to him, educational action research is critical (and self-critical), collaborative, reflective,

accountable (making the results of their enquiry public), self-evaluating and continuing professional development.

2.5. Characteristics of Action Research in Schools

The school is a social setting where different constituents interact to achieve a common, goal. The achievement of this dynamic social setting is influenced by the nature and changes occurring in its constituents. The teacher, as a professional with other actors, is expected to strive to improve the functioning of the school situation. As stated earlier, action research is a mechanism to improve a working situation and this is also true in school. Kemmis et. al, (1990) have argued and successfully introduced action research in teacher training at the primary and secondary levels.

At the school level action research is not only possible, but also appropriate particularly for at least five reasons which may again be summarized in the acronym "CRASP" model· mentioned above. Action research promotes a critical attitude, research in to teaching, accountability, self-evaluation and professionalism. All of these are important goals anywhere in the world. These goals have been stated and demanded frequently in recent years, but they have not been achieved satisfactorily, because they are difficult· to put into practice. Action research may provide a practical solution to this problem.

Through, systematic investigation, teachers can become more professional, more interested in pedagogical and other aspects of the school and more motivated to integrate their research and teaching interests in a holistic way. This in turn, can lead to greater job satisfaction, better academic programmers', improvement of student learning and practitioners' insights and contributions to the advancement of knowledge in education. Elliot (1988) provides the following characteristics· of action research in schools.

1. Action research in schools investigates human actions and social situations which are experienced teachers.

2. The aim of action research is to deepen teacher's understanding of her/his problem.

3. Action research espouses theoretical stance in which action intended to change the situation is temporarily suspended until a deeper understanding of the practical problem has been achieved.

4. In explaining what is going on action research tells a story about the event.

5. Action research interprets what is going by relating to a context of mutually interdependent contingency.

2.6. Activities of Action Research in Schools

Action research encompasses research, action, participation and reflection. Elliot (1990) presents practical guide to do action research at school. Following are descriptions of the activities involved in the action research cycle from his/her perspectives. These are primarily written in light of his/her experience of trying to help teachers do action research.

2.6.1. Identifying and Clarifying the General Idea

The general idea is essentially a statement which links an idea to action. In other words, the general idea refers to a state of affairs or situation one wishes to change or improve. One should avoid issues which one can do nothing about. The argument is that questions like the relationship between socio-economic status and achievement, between ability and a tendency to ask questions in class, may be interesting but they have tenuous links with action. There are certainly ideas which cannot easily be linked with one's actions and should be avoided, even though one may find them theoretically interesting.

However, there are states of affairs which one can link with actions but remains unsure about the extent to which something can be done about them. For example, if pupils are

dissatisfied with the way they are assessed, this obviously affects the teacher's capacity to help them learn. But he or she may feel that the mode of assessment which prevails is something little can be done about. Nevertheless, it is worth to suspend the teacher's judgments for a time in order to explore whether there is some action he or she could take to ameliorate the worst effects of the system he or she is constrained to operate with.

The important criteria for selecting a general idea are whether the situation refers to impinges on ones field of action; and is something one would like to change or improve on the extent to which one is able to change or improve on it is a question which action research should address, rather than assume an answer to. Another thing to take in to account in selecting a general idea as a focus is that one may have misunderstood the nature of the problem; or what needs to be improved. Thus, pupils' dissatisfaction with the way they are assessed may merely be a symptom of a much deeper problem, which needs tackling the problem rather than merely treating the symptom. The original general idea may need to be constantly revised during the process of action research. This is the way it is allowed for this possibility in every cycle of the spiral, rather than fixing the focus of the research at its beginning.

2.6.2. Reconnaissance

Reconnaissance is a process where a preliminary exploration about the issue under consideration is made. This activity can be sub-divided in to two components; describing the facts of the situation and explaining the facts of the situation.

(a) Describing the facts of the situation

One needs to describe as fully as possible the nature of the situation wants to be changed or improved on. For example, if the problem is pupils' wasting time in class' one will want to know things like:

- Which pupils are wasting time?

- What are they doing when they are wasting time?
- Are they wasting time doing similar or different things?
- What should they have been doing when they are wasting time?
- Is there a particular point in the lesson, or time of day, or set of topics, where pupils waste time the most?
- What are the different forms in which wasting time manifests itself?

The collection of this information can provide a basis. For classification of the relevant data, e.g. generating categories, classifying the different kinds of time wasting which goes on.

(b) Explaining the facts of the situation

Having collected and describing the relevant contingencies, or critical factors, it is possible to pose questions which have a bearing on the state of affairs described. In asking these questions one moves for a description of the facts to a critical analysis of the context in which they arise. This involves:-

(1) Brainstorming and generating explanatory hypotheses.

(2) Hypothesis testing.

A hypothesis may be cited for a relationship between the facts of the problem situation and some other factor(s) operating in its context. When teachers introduce factual information in person, either in written or verbal form, pupils may be prevented from evaluating it, since they will tend to interpret such interventions as attempts to get them accept its truth. However, through brainstorming around a problem, generating some hypotheses; one can then proceed to gathering information which is relevant to testing them. For example, evidence can be gathered about the extent to which one uses tense like 'good', 'interesting', 'right', their effects on pupils' classroom responses; and the ways pupils interpret their use. The gathering of this evidence may also suggest further

explanations of the problem situation, which in turn leads to more gathering of information. Even when one has tested hypotheses and found them to apply, they should retain the status of' hypotheses' rather than' conclusions 'since one can always encounter instances where they do not apply, and which will prompt a search for more comprehensive explanations. The process of analysis is an endless one, but in action research it must be interrupted for the sake of action. And the point of interruption should be when one has sufficient confidence in the hypotheses to allow them to guide action. Thus, the introducing factual information hypothesis does not tell one not to introduce factual information in person, and instead to give pupils independent access to it, e.g. looking it up in the library or resource centre. But it does provide some guidance. It suggests, for example, that an alternative strategy would be to make one's expectations of how pupils are to use the information one introduces much clearer to them.

2.6.3. Constructing General Plan

The general plan of action should contain:-

1. A revised statement of the general idea, which by now is likely to have changed, or at least been clarified further.

2. A statement of the factors one is going to change or modify in order to improve the situation, and the actions one will undertake in this direction, for example; 'I will modify the way I introduce factual information to pupils by clearly explaining what they are to do with it.

3. Although some models suggest one action step per cycle should be taken, others' experience tells that it is often necessary to undertake a cluster of steps at every cycle.

4. A statement of negotiations one has had, or will have to conduct with others before undertaking the proposed course of action. A teacher may need to negotiate some of the· action she or he proposes with colleagues, or a supervisor, whose capacity to do

their job properly could be influenced by the effects of the proposed change, or perhaps even intervene unconstructively if not consulted.

As a general principle, the initial action steps proposed should lie within areas where the action researchers have the maximum freedom of decision. Later, if it becomes clear that the only solution to the situation lies in 'negotiated action', then the planning should involve the relevant people. However, it is worth noting on the initial general plan what negotiations will have to occur later if certain actions are to be undertaken.

1. A statement of the resources one will need in order to undertake the proposed courses of action, example materials, rooms, equipment, etc.

2. A statement of the ethical framework which will govern access to and release of information.

One must ask the question: can the information I gather about other people's activities and views be missed by me and those I disseminate to (and whom could such misuse harm?) If the answer is 'yes' then one should try to give people a measure of control over one's access to their activities and views, and over the extent to which the information one gathers should be released to others. The key concepts here are confidentiality, negotiation and control.

It may not be only those immediately involved in the field of action that should have a say in these matters. Others only indirectly involved may nevertheless be harmed by them is use of information. For example, a head teacher may have to reap some of the consequences of information released about classroom practices in his or her school. One may therefore need to state clearly what his or her rights are over the release of information about the school. The general plan, therefore, should include a description of an ethical frame work which has been discussed and agreed up on with the relevant persons.

2.6.4. Developing the interventions

Here one decides exactly which of the courses of action outlined in the general plan one is going to implement next, and how both the process of implementation and its effects are going to be monitored. It is important to remember the following:

(a) One needs to use monitoring techniques which provide evidence of how well the course of action is being implemented.

(b) One needs to use range of techniques which provide evidence of unintended as well as intended effects.

(c) One needs to use arrange of techniques which will enable one to look at what is going on from a variety of angles or points of view.

2.6.5. Implementing the interventions

It may take some time to succeed implementing a course of action. It usually implies changes in all the participants' behavior. For example, a teacher cannot change his or her role (or some aspect of it) without corresponding changes in his or her roles in the classroom. And this may take time if the proposed action involves a fairly radical shift of teaching role. The length of time necessary to secure implementation may depend on the frequency of contact the teacher has with the group of pupils involved. Or it may depend on the extent to which he or she is able to analyses the cause of the implementation problem. In other words, he or she may have to shift away from simply monitoring the extent to which the action is implemented and undertakes one reconnaissance in to the underlying causes of the difficulties experienced. As a result the general idea of what the problem is, and what needs to be done about it, may have to be modified or changed.

Even if the action step is implemented with relative ease, it may create some side effects which require a shift in to reconnaissance in order to understand how these arise. And this in turn may require some modifications and changes to the general idea and the general

plan of action. As the action researcher shifts from simply monitoring the implementation and effects of an action step into a period of reconnaissance, he or she may need to select a wider range of monitoring techniques from the battery outlined later in this chapter. Multi techniques will help to secure amore penetrating grasp of the situation. When the need for an amended plan of action begins to emerge from the reconnaissance undertaken, the writing of a case study can help to generate ideas about future possibilities for action at the next cycle.

2.7. Types of Action research

There are many types of action research according to different pedagogical professionals. But the following types of action research are more familiar to the title of this research study.

Grurndy (1988) discusses three modes of action research: technical, practical, and emancipatory. Similarly, Holter and Schwartz-Barcott (1993) discuss three types of action research, that of a technical collaborative approach, a mutual collaborative approach and an enhancement approach.

2.7.1. Technical Action research

The technical type of action research is aimed to 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 facilitator (Grundy, 1987).

2.7.2. Practical Action Research

The practical 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).

2.7.3. 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.

2.8. The Importance of Action Research

Regarding to the importance of action research, many scholars describe it in different ways. However, they are summarized as follows:

2.8.1. It can fill the Gap between Theory and Practice in Education

Among other things, research is used to build theories that in turn help determine the best practices in education (Johnson, 2002). These practices are then used to help teachers create effective learning experiences. However, sometimes the gap exists between researchers conducting and reporting their educational research and teachers practicing in the field (Hensen, 1996). That is, what goes on in schools often does not reflect the wealth of research related to best practice in teaching and learning. According to Hensen (1996) and Johnson (2002) action research is one solution in bridging the gap between theory and practice.

2.8.2. It can Empower Teachers to Become Agents of Change

Book (1996), Erickson (1986), Hensen (1996) made clear that action research also facilitates teacher empowerment. Teachers are empowered when they are able to collect their own data to use in making decisions about their schools and classrooms.

Johnson (2002) in his words states that: Empowered teachers are able to bring their talents, experiences, and creative ideas into the classroom, and implement programs and strategies that best meet the needs of their students. They also are able to use the

methodologies that complement their own particular philosophy and teaching style. According to Book (1996), the top-down approaches sometimes used to manage schools and solve classroom problems create an external locus of control that inhibits teacher empowerment and thereby lessens the effectiveness of school.

2.8.3. It Enhances Professional Growth and Development

In regard to teachers' professional growth and development, Hensen (1996) describes the following benefits of action research:

- It helps teachers to develop new knowledge directly related to their classrooms;
- It promotes reflective teaching and thinking,
- It expands teachers' pedagogical repertoire,
- It puts teachers in charge of their craft,
- It reinforces the link between practice and student achievement,
- It fosters an openness toward new ideas and learning new things, and
- It gives teachers ownership of effective practices.

Thus, providing teachers' time and incentive to engage in action research projects and giving them a platform to present their findings and engage in professional dialogue with peers enhances their professional growth and development, which in turn moves the field of education forward.

2.8.4. Action Research is Like an In-service Training

It can also be used to replace teacher in-services as a means of professional growth and development (Johnson, 2002). According to Berliner, et al. (1996), traditional teacher in-services are often ineffective. That is, teachers are gathered, usually after a long day of teaching or on a busy workshop day, to listen to an expert describe an approach or methodology that often does not related to their classroom situation or align with their teaching style. Birman, et al., (2000), on their part also state that these traditional in-services generally do not give teachers sufficient time, activities, or content to increase their knowledge or affect their practice. Therefore, to be effective, in-services need to be longer or extended over multiple sessions, contain active learning to allow teachers to manipulate the ideas and enhance their assimilation of the information, and align the concepts presented with the current curriculum, goals, or teaching concerns (Johnson, 2002).

2.8.5. Action Research Prevents Teachers from Being Forgotten

According to Altrichter, H. et al. (1993) by communicating to the public, deep knowledge and experience can be achieved and it is advantageous to the improvement of practice. While reporting, participants have the opportunity to discuss, raise questions, getting feedback and criticism and forwarding supplementary ideas could also be realized. It is helpful to improve the knowledge and practice of the reporter teacher and at the same time is useful to other teachers and professional communities to gain knowledge from the findings. These activities will enhance the interaction between teachers and the community at large and at the same time highlights the importance and contribution of teachers.

2.8.6. Action Research is a Means to Influence Educational Policies

If the report has rational arguments and is convincing, then it has a power to improve the policy when disseminated to a large group of people, hence the possibility of reaching the appropriate and decision-making people is high (Altrichter, H. et al., 1993).

2.8.7. Action Research Helps the Teachers to Develop Confidence

After so many years of service, most of the teaching population assumes that their work is routine and they make themselves isolated due to dissatisfaction. However, reports on research result indicated that it is possible to alleviate this kind of problem through making visible such professional development activities to the public (Altrichter, H. et al., 1993). There are three possibilities to undertake action research in schools to develop teacher's self-confidence:

First, a single teacher is operating on his own with his class. There is a felt need on his/her part for some kind of change or improvement in the teaching learning or organization for example and were in a position to translate his ideas in to action in his/her classroom. He/she is as it were, both orientation within himself or herself.

Secondly, action research may be pursued by a group of teachers working co-operatively within one school though of necessity functioning against a bigger backdrop than the teacher working solo. They may or may not be advised by an outside researcher.

Thirdly, there is occasion where a team of teachers work alongside a team of researchers in a sustained relationship, possibly with other interested parties like advisers, university departments and sponsors, on the periphery. This third possibility though potentially the most promising may also be the most problematic at least initially because of rival characterizations of action and research by the teachers and researchers respectively.

Advocates of action research believe that little can be achieved if only one person is involved in changing his/her ideas and practices. For this reason, cooperative research tends to be emphasized and encouraged.

2.9. The Required Knowledge and Skills in Action Research

2.9.1. Practitioners' Knowledge

In order to the practitioners for change their own practices, they need to have knowledge that leads them to take action which is closely related to knowledge. According to Schon (1983) knowledge in action is inherent in the action and is the essential part of the epistemology of all professional practice, including teaching. As for Park (2001) we need to broaden the existing epistemological horizons to include forms of knowledge' associated with various human concerns. They are discussed here under.

2.9.1.1. Representational Knowledge: Functional Subtype

One subtype of representational knowledge comprises the portrayal of a thing, a person, an event or an experience as being related as a variable to some other variables in a functional manner, as in saying that one variable is a function of another in a mathematical sense; correlation and causal relationships are good examples of representational knowledge. The instrumental power of representational knowledge in this functional form lies in its capacity to make predictions by showing antecedent events leading to probable consequences, which makes it possible, in theory, to produce desired events or to prevent undesirable ones (Park, 2001).Therefore, the action researcher equipped with such knowledge, is then in a position to control events, with varying degrees of success.

2.9.1.2. Representational Knowledge: Interpretive Subtype

In contrast to the functional subtype, interpretive knowledge manifests itself as understanding of meaning and requires that the knower come as close to the to-be-known

as possible. This means taking into account the backgrounds, intentions and feelings involved both in understanding human affairs and textual and other kinds of, artifacts that are human creations (Park, 2001).

According to Park (2001) the interpretive process requires an attitude of openness and willingness to listen to the message emanating from the object of interpretation. Thus, the knower and the known participate in the process of knowing in which what they bring to the encounter merges together. As park (2001) nicely put it, interpretive knowledge is synthetic and integrative, rather than analytic and reductive.

2.10. Factors That Enable or Hinder the Engagement of Teachers in Action Research

In spite of many progresses made in educational research practices in Ethiopian second level of secondary education, there were multiple casual factors that hindered the active engagement of teacher's in their duties of practicing educational action research that could be classified as human, material, economic, institutional, and motivational ones.

2.10.1. Human or Teacher Related Factors

The human factors determinant to the involvement of teachers to undertake educational action research includes educational level, years of teaching experience, field of specialization, perception towards educational research, interest to conduct educational research, and problem of research culture (personnel capacity or Knowledge, attitude, and skill) that were presented respectively as follows:

Interest to conduct educational research: Teachers interests in research are the major conditions to effectively conduct educational research (Abreham, 2004). Asrat (2007) found that most teachers in education lacked real interest in educational research; as a result, they are not engaged in it.

***Personnel capacity or knowledge, attitude, and skill*:** Lack of personnel capacity or knowledge, attitude, and skill to conduct educational research was also identified as a major impediment factor to secondary school teachers. For examples, Kothari (2003) stated that problem of conceptualization and problems relating to the process of data collection and related things as one of the major impediment factors in action research. Amare (2000) also reported that inappropriate use of statistics and uncritical adoptions of the opinions in the review of literature section as well as lack of knowledge in education research as another hindering factor. Similarly, teachers lack of research capacity in the areas of research methodology, quantitative data analysis, and report writing that has resulted to the "deterioration of the quality of both teaching and research work" has been reported as among the major hindering factors contributing to reduce the level of teachers' engagement in action research (Derebssa, 2004).

2.10.2. Internal or School Level Factors

Material factors: Especially related to material facilities were found as another determinant hindering factors in undertaking educational research. For instances, Derebsa (2004) listed 11 facilities [computers, printers, photocopy services, duplicating services, stationery, internet connections, conducive working offices, necessary office equipment, relevant reading materials, telephone services, and fax services]that hamper teachers in the participation to conduct their research. According to Asrat (2007), the status of educational research facilities in education faculty characterized by problems of relevant literature and educational documents, and office facilities in the past ten years hinders teacher's involvement in educational research activities.

Internal budget: As identified by various scholars, lack of earmarked research budget and/or research fund, has an impact on the role of teachers' researcher to discharge one of their basic roles-undertaking educational action researches.

Time: Heavy teaching load/shortage of time was also a factor to preparatory teachers' involvement in educational action research practices. Research work time may not be the serious determinant factor as compared to the other determinant factor such as lack of research background (skill) and lack of in-service training.

Leadership and Reward System: 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).

Collaborative and Assessment: Collaboratively doing action research for educational practitioners being engaged in the assessment and improvement of their own practice is an important factor that can be an individual tool, helping classroom teachers reconsider their teaching methods or to adapt in order to solve a problem. It can be used as a non-traditional and community-based form of educational evaluation that focused on improving teaching and learning, but also social and environmental factors that affect the nature and success of teaching and learning. 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). Therefore, lack of both collaborative work and monitoring and evaluation of the work done concerning the educational action research in a given school is believed to negatively affect teachers engagement in action research.

Generally speaking, the conceptual framework based on major factors that could influence the engagement of teachers in action research in different ways in this study presented in Figure 1 below.

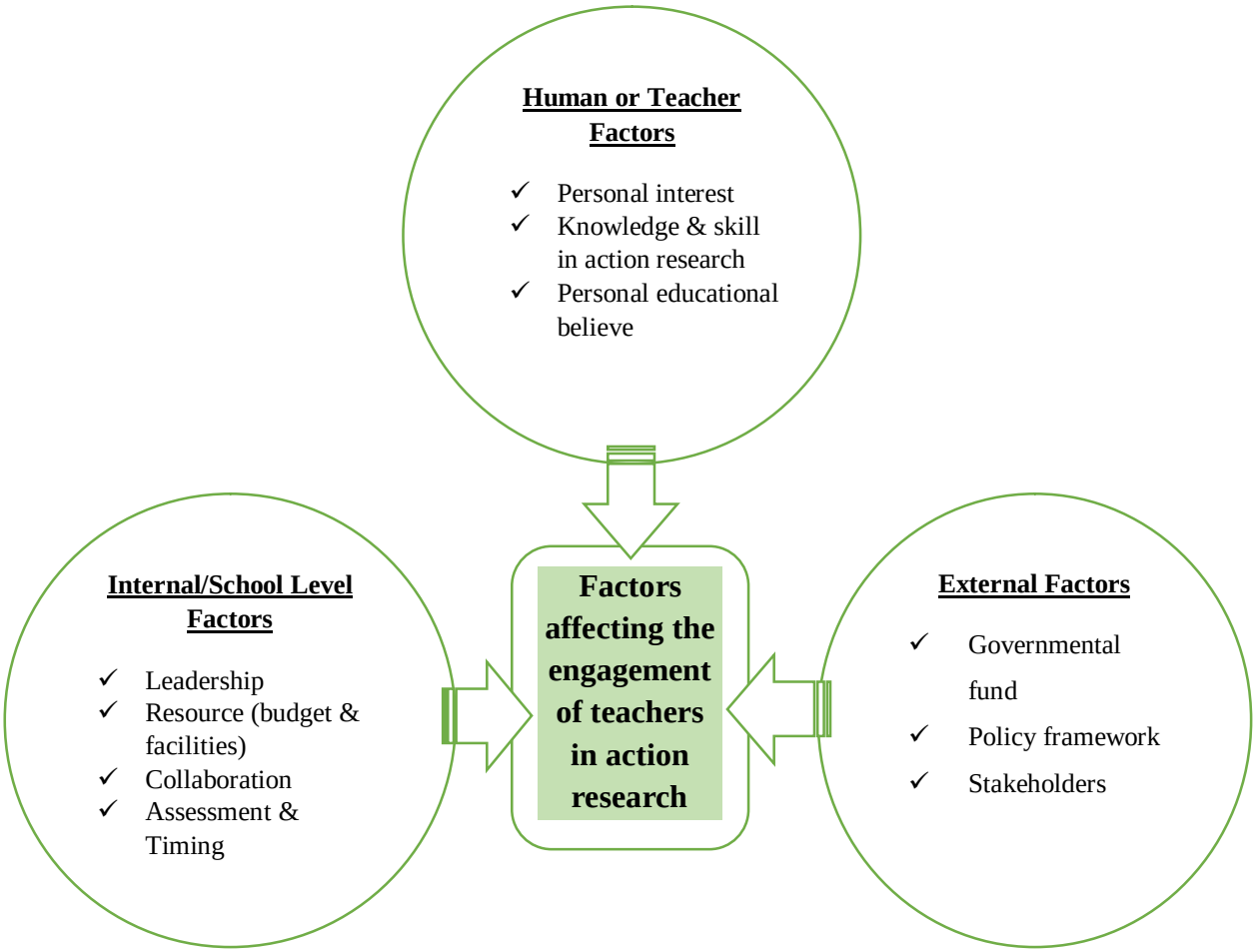


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the factors that influence teachers' engagement in action research.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Design and Methodology

Under this section, the major procedures followed to conduct the study were, population and size, the proposed tools (instruments) used in the data collection, and the methods of analyzing the data would be precisely described. The diverse origin of action research and its background in different paradigms and world views required the adoption of a multi method research approach that employed both quantitative and qualitative designs. In the quantitative design, the survey method was used to collect data from teachers through questionnaires. In the qualitative aspect of the design interviews from school directors, some educational experts from sub-city and document analysis were used to collect in depth data from school directors regarding the use of action research by preparatory school teachers and the implementation of these research out comes in solving educational problems.

3.1. Design of the Study

The mixed methods approach was used in this study because it enables to make investigations with prediction, narration of events, comparisons and drawing of conclusions based on the information obtained from relatively large and representative samples and of the target population. According to Trochim (2005), mixed method research is any research that uses multiple research methods to take of the unique advantages that each method offers. According to Creswell (2009), the time-intensive nature of analyzing both text and numeric data and incorporate elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches/combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms characteristics of this paradigm. Creswell (2009), also states that one advantage of mixed methods is opportunity to employ both open and closed-ended

questions as well as multiple forms of data collection possibilities. Moreover, mixed method research involves combining in single study techniques, methods, approaches and languages of both quantitative and qualitative tradition (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Hence, incorporating mixed methods into each action research cycle may help researchers secure a more systematic approach to action/intervention and provides a more solid ground for promoting sustainability of change. By capitalizing on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, mixed methods can help ensure better transferability of the action research study results to other contexts and community settings.

Furthermore, it helps to obtain statistical, quantitative results from the sample and follow up with a few participants to explain those results in more depth and to better understand a research problem by converging (triangulating) broad numeric trends from quantitative research and the detail of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). Accordingly, a mixed research design of concurrent study in which both types of data were collected at the same time and brought together in data analysis was employed. In this regard, quantitative research design, especially descriptive survey research method was employed with the intention of getting the general image of the engagement of action research activities and major influencing factors of research involvement among teaching staff of both Bole and Beshale senior secondary and preparatory schools.

3.2. Participants of the Study and Sampling Techniques

To make the sample size manageable, the populations of the study were limited to teachers, principals of preparatory schools, and some educational experts serving in Bole sub-city. There are two preparatory schools, two hundred fifteen preparatory school teachers and two principals and three vice directors in each Bole and Beshale senior secondary and preparatory schools, respectively.

The two schools were selected as target population of the study. Systematic random sampling is employed to select sixty teacher’s from two hundred fifteen teachers and all

school principals, vice directors from the target population and sometimes educational expertise from sub-city and woreda were participants of the study.

3.3. Instrumentation/methods of data collection

With respect to this, Creswell (2003) stated that employing multiple data collection instruments help the researcher to combine, strengthen and amend some of the inadequacies and for data triangulation.

The data for the study were obtained using both quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. Questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used to collect data from the participants.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire used for data gathering were closed-ended or open-ended and both and consist of three parts. The researcher preferred questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument because it is easier to handle and is simpler for respondents to answer within short period of time (Girma, 2010). Besides, it allows respondents to respond to questions anonymously. It tends to be more reliable, it encourages greater honesty and it is more economical than the interview in terms of time and money (Cohen et al., 2005). Furthermore, it serves to collect data from many respondents within short duration of time and with minimum costs (Gay & Arisian, 2000). The first part dealt with general information and the second part would assess the engagement of preparatory school teacher's in action research, the third part would contain different scales of measurements.

3.3.2. Interview

It can be used to explore and probe participant's response to gather more in –depth data about their experience and feelings, and to explore unplanned topics that might arise in the course of interview. It can help to explain data collected from other methods (Gay & Arisian, 2000). Interviews were conducted to support the data obtained through questionnaire about the engagement of teacher's in action research studies in solving educational problems. The interview consists of semi-structured and unstructured questions. Probing questions were asked to the interviewees to capture in-depth and detail information.

3.3.3. Document Analysis

Document analysis was also employed to triangulate the data obtained by questionnaire and interview on the research status and to get necessary information regarding how research is conducted and ongoing, as well as the legal issues related to research directions. With respect to this, Best & Khan (1989) stated that document analyses are important and relevant sources of data and useful in yielding information and exploring educational practice. To examine the engagement of teacher's in action research studies, research papers were analyzed to support the data gathered through interview, which are presented by the teacher-researcher at Bole sub-city preparatory schools.

3.4. Procedures of Data Collection and Administration

The researcher followed the following procedures in examining the problem under the study. In order to elicit the necessary data, a questionnaire, interview and data analysis were constructed based on the related literature. For the purpose of testing validity of the questionnaire, the researcher pilot tested the questionnaire on eight teachers and 2 principals at both preparatory schools and confirmed its reliability. The researcher

examined the filled- in questionnaire item by item and made some modifications on five questions. Before the actual collections of data, the researcher contacted the principals of the sample schools for their permission. The researcher then arranged convenient time for respondents in each sample school and woreda education office to elicit the necessary information and maximize the rate of return. Finally, data were gathered from sample preparatory schools' teachers and principals as well as woreda education officers as per the schedule.

3.5. Methods of Data Analysis

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. The quantitative data generated by questionnaires were structured, organized and framed to suit analysis and inference. The organization of the data was followed by the tables, percentage and frequency counts. This was employed to analyze various characteristics of the sample. This statistical tool helped to determine the relative standing characteristics such as sex, age, teaching experience and educational level which give detailed information about sample population. The data obtained through questionnaire would be analyzed by the qualitative data generated using interview, open-ended questionnaires, and document analysis. It would be analyzed qualitatively through narration, themes and structural pattern.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Descriptive Analysis of the Data

In this chapter, the results of the empirical study were reported. First, the respondent's feedback which is collected using questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted then the data obtained via interview with school directors, deputy directors and other administrative bodies were synthesized and presented.

Information synthesized from the school principals' interview indicated that some of students attending in Bole senior secondary and preparatory school were not satisfied by different subject teachers. Hence, some of them in most of their time, didn't appropriately attend their class rather they come out of the class and/or the school compound and stay at different places in/or around the school. Low motivations and lack of good preparation of teachers, lack of teachers' punctuality and other factors are believed contributed to this. Most teachers on the other hand, always follow their period and enter the class and after the class they stay in the refreshment hall for different recreational purpose rather than engaging in doing action research to find various methods of teaching that could help students to improve their learning outcomes.

In addition to this, both school principals always follow that whether the teachers are attending their period or not. However, most preparatory school teachers frequently feel and criticize research works as something irrelevant to their lives. It is also believed to be that many factors including inconsistencies among students, disciplinary problems, and high teachers' turnover have contributed to this gap. Therefore, with their mentality towards action research finding as having little importance. It is very difficult to put their findings into practice.

4.2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The purpose of the demographic information was to enable the researcher to describe the characteristics of the target population and capture every aspect of the schools considered to elaborate discussion of the findings. The questionnaire were distributed to 30 teachers and 3 principals in each school giving rise to 60 teacher respondents and 6 school principals at both Bole and Beshale preparatory schools of the Bole sub-city, city administration of Addis Ababa. All the questionnaires and interview distributed to the respondents were filled and returned to the researcher. Hence, rate of return of the questionnaire was 100%.

Demographic characteristics such as sex, age, as well as parameters such as teaching subject, educational level achieved, number of years the worker served in the school and weekly teaching load are presented below.

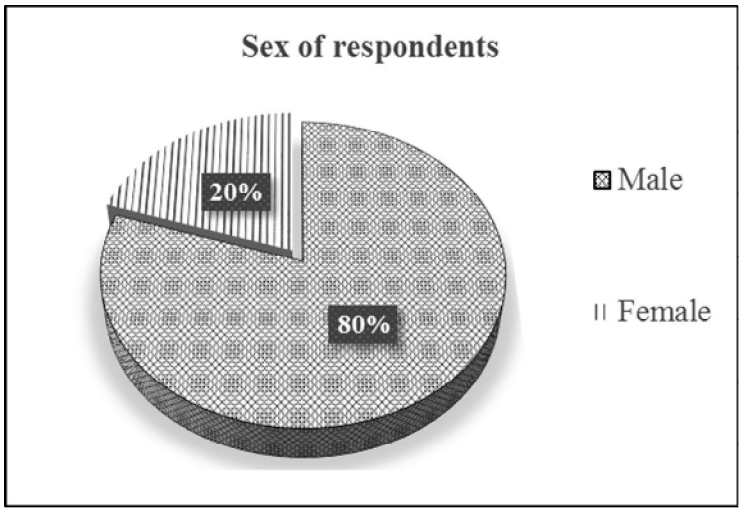


Figure 2. Proportion of sex of the respondents used in the study

As it was shown from Figure 2 above, the percentage of male and female respondents are 80% and 20%, respectively. Based on this figure, the proportion of female to male

teachers are 1 to 4. This indicated that the teaching staff of both preparatory schools are highly male dominated.

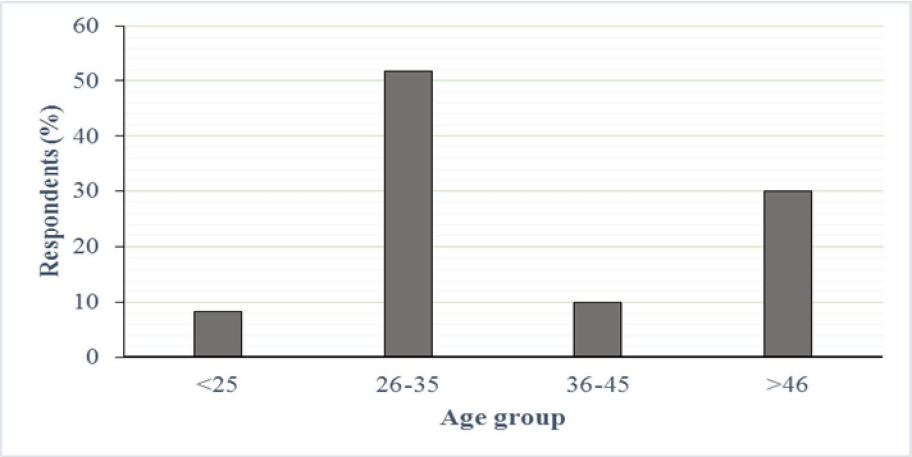


Figure 3. Age of the respondents.

Age group of the respondents are indicated in the Figure 3. Majority (51.6%) of the respondents were from the age group between 26-35 followed by the age group greater than 46 years old sharing (30%) of the total respondent teachers. This tells us the sample from both preparatory schools were occupied with energetic and most productive age group teachers.

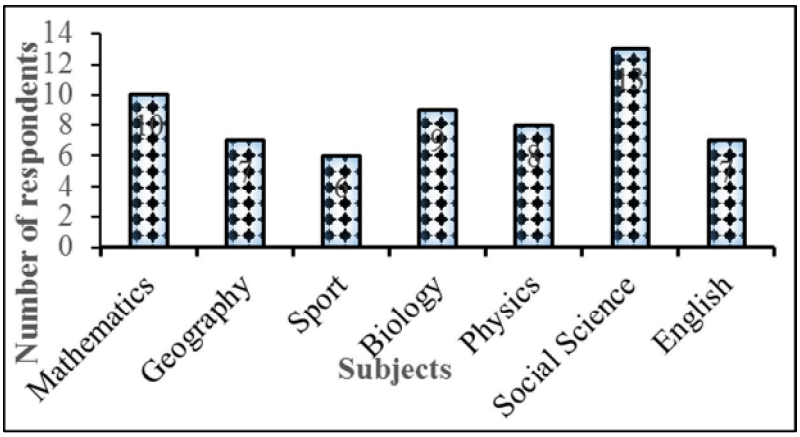


Figure 4. The number of respondents per each subject

The numbers of respondent teachers per teaching subjects are indicated in Figure 4 above. According to this figure, 10, 7, 6, 9, 8, 13 and 7 teachers were participated from

Mathematics, Geography, Physical Education, Biology, Physics, Social Science and English subjects in that order, respectively. This indicated that appropriate representation of the respective subject matters were made during sampling and this could help the researcher to draw conclusion about the existing situation regarding the engagement of teachers in action research.

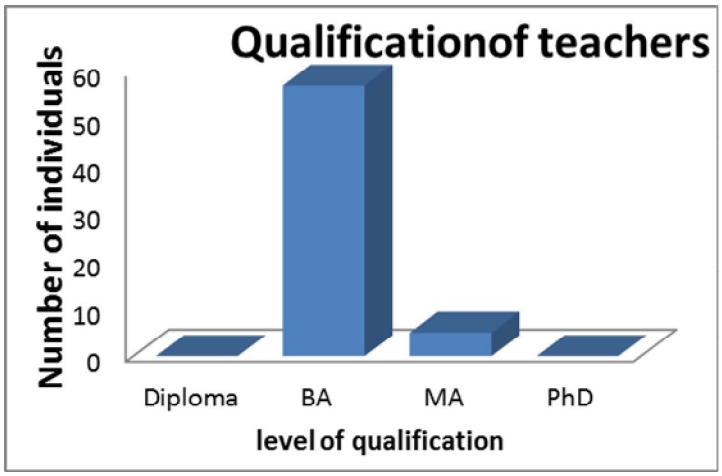


Figure 5. Educational qualifications of the respondent teachers

Regarding the academic qualification of the respondents, the majority 57 (95%) of the total respondents in the study are bachelor degree holders. But there were no diploma and PhD holders in both schools (Fig. 5). From this, one can easily judge that the majority of the respondents had no post graduate level education and lacks research experience and/or exposure that enable them to perform action research as much as possible. This is also supported by analyzing documents of both schools especially how much action research has been done per year.

Table 1. Proportion of Different Classes of Respondents' Professional Service Year in the Studied Schools

No.	Year service of the respondents	Number of respondents	Proportion of the respondents in (%)
1	<5 years	30	51
2	(6-10) Years	12	20
3	(11-15) years	5	8
4	(16-20) years	4	7
5	>20 years	8	14
Total		**60**	**100**

Proportions of different classes of respondents' service year are indicated in Table 1. Accordingly, majority of the respondents 51% of the school teachers have served only less than five years followed by 20% of the teachers served between (6-10) years. This reveals that the schools are largely served by young teachers who have high potential but less experience for the research.

Table 2: Weekly teaching load of teachers in the schools

Teaching load per a week	Number of Respondents	Proportion (%)
(6_10)	8	13.33
(11_15)	13	21.7
(16_20)	37	61.7
(>20)	2	3.33
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 2 shows that most of the teachers in the schools that (61.7%) have teaching load between 16-20 periods per week. On the other hand, there are small teaching load at both extremes like 3.33% of more than 21 periods per week. And 13.33% of the teaching load holding between 6-10 period per week indicating that these groups have enough time and

possibility to identify the problems and conduct an action research and contribute to the efforts made to solve the school problem. However, the information from the school principals' interview confirmed that the minimum and maximum teaching load is 6 and 15 between hours, respectively.

4.3. Knowledge and Skill of Teachers about Action Research before Employment

The result from the quantitative data analysis of teachers' involvement in action research before they have been hired in schools is indicated in the Figure 6 below.

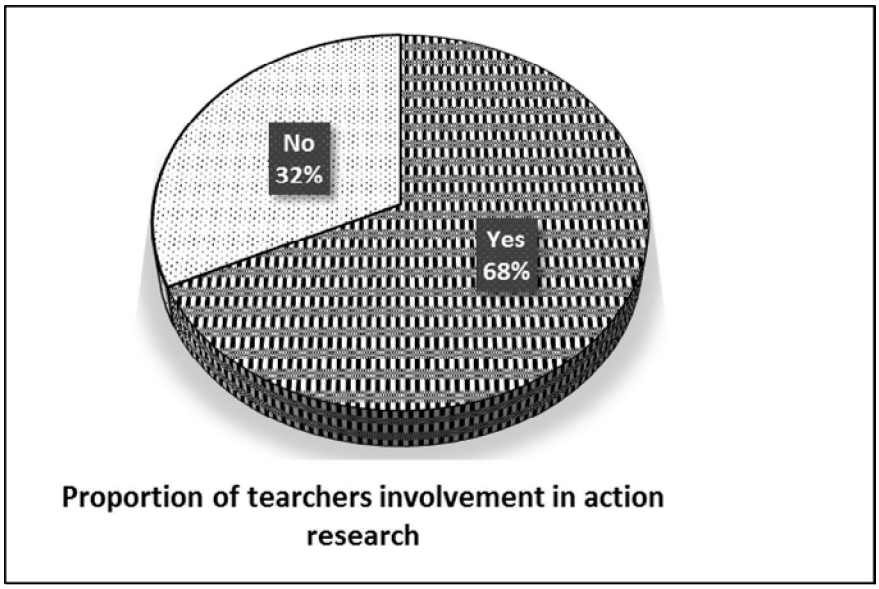


Figure 6. Teacher's knowledge of action research before they have been hired in the school.

Thus, 68% of the teachers have done action research before they were hired in the schools while 32% have not conducted before. This revealed that, largest proportion of teachers in the schools have had knowledge of doing action research and have enough potential to do action research. The result synthesized from the school principals' interview also confirmed that the majority of teachers' have knowledge and/or skills of doing action research. About 41% of the respondents were confirmed that the condition for the

involvement of majority teachers in action research before they were hired in the school was found for partial fulfillment of their bachelor degree, while 38% of them did action research in order to solve the problems of their organizations. As a result, it appeared that teachers of the schools can add an emotional and professional support to provide good knowledge and to shape the students in line with the objectives of the schools if they are fully engaged and applied their knowledge and skills of conducting action research.

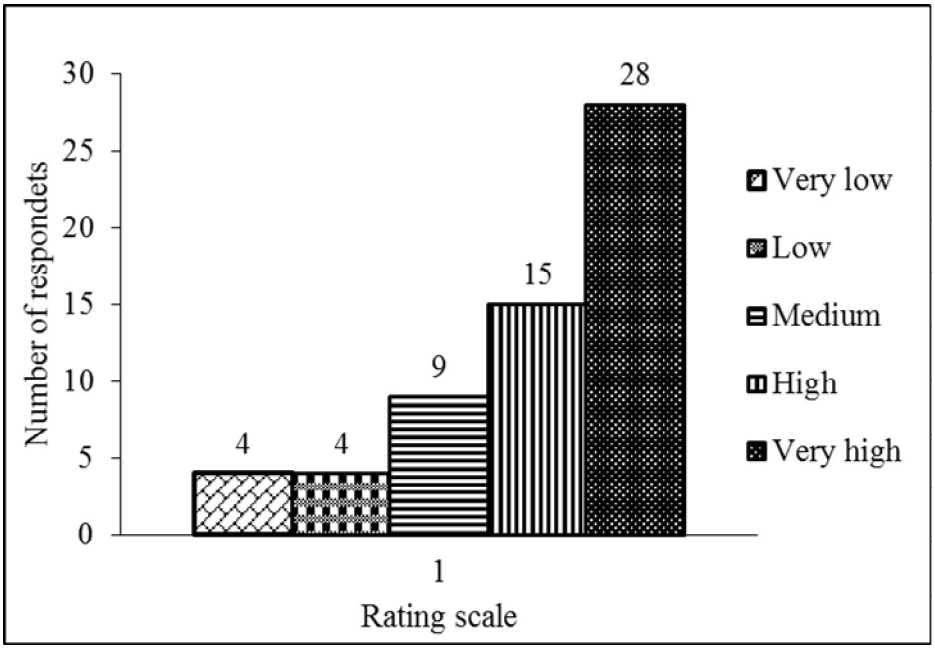


Figure 7. The importance of action research methodology in the schools.

Figure 7 shows the perception of the respondents towards the importance of action research methodology in the school. Almost 100% of the respondents described that they have taken research methodology during their university stay and believe the importance of research methodology in school development. The importance of research methodology in teachers understanding has a J-shaped nature. A smallest value of 4 to the highest of 28 of the 60 respondents were rated the action research methodology as very low and very high importance, respectively. This indicates that the teachers know the indispensability of research methodology to conduct action research in the school. Regardless of the importance of participations in seminars and workshops in updating teachers' skill and

knowledge of action research. However, majority (68%) of the respondents replied that they had not been given such opportunities. This may be due to lack of opportunities of workshop and seminars related to action research in the schools.

4.4. Teachers' Engagements in Action Research

In addition to this, information from the school principals confirmed that there is a plan for research undertakings in the school annual activity plan and the average minimum and maximum teaching load is 6 and 15 hours, respectively, revealing that teachers have enough time to conduct action research. However, the interest and level of teachers' engagement in action research is practically less. This may be due to lack of incentives, facilities and the like and the schools have been trying to solve the problem through discussing with researchers and different stakeholders.

Table 3. Proportion of time given to action research undertakings by the school teachers

No	**Hours/week (%) that teachers give for doing action research**	**Number of respondents**	**Of total teachers (%)**
1	< 5	43	71.6
2	5 – 10	15	25
3	11 – 20	1	1.7
4	> 20	1	1.7
Total		**60**	**100**

The quantitative data analysis revealed that majority of the respondent teachers had engaged in action research in their respective schools, but the level of their engagement as measured by the time allocated to action research is very less, i.e. 71.6% of the respondent teachers were engaged in action research and related activities in less than 5% of their time per week (Table 3). This indicates that the time given to action research in schools is negligible as compared to its value to build the base line of the new generation. The search

of the status of any educational research rather than action research in the schools is in line with the result of action research.

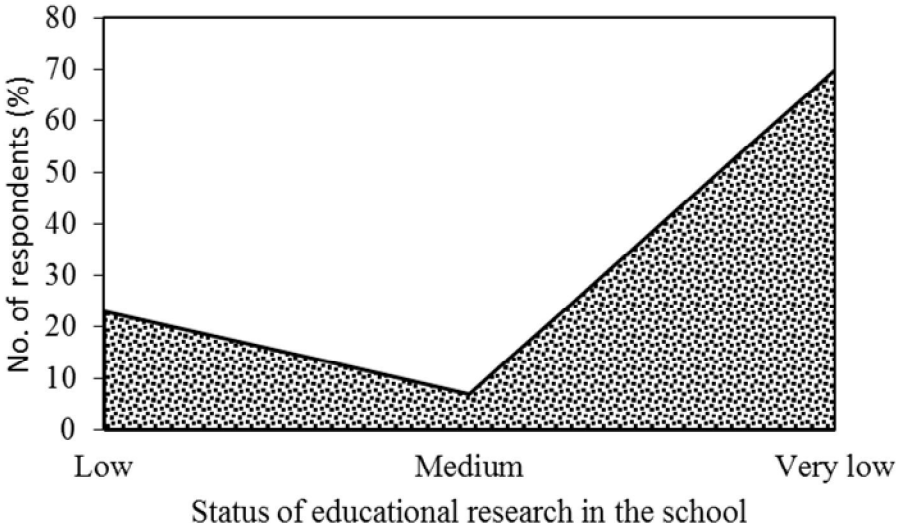


Figure 8. Status of educational research in the studied schools

About 70% of the respondents explained the educational research status are insignificant, whereas, 23% of the interviewee revealed that there is low status of educational research in the school (Figure, 8).

4.5. Factors that Enable or Hinder Teachers' Engagement in Action Research

4.5.1. Teachers' Related Factors

In order to determine teachers' attitude towards action research, eight different questions have been provided to the respondents.

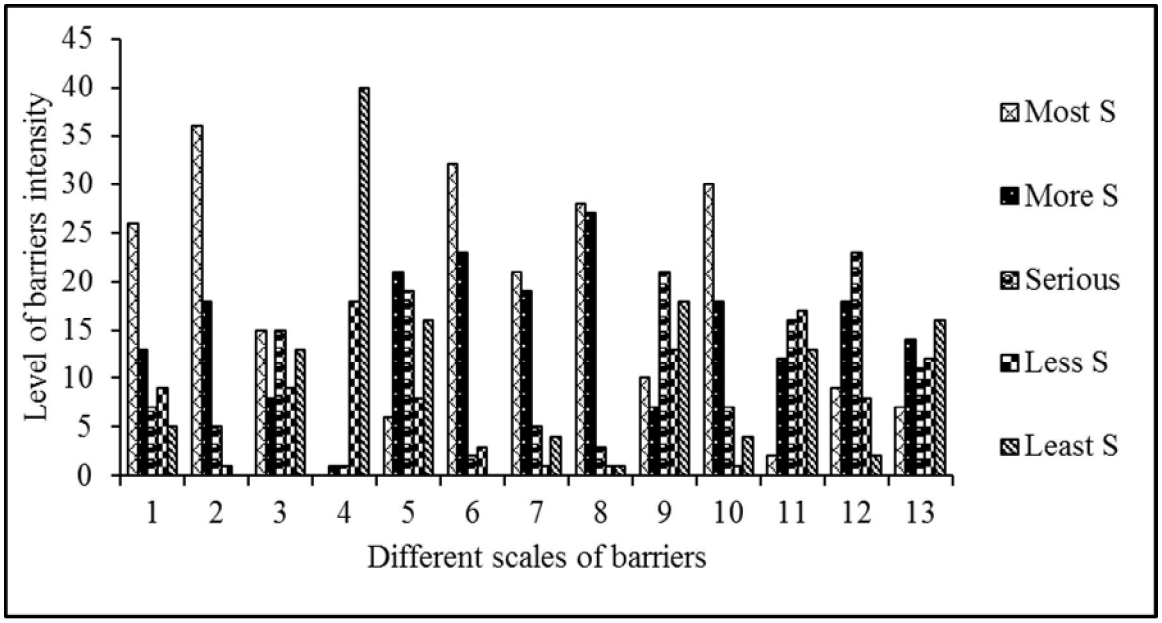
Table 4. The attitude of teachers towards action research activities

No	Teachers attitude towards action research activities	A/SA	DA/SD	UD
1	Research is the task of those who specialized in research and is not the concern and activities of every teacher in the school	9 (15)	51 (85)	0 (0)
2	Instructions could be more creative and improve teaching methods if teachers involve in action research	51 (85)	4 (6.7)	5 (8.3)
3	Action research contributes much in solving educational and societal problems	56 (93.3)	0 (0)	5 (8.3)
4	Conducting action research negatively affects effective teaching	10 (16.7)	50 (83.3)	0 (0)
5	Research should be given the same attention as to that of teaching	32 (53.3)	14 (23.3)	14 (23.3)
6	Research may pay a tremendous role in promoting quality of education	46 (76.7)	5 (8.3)	9 (15)
7	Considering teachers' research practices as criteria for promotion is unfair.	14 (23.3)	14 (23)	32 (53.3)
8	The expense of research in the school, outweigh teachers' contribution	32 (53.3)	5 (8.3)	23 (38.3)

Key: *SA = strongly agree; A = agree; DA = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; UD = undecided; values in the parenthesis are percent explained.*

As indicated in Table 4, 93.3% of the respondents were either agreed or strongly agreed that action research contribute much in solving educational and social problem. Similarly, 76.7% of the respondents agreed and/or strongly agreed that research could pay a tremendous role in promoting quality of education. However, 85% and 83.3% of the 60 respondents disagreed and/or strongly disagreed that research is the task of those who specialized in research and is not the concern and activities of every teacher in the school, and that conducting action research negatively affects effective teaching, respectively. Similarly, most school principals believe that conducting action research is the responsibility of all teachers and that action research is very important in educational and social problem solving, hence it contributes largely into educational development. For example, they were described that though there were no budget allocation from the government, conducting action research is the responsibility of teachers and the output of

such research in the school is primarily for the benefit of teachers themselves and for the development of the teaching-learning process. However, most teachers agreed that conducting action research is the job of teachers but they believe that there must be an incentive for those conducting the research.



Key: Most S = most serious, More S = more serious, Less S = less serious, Least S = least serious.

Figure 9. The effect of different barriers on the engagement of teachers in action research

According to figure 9, barriers include, lack of research experience, lack of in-service research training, lack of opportunity to participate in research seminars, lack of skills in research methodology, lack of research method knowledge and lack of commitment to work collaboratively in conducting research among teachers in that order are indicated as the most serious barriers for teachers' engagement in action research (Figure 9). Moreover, the result from the interview with principals and educational officers confirmed, in addition to the institutional factors, personal factors also plays a significant role in the level of teachers' engagement in action research.

4.5.2. Internal and External Factors Affecting the Engagement of Teachers in Action Research

The intended internal and external factors affecting the engagement of teachers in action research were indicated in Table 5. Accordingly, almost 50% of the respondents strongly disagreed that there is enough financial service to conduct action research in their respective schools. Similarly, most respondents felt that there is no support and encouragement from top management, particularly from the school to regional Educational Bureau management bodies to conduct action research in their respective schools. This was confirmed by the majority of respondents that agreed with the absence and/or unsatisfactory research incentives for undertaking action research in their school.

Among the many factors considered, majority of the respondent teachers were agreed and/or strongly agreed with that heavy teaching load at their schools consumed much of their time and minimized their time to conduct research. On top this, the responses of teachers on the factors such as frequent changes of personnel research units of the school could have affected research activities and on the factor that most teachers at the school have enough time to conduct action research and were markedly characterized by indecision. This kind of ambivalent position denotes that teachers' poor involvement in action research might be due to neither discouraging working condition, nor lack of awareness about the role of action research.

However, this tendency of choosing ambivalent position does not mean that these factors do not have negative impacts on teachers' engagement in action research. Instead, it signifies that since those teachers distanced themselves from involvement in action research due to various reasons which may be regarded as external factors rather than internal. This was confirmed by the result synthesized from the school principals' interview. According to this result, school teachers were not overloaded with teaching hours and have enough time to conduct action research. Therefore, this kind of idea contradiction may arise from lack of research interest among the teachers since most teachers expect incentives for each extra time they spent on research undertakings, which currently not existent but under discussion according to school administrators.

Moreover, most of the teacher respondents disagreed and/or strongly disagreed with the idea that there were adequate research seminars, workshops, and/or symposiums (in-service research training) in the school. But practically, in-service research training is believed among the most important factors contributing to enhance school research capacity of the teachers.

Table 5. Internal and external factors affecting teachers' engagement in action research

No.	Factors	Rating Scale				
		SA	**A**	**DA**	**SD**	**UD**
1	The financial service to conduct action research in your school is enough	10	0	20	30	0
2	Most teachers at your school have enough time to conduct action research.	10	0	25	0	25
3	Heavy teaching load at your school consumes more time of teachers and minimizes their time to conduct research.	10	20	10	15	5
4	Research incentives in your school are satisfactory	10	5	20	25	0
5	Research work is counted in teachers' professional promotion at your school.	10	25	5	15	5
6	There is support and encouragement from top management in your school.	10	10	10	30	0
7	Research and publication office of the school is organized to provide necessary support timely to enhance research capacity of teachers.	10	10	20	10	10
8	Research and publication section work closely with external organization to increase research fund.	5	5	15	20	15
9	Frequent changes of personnel research units /sections at the school affects research activities.	5	5	10	10	25
10	Administrative delay to get necessary material support	20	10	20	5	5
11	There is accessibility of data for those who conduct research in the school.	20	20	0	15	5
12	Research seminars, workshops, and/or symposiums (in-service research training) in your school are adequate to enhance research capacity.	15	0	20	15	10
13	Teachers in your school can get the copies of research works of their colleagues.	15	10	10	20	5
14	There is instructors collaboration with each other for action research activities in your school	5	0	15	20	20
15	In your school any action research outcomes are being utilized properly.	5	15	15	20	5
16	Administrative or committee responsibilities have no effect on teachers action research engagement	0	15	10	20	15
17	Adequate, research fund was assigned for research proposal	5	15	10	30	0
18	There is clearly specified budgetary procedure that ensures allocation of research fund on time as fast for conducting research	5	0	20	25	10
19	There is conducive policy environment for conducting action research.	15	15	10	5	15

Key: *SA = strongly agree; A = agree; DA = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; UD = undecided.*

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

- The schools must discuss thoroughly with teachers about how to solve educational problems in general and action research in particular.
- Schools 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.
- Workshops and in-service research trainings should be given to all levels consistently to update their understanding on action research activities.
- Educational researchers should present their research works to different stakeholders.
- Teachers should update themselves by frequently reading research books, journals and share research related materials with their colleagues.
- School principals and other top management bodies should have the necessary knowledge and skills about the relevance of action research and how to conduct it, so that which could enable them to facilitate research conditions.

Table 6: Respondents` opinion on the availability of fixed physical resources to teachers` engagement in action research

No	Facilities	Respondents	Statistic	Availability			Adequacy		
				Available	Not available	Total	Available and adequate	Available but not adequate	Total
1	Computer	Teachers N=60	No	7	2	9	13	38	51
			%	11.7	3.3	15	21.7	61.7	85
		Principals N=6	No	1	2	3	1	2	3
			%	16.7	33.3	50	16.7	33.3	50
2	Printer	Teachers N=60	No	13	1	14	22	24	46
			%	21.7	1.7	23.4	36.7	40	76.7
		Principals N=6	No	2	1	3	3	0	3
			%	33.3	16.7	50	50	0	50
3	Internet access	Teachers N=60	No	8	1	9	12	39	51
			%	13.3	1.7	15	20	65	85
		Principals N=6	No	1	2	3	1	2	3
			%	16.7	33.3	50	16.7	33.3	50
4	Laboratory services	Teachers N=60	No	6	38	44	2	14	16
			%	10	63.3	73.3	3.3	23.3	26.7
		Principals N=6	No	2	1	3	2	1	3
			%	33.3	16.7	50	33.3	16.7	50
5	Department office	Teachers N=60	No	48	1	49	8	4	12
			%	80	1.7	81.7	13.3	6.7	20
		Principals N=6	No	1	3	4	1	1	2
			%	16.7	50	66.7	16.7	16.7	33.3
6	Conducive working office with materials like chairs, tables…	Teachers N=60	No	2	2	4	6	50	56
			%	3.3	3.3	6.7	10	83.3	93.3
		Principals N=6	No	1	1	2	1	3	4
			%	16.7	16.7	33.3	16.7	50	66.7
7	Transportation services	Teachers N=60	No	0	49	49	6	6	12
			%	0	81.7	81.7	10	10	20
		Principals N=6	No	0	3	3	0	3	3
			%	0	50	50	0	50	50

On the other hand, respondent teachers were asked to give their opinion about another internal factor linked to fixed physical resources, and 80% of the respondents were replied that department office is available whereas, 61.7%, 65% and 83.3% of the respondent teachers responded that computer; internet services and conducive work environment were available but not accessible, respectively. However, 63.3% and 81.7% of the respondents in that order agreed that laboratory and transportation services are not available (Table 6).

Furthermore, insufficient transportation services and inadequate conducive working office with materials, each taking 50% of the respondent teachers, suggested other important factors affecting the level of engagement of teachers in action research in one way or another. Concerning the external factors affecting teachers' engagement in action research, majority of the respondent teachers strongly disagreed that there is clearly specified budgetary procedure that ensures allocation of research fund, and that there is fund allocation for educational action research proposal, whereas, nearly the same proportion of the respondent teachers were either agreed or kept skeptical with the existence of conducive policy environment that enables to conduct educational action research. Recent study by Daniel Turago (2010) on the involvement of teachers' in action research at Nefas-Silk Lafto Sub-city of Addis Ababa had revealed similar findings.

Table 7: Respondents` opinion on the availability of stationary educational resources to teachers` engagement in action research.

No	Facilities	Respondents	Statistic	Availability			Adequacy		
				Available	Not available	Total	Available and adequate	Available but not adequate	Total
1	Photocopy services	Teachers N=60	No	18	2	20	26	14	40
			%	30	3.3	33.3	43.3	23.3	66.7
		Principals N=6	No	2	1	3	3	0	3
			%	33.3	16.7	50	50	0	50
2	Duplicating services	Teachers N=60	No	17	3	20	24	16	40
			%	28.3	5	33.3	40	26.6	66.6
		Principals N=6	No	2	2	4	2	0	2
			%	33.3	33.3	66.7	33.3	0	33.3
3	Stationary material (Pen, Paper, CD, Flash Disks etc.)	Teachers N=60	No	38	1	39	1	10	11
			%	63.3	1.7	65	1.7	16.7	18.3
		Principals N=6	No	1	2	3	1	2	3
			%	16.7	33.3	50	16.7	33.3	50
4	Fax services	Teachers N=60	No	2	22	24	4	32	36
			%	3.3	36.7	40	6.7	53.3	60
		Principals N=6	No	2	1	3	2	1	3
			%	33.3	16.7	50	33.3	16.7	50
5	Telephone services	Teachers N=60	No	7	40	47	6	7	13
			%	11.6	66.6	78.3	10	11.6	21.7
		Principals N=6	No	1	2	3	1	2	3
			%	16.7	33.3	50	16.7	33.3	50
6	Recent reference materials (books, journals, research reports and etc. in the school library	Teachers N=60	No	4	2	6	2	52	54
			%	6.7	3.3	10	3.3	86.7	90
		Principals N=6	No	2	1	3	2	1	3
			%	33.3	16.7	50	33.3	16.7	50
7	Availability of finance	Teachers N=60	No	1	47	48	6	6	12
			%	1.7	78.3	80	10	10	20
		Principals N=6	No	0	3	3	1	2	3
			%	0	50	50	16.7	33.3	50

Moreover, respondent teachers were asked to give their opinion about another internal factor linked to stationary educational resources. Accordingly, 78.3% of the respondent teachers replied that there is financial inadequacy in both schools, whereas, 66.7% of them agreed that telephone services are not available in the school. On the other hand, 86.7% of the respondents agreed that recent reference materials in the library, that could help to be engaged in action research is available but not adequate enough (Table 7). This implies that teachers' engagements in action research were partially hindered by the above mentioned physical and stationary material factors.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

The main purpose of the study was to explore the current status of engagement of Bole and Beshale preparatory school teachers' of city government of Addis Ababa in action research undertakings and to assess the present knowledge and skills of preparatory school teachers concerning action research. To conduct this study, systematic random sampling technique was applied. The sample size includes 60 preparatory school teachers from different subjects of teaching, 6 school principals and some woreda education experts' officer. Questionnaires has been distributed and quantitative data has been collected concerning demographic characteristics of the sampled population, the knowledge and skills of preparatory school teacher's concerning action research, the level of teacher's engagement in action research at preparatory school, factors that enable or hinder, teachers engagement in action research and to identify possible entry points to improve teachers' engagement in action research. Interviews comprising both structured and semi-structured questions were also conducted to support the quantitative data obtained through questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and this was supplemented by the information synthesized from the interview questions and the major findings were summarized as follows:

- The study revealed that the majority (94%) of teacher respondents and 100% of principals confirmed that they had taken research methodology course during their university or college level study. Furthermore, concerning the knowledge and skills of action research among teaching staff, 68% of the teachers had confirmed that they had conducted action research before they have been hired and hence they were aware of the educational action research.

- The study manifested that majority of the respondents (47%) had shown their positive opinion towards the contribution of action research for promoting quality of education. However, it was evident from the analysis that the largest proportion (71.6%) of the respondent teachers were engaged in action research and related activities in less than 5% of their time per week in their respective schools.

- Concerning those factors that enable or hinder, teachers' engagement in action research, barriers including lack of research experience, lack of in-service research training, lack of opportunity to participate in research seminars, lack of skills in research methodology, lack of research methods knowledge and lack of commitment to work collaboratively in conducting research among teachers in that order are indicated as the most serious barriers for teachers' engagement in action research.

- The result from the interview with principals and educational officers depicted that, in addition to the institutional factors, personal factors also plays a significant role in the level of teachers' engagement in action research.

- Similarly, most respondents, nearly 50% of them felt that there is no support and encouragement from top management. This was confirmed by the majority of respondents that agreed with the absence and/or unsatisfactory research incentives for those who conducted action research in their school.

- Concerning the external factors affecting teachers' engagement in action research, majority of the respondent teachers strongly disagreed that there is clearly specified budgetary procedure that ensures allocation of research fund, and that there is fund allocation for educational action research proposal, whereas, nearly 50% of the total respondent teachers were either agreed or kept skeptical with the existence of conducive policy environment that enables to conduct educational action research.

5.2. Conclusions

The total summary given above highlighted different aspects of teacher's engagement in action research of Beshale and Bole preparatory schools of the Bole Sub-City, City government of Addis Ababa. The overall view of these study leads to the following conclusions:

- The study signifies that teachers' in Beshale and Bole preparatory schools of the Bole Sub-City had positive attitude towards education action research and its role in improving quality of education.

- The study depicted that, even though majority of the teachers and school principals confirmed that they had taken action research as a course during their university and/or college level study, they didn't get the opportunity to participate in any in-service trainings that could help them to build their educational research capacity. Hence, this signifies that the knowledge and skills of teachers in conducting action research were not sufficient.

- The result from this study also revealed that majority of the respondent teachers' had no post graduate level education and lack research experience and/or exposure that enable them to perform action research independently, i.e., currently the schools are largely served by young teachers who have high potential but less experience for undertaking research

- Regardless of the importance, however, the findings of this study indicated that the level of involvement of teachers' in action research undertakings was very minimal. Lack of motivational strategy, poor support from the top management bodies, lack of incentive, lack of collaboration among teachers and lack of financial and material resources that could help to fulfill the research activity were

pointed out as the most barriers that hinder most of the respondent teachers from engagement in action research in Beshale and Bole Preparatory Schools.

5.3. Recommendations

From the summary and conclusions drawn above, the following recommendations have been forwarded to contribute to the efforts made to enhance quality education in general and of Bole Sub-City in particular:

1. It seems to appear that teachers need to have trainings (both short-term and long-term) and hands-on practices to engage in action research activities so as to possess the required knowledge and skill to improve their engagement in actin research and enhance the status of current learning process.

2. Capacity development through facilitating teachers to learn from their own experience and improve their practice in engagement and doing action research is an important means to teacher empowerment, school improvement and educational change.

3. Given that research is an extra layer of work for teachers, there must be a need to develop clear insights in to preparatory schools teachers` reluctance and provide them with practical support such as participatory action activities, research rooms, important material and financial resources, enough time, incentives and previously published materials that will enable them to initiate conducting action research. School managers should also facilitate collaborative culture that supports the work of action research.

4. Teachers should update themselves by frequently reading research books, journals and share research related materials with their colleagues, as well as, school leaders and other top management bodies should have the necessary knowledge and skills about the relevance of action research and how to conduct it, so that it could enable them to facilitate research conditions.

5. Moreover, since improvement of quality of education is not only the responsibility of teachers, all concerned stakeholders have to jointly work 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. Besides, higher educational management bodies must find ways and means to promote and foster the effects of schools in identifying educational problems and seeking sustainable solution using action research.

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Appendix "A"

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STADIES

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL RESARCH

Questionnaire to be filled by Bole and Beshale senior secondary and preparatory school of Addis Ababa city administration

This questionnaire is designed to collect relevant data about "**Engagement of Teachers in Action Research in Governmental preparatory School: The case of Bole sub-city Addis Ababa city Administration",** which believed to be the proper primary data sources. Therefore, your cooperation in responses of the items of the questionnaire is frankly and accurately serves the research purpose highly for the success of the study. I would like to assure you that your response will be kept confidential and serve only for this research purpose. Hence respond by using a **"√"** mark for items with alternative responses and briefly stating your suggestions for the open ended item.

Thank you in advance!!

General Directions

1. Do not write your name
2. Please answer each question according to the instruction

Part I. Personal Information

1. Your department:----------
2. Sex : Male☐, Female☐
3. Educational qualification: Diploma☐, BA/BSC/BED ☐,MA/MSC ☐,PhD☐

4. Age: 25 years and below:☐,26-35 years ☐, 36-45 years ☐ 46 years andabove☐
5. Service: 5 and below years ☐, 6-10 years ☐,11-15 years ☐,16-20 years☐,21 years and above☐
6. Teaching loads per week 6-10 periods ☐, 11-15 periods☐16-20periods ☐,21 periods and above☐

Part ll. The following items are both about the engagement , knowledge and skill of preparatory teachers in action research,research competence and experience. Indicate your response by marking '' √ "in the box provided

1. Did you conduct action research before you were hired as teaching staff in this school?
   Yes.☐ NO.☐
2. If your response for question number 1 is 'yes' what was your purpose to conduct the action research? [you can choose more than one option]

   . For partial fulfillments of under graduate☐
   . For promotion in the structure of your career☐
   . To solve problems in the organization☐
   . To acquire knowledge in the area of your organization☐
   . To generate income☐
   . If any other (please indicate)----------
   ---
3. Have you ever taken research methodology courses in your undergraduate /postgraduate/study [pre service training? /
   Yes. ☐ No.☐
4. If your response for question 3 is ''yes '' how do you rate the usefulness of the course to conductaction researchin your current jobarea(school)?
   Very low.☐Low .☐Medium.☐High .☐Very High.☐
5. Have you everparticipated in Seminars or workshops toupdate your research skill in your school?Yes.☐No.☐

6. If your response for question number 5 is'' yes'' how do you rate the effectiveness of the trainingin enhancing you to be engaged in doing action research?

   Verylow .☐Low .☐Medium.☐High.☐Very high.☐

7. Do you think that, school teachers undertake action research in schools?

   Agree .☐Disagree .☐

   If you agree why?----------

   ---

8. If your response for question number '7' is '' agree'' on what issue didyou conduct action research ----------

   ---

9. What percentage of your time do you spend to know and do action researchin your school? Below 5%.☐, 6-10%.☐, 11-20%.☐,21-30%.☐

   if any other----------

   ---

10. Since the time you are employed to this school, have you conducted the action research or any research? Yes.☐No.☐

11. If your response for question number 1 'Yes', for what purpose did you conduct the action research / research?

    - To fulfill the requirements of higher diploma Yes.☐No.☐
    - For scholarly prestige and my promotion Yes.☐ No.☐
    - For the effectiveness of teaching learning process Yes.☐No.☐
    - To seek answer to various social problem Yes.☐No.☐
    - To test theory Yes.☐ No.☐
    - To develop theory Yes.☐ No.☐
    - To solve immediate problem in the school Yes☐ No.☐

12. How do you rate the involvement of teachers in action research activities in your school?

    Very low.☐Low.☐Medium.☐High.☐ ery high .☐

13. How do you rate the status of any educational research works in your school?

    Very low.☐Low.☐Medium.☐High.☐Very high.☐

14. The influence of barriers in the engagement of teachers by overcoming the challenges to conduct action research. Indicate the level of their seriousness by marking **''√''** in the given boxes below the chart.

    Note that:

    1. Most serious barriers
    2. More serious barriers
    3. Serious barriers
    4. Less serious barriers
    5. Least serious barriers

Table 1: List of possible barriers for the engagement of teachers in action research

No	Barrier	Rating Scales				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14.1	Lack of research methods knowledge					
14.2	Lack of research experience					
14.3	Your tendency to read different books, journals, articles and other handouts of educational research/action research/					
14.4	Your educational level					
14.5	Your limited years of teaching in preparatory schools					
14.6	Lack of in-service research training					
14.7	Lack of commitment to work collaboratively in conducting research among teachers					
14.8	Lack of skills in research methodology					
14.9	Lack of confidence to undertake research					
14.10	Lack of opportunity to participate in research seminars					
14.11	Lack of opportunity to conduct research					
14.12	Lack of time, because of family responsibility					
14.13	Lack of interest to conduct action research					

15. The following statements are about teachers'' attitude towards research practice in your preparatory school. Please, indicate the level of your agreement by putting a thick mark **(√)** in the box corresponding to the items.

Table 2: Questionnaires to identify teacher's attitude towards action research

no	Teachers attitude towards research	Scales				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15.1	Research is the task of those who specialize in research and is not the concern and activities of every teacher in the school.					
15.2	Instructions could be more creative and improve teaching methods if teachers involve in action research.					
15.3	Action research contributes much in solving educational and societal problems.					
15.4	Conducting action research negatively affects effective teaching.					
15.5	Research should be given the same attention as that of teaching.					
15.6	Research may pay a tremendous role in promoting quality of education.					
15.7	Considering teachers research practices as a criteria for promotion is unfair.					
15.8	The expense of research in the school, outweigh teachers' contribution.					

Note: 1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Disagree 4= Strongly Disagree 5= Undecided

Part III. Infrastructural challenges

1. Some of the basic materials and infrastructures needed to conduct action research or research are listed in the following table. Please, indicate the availability and sufficiency of the facilities in your school by putting a mark**"√"** at the appropriate column in the specified table below.
   Use the following scales: **1= Available, 2= Not available, 3= Available and adequate; 4 = Available but not adequate**

Table 3: Questionnaires to identify the availability of infrastructures to conduct action research

No	Facilities	Scales			
		Availability		Adequacy	
		1	2	3	4
1.1	Computer				
1.2	Printer				
1.3	Photocopy services				
1.4	Duplicating services				
1.5	Stationary material (Pen, Paper, CD, Flash Disks etc.)				
1.6	Internet access				
1.7	Fax services				
1.8	Telephone services				
1.9	Laboratory services				
1.10	Department office				
1.11	Conducive working office with materials like chairs, tables…				
1.12	Recent reference materials (books, journals, research reports and etc. in the school library				
1.13	Transportation services				

Part IV: Additional Administrative issu

1. The following issues are constraints to conduct action research in the school. Please, indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement by putting a mark **"√"** in the corresponding box, below the table.

Note that: ***1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Disagree 4= Strongly Disagree 5= Undecided***

Table 4: Questionnaires to identify factors affecting teachers' engagement in action research

No.	Factors hindering the engagement of teachers in action research activities	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The financial service to conduct action research in your school is as fast and on time.					
2	Most teachers at your school have enough time to conduct action research.					
3	Heavy teaching load at your school consumes more time of teachers and minimizes their time to conduct research.					
4	Research incentives in your school are satisfactory					
5	Research work is counted in teachers' professional promotion at your school.					
6	There is support and encouragement from top management in your school.					
7	Research and publication office of the school is organized to provide necessary support timely to enhance research capacity of teachers.					
8	Research and publication section work closely with external organization to increase research fund.					
9	Frequent changes of personnel research units /sections at the school affects research activities.					
10	Administrative delay to get necessary material support.					
11	There is accessibility of data for those who conduct research in the school.					
12	Research seminars, workshops, and/or symposiums (in-service research training) in your school are adequate to enhance research capacity.					
13	Teachers in your school can get the copies of research works of their colleagues.					

14	There is instructors collaboration with each other for action research activities in your school					
15	In your school any action research outcomes are being utilized properly.					
16	Administrative or committee responsibilities have no effect on teachers action research engagement					
17	Adequate, research fund was assigned for approved proposal					
18	There is clearly specified budgetary procedure that ensures allocation of research fund on time as fast for conducting research					
19	There is conducive policy environment for conducting action research.					

2. Is there research and publication office organizing research activity in your school?

   Yes ☐ No.☐

3. How do you rate the nature of your institutional policy on encouraging research work?

   Very low.☐ Low ☐Medium.☐High.☐Very high.☐

4. Are there opportunities disseminate research works in your school

   Yes.☐ No.☐

5. If your answer for question number 4 is yes, through what mechanism? (You can choose more than one option).

Seminars ☐, Conferences.☐, Publications.☐ Workshops/or symposium☐

Write if there are other sources

_____

_____

Part v. Open-ended Questions

1. What efforts do you think have been made to improve the existing scenario of action research practice in the school?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What are the major problems in doing action research in your school?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Please, would you list down any suggestion which you think would helpful to promote teachers involvement in educational research.

   _____

   _____

   _____

Thank you again!!

Appendix "B"

Interview guides to be raised in the interview data collection with directors, and vice directors of the school individually

1. Does Bole/Beshale senior secondary and preparatory school make research undertaking part of its mission statement?
2. How do you evaluate Bole/ Beshale senior secondary and preparatory school teachers' level of involvement to do action research?
3. Is there any research support given to teachers to do action research in the school? (either financially or non-financially)
4. Are there adequate reference books in your school library that help teachers for research purpose? Adequacy?
5. Do teachers get adequate copies of research works of their school or related in the library?
6. What do you suggest about the library service of your school?
7. Do the teachers use the internet services for e-booking to get current literature?
8. Do teachers have enough time to carry out action research? How much is the maximum teaching load in your school? And how much is the minimum?
9. What can you suggest about the opportunity of teachers to disseminate research results?
10. Is there annual teacher research plan in the overall plan of the school?
11. How is the value given to research, in teachers' performance evaluation and professional promotion?
12. Is there facilitation of research meetings, workshops, or short research trainings in your school?
13. What do you suggest to more improve the engagement of teachers in conducting action research??