

**FACTORS ATTRIBUTING TO THE MISMATCH
BETWEEN THE INTENDED AND ACTUALLY
USED TEACHING METHODS IN THE
FIRST CYCLE PRIMARY SCHOOLS
OF OROMIA**

**BY
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Abstract

The central intention of this research was to assess some of the factors attributing to the mismatch between the intended (learner-centered) and the actually used (lecture) teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia in general and that of West Shewa Zone in particular. To attain this objective, a descriptive survey research method was employed. The sample consisted of 237 teachers who were drawn from 25 first cycle primary schools. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the target districts and primary schools while stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the sample teachers.

To gather the necessary data, questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and observations were the instruments employed. In analyzing the data percentage, mean and chi-square were used. Results of the study suggest that the factors that enforce first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method in most cases are lack of training, large class size, inadequacy of educational facilities, inappropriateness of curricular materials developed for the level, and high teaching loads. Thus, based on the findings of the study, recommendations are forwarded to mitigate the aforementioned problems in the Zone under study.

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Abbreviations

TTI - Teacher Training Institute.

NETP - New Education and Training Policy.

Df - degree of freedom.

X²cri - Chi-square critical Value.

NGOs - Non Government Organizations.

Abstract

The central intention of this research was to assess some of the factors attributing to the mismatch between the intended (learner-centered) and the actually used (lecture) teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia in general and that of West Shewa Zone in particular. To attain this objective, a descriptive survey research method was employed. The sample consisted of 237 teachers who were drawn from 25 first cycle primary schools. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the target districts and primary schools while stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the sample teachers.

To gather the necessary data, questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and observations were the instruments employed. In analyzing the data percentage, mean and chi-square were used. Results of the study suggest that the factors that enforce first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method in most cases are lack of training, large class size, inadequacy of educational facilities, inappropriateness of curricular materials developed for the level, and high teaching loads. Thus, based on the findings of the study, recommendations are forwarded to mitigate the aforementioned problems in the Zone under study.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The main reason that triggered the investigator of this research to choose the topic 'Factors Attributing to the Mismatch Between the Intended and Actually Used Teaching Methods in the First Cycle Primary Schools of Oromia' is the fact that he has observed the mismatch between the teaching method(s) intended in the New Education and Training Policy and the actual teaching method being used in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia. The researcher has come to know this during his four-year stay in the teaching profession as a teacher trainer.

The New Education Sector Strategy (TGE,1994:13) states that the methodology to be employed in the primary level teaching - learning process is to be of the type that can enable the learner to develop problem-solving skills. In spite of this fact, in the current trend there is a suspicion that the teachers teaching in the primary schools in general and that of the first cycle primary schools in particular use the lecture method most of the time. Regarding the application of teaching method in the lower primary schools, local studies indicate that the teachers teaching at this cycle dominantly use the lecture method in conducting classroom instruction (Yalew, 1998: 395; Negussie, 1998:436; Amare, 1998:298; Ambaye, 1999:20; Wartenberg, 2001:27).

From this, one can apparently understand that there is a disparity between what is intended in the New Education and Training Policy and what is actually being applied in the actual teaching-learning process in terms of teaching methods in the country. This disparity has an adverse effect on the implementation of the newly developed curricula. Because the intention in developing the new curricula is that

great emphasis be given to the learner-centered approaches with particular emphasis to problem-solving method.

However, as the research results cited above show, nowadays the teachers teaching in the first cycle primary schools of the country dominantly use the teacher-centered teaching method; viz, the lecture method. This is surely against the policy, as the method being used does not fit with the newly developed curricula. In addition, this mismatch may have a serious impact particularly on the provision of basic education in the country. Concerning the effect of using teaching methods that do not go with the curricula to be learned, Herber (1970:2) states:

We are closer to the knowledge of how to solve problems than we once were; our curricula have improved; the achievement of our students has increased in comparison with previous generations. Yet there is much dissatisfaction with our educational product. One reason for the dissatisfaction is that we still apply old methods to new materials, perhaps with more intensity but in the same pattern.

Besides, as to the impact of instructional methods on the teaching-learning process, Means (1968:1) claims "teachers and other directors of learning are necessarily aware of those conditions that enhance or interfere with most effective educational progress. Among the most aggravating and persistent instructional problems are those closely associated with methods".

The above quotations clearly indicate that teaching methods are very crucial in fostering the instructional process. And unless the teaching method employed goes with the content(s) to be learned, the taking place of the teaching-learning process in an effective way is questionable. Regarding the relevance of the correspondence of the method of teaching and the particular instructional situation, Clark and Starr (1986:53) illustrate "there is no best method of teaching or any method that will suit all occasions. In almost every instance, to be maximally

successful, the teaching method used should be tailored for the specific teaching-learning situation."

From the above position one can understand that we do not select and apply a teaching method as it comes to our mind. But rather we have to consider the context of the specific instructional process so as to make the method goes in harmony with the content(s) to be learned in order to attain the instructional objective(s) as required. Similarly, regarding the factors that determine the selection and application of teaching methods, Knott and Mutunga (1995:166) state:

Few will disagree with the importance of using the right method in teaching. Because there is no simple and instant way of selecting a teaching method, we must consider several factors. In this case we should consider the purpose or objective of learning, the level required, group size, local constraints such as time available and facilities, the degree of autonomy of the learners, and any preferences or dislikes of the teacher.

Despite this fact, in the current practice the teachers teaching in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia mostly select and apply the lecture method uniformly. This is quite contrary to the teaching method(s) proposed in the NETP (TGE, 1994). Hence, studying and finding out the major factors attributing for this disparity and thereby implementing the NETP as intended is timely and appropriate. Thus, it is with this intention that this study geared to investigate some of the factors attributing to the mismatch between the intended and actually implemented teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia in general and that of West Shewa Zone in particular.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

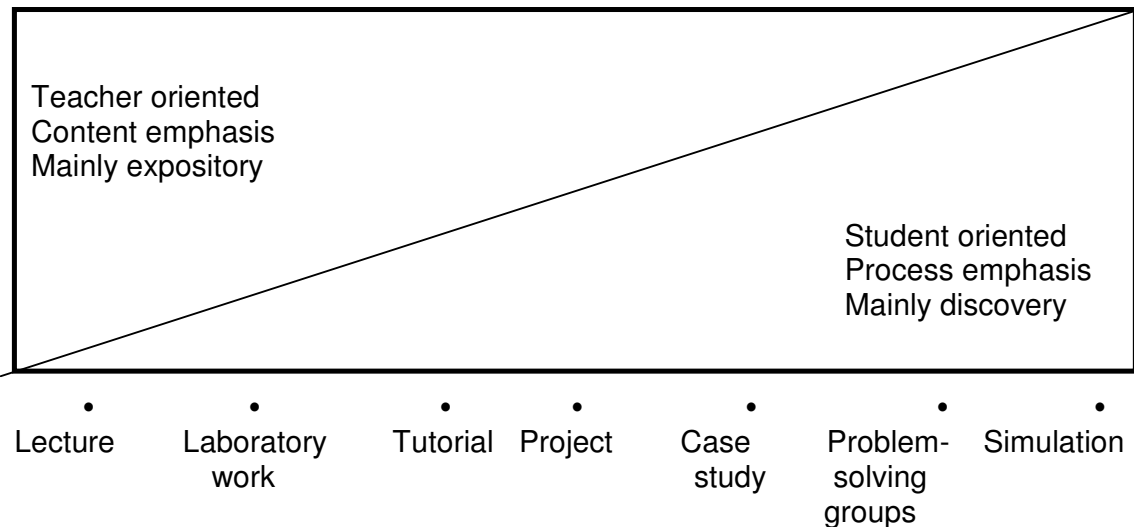
As Ethiopia is a developing country, a comprehensive improvement in education is the starting point for the all rounded development of the nation. This comprehensive improvement enables the country to get a well-trained and educated manpower, which is the immediate need of the country. This crucial aim is realized only if the learners learning in the lower grades (grade 1-4) get the chance of learning what are intended to be learned at the early years of this school life. This is so because this cycle is the basis and foundation of all higher level of primary and other educational levels. Supporting this view, Lockheed and Verspoor (1990) illustrate:

Primary education is a building block not only for further education but for the future. Economic and social progress depend on a thinking population and a literate, numerate labor force that can acquire, apply, and advance knowledge. Because of this developing countries should seek ways to improve and increase the time teachers devote to teaching and students devote to learning, particularly in primary schools.

Hence, it is due to this fact that the government of Ethiopia has placed a high priority in primary education since 1994 through the new directions formulated in the New Education and Training Policy (TGE,1994). According to the policy, the education to be offered to students of the first cycle of primary education should more than before take into consideration their physical development and fitness, intellectual maturity and readiness for learning. It must provide learners with firm basic education supported by production and service giving activities that acquaint them with practical experiences, which prepare them for some form of problem solving.

Nevertheless, in the current trend the teaching method used by the teachers teaching in first cycle is not the one that enables the learners to attain this general

educational goals. Because the teachers of the first cycle of primary education dominantly use the lecture method which is the other extreme of the teaching method proposed in the above general educational goals. Concerning this view, Brown and Atkins (1988) as cited in Knott and Mutunga (1995:167) illustrate the continuum of the teacher-centered and student-oriented teaching methods as under:



The above diagram clearly designates the differences between the teacher-centered and the student-centered teaching methods. In addition, it also shows the typical characteristics that one can realize as he/she moves from the more direct teaching method(s) to the more indirect teaching method(s). This, on the other hand, shows that though our education policy seeks the student-oriented, process emphasis, and mainly discovery teaching methods particularly the problem-solving method, teachers of the first cycle primary schools use the teacher-oriented, content emphasis and mainly expository teaching method; namely, the lecture method. This may have a serious impact on the implementation of the education policy in general and on the students' learning in particular.

So, to help the children learning at the lower primary schools learn the curricula to be implemented at this level using the problem-solving method more successfully, it is quite important that the factors which make the teachers

dominantly use the lecture method shall be assessed. Hence, it is with this intention that the investigator of this research thought of the most probable causes for this discrepancy and formulated the following general basic question which is supposed to be answered by the research results.

➤ Why do the teachers of the first cycle primary schools dominantly use the lecture method at the expense of the learner-centered teaching methods in West Shewa Zone? Under this umbrella basic question,

- training of teachers,
- class size,
- educational facilities,
- curricular materials,
- teachers' workloads,
- teachers' preferences,
- students' needs and interests, and
- teachers' awareness of the teaching methods suggested in the New Education and Training Policy are considered.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

It is obvious that using appropriate method(s) when teaching any content facilitates learning. However, sometimes there is a mismatch between the content to be learned and the teaching method to be used in the teaching-learning process. Since the focus of this study is a sort of the problem raised above, the main objectives of this research then are to:

- Find out whether or not the mode of their training makes first cycle primary school teachers use the lecture method dominantly in West Shewa Zone.

- Flesh out whether or not class size intimidates the teachers not to use the learner-centered teaching methods in the zone.
- Figure out the availability of adequate educational facilities in the zone and thereby see their impact on the selection and application of teaching methods.
- Realize whether or not the curricular materials prepared for the level have their own impact on the selection and utilization of teaching methods in the zone.
- Find out the effect of teaching load of the teachers' in the selection and application of teaching methods in the zone.
- Ascertain whether or not the teachers teaching in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone have problems of preferences in selecting and applying teaching method(s).
- Uncover the impact of the students' needs and interests on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods in the zone.
- Scrutinize the awareness of these teachers of the teaching method(s) proposed for the cycle and thereby assess its impact on the selection and utilization of teaching method(s) in the Zone.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The investigator of this research hopes that the research results will help teachers to guide themselves in selecting and applying appropriate teaching methods while teaching different subject matters to students of first cycle primary schools and thereby foster the provision of basic education as intended.

The researcher also believes that the gap created between the teaching method(s) intended in the New Education and Training Policy and that which is actually used in the lower primary schools will be filled.

Researchers can also use the research findings as a stepping-stone for further investigation that could lead to the improvement of teaching methods used by first cycle primary school teachers.

1.5 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The scope of this research is restricted to first cycle primary school teachers in West Shewa Zone. As a result of this restriction, the conclusion that would be drawn won't include teachers of second cycle primary schools within the same zone as well as teachers of other first and second cycles primary schools found in Oromia.

Moreover, though a number of factors may determine teachers' selection and application of teaching methods, in this investigation, however, the impact of the following factors: training of teachers, class size, educational facilities, curricular materials, teachers' workloads, teachers' preferences, students' needs and interests, and teachers' awareness of the teaching methods suggested in the New Education and Training Policy on the selection and utilization of teaching methods by first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone are considered.

1.6 DEFINITIONS OF BASIC TERMS

Intended Teaching Methods:- are learner-centered teaching methods that encourage students' participation, creativity, and critical thinking with particular emphasis to problem-solving in the learning process which is proposed in the New Education and Training Policy (TGE,1994).

Actually Used Teaching Method:- is source-centered teaching method or the lecture method in which the teacher dominates the teaching-learning process and students remain passive.

Mismatch:- the incongruence of the teaching method(s) proposed in the New Education and Training Policy (TGE,1994) and the teaching method practiced in the first cycle primary schools.

Training of Teachers:- refers to whether or not the first cycle primary school teachers are trained in learner-centered teaching methods but not to the teachers' certification.

New-Curricula: - the curricular materials developed in line with the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1994) so as to implement the policy as intended.

Curricular Materials:- according to different authors various curricular materials may be addressed under the concept curricular materials. However, in this research, they refer to the syllabi, the teachers' guides and the textbooks prepared for grades 1- 4 students.

Inappropriateness of Curricular Materials: inappropriateness of curricular materials may be seen in different perspectives by various people. Nevertheless, in this investigation, it refers to the inability of the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 students to address the learner-centered teaching methods.

1.7. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The first chapter treats the introductory part that includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and definitions of key terms. The second chapter is review of related literature. Chapter three deals with design of the study while chapter four is the presentation, analysis, interpretation, and discussions of the data. The last chapter treats the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

It has often been underlined by scholars that the main objective of the teaching – learning process is to enable the learners acquire knowledge, develop skill and attitude to fit to the existing society. This objective can be realized only if the students learning at different levels effectively learn the contents to be learned at the different levels of education. The one and the most determinant means to attain this aim are the teaching methods used by teachers in the teaching – learning process.

This is because teaching methods are one of the determinant curriculum elements that enable the learners understand the contents to be learned from the teachers' presentation, from one another or on their own efforts rather than waiting teachers for everything in the instructional process. Besides, teaching methods are the means by which teachers impart the contents to be learned to the students and try to bring the intended behavioral changes in the learners set by the educational objectives. Concerning this idea, *Clark and Starr (1986 : 49)* state:

Teaching methods are the means by which the teacher attempts to bring about the desired learning. Basically, method in teaching concerns the way teachers organize and use techniques of teaching, subject matter, teaching tools, and teaching materials to meet teaching objectives. It consists of formulating the goals and objectives for teaching, selecting the subject matter and teaching procedures that will best achieve those objectives, carrying out the procedures, evaluating the success of the learning activities, and following up their successes and failures. Because teaching method includes selecting content and instructional materials as well as teaching procedures, it determines to a large extent what students actually learn.

From the above quotation one may understand that teaching methods are very important for setting objectives, selecting contents and teaching materials that realize the objectives, and they also help teachers follow appropriate procedures in

the teaching – learning process. Regarding the relevance of teaching method, Brennan (1985: 101-102) also claims:

...what is commonly termed method may be said to involve the total complex of relationships and communication existing in the school, since it is through these that pupils assimilate important attitudes and values that affect their behavior and, indeed, the kind of persons they are or are becoming. Teaching methods are of the utmost importance, for through them the school achieves objectives, satisfies aims and makes a reality of the individualization of curriculum and teaching for pupils with special educational needs.

A method is not merely a device adopted for communicating certain items of information to students and it is not exclusively the concern of the teacher who is supposed to be at the 'giving end'. A method must link up the teacher and his/her pupils into an organic relationship with constant mutual interaction (Aggarwal, 1996).

Nevertheless, there are times when the teachers teaching at a certain level almost ignore learner – centered teaching methods and incline to choose and apply the teacher – centered teaching method in most cases. This may have a serious impact on the students' learning in the teaching – learning process. In line with this view, Brown, Oke and Brown (1982: 11) propose "with the right methods and techniques students can grasp concepts and ideas that they never believed possible. Poor methodology, resulting in bad teaching not only frustrates students but minimizes their chances of success in the future."

In general, this part of the study treats the following topics: local research findings on the prevalence of mismatch between the intended and actually used teaching methods, teacher–centered versus learner–centered teaching methods, and some factors that usually determine teachers' selection and application of teaching methods.

2.1. LOCAL RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE PREVALENCE OF MISMATCH BETWEEN THE INTENDED AND ACTUALLY IMPLEMENTED TEACHING METHODS.

In Ethiopia, in line with the New Education and Training Policy, the introduction of the newly developed curricula at the first cycle primary schools is now underway and gives due attention to active learning, practical application and student centered learning with particular emphasis to problem solving approaches. Despite this fact, in the current trend the teachers teaching at this cycle dominantly use the teacher-centered teaching method; namely, the lecture method. This clearly shows the existence of disparity between the intended and actually implemented teaching methods at the cycle. Regarding this, several local studies show that there is a mismatch between the teaching methods proposed in the New Education and Training Policy and the actual teaching method implemented by the first cycle primary school teachers.

For instance, a study conducted on primary school teachers under the title ‘**In-service Teacher Education**’ by Yalew (1998: 395) reveals that:

The lecture method is the most popular in which most respondents do have long experience (79.2%) but which is the least preferred (24.6%). Both teachers and school directors prefer most demonstration and practical sessions as well as correspondence mode of delivery with over all percentage rating of 58.2% and 53.2% and 50.9% respectively. Despite the preference of respondents for self directed learning and programmed instruction accompanied with practical sessions, trainers (educators) at primary and higher levels of learning mainly depend on a serious of lectures. This tendency could be mainly due to the reluctance and/or unawareness of [teachers] to the current pedagogical and andragogical approaches. This is perhaps one of the major challenges that primary education faces today.

Yalew (1998) stresses that the teachers of the primary schools use a series of lecture method due to their reluctance and/or lack of awareness to the current

pedagogical and andragogical approaches. But he has not taken into consideration the impact of teachers' training, class size, educational facilities, the curricular materials prepared for the level, teachers' teaching loads and the needs and interests of students' on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods in his study.

Similarly, concerning the teachers' application of the lecture method in the teaching-learning process in most cases, in his study entitled '**Relevance of the Teacher Training Natural Science Syllabus to the Primary Environmental Science Syllabus**' Negussie (1998: 436) states:

The lecture method, also called "teacher talk", involves active verbal presentation of knowledge by a teacher to pupils who receive the information passively. Out of 34 respondents of the six primary school 19 teachers (56%) are using it always while 13 teachers (38.2%) use it most frequently. Lecture method, though has its place in pedagogy, should not undermine the learner-centered approach; it only reinforces the position of the teacher as a symbol of authority in the class. When asked why they use mostly the lecture method, out of the 34 teachers, 20 teachers use the method because of the vastness of the syllabus and they can't finish on time while 14 teachers prefer the method because of the high number of pupils in the class.

As it can be seen from the results of the study, Negussie (1998) only considered the vastness of the syllabus prepared for the level and large class size as the main factors that intimidate the teachers to use the lecture method in most cases. However, he did not exhaustively treat the other factors such as teachers' lack of awareness of the teaching methods proposed for the first cycle, the impact of teaching load, educational facilities, mode of training, problems related to the teachers' and students' preferences in selecting and applying teaching methods in his study.

Moreover, Amare in his article entitled '**Teachers' Perceptions of Educational Problems in Ethiopia**' (1998: 298) recommends that "training on the

key role of instructional materials must be given to all professionals and policy makers because there is much dependence on the teacher (lectures) for education of the young.” One can realize from this position that Amare gives due emphasis to the inadequacy of instructional materials as the main factor that makes the teachers to depend on a series of lecture in conducting classroom instruction. Nevertheless, he did not consider the other possible factors that may make the teachers depend very much on the lecture method at the expense of the learner – centered teaching methods.

Furthermore, concerning the prevalence of the dominance of the teacher-centered teaching methods, Ambaye (1999:20) also claims:

Regarding the primary level syllabi, teachers' guides and textbooks, methodological component tilting to problem solving and inquiry need to be reworked so as to reverse the gear currently focussing on lectures, demonstrations and structured discussions mainly characterizing the teacher's behavior.

This position apparently shows that Ambaye emphasizes the problems related to the inappropriateness of the curricular materials developed for the first cycle primary education as the main factor that make the teachers depend on the teacher-centered teaching methods. And as a remedy he recommends the reworking of the curricular materials designed for the level so as to reverse the teachers' emphasis on the teacher-centered teaching methods to the learner-centered teaching methods. However, he did not address the other factors that may intimidate the teachers to depend on the teacher-centered teaching approaches in his investigation.

In the same way, Fransua, et.al. (1998 : 458) further elaborate the existence of the dominance of the lecture method in the teaching-learning process as follows:

[Concerning the use of teaching methods], most of the teachers reported that they mostly use the lecture method. A few of them use demonstration, discussion, group and individual methods. The major reasons given for the approach was shortage of teaching aids,

existence of large number of pupils in the class and vastness of subject content against time allocation. In response to how well they were prepared to use different teaching methods, the teachers reported that they were adequately prepared but they could not apply all the methods they learnt due to adverse conditions in the schools.

As it can be seen from the above quotation, Fransua and others considered shortage of teaching aids, large class size and the vastness of the content of the curriculum as the main factors that make the teachers not to use the learner-centered teaching methods in their study. However, they didn't treat the other factors that may have impact on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods such as mode of training, teachers' teaching load, problems related to teachers' likes and dislikes in selecting and applying teaching methods, the impact of students' needs and interests, teachers' awareness of the teaching methods proposed for the level and the like in their investigation.

Furthermore, the existing classroom scenario as observed in Ethiopian schools shows that teaching is perceived as a knowledge transmission process (Hailom,1998: 401). The teacher transmits 'knowledge' to students and the students receive 'knowledge' as specified in the syllabus. Thus, the effective teacher is the one who follows the syllabus and covers the course portions as determined by syllabus designers. The business of teachers is teaching and the business of students is learning. The emphasis is on content knowledge at the expense of procedural knowledge. Students are observed memorizing information given to them by the teacher. The ability to process information and abstract knowledge looks to be non-existent; even teachers are dependent on activities specified in the course books – they are not observed using classroom activities of their own. Most of them lack the skill and the will to develop and try their classroom activities.

Students are observed unable to generate and develop knowledge. They are evaluated only on their abilities to memorize information transferred, not on their abilities to generate knowledge by sensing and giving meaning, exploring connections, relations, implications, applications, interpretations, and abstractions from data given to them in the form of learning tasks. In fact students are always expected to converge with teachers' thinking if they are to be called 'good' students. Thus, learning through discovery, critical thinking, and risk taking and hypothesis making is hardly practiced in schools (Ibid).

As it can be realized, Hailom, though clearly indicates the dominance of the teacher-centered teaching methods in conducting the teaching-learning process in Ethiopian schools, he did not state the reason why the teachers exhaustively use the teacher – centered teaching methods in the instruction process. That means, he simply describes the non-existence of learning through discovery, critical thinking, and risk taking and hypothesis making in the Ethiopian schools without indicating the main factors that intimidate the teachers not to practise these learner-centered teaching methods in his study.

In general, the research findings cited above clearly indicate the existence of disparity between the teaching methods proposed in the New Education and Training Policy and the actual teaching method used by the teachers of the first cycle primary schools in Ethiopia. However, as can be observed from the above citations, none of the researchers exhaustively treated the major factors that may make first cycle primary school teachers primarily depend on a series of lectures in conducting classroom instruction at the expense of the student-centered teaching methods. Hence, it is with this ground that the investigator of this research embarked on this topic' Factors Attributing to the Mismatch Between the Intended and Actually Used

Teaching Methods in the First Cycle Primary Schools of Oromia’ in general and that of West Shewa Zone in particular so as to treat the factors addressed in the basic questions of the study exhaustively.

2.2. TEACHER-CENTERED VERSUS LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING METHODS.

The two major approaches to the classroom teaching are commonly known as: teacher-centered instruction and student-centered instruction. Teacher-centered instruction is the traditional method that does not encourage students’ participation in the teaching-learning process. Contrary to this, the student-centered instruction method is based on the intensive participation of students in the process of teaching – learning. The student-centered instruction is primarily supported by the application of information technology (IT), which is supposed to be one of the main components of the student – centered instruction. The current trend is a move from teacher-centered to the student-centered instruction (Wakshum, 2001).

Moreover, Ramsden (1992) as cited in Knott and *Mutunga (1995:163)* presents the differences between the teacher-centered and the learner-centered teaching methods as under:

Focus	Teacher-Centered	Learner-Centered
<i>Approach</i>	<i>Expository: “talk and chalk”.</i>	<i>Discovery: dialogue and inquiry</i>
<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Transfer of information</i>	<i>Development of individual potential</i>
<i>Rationale</i>	<i>Education as technology</i>	<i>Education as liberating process</i>
<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Surface learning</i>	<i>Deep learning</i>
<i>Teaching link</i>	<i>Direct</i>	<i>Indirect</i>
<i>Teacher role</i>	<i>Authoritative: ‘all knowing expert’.</i>	<i>Facilitative: developer’</i>
<i>Teacher activity</i>	<i>Telling, checking, correcting</i>	<i>Guiding on route, resources, interpretations.</i>
<i>Student role</i>	<i>Role learning</i>	<i>Self-direction for meaning.</i>
<i>Student activity</i>	<i>Listening, note taking</i>	<i>Exploring, reflecting, questioning.</i>
<i>Methods</i>	<i>Lectures, seminars, demonstrations</i>	<i>Discussions, simulations, problem solving.</i>

Concerning teachers' styles of teaching, some scholars propose that there are two contrasting teaching styles. The direct instruction which implies the teacher-centered teaching method and the indirect instruction that implies the student-centered teaching methods. Regarding this view, *Perrott (1982:2)* claims:

Flanders' studies (1970) observe two contrasting styles of teaching: direct and indirect. Direct teaching is characterized by teacher reliance on lecture, criticism, justification of authority and the giving of directions. Indirect instruction is characterized by teacher reliance on asking questions, accepting pupils feelings, acknowledging pupils' ideas and giving praise and encouragement. A substantial number of studies have found that pupils of 'indirect' teachers learn more and have better attitudes toward learning than pupils of 'direct' teachers.

As can be observed from Perrott's (1982) position both the teacher-centered and student-centered teaching methods are crucial in the teaching-learning process. Nevertheless, the students who learn by the student-centered teaching approaches learn more and have better attitudes towards learning than the students learn by the teacher-centered teaching methods.

2.2.1. Teacher-Centered Teaching Methods

Educators propose the view that the teacher-centered teaching methods give central roles to the teacher in the teaching-learning process. And the role of the teacher is to impart knowledge to the students and to encourage rote learning. In line with this idea, *Callahan and Clark (1988:176-177)* claim:

The basic technique of the teacher-centered teaching methods is to give learners information and then ensure remembering. Their role is to provide students with knowledge that will provide a foundation for higher thinking. These methods are basically expository in nature. They are also the time-honored methods used by teachers to impart knowledge to neophytes.

A teacher-centered methodology is based on the theory that the student is an empty vessel, waiting to be filled with knowledge. The teacher simply pours in the knowledge, and the process is complete, what is known as the transmission model

(Plass, 1998:311). On the other hand, according to some writers the concepts direct instruction and the teacher-centered teaching method are more or less the same and can be used interchangeably. Supporting this view, Borich (1988:143) states:

Direct instruction, sometimes synonymous with expository or didactic teaching, is primarily a teacher-centered strategy in which the teacher is the major provider of information. In the direct instruction model, the teacher's role is to pass facts, rules, or action sequences onto students in the most direct way possible....

Besides, teachers who employ direct instruction as the primary instructional method create classrooms that are academically focused and teacher-centered. These teachers present academic content in a sequenced and structured fashion. Direct instruction also involves clear specification of goals to students, with detailed explanations and wider coverage of content. Teachers ask questions that students can handle, typically directing low-level, literal questions to weak students and more demanding questions to better students. Teachers monitor students' performance, providing immediate corrective feedback. Proponents of direct instruction argue that it produces the best learning. They emphasize the teacher (rather than the student) as decision maker and embrace orderliness in the classroom. Since direct instruction endorses asking questions that students can answer rather than questions that challenge them and require reflection, proponents of direct instruction believe that drill and over learning are important in school learning (McCormick and Pressley, 1997).

From the above position one can apparently realize that the teacher-centered teaching methods give due attention to the teacher in the teaching learning process. That means, in these types of teaching methods it is the teacher who dominates the instruction process at the expense of the interests and needs of the learners. In general, under this topic, out of the different teacher-centered teaching methods

such as the lecture method, the demonstration method, the structured discussion method and the like, special attention is given to the lecture and demonstration teaching methods due to their prominence in the teacher centered teaching methods. Accordingly, the nature and characteristics, the merits and demerits of the two methods are treated in turn as follows.

2.2.1.1. The Lecture Method

According to the views of writers, the lecture method is one of the time-tested teaching methods useful for teaching students of different levels. And it is suggested that even if the method is a 'traditional' method, it is still a prominent method of teaching used at different levels of schools. With regard to this idea, Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert (1994:211) say:

The lecture method can be traced back to the Jews who used it with fairly large audiences since the teacher's words were highly valued, the Jewish students felt compelled to carefully listen, memorize the lessons and reproduce them. The lecture method has been used since that time. However, modern educators consider the lecture method outdated. New approaches are preferred. Nevertheless, this is not always possible. The method is popularly used in high schools and colleges and universities, especially with large groups.

The lecture method is among the most important of teaching techniques. Although its use has been severely criticized, it has a place in today's schools; it should, however, not be the teacher's mainstay. Short, informal teacher talks are much more effective for most purposes. If one desires quality teaching, other methods involving group process, inquiry, problem solving, and the higher mental processes are often more effective (*Clark and Starr, 1986*).

On the other hand, like the other teaching methods, the lecture method has its own advantages and disadvantages. Concerning its merits, different writers propose their own views. For instance, Mamidi and Ravishankar (1984:173) state the merits of the lecture method as follows:

The lecture method is very easy to employ. The main medium for communication is verbal. This method can be employed when the teacher and the taught can understand one common language.... The teacher also thinks it to be a convenient method because he has not to do any preparation, apart from preparing the topic, as it is required in some other methods; viz; demonstration or use of audio-visual aids. He should only know the subject and have command over the language of instruction. The teacher can straight away go to the class and teach.

Moreover, the lecture method has advantages due to the following reasons (I) It saves time and energy. A single teacher can give a lecture to any students in a given time. (II) It enriches and supplements materials found in textbook. (III) The teacher has the final work in choosing the type of knowledge to present to the students. (IV) The lecturers guide and encourage students to read and get information from other sources to fill the gaps left during lecture period. (V) It obliges the students to take notes and listen carefully if they want to be able to answer assessment questions (*Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert, 1994*).

In general, as it can be seen from the positions of Mamidi and Ravishankar (1984) and Bennaars, Otiende and Boisvert (1994) the lecture method has a number of advantages. However, it should be noted that though different authors propose the merits of the lecture method in different ways, this does not mean that we should use the method dominantly at the expense of the other learner-centered approaches. Because the current trend in general and our Education and Training Policy in particular recommend the teaching methods that encourage active students' participation, critical thinking, activity-oriented, problem-solving and the like.

On the contrary, as the other methods of teaching, the lecture method has its own drawbacks. Regarding these drawbacks various scholars forward various views. For instance, *Clark and Starr (1986:202)* claim:

Because learning from lectures is relatively passive learning, it is often relatively sterile learning. Lectures do not give students opportunity to explore, to think, or to interact. They are not conducive to study in depth, but rather tend to make students receivers of knowledge. They do not allow for differing responses or the exercising of one's curiosity. They are seldom useful for changing attitudes or imparting the higher cognitive skills. Except in unusual cases, very little of the lecture sticks in the students' minds. Students learn better when they put themselves into the learning.

It can be argued, following Clark and Starr (1986) that though there is no best method in the teaching-learning process, the lecture method has serious drawbacks. Because according to the authors, learning through lectures is relatively passive learning and even relatively sterile learning. Besides, the method does not give learners the chance to explore, to analyze, to think and to actively participate in the learning process. This in turn has an adverse effect on the students' learning. Because lecture is not helpful for imparting higher cognitive skills, changing attitudes and developing skills in the instructional process.

Similarly, Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert (1994) further elaborate the disadvantages of the lecture method as follows: (1) It does not encourage creativity. Students become passive recipients of ideas. (2) Assessment of students' performance and understanding is delayed and be difficult. (3) It is purely teacher-centered (4) A lecturer whose delivery is poor bore students who can neither follow nor profit by what they say.

This, on the other hand, may act as a hurdle in the students' learning. Because educators argue that teaching should create a situation whereby learners are allowed to follow their preferred styles of learning and to pursue the knowledge, skill and attitude delivered in the instruction process in a way each student wants and is able to. Such a condition fosters the students' learning process as intended.

A large number of studies have compared the effectiveness of lectures with other teaching methods. The results show that when measures of knowledge are used, the lectures proves to be as efficient as other methods. Alternatively, in those experiments involving measures of transfer of knowledge to new situations, or measures of problem solving, thinking, or attitude change, or motivation for further learning, the results tend to show differences favoring discussion methods over lecture (*McKeachie, 1986*).

2.2.1.2. Demonstration Method

Demonstration is a method by which teacher first explains the concept to be learned orally and then show how that activity is practically manipulated. With regard to this view, *Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert (1994 : 217)* say:

The demonstration method utilizes audio-visual technology. The teacher uses this approach to explain, emphasize or specify a topic or subject. A lot of telling, showing and doing activities are used in order to convey the message to a person, a group or a large audience. Generally, teachers use demonstration alongside other methods of teaching. For instance, in the laboratory, teachers demonstrate first how to use machines and apparatus before letting the student operate them. The method emphasizes observation followed by performance of specified activities.

Besides, *Aggarwal (1996:105)* also states the nature and characteristics of the method as “demonstration implies the presentation of pre-arranged series of events or equipment to a group of students for their observation. This is accompanied by explanatory remarks. This device is most commonly used in science and fine arts. It can also be used in giving information, knowledge and training.” Moreover, demonstration has been described as an audio-visual explanation, emphasizing the important points of product, a process or an idea. It is basically an activity which combines telling, showing and doing for the benefit of an audience, be it a person or a group of persons (*Brown, Oke and Brown, 1982*).

Regarding the advantages of the demonstration method Aggarwal(1996:106) explains “demonstration enables the students to acquire knowledge in the first hand form. It brings about a close relationship between theory and practice. It helps in fixing facts and principles. It fosters creative thinking.”

In addition, good demonstration can always show what a skilled performance looks like. It provides a trial of visual clues, which are much easier for learners to grasp than words alone. Demonstration in the use of audio-visual can prove most helpful (Kundu, 1986). In this citation, the focus is on provision of visual clues in the demonstration method, which makes the concept to be learned very simple for the students. This means, this method combines observation and oral presentation which in turn help the learners to use the senses of sight and hearing at the same time in the learning process thereby facilitates learning.

On the other hand, in spite of its many virtues, the demonstration method has various limitations. In line with this idea, *Brown, Oke and Brown (1982:58-59)* elaborate the disadvantages of the demonstration method as under:

(1) It provides less opportunity for children to discover things or solve problems on their own. (2) Active participation is reduced as the children mainly act as observers. (3) When classes are big, problems of audibility and visibility may arise. (4) It is difficult to evaluate thoroughly students' understanding during a demonstration.

As can be seen from the above position the central shortcoming of the demonstration method is that it encourages the students to become good observers. It does not give students the chance to be involved in the learning process critically. Besides, the method does not give the opportunity for students to discover things on their own initiative but rather the students are required to observe and then practise what they observed from the teacher's demonstration. These attributes are not the

characteristics of the learner-centered teaching methods but that of the teacher-centered teaching methods which are not actually recommended nowadays.

2.2.2. Learner-Centered Teaching Methods

Unlike the teacher-centered teaching methods which primarily put the teacher at the center of the teaching-learning process, the learner-centered teaching methods put the learners at the center of the instruction process. Besides, in the teacher-centered teaching methods the role of the teacher is transmitting knowledge to the students. Nevertheless, in the learner-centered teaching methods the role of the teacher is facilitating or coordinating the learning process. Supporting this view, *Eshetu (2000:59)* states:

The old notion of teaching which primarily regarded the teacher as transmitter of knowledge has given way to a modern conception. Teaching is now conceived as the facilitation of pupil's own learning. In line with this, the emphasis on the role of the teacher has shifted from transmission of knowledge to organization of pupils' involvement in the process. Pupils' active involvement in the teaching learning process, or indirect teaching is advocated because studies have found out that it has resulted in more pupil's learning and better attitude toward learning.

A learner-centered approach is founded on the concept that the learner is central in the learning process. Learners learn primarily because of what they bring to their classroom experience in terms of their perceived needs, motivations, past experiences, background knowledge, interests, and creative skills. Learners are active as opposed to passive recipients of knowledge. They may assume a decision-making role in the classroom, often deciding what is to be learned, through which activities, and at what pace. Learners can also produce materials and provide realia for the classroom. Teachers, on the other hand, are seen as facilitators, helpers, and resources with a decentralized role (*Kryszewska (1992)* as cited in *Coombe and Kinney, 1999*).

In general, though there are a number of learner-centered teaching methods, the researcher took the following four learner-centered teaching methods due to their prominent position and inclusive nature according to scholars.

2.2.2.1. Discussion Method

Writers propose the nature of discussion method in different ways. But the views of most of the scholars seem to explain that discussion method is crucial for sharing experiences, stimulating mental activity, and the like in the teaching-learning process. Referring to this idea, *Aggarwal (1996:107)* says:

Discussion is described as a thoughtful consideration of the relationship involved in a topic or problem under study. It is concerned with the analysis, comparison, evaluation and conclusions of these relationships. It aims at uniting and integrating the work of the class. It is carried out by organizing, outlining, and relating, the facts studied. It encourages the students to direct their thinking process towards the solution of a problem and to use their experiences for a further clarification and consolidation of learning materials....

We would also expect discussions to promote more active learning. Bloom and his colleagues (1953) at Chicago used recordings of classes to stimulate students to recall their thought during class. As predicted, they found that discussion stimulated more active thinking than lecture classes did (*Mckeachie, 1986*).

Besides, discussion method is advantageous due to the following reasons. (1) It provides a good opportunity to students to practise their oral communication skills. (2) A lot of information can be gathered from theory during discussion. (3) Students discover how to find new information, organize it and present it in a logical order which in turn help them to develop confidence in themselves. (4) It provides the students with training in the democratic process. (5) It gives practice to students in critical and logical thinking and listening (*Bennaars, Otiende and Boisvert, 1994*).

Certainly learning through discussion doesn't allow students to remain passive about learning; it requires active involvement in the acquisition and development of

knowledge. The discussion process moves away from the realm of lecturing – a realm in which students too often merely memorize and regurgitate ready-made facts. In striking contrast, learning through discussion dynamics facilitates a high level of analytical thinking along with the opportunity to evaluate one's own intellectual and interpersonal abilities (Rabow, 1994).

On the other hand, discussion method also has various limitations. Regarding the demerits of the method, *Bennaars, Otiende and Boisvert (1994)* comment:

(1) Only a few topics can be covered by using the discussion method since discussion can not be hurried. (2) Bright students tend to monopolize the discussion at the expense of the dull ones. (3) It is not easy to evaluate a discussion. (4) The discussion may degenerate into trivial issues of personal interest if groups have weak leaders.

2.2.2.2. Problem-Solving Method

Literature in education reflects a great deal of confusion related to the term “problem-solving”. For instance, terms such as discovery, reflective thinking, and inquiry are used synonymously with problem solving. It seems that some of the terms refer to thinking while others relate to ways of teaching.

However, though educational literature creates confusion regarding the distinctive nature of the term ‘problem-solving’, educators dare to define the term based on their own views. *For instance, Kahney (1986:28)* attempts to define problem-solving as a process in which learners inquire into possible solutions to their problems and gather data which they organize to facilitate learning. Besides, *Callahan and Clark (1988 :240-241)* define problem-solving as “the problem-solving activity is one that requires thought and a search for a solution.... Essentially, any learning activity in which the learner has to hunt for or think out answers is a problem-solving activity”.

In this process of solving problems learners are guided to discover relationships among data that facilitate the students' reasoning power. Thus, problem solving is a process in which the learners study the problem, hypothesize, test the hypotheses and formulate generalizations. Problem solving method is, therefore, a process of overcoming difficulties that appear to interfere with the attainment of a goal.

To this effect, there should be steps to be followed that can serve as term of references. According to *Aggarwal (1996:247)*, the steps are:

1. *Formation and appreciation of the problem. The nature of the problem should be made very clear to the students. They must also feel the necessity of finding out a solution for the problem.*
2. *Collection of relevant data and information. The students should be stimulated to collect data in a systematic manner. Full cooperation of the students should be secured. They may be invited to make suggestions as to how they could collect the relevant data. The teacher may suggest many points to them. He/she may ask them to read extra books. He/she may also ask them to organize a few educational trips to gather the relevant information.*
3. *Organisation of data. The students should be asked to sift the relevant material from the superficial one and put it in a scientific way.*
4. *Drawing of conclusions. Discussions should be arranged collectively and individually with each pupil. Panton suggests that the teacher's aim should be to secure that, as far as possible, the essential thinking is done by the pupils themselves and that their educative process produces the particular solution, formulation of generalizations at stake. Care should be taken that judgement is made only when sufficient data are collected.*
5. *Testing conclusions. No conclusion should be accepted without being properly verified. The correctness of the conclusions must be proved. The students must be taught to be critical, to examine the "truths" which they "discover" to see "whether they fit all the known data." We should have our minds free from every bias in the process of problem solving.*

From the aforementioned steps, it is evident that we do not solve a problem blindly. Rather there are steps to be followed in the process of solving a problem. These steps serve as a guideline and ease the process. This, in turn, may make the

students confident in solving prevalent problem thereby may help the students learn better and draw satisfaction from what they “discover”.

Moreover, the problem solving approach has advantages as it guides the student to extract principles from his/her own experience or as a consequence of confrontation with an important problem. It attempts to stimulate him/her to ask question and acquire new knowledge. It helps students to develop the skill, the depth and breadth of their power of reasoning (*Getahun, et al, 1997*).

Similarly, the inquiry/problem-solving approach is advantageous due to the following reasons. (1) It tends to generate enthusiasm and interest in the students. (2) Since the students find things out for themselves they remember them better. (3) Some researchers maintain that the approach enhance critical thinking and skills of scientific investigation (*Brown, Oke and Brown, 1982*).

On the contrary, despite its many virtues, like the other methods of teaching, the problem-solving method has its own drawbacks. In line with this view, *Getahun and others (1997:55)* state the demerits of the problem-solving method as follows:

(1) It is very expensive and time consuming. (2) Some students, especially slow learners tend not to respond to the problem situation and it is very demanding on the teacher to keep in touch with a variety of individual or group problem situation for guidance and investigation. (3) It requires the restructuring of the existing school syllabus for this method tends to advocate that students should not be ruled out by perplexed courses of study. (4) Many schools, in developing countries may not be fully prepared to afford well equipped materials and the specialist teachers in this problem solving technique.

In the same way, according to *Brown, Oke and Brown (1982:90)*, the disadvantages of the inquiry/problem-solving method can be stated as under. (1) It is time consuming (2) It may not be possible to use it in all situations. (3) Some researchers maintain that it is more suitable for intuitive and creative children.

2.2.2.3. The Project Method

A project is an activity carried out by an individual student or a group of students in a more natural and freer environment than that of an everyday classroom. It is important for a project to have specific and measurable goals to be attained on its accomplishment. The activity must be guided and supervised by the teacher. However, students must be given freedom to investigate and gather information for their project (*Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert, 1994*).

Besides, to Getahun and others (1997) a project is a natural, life like learning activity involving investigation and solving of problems by an individual or small group. Ideally it should consist of a task in which a student gets out to attain some definite goal of real personal value. It frequently involves the use and manipulation of physical materials and result in tangible products. Furthermore, the project method is a cooperative study where an assigned activity or specific task is done by a student or a group of students to produce a tangible product. This is done with relatively little direct interaction with the teacher (*Lemma, 1997*).

Moreover, the project method is advantageous due to the following reasons. (1) It encourages creativity, freedom of expression, cooperation and initiative. (2) It applies Dewey's philosophy of learning by doing. (3) It gives experience in planning and organizing. (4) It provides a natural approach to learning that is not confined by artificial subject area barriers (*Brown, Oke, and Brown, 1982 and Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert 1994*). Moreover, the project method is advantageous as it promotes the development of individual interests, motivates research and develops problem-solving skills (*Getahun, et.al, 1997*).

Though the project method has various merits, it also has its own drawbacks. Referring to this, *Bennaars, Otiende and Boisvert (1994:219)* state the disadvantages of the project method as follows:

(I) Excessive use of the project method could take a lot of time and may interfere with examination subjects. (II) There is no guarantee that all the students will participate in, and contribute to, the achievement of the objectives of the project. (III) It is not easy to keep order and discipline among students while they are carrying out their project. (IV) It is hard for the teacher to select topics, which will be of interest to all the students in the groups. (V) There is often a problem in assessing projects. VI) Individual evaluation of students who participated in the common project is practically impossible.

Similarly, the disadvantages of the project method can be described as under (1) During project activities order and discipline are sometimes difficult to maintain. (2) There are sometimes problems in scheduling the project. (3) It is difficult to choose topics of interest to all students. (4) The expense, effort and time given to complete a project are sometimes not justifiable in terms of what is learned (*Brown, Oke, and Brown, 1982*).

2.2.2.4. Cooperative Learning

An emerging approach to grouping which is proving effective at both the elementary and secondary level is cooperative learning. Generally, cooperative learning requires that mixed – ability students work together to accomplish a set of tasks. Students are placed in task groups composed of high, middle, and low learners. The percentage of each level that is represented in the group generally approximates the percentage of that level in the whole class. Rewards to individual students are usually based on the performance and accomplishment of the whole team rather than on that of individual team members, which provides an incentive for students to work together productively (*Moore, 2001:134*).

Cooperative learning, according to *Larsen–Freeman (2000:164)*, is described as:

Cooperative or collaborative learning essentially involves students learning from each other in-groups. But it is not the group configuration that makes cooperative learning distinctive; it is the way that students and teachers work together that is important ... [in this case] the teacher helps students learn how to learn more effectively. In cooperative learning, teachers teach students collaborative or social skills so that they can work together more effectively.

Cooperative learning is useful not only to help promote cooperative behavior and better group relations among students, but also to help students with their academic learning. Slavin (1986) reviewed a research and reported that 45 studies had been done between 1972 and 1986 investigating the effects of cooperative learning on achievement. These studies were done at all grade levels and included the following subject areas: language arts, spelling, geography, social studies, science, mathematics, English as a second language, reading, and writing. Studies he reviewed were conducted in urban, rural, and suburban schools in the United States and in Israel, Nigeria, and Germany. Out of the 45 studies, 37 of them showed that cooperative learning classes have significantly outperformed control group classes in academic achievement. Eight studies found no differences. None of the studies showed negative effects for cooperative learning (*Arends, 1997*).

In addition, advantages associated with cooperative learning include: (1) higher academic achievement than is generally achieved with other commonly used approaches, (2) development of better interpersonal relationships, (3) increased time on-task, and (4) development of more positive attitudes toward the subject and classroom (*Moore, 2001*).

Slavin (1994:11) further demonstrates the advantages of the cooperative learning method as follows “cooperative learning methods generally work equally well

for all types of students. While occasional studies find particular advantages for high or low achievers, boys or girls, and so on, the great majority find equal benefits for all types of students.”

On the contrary, concerning the demerits of cooperative learning method, Arends (1997) argues that cooperative learning lessons take more time than most other instructional models because of its reliance on small-group interaction. Besides, the method requires special attention to the use of classroom space, and moveable furniture.

Moreover, cooperative learning environment presents special management hazards for teachers, and it compels teachers to attend to a unique set of management tasks. For example, describing to students how to accomplish a complex group project is clearly more difficult than assigning them problems at the end of a textbook chapter. Similarly, it is more difficult to organize students into study teams and cooperate effectively than it is to get them to line up for recess or to sit and listen to their *teacher (Ibid)*.

2.3. FACTORS USUALLY DETERMINING TEACHERS' SELECTION AND APPLICATION OF TEACHING METHODS.

It is true that the selection and application of teaching methods can be determined by various factors. However, in this part of the study, training of teachers, class size, educational facilities, curricular materials, teachers' workloads, teachers' preferences, students' needs and interests, and teachers' awareness of the teaching methods suggested in the education policy are considered in turn due to their prominent impact on teachers' selection and utilization of teaching methods.

2.3.1. The Impact of Training on Teachers' Selection and Utilization of Teaching Methods.

Scholars suggest that there are a number of factors contributing to success or failure of learning or education to a great extent. Among these factors the role of teachers in maintaining quality education is of great importance. Supporting this view, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991:62-63) argue that " teachers are central to the delivery as well as to the quality of education." Similarly, Rajput(1996:140) claims:

The well-being of a nation is dependent upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of citizens is significantly determined by the kind of education they receive. The quality of education basically depends upon the quality of teachers the system produces. The importance of the teacher in a community cannot be ignored. From the very beginning of civilization till date philosophers as well as laymen have all praised the teacher's role in building a society. He has been called a nation builder and savior of mankind.

Besides, according to Ambaye (1999:31), the success of the educational process depends to a great extent on the character and ability of teachers. Teaching nowadays is more than imparting knowledge. It includes helping learners to learn by themselves, to acquire skills and develop attitudes in the changing social context.

This, on the other hand, means that to be effective in helping learners to learn by themselves, the mode of training the teachers get during their stay in the training institutions plays a vital role. It means, if we want the teachers to apply a learner-centered teaching approaches in the actual teaching-learning process, we have to train them in a learner-centered teaching methods so as to link the training program with what is needed from the practitioners. Regarding this idea, Plass (1998:313) argues" unless student teachers are themselves educated in a learner-centered way, the teacher-centered approach will perpetuate itself. We can not expect newly qualified teachers to transform their classrooms if they themselves have no

experience of learner centered methodology." Similarly, teachers should be taught by the same methods which they will be expected to use in career (Friedman, et.al., 1989 and Ambaye, 1999). Tickle (1987) also suggests that "among other things, training of teachers should encompass activities based implementation of the primary curriculum."

Besides, Altan and Trombly (2001:28) illustrate the importance of introducing the learner-centered teaching approaches to the would-be teachers as under:

Since the would-be teachers are studying to become teachers, it is important early in their careers to impart the notion of learner-centered education. This means organizing a class so that students are more involved in the teaching and learning process and the teacher is less likely to dominate classroom events. We have found that a learner-centered classroom enhances students' development in the process of becoming teachers.

Though the above positions stress the relevance of training the would-be teachers using the learner-centered teaching approaches, the situation in Ethiopia is quite different. This is because as a number of research findings indicate the current mode of teachers' training does not prepare the teachers in a way they are able to teach using the learner-centered teaching methods. Regarding this view, Ambaye (1999:1) claims:

The teacher is increasingly becoming the focus of interest because of the key role he/she plays in the delivery of quality education to the learner. The poor or ill preparation of the teacher in the past, however, has some undesirable effects in the delivery system. All available evidence indicates that among many teachers in Ethiopia, the critical determinants of effective teaching, namely, knowledge of the subject matter, pedagogical skills and motivation are actually lacking, although teachers are in the front-line of educational reform programmes.

Similarly, the Ethiopian Education Sector Development Program (MOE, 1996:iii) illustrates" the poor performance of primary schools is linked to the lack of

adequate teacher training, a high proportion of teachers are either untrained or are poorly trained. " ESDP (MOE,1996:7) also confirms that" effort to expand access to and the quality of education require attention to teacher training. Teachers already in the system fail to meet the systems minimum standards."

If we ask teachers to perform well, the training program should equip them with enough subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills. Unless this is done, how could an individual teacher delivers what he/she has not given at all? Currently, Ethiopia's situation seems to be demanding teachers for a return that has not been given to them from the system itself (Alemayehu, 1998 and Azeb, 1998).

From the above citations, it is evident that in Ethiopia at the present time, though the Education and Training Policy requires first cycle primary school teachers to practice the learner-centered teaching approaches, the teachers could not apply the methods due to problems related to their training. That means, the would-be teachers are trained in teacher-centered teaching methods whereas they are required to practice the learner- centered teaching methods, which in other words, means, seeking from the teachers what they were not provided during their stay in the Teachers' Training Institutes.

On the other hand, this problem, apart from the other factors, may emanate from the teacher trainers themselves. Because as local research findings show the teacher trainers who train teachers for the first cycle usually impart subject matter knowledge to the would-be teachers through the lecture method and the trainees do the same in turn in their areas of assignment. Supporting this view, Azeb (1998:304-305) claims that:

In the common practice of our country as well as others countries, many persons are engaged in training teachers without any dependable professional ideas regarding how and for what would-be

teachers are trained or prepared. This is so because they themselves do not have the necessary preparation or training for their important responsibilities. These teacher trainers, without any concern and care for what they are training the would-be teachers, simply give trainees subject matter, and that is what they in turn, give to the children and youth.

Besides, in Ethiopia there are very few teacher trainers in the TTIs who have either themselves received teacher training courses or had primary teaching experience in a primary classroom. These staff, fairly naturally, are more comfortable teaching the subject knowledge than the professional training, but if we look at accounts of what the school system needs, it looks very much like the focus of professional training in classroom skills (Bridges, 1998:364).

Moreover, to a large extent teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa are acutely lacking in the critical determinants of effective teaching: knowledge of the subject matter, pedagogical skills and motivations. The reason for this situation is the weakness of the teacher training system. The quality, efficiency and effectiveness of education depends to a large extent on the nature and success of teacher education programs (Taal, 1995). Besides, Hawes (1979:55) also conducted a research on African teachers and found that "the lack of correspondence between the needs of schools and TTI programs has brought about lower orientation of trainees of their widening task. " In addition, Anand and Padima (1984:38) further claim that "the changes in schools should be accompanied by a corresponding change in the teacher training program."

Furthermore, concerning the effect of understanding teacher trainers may have about teaching profession in shaping the would- be teachers to do their jobs, Freeman (2001:55) illustrates "... how you understand teaching will shape how you educate others to do it." In attempting to improve their teacher training programs

countries must develop a highly qualified corps of educators possessing both academic and pedagogical ability required for training teachers (Duberg and Gorhan, 1983).

2.3.2. The Influence of Class Size on Teachers' Selection and

Application of Teaching Methods.

According to writers, it is difficult to define a large class as the official class size varies from country to country. Supporting this idea, Lewis and Jimmie(1993:176) say:

There is no simple definition of a 'large class'. In some countries the official size of a primary class is as low as 20 and anything over is considered 'large'. In others, the figure is set at 40. In many cities, classes can go up to 100 pupils. Any class is too large if the teacher can not check on the progress of every single child. A class is too large if every child does not have access to a book. A class is too large if some of the pupils are not even physically accessible because desks or other pupils block the way.

Similarly, Alimi and Azeez(1998:51) also state "the large class phenomenon is difficult to explain because of the tendency to attribute much importance to class size. In terms of class size, what is defined as a large class varies from one teacher to another and one country to another."

Lewis and Jimmie (1993) and Alimi and Azeez (1998) are of the opinion that it is not simple to clearly define class size because the norm or standard that can serve as a yard-stick to say a class is large or small depends up on the norm set by a country. For instance, according to Jacobs and Manida

(1996:113), in some Southeast Asian countries, classes of 50⁺, even 60⁺, are the norm. On the other hand, McCormick and Pressley (1997:248) propose that the typical elementary school teacher in the United States has between 20 and 30 children in his or her classroom, with the average in the mid-20_s. The typical

secondary school teacher faces sections with between 25 and 30 students, with the average in the upper-20s; five or more sections per day is common. Whereas, the norm for student-teacher ratio in Ethiopia is 50:1 for primary and 40:1 for secondary levels (PHRD, 1996:51).

In general, whatever norm is set by a country for class size, according to scholars, obviously, class size is one of the key factors that determine the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods. In line with this, Gage (1976:6) says "... one powerful determiner of teaching method is the size of the group to be taught." In the same way, Knott and Mutunga (1995:169) state " quite clearly class size plays an important part in selecting a method because some are unsuitable when the group is excessively large or small. For example, too large a group would not be suitable for a discussion".

It is evident from Knott and Mutunga's position that the number of students affects the types of teaching methods a teacher uses. Adding to this view, Mckeachie (1986:181) also claims " large classes are more likely to use lecture methods and less likely to use discussion than small classes. Since discussion tends to be more effective than lecture for achieving changes in thinking and problem solving, we might expect large classes to be less effective than small classes." Moreover, teaching any thing to a large number of students is a very difficult task. However, the teacher who finds himself/herself-teaching classes of about 100 to150 students faces a real challenge (Gluscevic, 1999:32).

Furthermore, large classes make any form of instruction more difficult (Jacobs and Manida, 1996:113). Besides, Moore (2001:139) also illustrates " if you have little space and a large class, the discovery approach may not be appropriate." Similarly,

Lewis and Jimmie (1993:176) further say that " good teaching methods, involving discovery, discussion, and question and answer are impossible in large classes."

Moreover, according to Duppenhaler (1999:34), large classes do present teachers with a number of challenges. First, the teacher should be able to easily identify the students and this is especially difficult if one is teaching several large classes at the same time. Second, the teacher needs to have a way to monitor an individual student's progress. Third, the teacher must be able to have easy access to data about the students' strengths and weaknesses. Fourth, the teacher should be able to respond to the students as individuals, with interests outside the classroom. Toubia (1999:18) also comments " in many parts of the world, we have large classes of 60 students or more. This is usually the excuse that teachers give for their reluctance to experiment with new approaches or innovative teaching techniques."

As it can be seen, the above authors stress that if the class we teach has a large number of students, the probability that we are able to apply the learner-centered teaching methods is questionable. This, in turn, means, the number of students we teach affects the type of teaching methods we use in the teaching-learning process.

On the other hand, regarding the impact of class size on students' learning, studies conducted by various people show that large classes have a great influence on educational effectiveness. With regard to this, the experiments conducted by Macomber and Siegel at Miami University (1957a,b,1960) as cited in Mckeachie (1986:182) are particularly important because their measures included, in addition to conventional achievement tests, measures of critical thinking and problem solving, scales measuring stereotypic attitudes, and test of student attitudes toward

instruction. Statistically significant differences favored the smaller classes (particularly for high ability students).

Besides, a research conducted by Amare (1998:294) shows that over crowdedness of classrooms was one of the highly observed critical problems of education in Ethiopia. Furthermore, studies conducted by Fransua, et al (1998:458) and Nardos (1998:20) also reveal that in Ethiopia large classes are one of the major factors that have impact on the teaching-learning process. Moreover, Mckeachie (1986:185) argues that "... large classes are simply not as effective as small classes for retention of knowledge, critical thinking, and attitude change."

Virtually all reviewers of research on class size conclude that small classes boost achievement, particularly for weak students (McCormick and Pressley, 1997:248).

2.3.3. The Impact of Educational Facilities on Teachers' Selection and Utilization of Teaching Methods.

We should consider local constraints when selecting a method. The most important factors in this case are the facilities available, including resource materials and textbooks. Quite clearly if an essential requirement for a particular method is not available, for example, a piece of equipment for a demonstration, then that method cannot be used (Knott and Mutunga, 1995:169).

According to the present Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1994:27), " in order to promote the quality, relevance and expansion of education, due attention will be given to the supply, distribution and utilization of educational materials, educational technology and facilities." This shows that the policy gives a

great emphasis to the relevance of educational facilities as a part and parcel of the efforts made towards the improvement of the quality of education in the country.

Accordingly, various studies show the importance of educational facilities in promoting the teaching-learning process. For instance, the study conducted by Tilaye (1997), has indicated that educational facilities and services are important tools for the teaching learning processes. They are the means by which instructional objectives are fulfilled. Lack of the provision of instructional materials and physical facilities is a major cause for dropping out of school (World Bank, 1980). A school that has inadequate educational facilities may lead to under achievement of students. With regard to this, Heyneman and Loxley (1983) and Fuller (1986) as cited in Woldu(1999) found that school facilities are significantly linked to levels of educational achievement than were socio-economic characteristics of the family.

However, currently the situation in developing countries does not seem to provide educational facilities to run the teaching-learning process effectively. Regarding this idea, Rajput(1996:30) states:

When visiting schools in deprived areas of the developing world, it is easy to observe that the minimum equipment for efficient teaching (seats and desks, blackboard and chalk, textbooks for teachers and learners, exercise books and pencils) are often not available. This is not surprising since the proportion of the primary school budget available for non-salary expenditures is generally extremely low.

Teachers cannot do their job efficiently without instructional materials. In developing countries, school buildings are often poorly maintained and facilities are inadequate. At one site in Nigeria, according to World Bank report, three schools serving more than 3,000 students shared two pit latrines. The Philippines has a perennial shortage of classrooms. Often more than fifty-five students are crammed into classes built for half that number. In Haiti many classes have to be taught

outdoors. These conditions demoralize teachers, weaken their professional commitment, and affect student performance (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991).

Similarly, the findings of World Bank research report (1988) indicated that the scarcity of educational materials in the classroom has been the most serious impediment to educational effectiveness in Africa. Elleni (1995) has also pointed out that, due to the prevailing budgetary crisis in Africa, children have unpleasant time at school. She added that the available instructional materials are inadequate; school buildings are dilapidated, the classrooms are with broken desks, chairs, windows, with no sanitation, etc. All these discourage pupils' learning and aggravate early school leaving.

Moreover, investigators such as Fuller (1987) and Anderson (1992), claim that inadequate supply of school instructional materials (for instance, textbooks, libraries, laboratories, manuals, teachers' guides, teaching aids, etc;) can influence students performance and progress at school. Besides, according to Rajput(1996:130), the resources for learning that a teacher and his/her students use, can influence the effectiveness of the instructional programme. The creative use of such materials will increase the probability that the students learn more, retain better and improve their performance. Amare (1998:297) on the other hand states that "teaching without instructional materials is tantamount to farming with the use of fingernails."

Furthermore, teaching materials are taken as one of the means for minimizing the decline of students' attention and interest often encountered due to the "chalk and talk "type of teaching (Callahan and Clark, 1988). This means, to enhance students' involvement in the instructional process, teaching materials have utmost importance. In line with this idea, Romiszowski (1974) illustrates" proper application of teaching materials, along with the other instructional elements, is indicated to be

the means through which teachers appeal to learners understanding and active participation."

Instructional materials are critical ingredients in learning, and the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them. Instructional materials provide information, organize the scope and sequence of the information presented, and provide opportunities for students to use what they have learned (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). Among the different learning tools, textbooks need special attention, not only because research has consistently indicated that their availability has the most crucial impact on pupils' achievement but also because their preparation is the most complicated, both in terms of design and production (Rajput, 1996:30). Besides, according to PHRD (1996:57), there exists a general consensus among educators and researchers that non-availability of textbook has an adverse effect on the quality of education. Because textbooks deliver the curriculum, they are the single most important instructional materials. Nothing has ever replaced the printed word as the key element in the educational process and, as a result, textbooks are central to schooling at all levels. When textbooks are available, instructional time is not wasted while teachers and students copy text on and off the blackboard (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991:48).

Though, different scholars confirm the utmost importance of textbooks in fostering the teaching- learning process, in Ethiopia there is an acute shortage of textbooks. Regarding this, a study conducted by Fransua, et al (1998:457-458) on the topic 'A follow-up Study of the Graduates of Awassa Teacher Training Institute' revealed that most schools provide one textbook to 5 to 10 pupils and some schools do not provide textbooks at all. Similarly, teachers' guides were lacking and according to the teachers interviewed shortage of textbooks and teachers' guides

was causing variations among teachers regarding choice, depth and scope of subject matter, selecting instructional objectives, lesson preparation and delivery. Similarly, Amare (1998) in his article entitled 'Teachers Perceptions of Educational Problems in Ethiopia' indicated that there is shortage of textbooks in Ethiopia.

On the other hand, concerning the problems that may happen in implementing the teaching methods proposed in the Education and Training Policy due to lack of materials, Getachew (1999:20) argues:

... many teachers who look forward enthusiastically to renewing their activity in the classroom often find themselves limited by lack of materials, or the means to obtain them. Many of these teachers are heard complaining about the contradiction implicit in the situation where by, on the one hand, society and those in charge of education are demanding and promoting a renewal in teaching methodology while, on the other hand, they do not equip teachers with what they need to put this into practice.

2.3.4. The Role of Curricular Materials in the Selection and Application of Teaching Methods

According to Getahun, et al (1997:34), curricular materials include syllabus, textbooks, teachers' guides and reference materials. Next to this each of these curricular materials except reference materials will be discussed turn by turn due to the nature of the study.

2.3.4.1. Syllabus

Different writers describe the nature and characteristics of a syllabus in different ways. For instance, Posner (1995:7) describes a syllabus as follows:

The syllabus is a plan for an entire course. The plan typically includes the goals and/or rationale for the course, topics covered, resources used, assignments given, and evaluation strategies recommended. Occasionally syllabi might also include learning objectives, learning activities, and study questions. Thus, the

syllabus represents the plan for a course, elements of both the ends and means of the course.

Besides, syllabus is a branch of curriculum specified to a single subject. It serves as the sole point of reference. All educational materials, teaching aids, evaluations and implementation activities derive their purpose from the syllabus. Thus, the syllabus must be structured in such a way that it consists of objectives and tasks, hints for the methodological and organizational shaping of the instruction and outline of the subject matter and the time allotment (Getahun, et.al, 1997:34). On the other hand, a syllabus can be seen as the overall organizing principle for what is to be taught and learned. In other words, it is a general statement as to the pedagogical arrangement of learning content (McDonough and Shaw, 1995).

However, even if a syllabus is the most crucial curricular material, in the current state in Ethiopia, there is a suspicion that the syllabi of the subject matters prepared for the first cycle primary schools are not appropriate to select and implement the teaching method(s) proposed in the Education and Training policy of the country. Regarding this, the results of the study conducted by Ambaye (1999:1) generally revealed that there is a lack of harmony in light of new curriculum demands and applied methodology in both the primary and the TTI level syllabi to accord with problem solving and inquiry approaches.

Similarly, Leu (2000:3) describes the problems related to the flowcharts prepared for grades 1-4 from which the syllabi are normally developed as under:

The flowcharts are overcrowded with content and information and therefore perpetuate the notion that the acquisition of facts and information is more important than the active process of discovery learning. This is a persistent problem throughout the first and second cycles of primary education....

Leu's (2000) study clearly shows that the flowcharts prepared for the first cycle primary schools do invite the teacher-centered teaching methods than the learner centered teaching methods as they are overcrowded with many contents and information. This in turn affects the content of the syllabi. Concerning the impact of overloading a syllabus with contents to be learned, Ramsden (1992:71) argues "overloading syllabuses with content leads to poor learning."

2.3.4.2. Textbook

Because textbooks deliver the curriculum, they are the single most important instructional materials (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991:48; Behar, 1994:13; Peacock, 2001:38). The most ubiquitous of the resources for course, unit, and lesson planning is the textbook. In addition to its expository role it provides an organized outline of the subject matter field plus teaching aids as study questions, exercises, and suggestions for learning activities and further study (Callahan and Clark, 1988:25). Further- more, according to Clark and Star (1986:287), "textbooks are the most common information source in our classrooms".

Moreover, in textbooks, the scope of the subject matter is defined and the sequence for instruction is laid out. Textbooks are the major-if not the only-definition of the curriculum in most developing countries. Unfortunately, the curricula presented in textbooks, particularly the scope and sequence of the material, are often poorly organized. Instructional design is important because inappropriately targeted curricula (which are too difficult or too easy) frustrate students and increase failure.... Textbooks also suffer from factual inaccuracies, inappropriate illustrations, and problems with readability (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991:46).

Likewise, in Ethiopia as the results of local research findings reveal, the textbooks prepared for the first cycle primary schools are not appropriate to implement the teaching methods suggested in the New Education and Training Policy of the country. In line with this idea, Leu (2000:3-4) argues that:

The textbooks [prepared for grades 1-4 learners] are overcrowded with content and information. Units or chapters usually start with long and overly complicated narratives giving factual information, followed by recall questions and, only at the end, a few activities. This gives teachers the message that the acquisition and recall of facts and information are more important than activities and inquiry-based methods. This encourages "chalk and talk" methods and forces teachers to think their main duty is to "cover" all the information....

Active learning or higher-order thinking skill assignments are usually added to the end of a unit or chapter rather than being used at the beginning of a unit or integrated throughout the unit. This signals to the teachers that they are of marginal importance. Teachers are likely to skip them and go on to the next chapter because of lack of time.

Elizabeth Leu (2000) exhaustively described the shortcomings of textbooks prepared for the first cycle primary schools of Ethiopia through her study as indicated above. This clearly depicts that the textbooks prepared for grades 1-4 students have their own contributions to the teachers' use of the lecture method in most cases.

2.3.4.3. Teachers' Guides

Teachers' guides that are well integrated with the textbook or other instructional materials can have a positive impact on student achievement. Particularly, guides that include information on what to teach and on how to teach it, diagnostic tests that help teachers monitor student learning and modify the daily lessons accordingly, suggestions on how to manage the classroom, and activities for classroom use are effective (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991:50).

Teacher's guide is a material for the teacher with recommendable hints to support the teacher in preparing the lesson and in finding and applying the most suitable methods of teaching. It helps the teacher to understand the essential part of

the subject matter, supports the creativity of the teacher, makes him/her aware of the relationship between different subjects, and gives hints on how and when to use teaching aids (Getahun, et.al, 1997:35).

However, even if teacher's guides are very crucial for teachers, as various research findings show in developing countries teachers do not get adequate teachers' guides to conduct the instruction process as intended. In line with this view, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991:53) claim:

Teacher guides help teachers boost student learning to higher cognitive levels by suggesting good exercises and questions. Unfortunately, teacher guides are seldom available in developing countries. An internal World Bank study found that schools in Guinea-Bissau had no teacher manuals for any grades or subjects other than grade one. A survey in Malawi reported that fewer than 15 percent of teachers had received a teacher guide for a subject other than English. In rural Brazil only 44 percent of teachers had received teacher guides.

On the other hand, in Ethiopia, low quality of teachers' guides, failure of teachers' guides to give real support to teachers in understanding the overall reforms and understanding how to implement effectively in their classrooms are some of the noted problems (Leu, 2000:4).

In general, regarding the impact content of the curriculum may have on the type of methodology to be employed, Alkin (1992:1209) claims that "research to determine the most effective methods of instruction show that effective methodology is closely related to course content". Moreover, in selecting appropriate teaching methods, not only content of the curriculum but also the objectives of the curriculum should be taken into consideration as the main intention of using appropriate teaching methods is to facilitate the attainment of these instructional objectives. Supporting this view, Knott and Mutunga (1995:168) state" the specification of

learning objectives is important in selecting an appropriate teaching method, for these serve as targets for our teaching."

Obviously your selection of methodology and experiences will be related to the teaching domain. In addition, the methodology should be related to such factors as goals, specific learning objectives, and content. For example, if you are trying to teach problem solving or a psychomotor skill, the lecture method is not the right approach (Moore, 2001:136).

2.3.5. The Effect of Teachers' Work Loads on the Selection and Utilization of Teaching Methods

Academic life is becoming increasingly stressful. Academics are suffering from increased government control and monitoring; from financial cuts and work overload; from the difficult balancing act between their teaching, research and administrative roles. They experience the everyday stresses of doing a creative job within an increasingly uncreative environment; of both developing relationships with students and assessing their performance, of seeking promotion or setting for non-promotion as opportunities for advancement have become more limited; of maintaining self-esteem as their status in the community appears to decline (Fisher, 1994).

According to Fisher (1994), nowadays academic life is becoming increasingly stressful. And among the factors which make teachers stressful is the workloads they have or the time pressure that is put on them in schools.

Concerning the nature of time pressure and its impact on teachers, Kyriacou (1989) says:

Time pressure refers to the general level of demands laid up on teachers within very short period of time. It refers to lack of adequate time to complete the work or to create a situation of pressure in

attempting to do more work in less time. Indeed, a variety of demands put upon teachers in a typical school day, often with high deadlines attached to them, may make teaching stressful activity.

In addition, time factors obviously affect the cost of teaching ...within any given teaching situation the time factor is an important variable. A well-prepared and a badly prepared lecture can not always be regarded as equivalent examples of the same teaching method. Indeed the general problem of the optimum allocation of teacher time between contact time and preparation time is a critical one (Gage, 1976:132).

Furthermore, with regard to the way in which workloads should be assigned to teachers, UNESCO and ILO's Recommendation on the status of teachers (1966, 43:7) as cited in Legesse (1992:115) proposes:

Hours of work should be fixed in consultation with teachers' organization and should take into account the need for providing teachers time for adequate planning of lessons, evaluating the work of students, participating in co-curricular and research activities, reporting to and consulting with the parents of students and so on.

Nevertheless, the assignment of the teaching loads of teachers in Ethiopia seems different. That means, as various studies reveal the teachers teaching at the different levels of education are overloaded with high workloads. In line with this view, Ayalew (1985 E.C) as cited in Getachew (1999) revealed that "in Ethiopia most teachers (62%) have an unbalanced teaching load. The teaching load distributed to all teachers is not the same. Some teachers are given many periods per week with out any free time."

This means, if teachers are over loaded with a number of periods, the probability that they prepare activity based lessons and thereby apply learner-centered teaching methods is questionable. Referring to this idea, Legesse

(1992:114) comments"... hours of work are among the conditions that deserve careful consideration when trying to create a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning."

2.3.6. The Impact of Teachers' Preferences on the Selection and Application of Teaching Methods

There is evidence that teachers' likes and dislikes, together with their experience, have a bearing on the method they use. This is partly related to their philosophy, style and value system but also to their past experiences and their confidence in using new and often less controllable methods (Knott and Mutunga, 1995:170).

Similarly, regarding the impact of teachers' preferences in the selection and application of teaching methods, Moore (2001:136) states:

Every teacher has a unique set of personal experiences, background knowledge, teaching skills, and personality traits that make him or her more comfortable and effective with certain methodologies than with others. Obviously most teachers select the methods that have proved most successful in the past. Because people are inclined to select the methodology that makes them feel most comfortable, it is easy to get in to a teaching rut.

From Knott and Mutunga's (1995) and Moore's (2001) positions one can apparently understand that teachers tend to select the teaching methods that have proved most successful in the past and that make them feel most comfortable. This means, people naturally resist to change or new innovation as it upsets them and makes them feel not confident. In line with this view, Hutchinson and Torres (1994:321) argues:

The fundamental problem of change is that it disturbs the framework of meanings by which we make sense of the world. It challenges, and thereby potentially threatens the values, attitudes, and beliefs that enable us to make experience meaningful and predictable. Yet,

like growth, no development is possible without such disturbance. If people are to accommodate themselves to change, therefore, the disturbance that change inevitably brings must be kept within manageable limits. If it exceeds these limits, it will engender feelings of anxiety and insecurity and thereby provoke what Marris(1986) calls the 'conservative impulse' i.e. a determination to resist the change and maintain the existing context within which the individual feels secure.

Pratt (1980:435) also claims" any curriculum that requires teachers to change methods of operation and modes of thought faces difficulties." Furthermore, Evans (1996:130) proposes" researchers have long known that all change, positive as well as negative, requires us to learn new ways of responding to our environment and thus creates stress."

Furthermore, the barriers that keep teachers from trying new teaching techniques are the following. One barrier is simply effort. Usually it is easier to teach a class as you've done in the past than to try something new. A far more important barrier to change is fear of loss of status. To most teachers the status of the teacher is a cherished reward for years of study. To be an authority who dispenses crumbs of wisdom to the multitudes is a very satisfying role. Trying a new technique may involve a threat to your status. If the new method fails, the students are likely to feel that you don't know what you're doing. A third barrier is simply fear of failure. Teachers who try new techniques are not likely to be skilled in its use and are likely to imagine consequences far more catastrophic than, any which are likely to occur. Another barrier is fear of unfavorable reactions from colleagues (McKeachie, 1986).

2.3.7. The Influence of the Needs and Interests of Students on the Selection and Application of Teaching Methods.

It is obvious that the central objective of the teaching- learning process is to help the learners bring behavioral change as a result of learning. To this end, what

they learn and the means through which they learn what is to be learned should fulfil their needs and interests. Referring to this, Rajput(1996:193) states" curriculum is the precious commodity which is transacted by teachers and eventually consumed by students. It has to be learner's need based and relevant to the society in which the learner lives and grows up."

Likewise, the teaching methods that are selected to conduct the instruction process should address the needs and interests of the learners so as to foster the teaching-learning process as intended. Supporting this idea, Moore (2001:136) says:

The particular methodology selected must match the maturity level and experiences of your students. You would not use the lecture method with very young children or with students who have trouble paying attention to verbal messages.

Students, like teachers, feel comfortable and learn better when the method fits their abilities, needs, and interests. Always keep in mind that when the method is mismatched with your students, learning will not take place at the maximum level. Thus, effective teachers select the best possible method for a particular class.

Besides, one of the factors that affect the selection and application of instructional methods are the psychological and pedagogical regularities. They refer to the age of students, physical, mental and emotional abilities. Thus, method of leading and guiding instruction process is expected to match with the conditions mentioned above (Getahun, et.al,1997).

2.3.8. Teachers' Awareness of the Teaching Methods Proposed in the Education Policy and Its Bearing on the Selection and Application of Teaching Methods

The teacher is principal means of proper implementation of education policy and programmes. The effective transaction of curricula both within and outside the classroom is, for all practical purposes, the total responsibility of the teacher.

Accordingly, the expectations of teacher educators are high and demanding (Rajput, 1996:117).

To implement education policy and programmes properly, the teachers should have a through knowledge and understanding of what are intended in the education policy that serve as guidelines. Regarding this, Lenzer (1976:153) illustrates that "... today there can hardly be said to exist a subject area that has not been conjoined in some sense with policy or policy studies..."

Hence, it is very vital for teachers (or implementers) to know their duties and their expectations in implementing education policy. Other wise, it may have an adverse effect on the education system of ones country as what is not intended may be implemented. With regard to this, Marew (2000:33) states:

... lack of clarity, ambiguity about expectations, absence of regular interpersonal forums of communication, ambivalence between authority and support roles of external agencies, and solutions that are worse than the original problems combine to erode the likelihood of implementation.

Likewise, if the teachers teaching at a certain level do not know the teaching methods to be used for that level according to the education policy, they may employ teaching method which is not suggested for that level in the education policy. Hence, to help the teachers employ the teaching methods that are suggested in the education policy to a certain level efficiently and effectively, some sensitizing mechanisms should be used so as to introduce the methods to the teachers.

Referring to this view, Dubin and Olshtain (1986:31) comment:

Teachers who received traditional training and who have only worked with rather conservative materials may not be equipped professionally or emotionally to handle modern teaching materials which leave a considerable amount of decision making to the teacher. A period of sensitizing may be necessary for both teachers and students before new ideas can be introduced effectively.

CHAPTER THREE

3. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The central objective of this study is to survey the major factors attributing to the mismatch between the intended and actually used teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. To this effect, the research method, sources of data, sampling procedure, tools of data collection and method of data analysis are treated turn by turn as follows.

3.1. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study the research method that was used is the descriptive survey research method. Because in this investigation the main aim was to survey some of the factors attributing to the disparity between the intended and actually implemented teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone in breadth but not in depth.

3.2. SOURCES OF DATA

In conducting a research there should be some source from which data are to be secured. Likewise, the sources of data in this investigation were a) selected first cycle primary school teachers teaching in Ambo, Gindabarat, Waliso, and Walmera districts of West Shewa Zone. b) Some selected first cycle primary school students attending in the aforementioned four districts and c) primary school supervisors of Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments.

3.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

In this research out of the 23 districts which are found in West Shewa Zone, Ambo, Waliso, Gindabarat, and Walmera districts were selected as samples purposely to make the distribution of the districts included in the sample more or less fairly distributed in the Zone (See Appendix-H).

Besides, grades 1-4 primary schools from both urban and rural areas were selected purposely. In this case, the rural first cycle primary schools were selected based on their proximity to the centre of their respective districts. To this end, those schools which are found within the distance of 10kms from the center of their respective districts were included in the sample as sufficient number of first cycle primary schools were found within this distance that suffice the samples required.

Moreover, 237 teachers were selected from the above schools (both urban and rural) by stratified sampling technique to make the number of male and female teachers proportionally represented in the sample. This stratification technique was used to overcome problem of gender bias in the sampling procedure that may happen as a result of using the other sampling techniques. To this effect, those teachers who are teaching in the above four districts were divided into male teachers and female teachers strata as indicated below.

Table I: District wise Distribution of Teachers According to Their Sex

<u>District</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Ambo	136	160	296
2. Waliso	148	156	304
3. Gindabarat	108	28	136
4. Walmera	88	124	212
Total	480	468	948

Source: Oromia Education Bureau Planning and Project Service Education Management Information Systems Panel.

Then from the total population of the teachers, which is 948, a stratified sample of 237 teachers was selected that represents 25 percent of the population, thinking that taking this much number is adequate and at the same time manageable for conducting the study which was divided into 8 strata (that is, 4 districts each consisting of the two sexes). To obtain a stratified sample, 25 percent of the teachers were drawn from each of the 8 strata. To this end, 34 male teachers and 40 female teachers from Ambo; 37 male teachers and 39 female teachers from Waliso; 27 male teachers and 7 female teachers from Gindabarat and 22 male teachers and 31 female teachers from Walmera were drawn by simple random sampling technique (see Appendix-E).

3.4. INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

In this study, the data were gathered using five data collection instruments. These were questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and observation.

3.4.1. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was one of the data gathering tools employed for securing pertinent information for the study. It was used as a main data collection tool in the study and was designed to collect relevant data from the 237 first cycle primary school teachers.

The questionnaire has three parts consisting of 62 items (see Appendix-A). The first part has four items dealing with personal information or background of the respondents. The second part contains forty-three close-ended items which were framed in Likert scale type with five options (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree). The last section comprises fifteen items out of which fourteen items deal with availability of educational facilities and one item deals with

the overall suggestions of the teachers. The suggestions are in favour of helping the teachers focus on the learner-centered teaching methods rather than focusing on the lecture method frequently. Besides, in this third part of the questionnaire, two open-ended items were incorporated to give the respondents full freedom to express their feelings as they want.

3.4.2. The Interviews

In the study, to get additional information to the data obtained from the teachers through the questionnaire, interviews were used as data collection instruments. To this end, semi-structured interviews were set to collect related information from 40 first cycle primary school teachers (Appendix-B), 6 primary school supervisors working at the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments (Appendix-C) and 36 randomly selected first cycle primary school students (Appendix-D).

This type of interview was favoured as it allows a wider freedom to ask further questions and helps control the direction of the interview to elicit the sought data. Moreover, it enables the interviewees to express their ideas and yet its semi-structured nature saves them being off the point (Brown, 1988). Furthermore, the contents of the interviews were made similar to that of the questionnaire and thus were cross-checked with responses of the respondents drawn through the questionnaire.

3.4.3. Focus Group Discussions

Apart from the data gathered through the face-to-face conducted interviews, focus group discussions were made with thirty-two randomly selected first cycle primary school teachers (eight teachers from each district). The focus group discussions were conducted believing that the group situation may reduce the

influence of the interviewer on the research subjects by tilting the balance of power toward the group. Because focus groups emphasize the collective, rather than the individual, they foster free expression of ideas, encouraging the members of the group to speak up (Denzin (1986), Frey and Fontana (1993) as cited in Madriz (2000)).

Accordingly, the teachers included in the focus group discussions were interviewed (in line with the basic questions of the study) whether or not problems related to their training, large class size, lack of educational facilities, inappropriateness of the curricular materials developed for the first cycle primary schools, workloads, preference to the lecture method, students' needs and interests and/or unawareness of the teaching methods suggested in the NETP make them use the lecture method in most cases. During the discussions, the teachers forwarded some possible solutions for the problem.

3.4.4. Document Analysis

To Best and Kahn (1993) when document analysis is used as descriptive research, current documents and issues are the foci. Likewise, in this study, in addition to the information obtained from the respondents with reference to class size and teaching loads, document analysis was conducted.

In the case of class size, grades 1-4 students' attendance sheets were collected from the record offices of eight purposefully selected first cycle primary schools (that of two schools from each district). That means, the attendance sheets, which contain the number of students assigned in each classroom of one rural and one urban primary schools, were collected from the four districts and analyzed thoroughly. The central intention of the analysis was to ascertain whether the number

of students found in each section is below or above the standard set by the Ministry of Education for class size in Ethiopia for primary schools; viz, 50:1.

Similarly, regarding the period allotments to the teachers, the time tables of the above eight first cycle primary schools (that of two schools from each district) were analyzed. The purpose of the analysis was to get the over all picture of the actual period allotments and thereby crosscheck with the responses of the respondents with reference to teaching loads.

3.4.5. Observation

According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989), McDonough and McDonough (1997), and Creswell (1994), observations are important tools that can be employed in descriptive research and other qualitative research types for gathering genuine and pertinent data on teachers' and students' behaviors in the actual setting. In this research, however, observation was made based on the third part of the questionnaire to see the availability of educational facilities in the schools thereby crosscheck the responses secured from the teachers through the other data gathering tools regarding the adequacy of school facilities.

3.5. TRY OUT OF THE INSTRUMENTS

All the instruments were developed by the researcher with reference to related literature and his experience. After the preparation, the instruments were judged for their validity by six graduates (2 in Curriculum and Instruction, 2 in Educational Psychology, and 2 in Teaching English as a Foreign Language). And finally, the instruments were judged for validity critically by the researcher's advisor.

Besides, after the judgement for validity is completed, the instruments, specially the questionnaire, were administered in a face-to-face situation to a sample consisting of 15 teachers (almost half males and half females) who are randomly

selected from grades 1-4 teachers of Alemgena Primary School located in Alemgena District. Alemgena District in general and Alemgena Primary School in particular is selected for the pilot study due to the fact that it is located in the universe of the study but out of the districts and primary schools taken as samples in the study (see Appendix-H).

After the administration of the questionnaire, the responses of the respondents were scored. Besides, in scoring the responses of the subjects, the positively and negatively stated items were sorted out and the negatively stated items were reverse-scored and assigned weights accordingly (Babbie, 1973). Then the reliabilities of the items were calculated using the internal-consistency methods (Cronback, 1951, as cited in Ferguson and Takane, 1989). Accordingly, the reliabilities of the items dealing with the sub-scales training of teachers, class size, educational facilities, curricular materials, teachers' teaching loads, and learners' needs and interests were found to be

$\alpha(\infty) = 0.6122, 0.7714, 0.7881, 0.8162, 0.7041, \text{ and } 0.6442$ respectively.

However, since the computed reliabilities of the items dealing with the sub-scales teachers' preferences and teachers' awareness of the teaching methods suggested in the education policy fell below $\alpha=0.50$ (i.e, teachers' preferences $\alpha = 0.4502$ and education policy $\alpha=0.1350$), as per the judgement of 2 graduates from TEFL and 2 from Curriculum and Instruction amendments were made on the items that need to be and some items which were found out to be vague were totally discarded.

After the improvements, the items were organized and administered to a sample of 15 first cycle primary school teachers (almost half males and half females) teaching in Mulugeta Primary School located in Sebeta town (see Appendix-H). Then

the reliabilities of the items of the two sub-scales; viz, teachers' preferences and education policy were computed and the obtained reliability indices were 0.7107 and 0.5848 respectively. Furthermore, the reliability of the over all instrument was found out to be $\alpha = 0.8468$.

According to Gay (1980), if reliability coefficient is ≥ 0.50 , it can be accepted as reliable instrument. Based on this criterion, the items were found to have good grounds to be employed in collecting the relevant main data for the study.

3.6. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENTS

Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, a visit was made to each school included in the sample schools by the researcher and his research assistants. The total number of grades 1-4 teachers were secured from the schools records. After the number and sex of the teachers were identified, the questionnaire was administered to the teachers in the researcher's presence to clear up any possible misunderstanding the respondents might face in filling in the questionnaire. And thereby maintain the situation in which the instrument was administered during the pilot study and to ensure 100% return.

Concerning the interview, the researcher interviewed forty randomly selected first cycle primary school teachers. The teachers were interviewed whether or not problems related to their training, large class size, scarcity of educational facilities, inappropriateness of the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4, teaching loads, preferences in selecting and applying teaching methods, students' needs and interests and/or lack of awareness of the teaching methods proposed in the New Education and Training Policy intimidate them to use the lecture method most of the time. The interviewing of the primary school supervisors and some selected first cycle primary school students was also conducted by the researcher.

3.7. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Three types of statistical techniques were used to analyze the data secured by applying interviews, document analysis and questionnaire as data gathering tools. These were percentage, mean and chi-square.

Percentage was used to explain the characteristics of the respondents and to show the difference in responses among the various groups of respondents regarding interviews. Mean, on the other hand, was employed to calculate the average of the class size and the teachers' teaching loads from the documents of the 8 primary schools.

Nevertheless, before applying chi-square (χ^2) as a method of data analysis, the results obtained from 237 teachers through the questionnaire were sorted out and tallied. Scores and frequency numbers were assigned accordingly. Then, chi-square was employed to determine the statistical significance of differences between proportion of responses in the groups. To this end, the five-point scale was reduced into a dichotomous scale as the central intention of the study was to figure out the factors, which do attribute to and do not attribute to the mismatch. In so doing, the value of the neutral option; namely, that of 'undecided' was liquidated proportionally to the disagree and agree sides (Babbie, 1995). As samples see Appendices F and G. Besides, the level of significance, in all the above cases, was determined at $p < 0.05$.

However, the data that were gathered using open-ended items of the questionnaire, focus group discussions and actual schools' educational facilities observation were not tabulated or computed; rather such information were used as qualitative data and were included in the interpretation and summary of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data collected through questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, documents analysis and observation.

The chapter comprises two major parts. Part one treats the characteristics of the sample teachers that filled in the questionnaire where as part two deals with the presentation, analysis, interpretation, and discussions of results.

4.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The necessary data for this research were obtained from the teachers teaching in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. A questionnaire was prepared and administered to the respondents with its part seeking personal information. Accordingly, based on the responses obtained from the sample teachers with reference to their background information, some major characteristics of them are presented as under.

Table II: Characteristics of Teacher Respondents

Respondents		No	%
Sex	Male	120	50.6329%
	Female	117	49.3670%
Total		237	100
Teaching Experience	5 - 10	10	4.2194%
	11 - 15	74	31.2236%
	16 - 20	112	47.2574%
	21 - 25	41	17.2996%
Total		237	100
Teaching Load	15 - 20	34	14.3460%
	21 - 25	107	45.1477%
	26 - 30	96	40.5063%
Total		237	100
Class Size	Less than 50		
	More than 50	237	100%
Total		237	100
Place of Work	Urban	144	60.7595%
	Rural	93	39.2405%
Total		237	100

As shown in table II, the teacher respondents include 120 (50.6329%) males and 117 (49.3670%) females. By their teaching experience 10 (4.2194%) teachers have served from 5 to 10 years, 74 (31.2236%) teachers have served from 11 to 15 years, 112 (47.2574%) teachers have served from 16 to 20 years, and 41 (17.2996%) have served from 21 to 25 years.

Regarding teaching load, 34 (14.3460%) teachers teach between 15 to 20 periods per week, 107(45.14777%) teachers teach between 21 to 25 periods per week where as 96(40.5063%) teachers teach 26 to 30 periods per week. Concerning class size, all of the teachers (100%) are found to teach more than 50 students per

classroom in their respective schools. Besides, out of 237 teachers 144(60.7595%) teachers were reported to be from urban and 93(39.2405%) teachers were from rural first cycle primary schools.

4.2. FACTORS INFLUENCING SELECTION AND APPLICATION OF TEACHING METHODS

This research has surveyed some of the factors that make first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method most of the time. The presentations, interpretations and discussions of the factors that have impact on the teachers' selection of teaching methods are carried out in the following subsections. Frequencies of item responses are presented under each of the major factors in contingency tables.

4.2.1. Training of Teachers

The success of the educational process depends to a great extent on the character and ability of teachers. Nowadays, teaching is more than imparting knowledge. It includes helping learners to learn by themselves, to acquire skills and to develop attitudes in the changing social context (Ambaye, 1999). To this end, the mode of training that teachers get during their stay in the training institutions plays a vital role. Thus, table II presents the data regarding the teachers' views on their training.

Table III: Responses of Teachers to Items Related to Training of Teachers.

<i>R.NO</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>X²</i>
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
5.	Not trained in learner centered teaching methods.	16.0857	220.9115	177.0194*
12.	Devoting much time in discussing on various issues in pairs and/or in groups.	14.4897	222.5212	182.6038*
19.	Instructors used to talk in most cases without giving chance to trainees.	10.2595	226.7362	197.7306*
26.	Trainees had the chance of speaking more than their instructors.	11.5846	225.4057	192.9091*
33.	There was a chance to physically move during the instructional Process in TTIs.	14.3018	222.6989	183.2462*
40.	Used to solve problems.	7.1510	229.8497	209.2603*
43.	Encouraged to learn how to learn Than learning facts.	11.6910	225.3161	192.5556*
46.	Used to learn by the student-Centered teaching methods.	15.8714	221.1407	177.7868*
	Overall Training	101.2199	1794.8446	1512.8422*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall training is 948.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items entertained in the above table, refer to Appendix -A.

As shown in table III, the calculated chi-square values of all of the items are by far greater than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. For instance, regarding item number 5, the calculated chi-square (177.0194) is greater than the chi-square critical value ($\chi^2 = 3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Hence, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be said that the teachers use the lecture method dominantly, as they haven't been trained in the learner-centered teaching methods. This idea goes with the view of Plass (1998:313) that states "unless student teachers are themselves educated in a learner-centered way, the teacher-centered approach will perpetuate itself. We can not expect newly qualified teachers to transform their classrooms if they themselves have no experience of learner-centered methodology".

The same table also designates the degree of devotion of the teachers in discussing on various issues in pairs and/or in-groups when they were in the Teachers' Training Institutes. In this regard, since chi-square calculated (182.6038) is greater than χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841, the teachers did not devote most of their time on discussing on different issues in pairs and/or in groups when they were in the Teachers' Training Institutes. Based on this, it can be deduced that the teachers were not trained in learner-centered teaching methods frequently.

Similarly, the table above depicts the extent of teacher trainers talk in the teaching-learning process. Regarding this issue, since χ^2 calculated value (197.7306) by far exceeds χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) = 3.841, when the first cycle primary school teachers were in TTIs, their instructors used to talk in most cases without giving chance to the trainees in the instructional process. This, on the other hand, shows that the teachers were trained in teacher-centered teaching methods.

Besides, table III examines whether or not the teachers had the chance of speaking more than their instructors in the Teachers' Training Institutions. Concerning this, as can be seen from the table, χ^2 calculated (192.9091) is greater than the chi-square table value (χ^2 , 0.05 = 3.841). Therefore, the teachers did not get the chance of speaking more than their instructors did during their stay in the TTIs. This implies that the teachers were not trained in the learner-oriented teaching approaches.

The table also illustrates the extent to which the first cycle primary school teachers got a chance to physically move or relax during the teaching-learning process in their respective TTIs. With this regard, the chi-square calculated value (183.2462) is by far greater than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05) = 3.84. Hence, there was no chance for the teachers to physically move or relax during the instructional process when they were candidates in Teachers' Training Institutes.

Moreover, the table discloses the degree to which the teachers used to solve problems in the teaching-learning process in the TTIs. Accordingly, the chi-square calculated (209.2603) is far greater than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05 = 3.841) and hence the difference examined is quite significant. Thus, the magnitude and direction of the difference show that during their stay in the TTIs, first cycle primary school teachers did not use to solve problems on their own. This, on the other hand, means, the teachers were not trained in problem-solving method.

Table III further depicts whether or not the teachers were encouraged to learn how to learn in the TTIs. Concerning this issue, the χ^2 calculated (192.5556) exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. Therefore, the teachers were not encouraged to learn how to learn than learning facts when they were in their

respective TTIs. This, in turn shows that the teachers were not trained in learner-centered teaching methods.

Furthermore, in the same table it is seen that the χ^2 calculated (177.7868) to check whether the teachers were trained in learner-centered teaching methods is also greater than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). This apparently shows that the teachers were trained in teacher-centered teaching methods.

In general, as can be observed from the above table, regarding the overall teachers' training, the χ^2 calculated (1512.8422) is by far greater than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) = 3.841. Hence, lack of training is quite a significant factor that makes the teachers use the lecture method frequently in the teaching-learning process. Besides, interview was made to 40 randomly selected teachers so as to check whether lack of training makes them use the lecture method in most cases at the expense of the learner centered teaching methods. Accordingly, out of the 40 respondents, 38 teachers (95%) said that they were not trained in learner-centered teaching methods while only 2 teachers (5%) said lack of training is not a problem that makes them use the lecture method dominantly.

Similarly, 32 teachers were randomly selected (8 teachers from each district) for the focus group discussions. And almost all of the teachers said that lack of training is one of the factors that intimidate first cycle primary school teachers to use the lecture method most of the time. In the same way, the primary school supervisors working at the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments were interviewed and they also confirmed that lack of training is one of the problems that make the teachers use the lecture method in the instructional process frequently. The supervisors added that to alleviate the problem,

Cluster Resource Centers are established at different sites in the zone so as to facilitate the process of capacity building of the practitioners and thereby enable them practice the learner-centered teaching methods as intended.

4.2.2. Class Size

It is obvious that student population in a classroom affects the teaching learning process in general and the teaching method to be used in particular. Referring to this, Gage (1976) and Knott and Mutunga (1995) are of the opinion that one powerful determiner of teaching method is the size of the group to be taught. This part of the analysis hence focuses on the impact of class size on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods and table IV shows the summary of the data.

Table IV: Responses of Teachers to Items Related to Class Size

<i>R.NO</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>X²</i>
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
6	Using the lecture method dominantly due to students Number.	3.0386	233.9716	225.0213*
13	Do not make students discuss in Pairs and/or in groups because of the large number of students.	8.2798	228.7311	205.0581*
20	Unable to check whether each of the students do their homework due to large class size.	10.0846	226.9059	198.3606*
27	Not using the learner-centered teaching methods because of the large number of students.	7.0593	229.9312	209.5860*
34	Unable to give and correct class works due to large class size.	18.8759	218.1208	167.5043*
	Overall Class Size	47.0303	1137.9211	1004.2555*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall class size is 592.5.

$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1, 0.05) = 3.841$

For the detail understanding of the items entertained in the table, see Appendix-A.

As can be seen from table IV, the calculated χ^2 values of all of the items are greater than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. The detailed description of each of the items are presented one by one as follows.

In the table, the first item deals with the teachers use of the lecture method frequently due to large class size. Regarding this, the chi-square calculated value (225.0213) is by far greater than the chi-square critical value (at 1,0.05) = 3.841. As one can see from the table, the magnitude and direction of the difference indicate that first cycle primary school teachers currently use the lecture method dominantly due to the large number of student found in their classrooms.

Table IV also displays the degree to which first cycle primary school teachers make their students discuss in pairs and/or in groups. In line with this, the calculated χ^2 value is 205.0581. Compared to the χ^2 critical value (1, 0.05) which is 3.841, it is by far greater that ascertains the fact that the teachers do not make their students discuss in pairs and/or in groups during the teaching-learning process dominantly due to the large number of students they teach.

In the same manner, the table further presents the extent to which first cycle primary school teachers check whether each of the students do their homeworks. In this regard, the calculated chi-square value (198.3606) is greater than the chi-square table value (1,0.05) = 3.841. Therefore, the teachers do not usually check whether or not each of their students do their homework properly due to the large number of students they teach.

In table IV, it is also noted that the effect of the number of students on the teachers use of the learner-centered teaching methods is addressed. Concerning this, the χ^2 calculated value (209.5860) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) that is 3.841. Hence, in the respondents' opinion, first cycle primary school teachers

do not use the learner-centered teaching methods because of the large number of students they teach in their respective classrooms.

Moreover, in the same table the degree to which first cycle primary school teachers give and correct classworks has been assessed. Accordingly, the calculated χ^2 value (167.5043) depicted that it is greater than the critical χ^2 value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. So, the teachers do not usually give classworks as students are too many in their class(es) and they do not get time to coordinate, help or guide the students individually and/or in groups.

To sum up, as it is presented in the above table, with regard to the overall impact of class size on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods, the calculated value of χ^2 is 1004.2555. Compared to the χ^2 critical value (at 1,0.05 = 3.841), it is by far greater that clearly shows that large class size makes the teachers dominantly use the lecture method at the expense of the learner-centered teaching methods.

In addition, to see whether the number of students the teachers teach makes them use the lecture method most of the time, interview was made to the 40 teachers selected as interviewees. And all of them (100%) said that they teach large number of students in their respective classrooms regardless of the standard set by the Ministry of Education for class size; namely, 50:1 for primary schools.

Furthermore, through the focus group discussions all of the informants agreed that large class size makes them not use the learner-centered teaching methods as intended in the education and training policy. The teachers further claimed that especially in the rural areas teachers are forced to teach up to 100 and even above 100 students in a single classroom due to shortage of teachers. Besides, to crosscheck the responses of the respondents with the realities of schools in terms of

class size, the researcher collected grades 1-4 students' attendance sheets from eight schools (two from the four districts). And after analysis he found that in almost all of the eight schools the students' number per classroom is greater than 50; the standard set by the Ministry of Education for class size in the case of primary schools with an average of 70. And the average for each school ranges from 51 to 114.

Moreover, the primary school supervisors working at the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and the four Districts Education Departments were also interviewed as to what extent class size compels first cycle primary school teachers use the lecture method most of time. And all of them confirmed that large class size is the most critical problem that intimidates the teachers to use the lecture method frequently in conducting classroom instruction.

4.2.3. Curricular Materials

It is true that the content of the curriculum has an impact on the type of methodology to be employed. Referring to this, Alkin (1992) argues "research to determine the most effective methods of instruction show that effective methodology is closely related to course content." Obviously your selection of methodology should be related to such factors as goals, specific learning objectives, and content. For example, if you are trying to teach problem solving or a psychomotor skill, the lecture method is not the right approach (Moore, 2001).

From the above positions, one may understand that in selecting and applying a teaching method the goals, the objectives, and the contents of the curriculum to be implemented have a bearing. Hence, table V displays the teachers' responses regarding the role of curricular materials in their selection and application of teaching methods.

Table V: Responses of Teachers to the Items that Deal with Curricular Materials

<i>R.</i> <i>NQ</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>X</i> ²
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
7.	Using the lecture method in most cases due to vastness of subject matters.	20.0128	216.9790	163.6948*
14.	The difficulty of the curricula makes the teachers use the lecture method.	16.6322	220.3741	175.1509*
21.	The curricular materials do not invite learner-centered teaching approaches.	33.8576	203.1455	120.9215*
28.	The Curricular materials make teachers not use learner-centered teaching Approaches.	32.1716	204.8417	125.8016*
35.	The curricular materials are not relevant.	45.4042	191.5837	90.1622*
41.	Poor organization of curricula materials makes the teachers not use learner-centered teaching methods.	34.9497	202.0534	117.8213*
44.	The objectives of the curricular materials do invite the lecture method.	110.4557	126.5414	1.0918
	Overall Curricular Materials.	292.4419	1366.5200	695.3850*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall curricular materials is 829.5.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items treated in the table above, refer to Appendix -A.

Table V indicates that the calculated chi-square values of items 7,14, 21,28, 35, and 41 are by far greater than the x^2 critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. However, the chi-square calculated value (1.0918) or that of item 44 is less than the chi-square critical value. In the forthcoming paragraphs the chi-square calculated values of each of the items and their implications are presented in turn as under.

In the table, item 7 deals with the extent to which first cycle primary school teachers use the lecture method in most cases due to the vastness of the subject matters they teach. In line with this, the chi-square calculated value (163.6948) exceeds the chi-square critical value (at 1, 0.05 = 3.841). Therefore, the teachers feel that they use the lecture method frequently as the courses they teach are very vast and could not be finished on time if the learner-centered teaching methods are used.

In table V the degree to which the difficulty of the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 students intimidates the teachers to use the lecture method most of the time is presented. With this regard, the chi-square calculated value (175.1509) is greater than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. Hence, in the first cycle primary school teachers' opinion it is difficult to use the learner-centered teaching methods in most cases as the curricula prepared for the level are beyond the ability of the children.

Besides, regarding the degree to which the syllabi, teachers' guides and students' textbooks of grades 1-4 students invite the learner-centered teaching methods, the χ^2 calculated value (120.9215) by far exceeds the chi-square critical value (1,0.05 = 3.841). Therefore, the respondents believe that even if first cycle primary school teachers want to employ the learner-centered teaching methods, they could not do so as the curricular materials (syllabi, teachers' guides and students' textbooks) do not invite such teaching approaches.

In the same table, to what extent the curricular materials prepared for the first cycle primary schools hinder the teachers from using the learner-centered teaching methods is addressed. Accordingly, the χ^2 calculated value (125.8016) is greater than the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2 = 3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). So, in the first

cycle primary school teachers' opinion, the curricular materials prepared for the first cycle primary schools make the them not use the learner-centered teaching methods dominantly.

Moreover, regarding the relevance of the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 students, the chi-square calculated value (90.1622) is also greater than the chi-square critical value (at 1,0.05) which is 3.841. Hence, first cycle primary school teachers think that the curricular materials developed for the first cycle primary schools of Oromia are not relevant for the level. This may be due to the fact that the curricular materials developed for the level are beyond the ability of the students, poorly organized and/or due to the vastness of the subject matters taught at that level.

In table V, due emphasis is also given to whether or not the way the curricular materials developed for the first cycle primary school students organized makes the teachers not to use the learner-centered teaching methods dominantly. In this regard, the chi-square calculated value (117.8213) exceeds the chi-square critical value (1, 0.05 = 3.841). Therefore, the teachers are of the opinion that they do not use the learner-centered teaching methods frequently as the syllabi, the students' textbooks and the teachers' guides of the subject matters they teach are poorly organized.

Lastly, the table presents the degree to which the objectives of the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 children do invite the lecture method. Regarding this, the calculated chi-square value (1.0918) is less than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. Hence, this is not considered as a factor that makes the teachers use the lecture method most of the time.

In spite of this, the overall χ^2 calculated value (695.3850) for testing the impact of curricular materials on the teachers dependency on a series of lecture is by far greater than the χ^2 table value (1,0.05 = 3.841). This means, the teachers believe that inappropriateness of the curricular materials prepared for the first cycle primary schools is one of the factors that intimidate them to use lecture in conducting classroom instruction.

Besides, out of the 40 interviewed teachers, 30 teachers (75%) said that the curricular materials prepared for the level are very vast and at the same time beyond the ability and maturity level of the children where as 10 teachers (25%) argued that the curricula have no problem. Similarly, through the focus group discussions, the majority of the teachers claimed that the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 level are very difficult not only for the students but also for the teachers teaching at the level. Moreover, the teachers added that nowadays though there are efforts to gear the curricula towards the learner-centered teaching methods, except that of English language, still the materials are theoretical, too advanced for the children to learn independently and content-oriented.

Furthermore, concerning the extent to which the curricular materials compel the teachers use the lecture method most of the time, primary schools supervisors working at the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments were interviewed. Almost all of them said that though there are improvements from time to time still the curricula prepared for the first cycle primary schools are not the one that enable teachers use the learner-centered teaching methods frequently. This is because the materials are very vast, too difficult to understand easily and effectively and at the same time not activity-oriented.

4.2.4. Teachers' Teaching Loads

Teaching load is one of the factors that may enforce teachers to use or not to use a particular teaching method. Regarding this, Gage (1976) says "within any given situation the time factor is an important variable. A well-prepared and a badly prepared lecture can not always be regarded as equivalent examples of the same teaching method." Table VI thus depicts the responses of the teacher respondents concerning the impact of their teaching loads on the method they use.

Table VI: Responses of Teachers to the Items Related to Teaching Loads.

<i>R.N</i> <i>Q</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>X</i> ²
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
8.	Using lecture method frequently due to high teaching loads.	19.2444	217.7656	166.2897*
15.	Do not get sufficient time to prepare activity-based lessons so as to apply the learner-centered teaching methods in most cases.	30.9598	206.0426	129.3417*
22.	Lack of substitute teachers makes first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method frequently.	19.0802	217.9153	166.8160*
29.	First cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method dominantly due to their excessive work loads.	14.8791	222.1278	181.2321*
36	Participating in various co-curricular activities besides having high teaching loads per week makes use the lecture method.	25.9873	211.0186	144.4582*
	Overall Teaching Loads.	109.8898	1075.0569	786.1160*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall teaching loads is 592.5.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items treated in the table above, refer to Appendix-A.

Table VI reveals that the calculated chi-square values of all of the items are greater than the chi-square critical value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. Thus, the magnitude and direction of the differences indicate that all of the items presented in the table are found to be factors that show the fact that their teaching loads make first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use a series of lecture in conducting classroom instruction.

For instance, in the table, item 8 deals with whether or not the teachers use the lecture method frequently due to high teaching loads. In this regard, the chi-square calculated value (166.2897) exceeds the chi-square critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Therefore, the teachers apply the lecture method most of the time as they are loaded with a number of periods and do not get time to prepare themselves for using the learner-centered teaching methods.

The table also shows to what extent lack of sufficient time hinders the teachers from using the learner-centered teaching methods dominantly. Concerning this view, as can be seen from the table, the χ^2 calculated value (129.3417) is by far greater than the chi-square critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Hence, the teachers teach a number of subjects that do not give them sufficient time to prepare activity-based lesson(s) so as to apply the learner-centered teaching methods frequently.

Besides, in table VI, the degree to which lack of substitute teachers makes first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method most of the time is entertained. Regarding this, the chi-square calculated value (166.8160) exceeds the chi-square table value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Thus, the teachers think that they do not have substitute teachers and as the result they have

high teaching loads. These high teaching loads make them use the lecture method in most cases.

Table VI further displays whether or not first cycles primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method dominantly due to their excessive workloads. In line with this, the calculated χ^2 value obtained is 181.2321. This is by far greater than the critical chi-square value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, the teachers think that first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method in most cases due to their excessive workloads.

The table further presents if first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone have high teaching loads per week and at the same time participate in different co-curricular activities thereby use the lecture method dominantly. With regard to this, the value of the chi-square calculated (144.4582) exceeds the χ^2 table value (1,0.05) which is 3.841. Hence, first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone compel to use the lecture method in most cases as they participate in different co-curricular activities besides having high teaching loads per week.

In general, as can be observed from table VI, the overall calculated χ^2 value of teaching loads is 786.1160. Compared to the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. This in turn indicates that the teaching loads first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone have made them use the lecture method frequently.

Furthermore, out of the 40 interviewed teachers 32 teachers (80%) said that they have high teaching loads while 8 teachers (20%) claimed that they are not overloaded. Similarly, through the focus group discussions, the majority of the teachers (informants) argued that they teach 20-30 periods and sometimes even more 30 periods per week. And these high teaching loads make them very busy and

hinder them from preparing activity-oriented lesson plans which help them use the learner-centered teaching approaches.

In addition, to cross-check the responses given by the informants regarding teaching loads, the period allotments of the teachers of eight first cycle primary schools (that of 2 schools from each district) were analyzed from the time tables of the schools. And it was found that except few teachers all of them teach more than 20 periods per week with an average of 22.50 periods per week. And the average for each school teachers' teaching loads ranges from 20.50 to 25.25 periods.

Besides, the primary school supervisors working at Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments also confirmed that teaching load is one of the factors that intimidate first cycle primary school teachers to heavily depend on a series of lecture in the teaching-learning process. The supervisors further commented that due to shortage of teachers especially in the remote areas there are cases in which teachers teach up to 40 periods per week.

4.2.5. Teachers' Prefences

Every teacher has a unique set of personal experiences, background knowledge, teaching skills, and personality traits that make him or her more comfortable and effective with certain methodologies than with others. Obviously most teachers select the methods that have proved most successful in the past. Because people are inclined to select the methodology that makes them feel most comfortable, it is easy to get into a teaching rut (Moore, 2001). Thus, table VII presents the teachers' responses regarding the degree to which their preferences make them select the method they use.

Table VII: Responses of Teachers to the Items Dealing with Teachers' Preferences.

<i>R.N</i> <i>Q</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>χ</i> ²
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
9.	Preferring lecture method to learner-centered teaching methods.	212.6355	24.3645	149.5610*
16.	Learner-centered teaching methods do not satisfy in imparting the content to be taught.	221.3393	15.6607	178.4966*
23.	If learner-centered teaching methods are used, students will disturb the classroom.	213.8193	23.1724	153.3600*
30.	Preferring lecture method to learner-centered Teaching methods as the latter demand serious Preparation.	112.1057	124.9066	0.6914
37.	Preferring lecture method to learner-centered teaching approaches as it avoids excessive works during lesson(s) preparation.	45.2440	191.7484	90.5634*
42	It is very difficult to apply the learner-entered teaching approaches in the Ethiopian context.	29.4980	207.5021	133.6939*
45	Teachers of Oromia use the lecture method dominantly, as they prefer the method.	224.1311	12.8688	188.3196*
47	If the learner-centered teaching methods are applied, teachers do not feel confident as they are new approaches of teaching.	205.1166	31.8833	126.6235*
	Overall Teachers' Preferences.	1258.6293	637.2816	203.6250*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall teachers' preferences is 948.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items included in the table, see Appendix-A

Scholars argue that teachers' preferences have a great impact on the method they select and apply in the teaching-learning process. Referring to this, Knott and Mutunga (1995:170) say:

There is evidence that teachers' likes and dislikes, together with their experience, have a bearing on the method they use. This is partly related not only to their philosophy, style and value system but also to their past experiences and their confidence in using new and often less controllable methods.

However, the result of the overall teachers' preferences presented in table VII has shown to the contrary. This is because as can be seen from the table, the χ^2 calculated value of the overall teachers' preferences (203.6250) is by far greater than the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). The magnitude and direction of the difference show that teachers' preferences do not make first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method most of the time. The detailed description of the items treated in table VII is presented in turn as under.

In the table, item 9 deals with whether or not first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone prefer the lecture method to the learner-centered teaching methods. Concerning this, the χ^2 calculated value (149.5610) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Hence, the teachers do not prefer the lecture method to the learner-centered teaching methods.

In table VII item 16 further examines whether learner-centered teaching methods do not satisfy the teachers in imparting the content they teach. In line with this, as can be seen from the table, the chi-square calculated value (178.4966) is by far greater than the chi-square table value (1,0.05=814). Therefore, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be deduced that the teachers do not use the learner-centered teaching methods dominantly not because of the fact that the methods dissatisfy them in imparting the content they teach but may be due to some other factors.

Similarly, in the table item 23 tries to see if the teachers refrain themselves from using the learner-centered teaching methods due to the fear that the students disturb the classrooms. With this regard, the χ^2 calculated value (153.3600) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Thus, the teachers oblige not to use the learner-centered teaching methods not due to the fear that students disturb the classrooms but may be due to some other reasons.

In table VII item 30 treats the degree to which first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone prefer the lecture method to the learner-centered teaching methods as the latter demand a serious preparation. Regarding this, since the χ^2 calculated value (0.6914) is less than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05) that is 3.841, there is no significant difference among the respondents. So, it is not considered as an indicator factor.

In the same table item 37 examines the extent to which the teachers prefer the lecture method to the learner-centered teaching approaches as it avoids excessive works during lesson(s) preparation. In this case, the χ^2 calculated value is 90.5634. Compared to the χ^2 table value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. Hence, the magnitude and direction of the difference reveal that the teachers prefer the lecture method to the learner-centered teaching approaches as it avoids excessive works during lesson(s) preparation. This may be due to the fact that the teachers teach high teaching loads and do not get sufficient time to prepare their lesson plans; but not due to their preferences to the lecture method.

Moreover, in table VII item 42 addresses the degree to which the teachers think the learner-centered teaching approaches can be applied in the Ethiopian context. In this regard, the χ^2 calculated value (133.6939) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05 = 3.841). Therefore, based on the magnitude and direction of

the difference, it can be concluded that the teachers think that it is very difficult to apply the learner-centered teaching approaches in the Ethiopian context. This might be due to the prevalence of various constraints such as large class size, lack of school facilities, inappropriateness of the curriculum, workloads, lack of motivation on the part of teachers and the like that may act as hurdles in the implementation of the learner-centered teaching methods.

In the same table item 45 deals with whether or not first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method dominantly as they prefer the method. In line with this, the χ^2 calculated value (188.3196) is greater than the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Thus, in the teachers' opinion, first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method dominantly not as they prefer the method.

Last but not least, in table VII item 47 examines the extent to which first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone have confidence in applying the learner-centered teaching methods. Concerning this, the χ^2 calculated value (126.6235) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Hence, the teachers believe that they apply the lecture method frequently not because they lack confidence in applying the learner-centered teaching methods as they are new approaches of teaching. Furthermore, to check whether or not the teachers apply the lecture method frequently due to their own preferences to the method, interview was made to 40 teachers. Out of the 40 teachers 34 teachers (85%) said that they use lecture method dominantly not because they prefer the method but due to the prevailing constraints in the schools while 6 teachers (15%) claimed that they use the method frequently as they prefer the method.

Besides, through the focus group discussions almost all of the teachers confirmed that they apply the lecture method in most cases not as they prefer the method but due to such problems as large class size, lack of educational facilities, teaching loads and the like that act as obstacles in the application of the learner-centered teaching methods.

The primary school supervisors working at the Oromia Regional Education Bureau, West Shewa Zone Education Department and the four Districts Education Departments were also interviewed whether first cycle primary school teachers apply the lecture method frequently due to their own preferences. Accordingly, the majority of the supervisors argued that the teachers use the lecture method in most cases due to overcrowded classes, lack of educational facilities, high teaching loads, lack of motivation and the like but not due to their own preferences to the method.

4.2.6. Students' Needs and Interests

The main objective of the teaching-learning process is to help the learners bring behavioral change as a result of learning. To this effect, what they learn and the means through which they learn what is to be learned should fulfil their needs and interests. Concerning this view, Rajput (1996:193) states "curriculum is the precious commodity which is transacted by teachers and eventually consumed by students. It has to be learner's need based and relevant to the society in which the learner lives and grows up."

Likewise, the teaching methods that are selected to conduct the instruction process should address the needs and interests of the students in order to foster the teaching-learning process as intended. Table VIII hence presents the teacher respondents' responses with regard to the impact of students' needs and interests on the method they employ.

Table VIII: Responses of Teachers to the Items Related to Students' Needs and Interests.

<i>R.NO</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>χ²</i>
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
10	If learner-centered teaching methods are used, students do not actively participate in the lessons to be learned.	216.0264	20.9734	160.5303*
17	If learner-centered teaching methods are employed, students may talk about their own personal issues.	216.3014	20.6986	161.4366*
24	If learner-centered teaching methods are used, students show lack of interests due to little previous exposure to the methods.	204.9171	32.0830	126.0422*
31	If learner-centered teaching methods are applied, students may not consider themselves as sources of knowledge, skill and attitude.	209.8547	27.1455	140.8551*
38	If learner-centered teaching methods are employed dominantly, students do not feel that they really learn the lessons properly.	218.7692	18.2308	169.6862*
	Overall Students' Needs and Interests	1064.6419	120.3585	752.4650*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall students' needs and interests is 592.5.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2(1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items entertained in the table above, refer to Appendix-A.

Table VIII depicts that the chi-square calculated values of all of the items as well as that of the overall students' needs and interests fall above the chi-square critical value ($x^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Thus, based on the magnitude and direction of the differences, it can be argued that students' needs and interests

do not compel first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method frequently at the expense of the learner-centered teaching methods.

In the table, for instance, the first item deals with whether or not students do not actively participate in the lessons to be learned if the learner-centered teaching methods are used. In this regard, the χ^2 calculated value (160.5303) falls above the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Hence, the teachers use the lecture method most of the time not because their students do not actively participate in the lessons to be learned if the student-centered teaching methods are used but may be due to some other reasons.

In the same table item 17 treats to what extent the teachers think the students talk about their own personal issues if the learner-centered teaching methods are employed. In reference to this, the χ^2 calculated value (161.4366) is by far greater than the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, the teachers think that they use the lecture method most of the time not due to the fear that students may talk about their own personal issues instead of the lessons under discussion if the learner-centered teaching methods are employed but may be due to some other factors.

In table VIII item 24 sees whether the teachers say that students show lack of interest if the learner-centered teaching methods are used. Concerning this view, the χ^2 calculated value (126.0422) exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Hence, the teachers think that students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods due to little previous exposure to the methods do not make them use the lecture method frequently.

In the same table, to what extent the practitioners think that students consider themselves as sources of knowledge, skill and attitude if the learner-centered

teaching methods are used, is also considered. In line with this, the value of the χ^2 calculated is 140.8551. Compared to the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. Therefore, the teachers think that if the learner-centered teaching methods are used, students consider themselves as sources of knowledge, skill and attitude and this does not make them heavily depend on a series of lecture in the teaching-learning process.

Lastly, table VIII presents the teachers' responses regarding the degree to which their students feel about the effectiveness of learner-centered teaching methods. With regard to this, the χ^2 calculated value (169.6862) by far exceeds the χ^2 table value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, the teachers are of the opinion that if the learner-centered teaching approaches are used, the students feel that they really learn the lessons to be learned properly. And this does not intimidate them to use the lecture method most of the time.

Moreover, to check whether or not students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods make the teachers use the lecture method most of the time, interview was made to 40 teachers. And out of the 40 teachers, 28 teachers (70%) said that they use the lecture method frequently not due to students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods. On the contrary, 12 teachers (30%) claimed that due to little previous exposure to the methods the students do not show interest in the learner-centered teaching methods and this makes them use the lecture method in most cases. Similarly, during the focus group discussion, most of the teachers said that it is not students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods that make them use the lecture method dominantly.

In addition, 36 first cycle primary school students were interviewed to see to what extent they have interest to learn by the learner-centered teaching methods.

Accordingly, the majority of the students reported that if conditions allow them to learn by the student-centered teaching approaches, they have a great interest to learn through different activities. Some students further added that due to their short attention span if they learn by the lecture method throughout the periods, they get tired and even hate the lesson(s) delivered to them.

Furthermore, the primary school supervisors working at the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments were interviewed as to how far students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods compel the teachers to use the lecture method. And the majority of them said that students lack of interest in the learner-centered teaching methods can't be considered as a factor that hinder the teachers from using the learner-centered teaching methods. Moreover, the supervisors added that if preconditions such as educational facilities are fulfilled, appropriate curricular materials are prepared, students' number per classroom is the one that is manageable and if teachers' workloads allow them to prepare activity-based lessons, the students have great interest to learn by the student-centered teaching approaches especially through play due to their age level.

4.2.7. Awareness of Teachers to the Teaching Methods Suggested in the NETP of Ethiopia

To Rajput (1996) the teacher is principal means of proper implementation of education policy and programme. The effective transaction of curricula both within and outside the classroom is, for all practical purposes, the total responsibility of the teacher. To implement education policy and programmes properly, the teacher should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of what are intended in the education policy that serve as guidelines. Therefore, table IX displays the teachers'

responses regarding the extent to which they are aware of the teaching methods suggested for first cycle primary schools in the NETP of Ethiopia.

Table IX: Responses of Teachers to the Items that Deal with Teachers Awareness of the Teaching Methods Suggested in the NETP of Ethiopia

<i>R.NO</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		<i>X²</i>
		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
		<i>1+2</i>	<i>4+5</i>	
11.	Lack of awareness of teaching methods Proposed in NETP of Ethiopia.	226.5594	10.4405	197.0776*
18.	Getting adequate orientation about the NETP in different ways.	221.4760	15.5240	178.9714*
25.	Ignorant of the teaching methods intended in the NETP for the first cycle primary schools.	228.7204	8.2794	205.0340*
32.	Learning about teaching methods suggested in the NETP of Ethiopia in TTI.	26.5791	210.4210	142.6069*
39.	First cycle primary school teachers of Oromia are not aware of teaching methods Proposed in NETP for the cycle.	229.9101	7.0898	209.4890*
	Overall Education Policy	944.4438	240.5563	418.1077*

* P<0.05

N.B

* = P<0.05

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall teachers' awareness of the teaching methods suggested in the NETP is 592.5.

$$x^2_{cri} = x^2 (1,0.05) = 3.841$$

For the detail understanding of the items entertained in the table, see Appendix-A.

Table IX indicates that the x^2 calculated value of the overall awareness of the teachers regarding the teaching methods suggested in the NETP of Ethiopia is 418.1077. Compared to the x^2 critical value ($x^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. Thus, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be concluded that first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone are aware of the teaching methods intended in the NETP of Ethiopia for the first cycle primary schools.

In the table, for instance, the first item deals with the degree to which the teachers are aware of the teaching methods proposed in the NETP of Ethiopia. In reference to this, the χ^2 calculated value (197.0776) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Hence, the teachers apply the lecture method dominantly not because of lack of awareness of the teaching methods proposed in the NETP for first cycle primary schools but may be due to some other factors.

Similarly, in table IX item 18 treats the degree to which the teachers got adequate orientation about the NETP of Ethiopia in various ways. Regarding this, the value of the χ^2 calculated (178.9714) by far falls above the χ^2 table value (1,0.05=3.841). Therefore, even if the teachers haven't learned about the NETP in the TTIs, they got adequate orientation about it in different ways. This, in turn reveals that the teachers use the lecture method frequently not due to lack of awareness to NETP of Ethiopia.

In the same table item 25 examines whether or not the teachers are ignorant of the teaching methods intended in the NETP of Ethiopia for the first cycle primary schools. In this regard, the χ^2 calculated value (205.0340) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Thus, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be concluded that the teachers learned about the teaching methods intended in the NETP for first cycle primary schools in different ways.

In table IX item 32 sees whether the teachers learned about the teaching methods suggested in the NETP for the first cycle primary schools during their stay in the TTIs. Concerning this, the χ^2 calculated value (142.6069) exceeds the χ^2 table value (1,0.05=3.841). Hence, based on the magnitude and direction of the

difference, it can be concluded that during their stay in the TTIs, the teachers did not learn about the teaching methods suggested in the NETP of Ethiopia.

Finally, in the table item 39 deals with the extent to which first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia are aware of the teaching methods proposed in the NETP for the cycle. In line with this, the χ^2 calculated value (209.4890) is greater than the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at significance level of 0.05). Therefore, taking into consideration the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be said that the teachers think that first cycle primary school teachers of Oromia use the lecture method in most cases not because they are unaware of the teaching methods proposed in the NETP for the cycle.

Furthermore, among the 40 interviewed teachers, 36 teachers (90%) said that they are aware of the teaching methods suggested in the NETP for the first cycle primary schools where as 4 teachers (10%) reported that they are not aware of the teaching methods suggested for the first cycle primary schools.

In the same manner, through the focus group discussion the majority of the teachers agreed that at theoretical level they know the teaching methods to be used for teaching first cycle primary schools children. However, they could not apply the methods due to adverse conditions in the schools.

Moreover, the primary school supervisors of Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments also confirmed that the teachers are aware of the teaching methods to be employed for the first cycle primary schools. Nevertheless, they could not apply the methods as intended due to the existence of obstacles such as lack of training regarding the practical application of learner-centered teaching methods, large class size, workloads, inadequacy of educational facilities, lack of motivation, and the like.

4.2.8. Educational Facilities

We should consider local constraints when selecting a method. The most important factors in this case are the facilities available, including resource materials and textbooks. Quite clearly if an essential requirement for a particular method is not available, then that method cannot be used (Knott and Mutunga, 1995). Table X thus shows the teachers' responses concerning the adequacy of educational facilities and its bearing on the selection and application of the teaching method they use.

Table X: Responses of Teachers to the Items Related to Adequacy of Educational Facilities.

<i>R.</i> <i>NQ</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Observed Frequency</i>		χ^2
		<i>Inadequate</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	
		<i>0+1</i>	<i>2+3</i>	
48	Library	227	10	198.6878*
49	Science kit	220	17	173.8776*
50	Classrooms	191	46	88.7130*
51	Windows	197	40	104.0042*
52	Students' Seats	206	31	129.2194*
53	Desks	207	30	132.1898*
54	School Pedagogical Centers.	206	31	129.2194*
55	Textbooks	210	27	141.3038*
56	Syllabi	195	42	98.7722*
57	Teachers' guides	181	56	65.9282*
58	Blackboard	182	55	68.0548*
59	Chalk	167	70	39.7004*
	Overall Educational Facilities	2389	455	1315.1744*

* $P < 0.05$

N.B

* = $P < 0.05$

df = 1

The expected frequency for agree and disagree columns is 118.5. And that of the overall available of educational facilities is 1422.

$$\chi^2_{\text{cri}} = \chi^2(1, 0.05) = 3.841$$

As can be observed from table X, the χ^2 calculated value of the overall availability of educational facilities is 1315.1744. Compared to the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. Thus, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be concluded that there is inadequacy of educational facilities in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone.

In addition to what was proposed by the target population, observation was made on different schools facilities such as the condition of library, science kit, classrooms, students' seats, desks, School Pedagogical Centers, blackboards, windows, and the like. In most cases, the above listed schools facilities and related ones are either inadequate or totally absent.

In the next paragraphs the condition of each of the above listed educational facilities is discussed to give a clear image of their availability. In the table, for instance, item 48 deals with the availability of library. In this regard, the χ^2 calculated value (198.6878) by far exceeds the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Therefore, there is inadequacy of library service in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. Similarly, by the observation made, it was found that except very few schools found in towns almost all of the schools do not have library services.

In table X item 49 deals with the adequacy of science kit service. In line with this, the χ^2 calculated value is 173.8776. Compared to the χ^2 table value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05), it is by far greater. Hence, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it is apparent that there is inadequacy of science kit in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. Besides, through the observation, it was seen that in most of the schools either science kit is giving service nominally or totally not present.

The same table presents the conditions of classrooms and windows. Regarding these, the χ^2 calculated values (88.7130 and 104.0042 respectively) exceed the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, based on the directions to which the differences tend to, it can be concluded that classrooms and windows are inadequate in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. Moreover, by the observation made it was ascertained that except some newly built primary schools, in most of the schools visited the classrooms are dilapidated, narrow, with no sanitation, and do not allow to conduct activity based learning. Similarly, except that of the few newly built schools, the windows of most of the schools observed were either not big enough to allow a free movement of air or there for the sake of formality.

Table X also shows whether or not students' seats and desks are adequate. With this regard, the χ^2 calculated values (129.2194 and 132.1898 respectively) by far exceed the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$). Hence, students' seats and desks are not adequate in the first cycle primary Schools of West Shewa Zone. In the same manner, through the observation the researcher confirmed that in the majority of the schools observed, there is inadequacy of students' seats and desks either as three and/or four students' sit on a single desk or the facilities are not present at all.

Moreover, in the same table due attention is also given to the degree of adequacy of School Pedagogical Centers. Concerning this, the χ^2 calculated value (129.2194) is by far greater than the χ^2 table value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Hence, there is inadequacy of School Pedagogical Centers in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. Similarly, the observation made revealed that the School Pedagogical Centers of most of the schools observed are in a poor condition. This is because almost all of them are equipped only with locally produced

two-dimensional materials such as pictures, charts, diagrams, maps, graphs, and very few models.

Table X presents the extent to which curricular materials (textbooks, syllabi and teachers' guides) are available in West Shewa Zone. With this regard, the χ^2 calculated values (141.3038, 98.7722, and 65.9282 respectively) are greater than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Thus, based on the magnitudes and directions of the differences, it can be concluded that there is inadequacy of students' textbooks, syllabi and teachers' guides prepared for grades 1-4 level in West Shewa Zone.

The same table displays whether or not adequate blackboards and chalk are available in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone. Regarding this, the χ^2 calculated values (68.0548 and 39.7004 respectively) exceed the χ^2 critical value ($\chi^2=3.841$ at a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, there is inadequacy of blackboards and chalk in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone.

Till now the inadequacy of educational facilities has been discussed in detail. But whether or not this inadequacy makes the teachers use the lecture method dominantly is not known yet. Thus, a look at the following table gives the overall image of the teacher respondents' responses regarding this issue.

Table XI: Responses of Teachers to the Availability of Educational Facilities and Its Bearing on the Use of the Lecture Method

<i>Ro NQ.</i>	<i>Item</i>		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>χ^2</i>
60.	Do you use the lecture method in most cases due to lack of educational Facilities?	Observed Frequency.	224	13	187.8524*
		Expected Frequency.	118.5	118.5	

* $P < 0.05$

N.B

* = $P < 0.05$

df=1

$\chi^2_{cri} = \chi^2(1,0.05) = 3.841$

As can be seen from table XI, the χ^2 calculated value (187.8524) is by far greater than the χ^2 critical value (1,0.05=3.841). Hence, based on the magnitude and direction of the difference, it can be concluded that first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method most of the time due to lack of educational facilities.

In the same manner, out of the 40 interviewed teachers, 37 teachers (92.5%) said that lack of educational facilities is one of the factors that make them use the lecture method frequently while 3 teachers (7.5%) claimed that inadequacy of educational facilities does not oblige them to use the lecture method, probably for irrational reasons. This is because through the observation, the researcher confirmed that there is inadequacy of educational facilities in the schools in which the interviewees teach.

Moreover, through the focus group discussion, all of the teachers stressed that inadequacy of educational facilities is one of the factors that oblige them to depend on a series of lecture in conducting classroom instruction. The teachers added that lack of educational facilities in general and lack of students' textbooks in particular make them not use the learner-centered teaching methods in most cases. The teachers further claimed that due to shortage of students' textbooks, schools provide one textbook to five to eight students and some schools do not provide textbooks totally. Furthermore, in response to 'item 61' of the questionnaire, most of the respondents said that lack of students' textbooks has the most adverse effect on their utilization of the learner-centered teaching methods.

The primary school supervisors of the Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and the four Districts Education Departments were also interviewed and all of them ascertained that there is inadequacy of educational

facilities in the Zone. The supervisors further said that to reduce the problem, efforts have been made to help the teachers produce teaching materials from locally available materials in their respective Cluster Resource Centers.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The central objective of this research was to survey some of the factors attributing to the mismatch between the intended and actually implemented teaching methods in the first cycle primary schools of Oromia in general and that of West Shewa Zone in particular. To attain this objective, the investigator posed the following general basic question.

- ◆ Why do first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone dominantly use the lecture method at the expense of the learner-centered teaching methods? Under this general basic question, training of teachers, class size, educational facilities, curricular materials, teaching loads, teachers' preferences, students' needs and interests, and education policy were considered.

To answer the above general basic question out of the 23 districts found in West Shewa Zone, Ambo, Waliso, Gindabarat, and Walmera districts were selected as samples purposely to make the distribution of the districts included in the sample more or less fairly distributed in the Zone. Then 237 first cycle primary school teachers teaching in the centers and within the distance of 10kms from the centers of the above four districts were selected as samples using stratified and simple random sampling techniques.

To gather the necessary data a questionnaire containing 62 items was administered to the sample teachers. Besides, 40 first cycle primary school teachers, some selected first cycle primary schools students, and 6 primary school supervisors working at Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education Department and Districts Education Departments were interviewed. Moreover, to get additional information focus group discussions were made with 32 teachers. Furthermore, apart from the data obtained from the respondents regarding class size and teaching loads, document analysis was conducted. In addition, observation was carried out to see the availability of educational facilities and to cross-check the responses secured from the respondents through the other data collection tools with reference to adequacy of educational facilities.

Accordingly, the responses obtained from the sample teachers through the close-ended items of the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed using chi-square. Furthermore, the data collected through the open-ended items of the questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and observation were incorporated to substantiate the data obtained using the close-ended items of the questionnaire. At last, after analyzing and interpreting the data, the following outcomes were reached at.

1. It has been found that the majority of the teachers teaching in the first cycle primary schools of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method dominantly as they haven't been trained in the learner-centered teaching methods. It was also found that cognizant of the existence of problems related to teachers' training, Cluster Resource Centers have been established at different sites in the Zone. The main purpose of the Cluster Resource Centers is to provide continuous support to the teachers.

2. Regarding the impact of class size on the teachers' selection and application of teaching methods, it was found that first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method frequently due to the large number of students they teach. Besides, it was found that due to shortage of teachers especially in the rural areas teachers are compelled to teach up to 100 and even above 100 students in a single classroom in their respective schools.
3. Concerning the influence of curricular materials on the teachers selection and application of teaching methods, the teachers reported that the curricular materials (syllabi, teachers' guides and students' textbooks) prepared for grades 1-4 level are too vast to cover on time, theoretical, too advanced for the children to learn independently and content-oriented. And these make the teachers use the lecture method in most cases.
4. The research findings showed that there is inadequacy of educational facilities in West Shewa Zone. And this inadequacy obliges first cycle primary school teachers select and apply the lecture method most of the time. The study further revealed that there is a serious shortage of teaching materials such as syllabi, teachers' guides and students' textbooks in the Zone.
5. Fisher (1994) claims that nowadays-academic life is becoming increasingly stressful. And among the factors which make teachers stressful is the workloads they have or the time pressure that is put on them in schools. Likewise, in this study it was found that teaching load intimidates first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone to depend on a series of lecture in conducting classroom instruction. It has

also been found that in addition to having high teaching loads per week, the teachers participate in different co-curricular activities.

6. According to Knott and Mutunga (1995), teachers' likes and dislikes together with their experience have a bearing on the method they use. In this research; however, it was found that the impact of teachers' preferences in choosing and applying the lecture method has been insignificant.
7. To Moore (2001) students, like teachers, feel comfortable and learn better when teaching method fits their abilities, needs, and interests. Nevertheless, in this study it has been reached at that the majority of first cycle primary school students do not have needs and interests to learn by the lecture method. And the influence of students' needs and interests in the selection and application of the lecture method was not significant.
8. It is true that if the teachers teaching at a certain level do not know the teaching methods to be employed for that level according to the education policy, they may use a teaching method which is not suggested for that level in the education policy. But the findings of this investigation showed to the contrary. That is, the majority of first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone are aware of the teaching methods to be used in the first cycle primary schools. Hence, the impact of teachers' lack of awareness to the teaching methods suggested in the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia on their frequent use of the lecture method has been insignificant.

In general, from the results obtained, it can be concluded that the factors that make first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the

lecture method dominantly at the expense of the learner-centered teaching methods are lack of training, large class size, inadequacy of educational facilities, inappropriateness of curricular materials, and teaching loads.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are forwarded.

1. It was found that the majority of first cycle primary schools teachers of West Shewa Zone apply the lecture method frequently as they haven't been trained in the learner-centered teaching approaches. In other words, the research results showed that the teachers were trained in the teacher-centered teaching methods during their stay in their respective TTIs.

Therefore, to help the teachers practice the learner-centered teaching methods and thereby implement the teaching methods suggested for the level in the NETP of Ethiopia as intended, training which will focus on the practical application of the learner-centered teaching methods should be given. To this effect, to the already certified teachers workshops, seminars and/or refresher courses should be given seriously through the already established Cluster Resource Centers as it is cost effective and at the same time affordable to participate all teachers. The teachers should also be encouraged to conduct intra-staff and inter-staff training that emphasis the application of the learner-centered teaching methods in their respective schools in general and in their respective Cluster Resource Centers in particular.

To improve the situation to a great extent, the trainees that will be trained to teach in the first cycle primary schools should be trained in the learner-centered teaching approaches during their stay in TTIs. In so doing, the

teacher trainers should prepare teachers who are academically, psychologically, professionally and attitudinally ready to practice the learner-centered teaching approaches in their area of assignments.

2. It has been found that first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method most of the time due to the large number of students they teach. It was also found that because of shortage of teachers specially in the rural areas teachers are forced to teach up to 100 and even more than 100 students in a single classroom in their respective schools.

There are two dimensions to this concern: one is related to shortage of teachers, the other is shortage of classrooms. Hence, in order to somehow reduce the number of students per classroom to the optimum level, adequate number of first cycle primary school teachers should be trained. To this end, apart from the regular programme, the programme already run by the TTIs of Oromia, in which the trainees cover the whole expenses on self sponsor bases, should be strengthened and continue to train first cycle primary school teachers both with quantity and quality. This may help the region to get sufficient number of teachers with its meager budget and thereby reduce students' number per classrooms.

In addition, if possible, extra classrooms should be constructed. To this effect, the government should create a conducive situation in which NGOs invest their finance on primary education in general and on basic education in particular.

3. The study showed that inappropriateness of curricular materials (syllabi, teachers' guides, and students' textbooks) have been seriously suggested

by teachers. That is, the teachers complained that the curricular materials prepared for grades 1-4 level are too vast to cover on time, too difficult for the children to learn independently and content-oriented. And these make them use the lecture method most of the time.

Thus, to ascertain whether or not the aforementioned problems really exist in the curricular materials, further research that focuses on content-analysis should be conducted.

4. The research results depicted that inadequacy of educational facilities compels first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone to apply the lecture method most of the time. Besides, it was noted that there is a serious shortage of teaching materials like syllabi, teachers' guides and textbooks in the Zone.

Therefore, to enable the teachers apply the learner-centered teaching approaches instead of applying the lecture method frequently, there should be provision of adequate educational facilities. To this end, in addition to the budget allocated to them by the government, schools should improve their facilities with the help of their communities. To attain this objective, school personnel, teachers and other concerned bodies are required to create means of fund raising mechanisms such as organizing bazaar, trying to solicit fund from NGOs by preparing a research project, and the like.

Moreover, teachers should be encouraged to prepare or solicit instructional materials from the locally available resources. Furthermore, Education Materials Production and Distribution Agency should strive to supply

schools with teaching materials like syllabi, teachers' guides and students' textbooks in sufficient quantities and at the appropriate time.

5. From the results of the investigation, it was realized that high teaching loads enforce first cycle primary school teachers of West Shewa Zone use the lecture method dominantly. The study also revealed that the teachers participate in different co-curricular activities apart from having high teaching loads per week. Moreover, as can be seen from table II, out of the 237 teacher respondents 203 (85.6540%) teachers teach 21 to 30 periods per week. The researcher feels that these workloads have an impeding effect on the teachers' selection and application of the learner centered teaching methods in most cases. Hence, the recommendations given on number two above regarding training of teachers could help reduce the workloads of the teachers and there by enable them apply the learner-centered teaching methods as intended in the NETP of Ethiopia.

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