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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES**  
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**RURAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERSONAL INITIATIVE IN  
IMPROVEING PROFESSIONAL COMPETETNCES IN WEST  
SHEWA ZONE, OROMIYA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA**

**BY**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Hirpa Bane, entitled: Rural School Teachers' Personal initiative in improving Professional Competences in West Shewa zone, Oromiya Regional State, Ethiopia and submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master of Arts Degree in Curriculum and Instruction complies with the regulation of the University meets accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

**Signed By Examining Committee**

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development, their perception on Major professional development activities and to what degree they make use of this opportunity for improving their professional competencies through their personal initiative. Data were collected through a questionnaire, interview and document analysis. The participants were 137 male and 25 female teachers from ten rural secondary schools in west shewa Zone of Oromia which had a total of 561 rural secondary school teachers. The data collected were analyzed using statically methods such as mean, percentages, frequency, t-test, ANOVA and Tukey test. The result of analysis indicated that all teachers, regardless their sex, qualification age and teaching experiences, have positive attitudes towards their own professional development through personal initiation. Majority of the teachers also give much importance to Major professional development activities. Despite the fact that teachers do not make use of these activities as much as they give the importance to. The results of t-test and ANOVA indicated that there is no significant difference between and among group in importance given to and making use of many activities by the background factor. However, female teachers, young teachers and less experienced ones seemed to give more importance to and make use of a few professional development activities than other teacher. It was also indicated must work environment factors that affect their professional development considered importance by teachers. From the finding one could conclude that there is a gap between the importance given to the professional development activities and the actual use of these activities in improving professional competence and that there are work environment factors that received attention of the teachers for improving their own professional development. Therefore, it can be recommended that school, woreda education office and other responsible bodies need to provide necessary school physical resources and institutional supports such as internet, library, laboratory etc services to enhance personal initiative professional development for improving their professional competencies.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Effective education can be achieved through the efforts of well qualified teachers. Literatures on education quality indicate that there is a strong relationship between teacher professional development and quality, especially in the areas of teachers' beliefs and practices, students' learning, and on the implementation of educational reforms (UNESCO, 2006). Indian Education commission (1964) also underlined that the effectiveness of educational program is largely determined by the quality of teachers. The importance of teacher in the learning process of education is of a great value of all different factors, which influence the quality of education and its contribution to the national development, the quality, competence and characters of teachers are the most significant.

The teachers in every country have the greater responsibility of making the students competent enough in the global context and to contribute to the development of the nation. To mould the students in to ideal, democratic citizens with efficiently and skills, teachers should be example, competent and effective and devoted to profession with expertise and intellect. Solomon (2008) mentioned multi demonstrational role of the teacher can and should play in nation building for current and future development of the country.

To carry out these roles effectively, teachers need constant review of their attitude and beliefs about learners, learning and teaching, practice, effort and commitment to the professional development. They also need to engage in professional development, which is a career long process of improving knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Among various approaches to professional development personal initiated development stands as one of the notable trends. According to Wajnyrab (1992), teacher development is something that

happens with in classroom and oneself. It is often initiated by the teachers themselves and the role of school based support is to help channel energies in the directions that will be valuable and meaningful to the teachers. In other words, personal initiation of professional development is one of the most important aspects of successful professional development since it arises teachers' motivations, commitment and devotion to improve their competences. They are the key terms because change and successful professional development is unlikely to occur unless teachers are voluntary and willing to. Day (1999) agrees that professional development is not something that can be forced, it is the teacher who develops actively, and not the teacher is developed passively. He further argues that change, which is not internalized, is likely to be cosmetic "token" and temporary. Numan (1998) states that successful professional development must be ongoing, sustained and self-directed. These arguments place personal initiated and self directed development in an important position in the professional development. This indicates that the best sources for professional development are the teachers themselves if they take charge of their development.

They are also the ones to start practice, reflect on and evaluate their teaching to contribute to their development that will continue throughout their careers. Fullan(1992) states that professional development is basically a solitary journey or interactive. A teacher may engage in self-development alone or with others .Self reflection is one of the process including solitary activities in which a teacher may assess self-goals and implement changes. Interactive activities may also be an alternative for self-development: a teacher may seek inputs from other people such as students, peers and supervisors Horseley(1987). It should be added that teachers all need help and support throughout their journey. It is important that teachers should take initiation to work with colleagues for their development.

Professional development (PD) is indispensable for different reasons. *First*, the issues of globalization and complex social changes bring multiple demands on teachers. Thus, a well educated, flexible, highly competent teaching force is required to handle these changes and to foster practices which are responsible to the education needs of all teachers (Dadds, 2001). *Second*, learning is the process of adapting to the new working environment of their own (Hayes, 2000). This indicates that the pre-service training may have less impact on teachers than might be hoped and any impact may be washed out in the certain years of teaching .*Third* professional

development promotes critical dialogue among teachers. Learning is social experience if teachers allow themselves to become a student of their own extraordinary self-education. They would be very well pleased to facilitate the self-education of others (Underhill, 1982). This strengthens idea that the contribution of self-learning of teachers to the learning of others.

Cognizant to this, Tagore (1994) illustrates that “a teacher never truly teach, unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.” (1994) A. R. Rather has summarized Tagore’s argument saying that” one who does not learn and acquire up-to-date knowledge cannot teach others. Teacher’s job is just like that of lamp. Unless the lamp is burning, it cannot light another lamp with its name.”(Arnold,2004). Aggarwal (2008) also said that “I prefer that my student should drink from running stream rather than stagnant pool.” (Agawam,2008). So as to become models for their students as enthusiastic lifelong learners, teachers should not ignore their professional development. Therefore, teachers need to be continually going ahead and equipping themselves with the knowledge and skills that will increase their ability to provide improved opportunities to learn for their students In order to accomplish this goal, teachers should also have opportunities to develop themselves and committed to use them to be better teachers. It is believed that teachers’ professional development through self-initiated activity is an ongoing activity, which always seeks continuous research to find out what is prevailing in the school and take remedial action on the obstructing factors.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Research literatures indicated that factors like teacher centered and school-based workshops, in class coaching by consultants, supervisors or peers, team planning and problem solving by collegial workgroup, action research, classroom visitation, and professional study groups are important elements that contribute to effective professional development of teachers (Anderson, 2002). As recent studies indicate the importance of self-initiated learning at workplace has been increasing (Drucher, 1998). Adequate time and resources are needed for the program in which teaching forces have a say in the content activities and in which new skills can be learned, practiced, reflected upon, and improved overtime. For effective self- initiated learning, teachers become aware of their conceptions, efforts, initiatives and motivation, and the importance of their own professional competences. Most learning process by all teachers take place most

effectively at school level, in the clusters of nearby school working together, or sometimes in some more centralized setting as long as strong follow up and continuing support is available at school (USAID,2004). Specifically, informal work place learning that involves those learning activities initiated by employees help them in learning and developing their professional knowledge and skill (Cofer, 2000). The form of this learning is predominately experiential and involves dialectical process of action and reflection (Marstick, 1999).

To this end ,the government of Ethiopia has launched and implemented various teachers' development program (TDP) such as pre-service and in service teacher training program and continuous professional development (CPD) to upgrade and update teachers' knowledge, skills and values to alleviate poor quality education problem CPD program is compulsory and is the civic duty of all educators (MOE,2009). It was produced at the national level and conducted formally in all primary and secondary schools since 2005 (MOE, 2009).

As some evidences indicated, some studies have been carried out to see the impacts of CPD on activities take place in and outside of the school by teachers. The studies have shown few positive effects that CPD have had on different school matters .For instance, Gizaw (2006) stated that CPD brings some effect on teacher' classroom practice and other school activities like student- teachers relationship, sharing ideas and experiences among teachers, work in collaboration and others According to Amare (2006) CPD has also laid foundation to build strong academic achievement of students. On the other hand, researches conducted on status of rural school teacher's personal initiative in improving professional competences that help teacher meet the nations professional standards seem be limited.

As a result, the researcher decided to explore practice and challenges of rural teachers' personal initiative in improving their professional competencies in selected schools in West Shewa zone, Oromia for some important reasons. *Firstly*, recent studies have shown the increasing importance of self-initiated learning in the workplace (Drucher, 1988). Therefore, more must be known about the nature of self initiated activities in which teachers engage. *Secondly*, the acquisition of competence, which enables teachers to meet the requirements of changing society and to perform in complex environment, has become a central issue in education system (Kirschner*etal.*, 1997). *Thirdly*, as clearly set out by National Framework for professional competence of teachers, all

Ethiopian teachers need competence to progress through the professional career ladder. Taking in to account the aforementioned reasons, the researcher initiated to conduct this study.

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the rural secondary school teachers' attitudes towards their professional competence improvement?
2. What types of professional learning personal initiative activities do the rural teachers engage in to improve their professional competencies? How do they perceive and how often do they make use of these activities?
3. What aspects of rural secondary school teachers' work environment factors influence teachers' participation in self – initiated professional competencies activities?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to investigate the attitude, practice and challenges of rural secondary school teachers in improving their professional competencies through their personal initiative activities in West Shewa, Oromiya.

#### **Specific objectives:**

1. To explore the attitudes of rural teachers towards improving their professional competencies.
2. To investigate types of personally initiated activities the rural teachers engage in improving their professional competencies.
3. To identify those challenges which affect the rural teachers personally initiated activities.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The study on personal initiated professional competencies development of rural secondary school teachers is valuable for various reasons. First of all, there has been a little direct research on rural teachers' attitudes toward professional development efforts and activities. Therefore, this study will provide an insight into professional competency. Secondly, the importance of engaging in voluntary, individual and collaborative efforts in personal initiated development will be made clear. The study may provide an insight for decision makers, and help them reconsider

development opportunities, the need for teacher development, problem of teachers, and take some measures to improve the situation. Lastly, since the professional competence is given a lot of emphasizes, especially in the document for the national framework for professional competence for teachers, it would be stimulating to examine some of the potential opportunities and how much rural teachers develop themselves as teachers. It may help teacher become aware of their conceptions, efforts, initiatives and motivation, and the importance of their own professional competence.

### **1.5. Delimitation of the Study**

This study is delimited to rural secondary school teachers' personal initiative in improving their professional competence of West Shewa, Oromiya in selected secondary schools

### **1.6. Definition of Important Terms**

Professional Competence- is the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, skills, emotions, value and reflection

Attitude towards professional development –teachers' feeling of gratification in their profession

Experience (in teaching) –number of years of service after graduation

Secondary school –refers to school having grades 9-10

Rural –refers to areas of living where most of inhabitants are engaged in agricultural activities.

Rural secondary school –refers to secondary school that provides education service for rural communities

### **1.7. Organization of the Study**

This thesis is organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with back ground of the study, statement of the problem, basic questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and definition of terms. The second chapter treats review of related literatures and the third presents research methodology. The fourth chapter presents data presentation, analysis, and interpretation. Finally, the summary, conclusions and recommendations are treated in the last chapter. Bibliography and appendices are also attached at the end.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Professional Competency: Concepts and Definitions

Wetera (2001) defines the term professional competency as a set of knowledge, skills values, attitudes, capacities and beliefs that people need to be effective in their profession. Teachers' professional competencies comprise different competencies in various fields such as pedagogical, cultural, communicational, personal, intellectual etc which are needed for successful teaching.

According to him, term 'professional competency' is made of two words 'professional' and 'competency'. A profession may be defined as an occupation which requires special training purposefully to supply skilled service to others for a definite 'fee or salary. When we use the term 'Professional' to any job or occupation it is supposed to have certain distinguishable features that normally go with a profession such (i) a profession evolves in the process of responding to certain specific needs of a society (ii) A profession is characterized by systematized body of knowledge that is unique to that 'profession, (iii) A profession is characterized by a body of skills (iv) a profession is characterized by unique professional attitude seen among its members.(v) a profession is characterized by a service orientation and others As teaching satisfies the criteria of a profession and is considered as a profession, teachers have the responsibility to identify, develop and maintain high standards of competence.

According to Tomilson (1995) competence refers consistent ability to realize particular sorts of purposes to achieve desired outcomes." Therefore, professional competency can be considered as a highly valued quality which helps the professionals use their knowledge, skills, intellect strength and capacity efficiently to carry out one's functions and duties for the profession. Teaching competency can also be considered as the set of knowledge, skills and capabilities of teachers that make them successful in teaching profession.

The Ethiopian National Professional Standards Framework for School supervisors defines competency as the broad concept concerns the ability to perform particular tasks, duties and

roles to the standard of performance expected in the workplace. Competence requires the application of specified skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to effective participation in an organization or enterprise. It covers all aspects of workplace performance and involves performing individual tasks; managing a range of different tasks; responding to contingencies or breakdowns; and, dealing with the responsibilities of the workplace, including working with others. It requires the ability to apply relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes consistently over time and in the required workplace situations and environments (MOE, 2012).

### **2.1.1. The Structure of Teacher Competence**

According Mandlew and Kessen (1996), there are three developmental processes of teacher competences. The first step is the identification of local or institutional goals and objectives, according to which suitable teacher behavior is to be selected. Next step is the translation of selected behavior into teacher variables. Third step is to select levels of proficiency. Another important step is the validation of teacher competence Westera (2001) states teacher competencies that directly linked to teacher's knowledge in subject matter and in general pedagogy ,attitude and skills in-turn determine the teacher performance. According to Grossman (1986) teachers' knowledge of the subject matter content they teach affects teacher effectiveness in teaching. According to Medley and Shannon (1994) teacher competence to teach includes the abilities, beliefs and knowledge a teacher possesses and brings to the teaching situation.

### **2.1.2. Components and Dimensions of Professional Competency**

#### **2.1.2.1.Components**

According to Selvi (2010) the professional competencies of teachers consists of four areas of competencies: the first is field competencies which are related to the subject that teachers will teach, the second-research competencies refers to competencies of research methods and techniques and help the teachers in developing themselves and in their career. These competencies improve teachers' overall performance, the third –Curriculum competencies include curriculum development competencies and curriculum implementation competencies. These competencies incorporate both theoretical and practical competencies; the last one is emotional competencies that include teachers' and students' morals, beliefs, values, anxieties, attitudes, empathy and motivation.

The concept of teacher competencies should extend beyond the duties of teacher in the school to various dimensions of competences mentioned above to make teachers be effective.

### **2.1.2.2. Dimensions of Professional Competency**

Professional competency mainly depends on five factors: first, Competency in activity based teaching & hurdles, which refers to the ability of teachers in adopting learning or teaching situations that are characterized by participation on the part of learners, as opposed to passive learning of information from a lecture talk or observed demonstration. Second, competency in child centered approach that refers to competency of teachers in adopting learning process where the learner i.e. the child is given the top most priority so that maximum participation of pupils is ensured, which help to develop scientific attitude, curiosity and interest in pupils and to tackle behavioral problems of children. Third, competency in teaching-learning process that deals with teachers' competency in preparing the tools, which are used to make the teaching effective and meaningful and to promote learners' interest in learning. Fourth, competency in evaluation techniques, which indicates competency of teachers to carryout the evaluation process i.e. judging, valuing and ranking pupils by various evaluation techniques. Lastly, competency in opting novel strategies that encompasses competency of teachers in adopting novel teaching techniques such as interactive teaching, micro teaching, the role playing method, power point and video presentation etc.

### **2.1.3. Major Areas of Teaching Competency**

The professional competency of teachers, teaching at higher secondary level are studied in five major areas of teaching competency. These are- competency in activity based teaching which refers to conventional methods by which learners receive knowledge, the second type is competency in adapting child centered practices. These methods focus on the child in teaching-learning to develop a scientific attitudes , curiosity and interest in different areas ; the third one is competency in preparing teaching materials This refers to teacher competency in preparing teaching-learning materials (Koundinya 1999).These materials are very crucial for making teaching more effective; the firth is competency in evaluation technique which refers to the of judging, valuing and learners (Scriven, 1999), and the last is competency in adopting novel

strategies .Teachers use these strategies to raise students' enthusiasm and interest in preparing and inventing new materials which assist their learning.

## **2.2. Competency Framework for Teachers**

According to The Department Education and Training of Western Australia the Competency Framework for Teachers articulates professional knowledge, skills, and attributes essential for all classroom teachers, operating across three broad phases of competency. The competencies are generic and may be applied to specific teaching and learning contexts as defined by students, phases of schooling and learning areas.

The Competency Framework for Teachers also articulates the complex nature of teaching profession by describing three professional elements of teachers' work: attributes, practice and knowledge. These elements work in an interrelated way as they are put into practice in classrooms.

### **2.2.1. Professional Attributes**

Professional attribute show the characteristics that are readily identifiable as essential to effective teaching. These attributes indicate teachers' readiness for accepting challenges, demands and obligations of teaching. The Framework sets the standard in which teachers work with students, parents/caregivers, colleagues and others. Professional attributes provide the underpinning values, beliefs and skills for the decisions and actions teachers make in their day-to-day work. They describe the attitudes and behaviors through which teachers demonstrate their ability to facilitate student learning.

### **2.2.2. Professional Knowledge**

As the Framework states effective teachers depend on of body professional knowledge in order to maximize their ability to improve student educational outcomes. It adds that knowledge of students, curriculum, subject matter, pedagogy, education-related legislation and the specific teaching context is the foundation of effective teaching and enables teachers to be responsive to the changing needs of students. Therefore, the Framework supports teachers as they continue to

build upon their professional knowledge. It promotes ongoing professional learning and incorporates contemporary teaching theory

### **2.2.3. Professional practice**

Professional excellence involves teachers engaging in all five dimensions .The five dimensions describe the major professional responsibilities and actions teachers carry out in their professional lives. These dimensions interconnect with each other and collectively contribute to teachers' effectiveness

## **2.3. National Professional Standards for Ethiopian School Teachers**

The seven national standards for teachers identify what is expected of teachers within three domains of teaching. Teachers' demonstration of the standards will occur within their specific teaching context at their stages of expertise and reflect the learning requirements of the students they teach (MoE, 2012) Standard 1: Know students and how they learn ,Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it, Standard 3: Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning, Standard 4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments, Standard 5: Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning, Standard 6: Engage in professional learning and Standard 7: Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/care givers and the community

The Standards are grouped into three domains of teaching; Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. In practice, teaching draws on aspects of all three domains

### **2.3.1. Domains of Teachers**

#### **2.3.1.1. Professional Knowledge**

Teachers draw on a body of professional knowledge and research to respond to the needs of their students within their educational contexts Teachers know their students well, including their diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds. They know how the experiences that students bring to their classroom affect their continued learning. They know how to structure their lessons to meet the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of their students

### **2.3.1.2. Professional Practice**

Teachers are able to make learning engaging and valued. They are able to create and maintain safe, inclusive and challenging learning environments and implement fair and equitable behavior management plans. They use sophisticated communication techniques.

### **2.3.1.3. Professional Engagements**

Teachers demonstrate respect and professionalism in all their interactions with students, colleagues care givers and can communicate effectively with them about their children's learning. They are sensitive to the needs of parents/ care givers and the community

## **2.4 Personal Initiated Professional Development**

Professional development is a process of continuous growth of teacher professionalism and behavior which they gain by actively participating in various program ,activities ,conferences and workshops designed in addition to enhance their skills ,knowledge, competences and attitudes ,both individually and in group. Therefore, in many counties like Ethiopia teachers are provided with trainings, seminars, workshops and many other professional development activities in order to improve their skills, practices ,and stay up-to-date with changes related to teaching and learning .However, personal- initiated professional development not only provides an opportunities to determine his/her own learning goals but also helps to identify activities and resources required to pursue these activities(Numan,2001).He adds that it also helps teachers to reflect on their learning experiences in order to augment their professional expertise .The well-planned and continual personal initiated professional development yields more effective professional learning than one-shot workshops and conferences. Teachers since they intrinsically initiated such development activities ,get involved in them wholeheartedly thereby recognizing the necessity of continuous learning and reflective practice .Lucy(2008)states that self-initiated professional development enhances teacher self reflection whereby teachers have control over their professional experiences and are motivated by tasks or problems that they find meaningful . Because teachers are already aware of their strengths and needs ,they have self-directed professional development plan for them .These plans can be meant to be fluid ,with ability to grow and change over the course of professional life in response to experiences and opportunities encountered .Self-initiated professional development activities may include both collaborative

and entirely individual activities whereby teachers ,with or without the consultation of teachers educators attempt to diagnose their needs and solve them by themselves .The other forms of professional development activities may include action research ,collaborative learning teams ,peer observation and coaching relationship or lesson studies .In this way ,self-directed professional development activities are listless .It can include professional reading ,or the discussion with colleagues or may be attending professional conferences either being a sponsor teacher or mentoring a beginning teacher

## **2.5 Self –Directed Learning**

Self –directed learning refers to a particular attitude towards learning ,one in which the learner is prepared to take responsibility for her /his own learning (Dickison,1987) .Guglielmino (2008) further clarified self –direction in stating that it can occur in a variety of situations ranging from a teacher –directed classroom to self –planned and self –conducted learning projects developed in response to personal or workplace interests or needs and conducted independently and collaboratively .Therefore ,the self –directed learner , as Dickison(1987) states ,is one who retains responsibility for planning ,decision making ,and implementation of the decision throughout the period of learning . It does not necessarily entail that is autonomous but it can be done by joining formal courses too. Brocket (1991), on the other hand, states that self direction in learning is a way of life. This means that learning takes place across the entire lifespan .This can be made clear by comparing it with formal education being acquired in the institution where the learner has to control both the objectives and means of their learning but in self –directed learning learner controls over both the objectives and the means .Self –directed learning ,according to Knowles (1975) described as a process in which individuals take the initiative ,with or without the help of others ,in diagnosing their learning needs ,formulating learning goals, identify human and material resources learning choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes .

Self-direction in learning can be taken as an umbrella concept because it refers to activities where primary responsibility for planning ,carrying out and evaluating a learning endeavor is assumed by the individual learner (Brocket ,1991) It refers to a process in which a learner assumes primary responsibility for planning ,implementing and evaluating a learning process

where an education agent or resources often plays a facilitating role in the process .It centers on a learner's desire or preference for assuming responsibility for learning . Therefore, self-direction in learning refers to both the external characteristics of an institutional process and the internal characteristics of the learner where the individual assumes primary responsibility for learning experiences.

In this sense, the self –directed learner is the one who takes the responsibility for the management of his/her own learning being autonomous in all the processes without assistances .Self –directed learning, as Dickinson (1987) states, is an attitude of mind towards learning rather than any particular techniques or activities .s Self-directed adults are more frequent but are probably still a minority of learners. However, it is not the case, for the school children. Self-directed learning very well fits with autonomy individualized learning .Autonomy is one possibility with self –directed learning in which the learner undertakes all of the management tasks associated with her/his own learning.

## **2.6. Overview of Teachers Continuous Professional Development Program in Ethiopia**

Within the framework of the 1994 Education and Training Policy, the government of Ethiopia launched series Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) in order to improve education quality and expand access of education .To treat issues related with teachers' qualification and In-service Teacher Education Program, the Teacher Education, System Overhaul (TESO) was under taken. On the basis of TESO report ,a thorough revision to modernize teacher education system was done .In relation to this ,Teacher Development Program (TDP)was launched in 2005 (MoE).TDP emphasizes on improving the quality of education by designing various teacher support activities and modernizing both pre-service and in-service training of teachers .As a result ,Teachers Continuous Professional Development program(CPD) was launched as one aspect of TDP and has been implemented both in primary and secondary schools of Ethiopia since 2005 .CPD has been launched in two component :a two year induction program for new teachers and a proper CPD for those who are already in the system .Each teacher is expected to complete a minimum of 60 hours CPD time per year .

According to MOE(2009) ,the aim of Continuous Professional Development is to improve performance of teachers in the classroom and raise students achievement .It is a career long

process of improving knowledge ,skills and attitudes centered on the local context and ,particularly ,classroom practice .Specifically, its objectives are to ;support teacher capacity to teach effectively using appropriate new student-centered and problem- solving approaches according to active learning based-curriculum that was introduced in 1994 ;improve teachers' subject matter knowledge based on content of the curriculum and the teaching approaches which require teachers to engage students in the development of higher order thinking skills help teacher to develop more positive attitudes ,more cooperative approaches to their work at school level ,and strengthen professional identity ; introduce the idea of reflective practice and action research through which teachers studied their practice to improve it and promotes teachers to recognize their work as professional by providing new approaches for growth opportunities learning and development (Vigies-Riemers,2003)

## **2.7. Activities that Foster Professional Development**

### **2.7.1 In-service Training:**

In-service training (INSET) is defined as a planned event, series of extended program of accredited or non-accredited learning. As professionals, teachers need trainings to keep pace with the rapid developments in order to be familiar with new knowledge and technologies. Day (1999) claims that while teachers now have more opportunities for INSET, they have less opportunity for extended learning, less choice over what they learn Consequently, in order to learn extensively what is introduced in the INSET program, follow-up support and practice are required to take place. As Hiep (2001) claims, along with the teacher training, teacher development must be a vital component in teacher education since development fills the gap in training by giving teachers opportunities to reflect on classroom practice, gain insight into teaching experiences and deal with change and divergence. Moreover, Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) states that INSET runs the risk of emphasizing skill development of teachers rather than personal and professional development, which is a threat for extensive learning and development.

Another shortcoming of training program is that; they are questionable in terms of satisfying the needs of the teachers. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) claim that INSET program rarely address the individual needs and concerns. Hargreaves and Fullan explains the reason for setting aside

the needs of the teachers in these program by the fact that the topics are frequently selected by people other than those for whom in-service is intended.

INSET program can have important contributions to foster teachers' knowledge and improve their classroom practices. However, these programmers' limitations and strengths need to be considered. As Day (1999) puts forward, where INSET doesn't take account of the development phases of teachers, their intellectual and emotional development needs, it is unlikely to enhance their capacity for skilled commitment over the longer period.

### **2.7.2 Peer Observation**

Teachers have many sources to learn from others. Freeman and Cornwell (1993) indicated that teachers can learn from experts by taking courses, or undergoing program of staff training in new techniques and approaches, from formal meetings, discussions, performance appraisals, clinical supervision, students, or peer observation. Teachers also learn from their students but they learn most, perhaps, from themselves and their colleagues in their own work place. Hence, one of the most important activities for teachers to develop themselves is peer observation, in which two teachers observe each other.

As it is indicated in Numan and Lamb (1996) peer observation as a self-assessment and learning tools follows some stages. In the pre-observation stage the observer and the teacher discusses the lesson plan and the focus of the observation and during the observation the observer makes notes on the steps in the lesson, recordings such things as departures from the lesson plan. In the post-observation stage both the teacher and the observer report their impressions of the lesson, and discuss any differences of interpretation. Last stage is the follow-up stage when the teacher tries out any new ideas or suggestions that arise and reports back to the observer.

### **2.7.3 Action Research**

One of the most effective ways of reflecting on their teaching for teachers is action research. Action research is referred to teacher-initiated classroom investigation which seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning, and to bring about change in classroom practices. Kemmis and McTaggart, cited in Richards and Lockhart, 1996). There are some steps that are suggested by Richards and Lockhart when teachers are conducting an action

research in their classroom. First of all, teachers identify a problem that they would like to change through observation of their own classroom. By identifying the need or the problem, teacher finds the focus of the research and change the theme into a concrete question. Secondly, the researcher develops a strategy for a change. The teacher works out an action plan that will address the problem and may write a hypothesis. Then, the strategy is implemented. Teacher puts his/ her plan into operation for a fixed period of time when he/ she monitors, records the action and collects data. Finally, the researcher evaluates the results and reflects on the effects of the research.

What makes action research one of the effective ways for the professional development is that it is teacher-initiated classroom investigation, which means the teachers is ready and motivated to seek ways in order to increase his/ her understanding of classroom teaching, reflect on and to bring change in his/ her practices. Therefore, being a self-initiated and designed process, action research has many advantages. As Wragg (1999) agrees, self-study is now widely recognized as a powerful influence for personal and social renewal. It does mean accepting the responsibility of accounting for own practice.

Undertaking action research for teachers means examining their own classroom practices, which is very valuable because as Freeman and Cornwell (1993) state, often what one thinks what happening in their classroom can be quite different from what is actually going on. While undertaking action research, in the course of examining their own classroom data, teachers begin to notice problems that they were not aware of before. Hence, teachers are provided with better information than they already have about what is actually happening and why. On the whole, it seems that if teachers don't reflect on their practices, they then are more concerned with 'how to' questions in their daily lives, such as how to exploit a course book, handle an activity, present a subject.

Richards and Nunan (1990) suggest moving away from 'how to' questions since they have limited utilitarian value, to the 'what' and 'why' questions. They argue that it is necessary to become a critically reflective teacher and improve in teaching skills. Wragg (1999) further explains that if a teacher feels that his/ her practice is satisfactory or needs attention in some way,

he/ she will be able to explain how and why this is the case with evidence to support his/ her claims by the help of this reflective activity.

## **2.8 Strategies for Teacher Personal Initiative Professional Development**

Teachers use different learning strategies to engage in self-initiated professional development to improve their professional competence. Since teachers are adult learners they prefer in engaging in self-directed professional development strategies. Using these strategies teachers ought to be encouraged to become ‘reflective practitioners’ and thereby self evaluation takes place and the teachers can become cognizant of their professional competence (Wallace, 1991). Wallace further stated that “teachers should be flexible, capable of further independent study, able to solve problems in a rational way, able to combine speed of response with depth of understanding.

According to Bhatta (2011), adult learners are self-directed because they seek out learning activities to enhance their own knowledge in order to meet their needs. Besides, the adult learner wants to draw on their rich personal and professional experiences. If the learners are involved in their learning rather than becoming merely passive participants they are more likely to master the information or concepts presented, apply them to their practice, and retain the information presented. Self-directed activities include a variety of activities before, during and after the learning experience to engage the participant in active learning.

### **2.8.1 Self-Monitoring**

Self-monitoring is a strategy that a teacher can adopt for his or her professional development. Self-monitoring in teaching involves having a teacher record his or her teaching behavior for the future reference so that he or she can go through it for self-appraisal. According to Richards (1995:118) “self-monitoring refers to the teacher making a record of a lesson, either in the form of a written account or an audio or video recording of a lesson, and using the information obtained as a source of feedback on his or her teaching.”

Self-monitoring can make the teachers aware of their current knowledge, skills and attitudes as a basis for self-evaluation. Teachers can therefore collect information regarding their classroom

behavior for future reference to bring about necessary changes. Richards and Farrell (2005) stated that self-monitoring refers to “activities in which information about one’s teaching is documented or recorded self-monitoring of language lessons: lesson reports, audio-recording a lesson, and video-recording a lesson. Self-monitoring provides an opportunity in order not only to better understand one’s teaching but also to review one’s own strengths and weaknesses as a teacher. Self-monitoring or self-observation embodies a systematic approach to the observation, evaluation, and management of one’s own behavior (Armstrong &Frith, 1984; Richards, 1995) in order to gain better understanding and control over the behavior.

### **2.8.2 Journal Writing**

In the pursuit of their professional development, teachers can keep a teaching journal as an effective device. Richards and Farrell (2005) explained that a teaching journal is “an ongoing written account of observations, reflections, and other thoughts about teaching, usually in the form of a notebook, book, or electronic mode, which serves as a source of discussion, reflection, or evaluation. Such journals are sometimes called teaching logs or teaching diaries, and, can be used as an important reflective device or the self-directed strategy for the professional development of a teacher. Journals are more elaborate and systematically written in their nature and therefore can work as an aid to “reflection on action” (Schon, 1983). A teaching journal enables the teachers to go back and see their thinking whereby creating a lasting record of thoughts that provides evidence of the teachers’ self-development.

### **2.8.3 Analyzing Critical Incidents**

A critical incident is something we interpret as a problem or a challenge in a particular context, rather than a routine occurrence. It is a short description of an event that has taken place over a certain period of time. It can happen to anyone and anywhere in a real-life situation too. The incident is critical because it is important, essential or valuable in a way that it has some meaning. Critical incidents are based on real-life situations and typically involve a dilemma where there is no easy or obvious solution. The objective of critical incidents is to stimulate thinking about basic and important issues which occur in real-life situations. Tripp (1993) stated that “... a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event. To take something

as a critical incident is a value judgment we make, and the basis of that judgment is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident. Tripp believes that incidents happen but critical incidents are created because of their importance. Therefore, for Tripp any lesson can be critically analyzed and a particular event made critical by our reflection on it. In making incidents critical, one needs to ask not only what happened but also why it happened. This should then be situation for the future reference.

#### **2.8.4 Teaching Portfolios**

Teaching portfolios, often known as dossiers, are compilation of teaching materials and related documents that teachers employ during teaching and learning processes. Portfolios serve as tools for reflection, a way to thoughtfully document teaching practices and progress toward goals. Portfolio entries can inform professional growth plans. As actual artifacts of teaching, portfolios help teachers to systematically ponder over their practice, reflect on the problems they face, and learn from their experience. They provide direct evidence of what teachers have accomplished. Richards and Farrell (2005) defined teaching portfolio as “a collection of documents and other items that provides information about different aspects of a teacher’s work.” The teaching portfolio not only exposes the teachers’ performance description but also facilitates professional development by providing a basis for reflection and review. The portfolios reveal how creative, resourceful, and effective the teachers are. They can also become the source of review and reflection and also they can promote collaborative work as well.

Teaching portfolio has been defined variously by various authors. According to Porter and Cleland (1995) teaching portfolio is “a collection of artifacts accompanied by a reflective narrative that not only helps the learner to understand and extend learning, but invites the reader of the portfolio to gain insight about learning and the learner.” Similarly, Stronge (1997: 194) stated that “In its most basic form, a teaching portfolio is a collection of information about a teacher’s practice”. Seldin, et al (2010) explicated that teaching portfolios offers an opportunity to reflect upon the teachers’ work and thereby they rethink strategies and methodologies, revise priorities, and plan for the future. Consequently, teachers get stimulated to hone and to improve their performance in a better way.

### **2.8.5 Action Research**

The application of research to educational problems in a particular classroom setting is known as action research. It is carried out not for the development of a theory or the generalization of the applications but it is done for the immediate application in order to find the solution of the problem. Therefore, it refers to “teacher-conducted classroom research” (Richards and Farrell, 2005) that attempts to solve practical problems. Many teachers- whether deliberately or inadvertently- involve in conducting action research in their day-to-day classroom activities when they have to tackle a problem. Thus it is a crucial tool for a teacher for his or her self-development. Action research is, typically, a reflective process that allows for inquiry and discussion as a component of the research. Therefore, it also involves a cycle of activities such as problem identification, information collection, strategic plan, and implementation of the plan and reviewing of the executed plan. Best and Kahn (2007) explicated that action research applies “scientific thinking and methods to real-life problems and represents a great improvement over teachers’ subjective judgments and decisions based on folklore and limited personal experiences”. The goal of action research is to improve the teaching and learning environment enabling teachers’ growth. Usually, action research is conducted in a small scale both individually and collaboratively.

### **2.9 Factors that Affect Teacher Professional development**

Many factors are affecting teacher professional development .these factors include teachers, students and colleagues. Teachers themselves are considered in terms of their cognitions ,their awareness of education and development etc, Students are also an important factors to teachers’ career development as students’ challenging questions and special needs will pose a great impact on teachers’ future teaching ;colleagues and peers also influence teacher career development much because teachers better their profession in a learning communities ; participating in collaboration ,discussing and exchanging information help teachers their profession (Hanson, 2010).

According to Abebe (2010), the factors that influence teacher’s professional development are classified into three groups: context, process and content. The conceptual factors –include factors

related to wider perspective of societal, organizational, school work culture, prevailing system of learning and development and others. These factors in general address the questions why where and when the learning and professional development take place (Abebe, 2010). These contextual factors influence teachers' learning and development and need to be well understood and considered while planning their learning and professional development activities. Reimers (2003:15) described the relevance of contextual factors and the non-existent of a one –fits –all models as there is no single form or model of professional development better than others and which can be applied successfully in any institution or context. Schools and educators must evaluate their needs, cultural beliefs practices in order to decide which professional development models would be the most beneficial to their particular situation. It is clear in the literatures that different factors within workplace, such as school structure and culture, influence teachers' sense of efficacy and professional motivation.

Abebe (2010) also states that contextual factors in teacher's professional development have profound influence since cognition and learning activities which are situated, social and distributed. Rooted in the thinking of Dewey, Vygotsky and others, theories of cognition explicitly posit that knowledge is inseparable from the context and activities within which it is developed both physical and social contexts are an integral part of an activity that takes place as the activity itself is an integral part of learning and that takes place within it.

Margaret (2010) Also identifies that personal initiated –learning activities are influenced by the availability of resources, physical layout and level of centralization in their schools .personal influences such as age, applied focus, autonomy, commitment, educational background, educational philosophy expertise, flexibility, gender, initiative, administrators' behavior, community perception of teachers, competing goals.

## **2.10 Personally Initiated Learning Activities that Improve Teachers' professional competences**

Cheng (2004) states that teachers are required to take up new responsibility in school management, curriculum planning and development, mentoring teachers school-based action planning project work and working with parents, outside leaders and professionals.

The study conducted by Margaret (2010) on self-initiated learning activities of experienced public school teachers in US showed that teachers engaged in three types of self- initiated learning activities: knowledge exchanging, experimenting, and environmental scanning.

Recent studies show that professionals learn a great deal through personal initiated learning activities in the workplace (Ehlyetal, 2000). In the context of teaching, examples of such activities including taking and sharing materials with other teachers searching internet for the instructional content, and experimenting with the new instructional strategies. Reports have shown that as much as 90%of new learning is acquired through self-initiated activities in the workplace rather than organizationally planned or sponsored activities away from the workplace (Brinkerhoff &Gill, 1994) these types of self- initiated learning activities include collaboration, formal planning, independent research, individual experimentation, mentoring, observing reflecting on the past experiences, role playing, sharing resources and talking.

The study on EFL teachers' self –initiated professional development by Birhanu (2014) indicated that teachers frequently practice professional development activities like speaking in their classroom lessons, reading school textbooks, managing classrooms and planning their lessons. Teachers rarely practiced activities like assessment and evaluation, reading other books, speaking in conversation, listening radio program listening TV program, use of the teaching materials, writing in personal communication, reading magazines and publication and watching movies.

In Renyi's article "Building Learning into the Teaching Job," published in 1998 it is reported that a survey of teachers led the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) to recommend that the teachers take charge of their professional development opportunities if they want to go beyond merely keeping up with changes. This outstanding study was a two-year study of professional development. NFIE of the National Education Association (NEA), which represents 2.2 million education employees, set out to analyze what constitutes high-quality professional development. Over two years they examined high functioning schools and studied their professional development opportunities, interviewed nearly 1,000 teachers and teacher leaders, solicited essays from teachers, conducted focus groups of members of the public, and consulted with leading education researchers and reformers.

Wang and Seth (1998) reported their research in an article titled: “Self- Development through Classroom Observation: Changing Perceptions in China.” The research was jointly carried out by a British lecturer and her Chinese counterpart at the Language Center, Qingdao University. Their aim was to turn classroom observation into an effective development of teacher through employing a more collaborative approach. The participants of the research were in three categories: the British lecturer, the Chinese counterpart, and the Chinese teachers, which led to four patterns of relationship: British lecturer - counterpart, British lecturer - teacher, and teacher. The procedural framework of the research was (a) pre-classroom observation questionnaire, (b) classroom observation process that includes pre-observation discussion, classroom visits, and post-observation discussion, (c) post-classroom observation questionnaire.

All those who participated in the program agreed on the benefit they had obtained in terms of their self-development. Some of the key issues, which emerged from their feedback, were:

1. Classroom observation through the self-development approach was a very effective aid to teacher self-development.
2. The participants began to view classroom observation as a positive tool to help improve their teaching rather than as a means of judgment.
3. Classroom observation was not only an educational and pleasant experience but also a collaborative learning opportunity, which enabled teachers and observers to learn from each other (Wang and Seth, 1998: 209)

Recent studies have shown that professionals learn a great deal through self-initiated activities in the workplace (Ehly, et al., 2000). In the context of teaching, examples of such activities include talking and sharing materials with other teachers, searching the Internet for instructional content, and experimenting with new instructional strategies. Recent reports have indicated that as much as 90% skill is acquired through self-initiated activities in the workplace, rather than organizationally planned or sponsored activities away from the workplace (Brinkerhoff & Gill, 1994).

The reason for teachers' reliance on self-initiated learning activities for their professional development is the intensification of their work that may constrain their participation in such activities (Corcoran, 1990). As reality of public school teaching in the US indicates, most teachers are isolated from their peers for most of the work day and their time is completely committed (Hargreaves, 1992). While these constraints seem to leave little opportunity for engagement in self-initiated learning activities, it is commonly known that many experienced teachers find ways to continually develop their teaching knowledge and skills. Therefore, if teachers rely on self-initiated learning activities for their professional development, and if many experienced teachers continually enhance their professional knowledge and skills, even though the nature of their jobs constrains their ability to engage in learning activities, then more must be known about the nature of the self-initiated learning activities in which experienced teachers engage.

The study conducted by Margaret *etal* (2001) on self-initiated learning activities indicated that teachers used three different types of self-initiated learning activities. The first activity was knowledge exchanging, in which teachers shared and reflected on others' practice and experiences. The second activity was experimenting, in which teachers actively experimented with new ideas and techniques. The third activity was environmental scanning, in which teachers independently scanned and gathered information from sources outside the schools.

The study further stated that Knowledge exchanging, which involved sharing and reflecting on others' practice and experiences, was an important way for the teachers in developing their professional knowledge and skills, sharing and reflecting occurred when teachers talked, collaborated, observed, and shared resources with others. According to this study, experimentation was one of self-initiated learning activities used by all teacher-participants to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Teachers acted, reflected on their actions and then either took immediate actions to alter their practice or recorded their future plans to do so.

The use of reflection-in-action versus reflection-on-action was found to be dependent on both the teaching level and the type of task being performed. It was also indicated that In addition to knowledge exchanging and experimentation, teachers scanning external such as searching the internet for the instructional purpose, scanning professional journals and other educational

publications to understand about recent developments and research in their content areas in learning and instruction and attending professional conferences to talk with other teachers and lend instructional ideas and materials to acquire professional knowledge and skills .The impact study conducted (by Lund University 2005 and Haramaya University 2007) On English Language Improvement (ELIP) indicated that teachers need intervention to improve their proficiency and pedagogical skills in English.

Similar to this, the national learning assessment of grade 8 students 2008 showed that students' achievement was below the standard. The Science and Mathematics Education of Ethiopia (SMASEE) ( 2011) report also showed that mathematics and science teachers have lack of the necessary facilitation skills to lead group discussion, question and answer activities, demonstration skills, skills of planning effective lesson plan and generally lack of content mastery.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHDOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore the practice of rural secondary school teachers to improve their professional competencies through their personal initiation. To achieve this objective descriptive survey research design was employed. This design helped the researcher to have understanding of the problem by studying the current status, nature of the prevailing conditions, practices and trends through relevant and precise information (Koul, 1996). Thus, to show the existing situations and practices of professional competencies, descriptive survey design is found to be convenient.

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for this investigation. The quantitative data were gathered from teachers through questionnaires. In addition, interviews and document analysis were employed to collect qualitative data.

#### 3.1. Sources of Data

The study utilized both primary and secondary data .For primary source the researcher collected data from 162 teachers for quantitative data and 10 teachers for the qualitative one. Documents pertaining to teacher's activities such as portfolio, action research, lesson plans, and autobiography and policy documents were used as a secondary source of data for this study.

#### 3.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques

Random sampling was employed to select sample population for this study. More specifically cluster random sampling technique was used to select sample Woredas of the Zone. There are 18 *Woredas* and 29 rural secondary schools and 561 rural secondary school teachers. These *Woredas* were divided in to five clusters namely the North (Abuna, Jeldu and Gindabarat), East (Ejere, Ada'a and Meta), Central (Dandi, Ambo, Toke, Ifata and Inchinni), South (Danno, Nonno and Jibat) and West (Bako, Ilu Galan, Mida and Chaliya). The sample *Woredas* were selected using simple lottery method from each cluster. One *Woreda* was selected from each

cluster except the central one from which two Woredas were selected because it has more *Woredas*. Accordingly, Six Woredas were selected from five clusters. All of the rural secondary schools (10 schools) of the selected Woredas and all teachers of these schools were taken as the participants of the study.

**Table 1. Sample Respondents**

No	Woreda	Schools	Sample Population		
			Male	Female	Total
1	Ejere	Gorba	10	2	12
2	Jaldu	Chobi	24	5	29
3	Toke	Toke Erensa	15	5	20
		Goro Sole	11	4	15
4	Ilfata	Bakke	26	1	27
		Gute	12	2	14
5	Chaliya	Babicha	17	4	21
		Tulu Mara	10	3	13
6	Danno	Bakke Sirba	9	4	13
		Danno	8	4	12
<b>Total</b>			142	34	176

### 3.3. Data Collection Instruments

In order to achieve the purpose of the study the researcher employed questionnaire, interviews and document analysis as data collection instruments.

#### 3.3.1. Questionnaire

According to Best and Khan (2005:301) questionnaire is advantageous to gather data from a number of respondents at one place which makes possible an economy of time and expense, and provides high proportion of usable responses. Thus, based on research questions and review of related literatures, set of questionnaires were prepared in English Language owing to the participants academic status- secondary school teachers where English language is medium of instruction.

The questionnaire has four parts. Part one was about the background of the respondent, part two included statements about the attitude of teachers towards their own professional development. In the third section, questionnaires regarding teachers' professional development activities that has two sections one referring to the importance of these activities and the other referring to what degree these activities used were asked. Section four included the statements about the work environment factors that influenced the teachers' professional development.

The questionnaire consists of both closed –ended and open –ended items. The closed – ended questions contains alternative type items and scaled items, particularly Likert type items on which the respondents were asked to show their responses to indicate the level of variables.

In order to check the relevance, clarity, chance of ambiguity, reliability and validity of this questionnaire, two screening steps- experts comment and pilot test were used. First, the questionnaire was judged by five PhD candidates for its validity. Three from Curriculum and Teachers' professional Development Studies and two from Educational Planning and Management rated the relevance of each item against what the alternatives in the five point scale ranging from 5 for strongly agree to 1 for strongly disagree, from 5 for very important to 1 for not important at all and from 5 for always to 1 for never. Since all items in the questionnaire received an average score above 3(see Appendix c), they were accepted

Second, pilot test was conducted on Meti Secondary school which was not included in the sample. The questionnaire was distributed to 30 teachers of this school. After collecting the filled questionnaires from all of the school teachers, the reliability estimate for the total items was computed using SPSS. The reliability estimate for the total items using cronbach alpha was found to be 0.833(see Appendix D). This coefficient is a good indicator for reliability. In addition to the scaled questionnaire that was filled by respondents, an open-ended question was included in part one of the questionnaire so as to give chance for respondents to give their responses in their own words.

### **3.3.2. Interview**

Semi- structured interview was prepared with the aim of obtaining detailed and deep information from a few teachers so as to triangulate with the data collected using questionnaire. The interviews were conducted based on face to face interaction with the participants. The response of the participants was not recorded instead complied by extensive note taking.

### **3.3.3. Document Analysis**

Documents related to education such as teacher's portfolio, policy documents, action research, lesson plans, were analyzed with aim of supplementing the data obtained through questionnaires and interviews. This document analysis was done by using note taking formats in advance.

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedures**

Before the administration of the questionnaires to the actual subjects in the study, the organized tools passed through experts' comment and pilot test for its validity and reliability respectively.

Based on these results the questionnaires were administered in face to face situations to the respondents in order to avoid refusal and missing of responses, and clarify if additional explanations regarding how to respond are required.

Finally, after the data had been filled, the questionnaires were collected

### **3.5. Methods of Data Analysis**

The quantitative data gathered through questionnaires were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools which were processed through SPSS computer software to give the picture of data and to provide better understanding of the results. Accordingly, to analyze data, percentage, frequency, mean and independent sample t- test, one -way variable analysis (ANOVA) were used. Percentage was utilized to analyze and determine different characteristics (sex, age, service, qualification, etc) of the respondents. The frequency and mean were utilized to analyze and describe the extent to which teachers engage in personal initiative activities to improve their professional competencies, the work environment factors affecting personal initiative activities, the role of resource in supporting personal initiative activities, and independent samples t-test and ANOVA to check if the significant difference between the groups exist at alpha 0.05 level

of significance ; i.e. the level of significances in all cases were tested at alpha 0.05 .T-test was used for binary comparisons ; one –way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey –test for multiple comparisons .

The data obtained through interview and document analysis were grouped into themes based on the basic questions and thematically described following the discussion of qualitative data. The data were analyzed using narrative description.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

Using survey method, the purpose of this study is to investigate the attitude and practice of rural secondary school teachers in improving their professional competence through their personal initiation. The findings of the study are presented in seven sections. The first section describes demographic characteristics of the respondents. The next six sections address the three research questions.

The second section discusses teachers' attitude toward their own professional development. The third section deals with the differences in teachers attitudes by background factors. The fourth section discusses the teachers' perception on importance given to major professional development activities and the actual uses of these activities. The fifth section discusses these activities by background factors. The sixth and seventh sections explore the work environment factors that influence the rural secondary teachers' school personal initiative activities in improving professional competence and the differences by the background factors.

#### **4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

All 176 respondents who participated in this study were rural secondary schools teachers who were teaching in grades 9 and 10. A total of 162 respondents filled the questionnaires. Of which 137 (84.6%) were male teachers and 25 (15.4%) were female teachers. This gives a 92% return rate. For the interview six male teachers and four female teachers participated..

**Table: 2 Characteristics of teachers respondent by sex, age, qualification and experience**

Description		N	%
Sex	Male	137	84.6
	Female	25	15.4
	Total	162	100
Age	21-25 years	57	36.2
	26-30 years	86	53.1
	31-35 years	12	7.4
	36-40 years	6	3.7
	above 40 years	1	0.6
	Total	162	100
	1-5years	86	53.1
Teaching experience	6-10 years	61	37.7
	11-15 years	10	6.2
	16-20 years	4	2.5
	Above years	1	0.6
	Total	162	100
Qualification	Diploma	10	6.2
	Degree	149	92.0
	MA/MSc.	3	1.9
Number	Total	162	100

Table 2 shows full demographic characteristics of the respondents. According to this table, teachers who responded to the questionnaire were predominately male 137 (84.6%). Most the respondents were at the young age 57(36.2%) of teachers are in the first age category (age 21-25years) and 86 (53.1%) of the teachers' ages range from 26-30 years. Teachers who have 1-5 years of teaching experience form the largest group of respondents 86(53.1%) followed by teachers who have 6-10 years of teaching experience 61 (37.7%). About 15(9.3%) teachers have 11 and above years of teaching experience. The Table also shows that the majority of the

respondents 149 (92%) are first degree holders. This indicates that the minimum qualification requirement for teaching secondary school is almost to be met

#### **4.2 Rural Secondary Schools Teachers Attitudes towards improving their own Professional Competencies**

The purpose of this section is to explore rural secondary school teachers' attitudes towards their own professional competencies (**research question number 1**). Teachers' responses to the statements in the second section of the questionnaire provided data on their attitudes.

As Table 3 indicates, most of the respondents agreed / strongly agreed with statements underlying the importance of self initiation as a factor in successful profession development. If teachers feel free to test new ideas or techniques in practice and therefore take the initiative and action for their own development, they will be less dependent on institution they work for. Hence, their efforts and activities in improving their own professional competencies will be more meaningful. Teachers have positive attitudes towards the statements such as: teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for 104(64.2%). Teachers should take initiative and action for their own professional development 146(90.2%), teachers should be free to test any ideas or new techniques in practice got 130(80.2%), reflection and evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge are also favored by teachers 149(91%) and teachers should reflect up on their own practices to improve professionally, got 143(88.3%).

Teachers' attitudes towards the idea of collaboration were asked through three statements including peer observation, helping each other as teachers in evaluating teaching and producing solution to problems. The majority of teachers strongly agree/agree that teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths and weaknesses got 143(88.35), produce solutions to solve problems 145(88.6%) and peer observation to gather information about teachers performance 134 (82.7%).

Keeping up to date with new ideas and changes is another theme that is investigated in the practice of professions development. Teachers have positive attitudes towards this idea. Most of the respondents strongly agree/agree 145 (89.6%) that teachers should be open to new idea and

changes 145(89.6%) and they should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvement in education system 143(88.3%).

**Table 3 Degree of Agreement with Statements about Rural Teachers' Attitudes towards improving their own Professions Competences (Frequency, percentage).**

S.N.	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Teachers should improve Their professional skills & knowledge	14.2%	9.3%	12.3 %	45.1%	19.1 %	3.46	1.295
2	Teachers should take initiative and action for their own professions development	1.2	2.5	6.2	46.3	43.8	4.29	793
3	Teachers should be free to test any idea or technique	4.3	4.3	11.1	36.4	43.8	4.11	1.051
4	Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their teaching	0.6	1.2	6.2	36.4	55.6	4.45	723
5	Teachers should help each teaching to identify profession strengths and weaknesses	1.9	2.5	7.4	38.3	50	4.32	861
6	Teachers should help each other to produce solution to the problems	0.6	1.9	8.	46.9	42.6	4.29	745
7	Teachers should be open to new ideas and changes	0.68	0.6	9.3	34	55.6	4.43	738
8	Teachers should reflect on their own practice to improve their profession	1.2	1.2	9.3	36.4	51.9	4.36	802
9	Peer observation should be used to gather information about teachers' performance	0.6	4.9	11.7	45.7	37.0	4.14	853
10	Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with change and improvements	2.5	2.5	6.8	38.3	50	4.31	894

N=162

These results show that teachers acknowledge the importance of improving their professional competencies. They have positive attitude towards the main themes underlying the issues like the necessity of self-initiation, collaboration, reflection and evaluation as well as keeping up to date with new ideas and changes in the field they teach. In spite of all these, some respondents (35.8%) seem to have less faith in the idea teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on institution they work for. In addition to the result of frequencies and percentages in **Table 3**, the mean scores of all items except the mean score of item number one, ranges from 4.11 to 4.45 indicate that teachers agreed with majority of statements under the title professional development and the results of standard deviations show that there is no great variation among opinion Of each respondent about every statement. Although most of the teachers agree that self-initiation should be important factor in professional development, more than one third of the teachers stay uncertain or disagree with the item. From mean score of this item (3.46) the similar result seemed to be seen.

The data obtained from interview indicated majority of the respondents underlined those teachers professional development activities were highly influenced by teachers' attitudes and mainly emphasized the importance of institutional support, experts' assistance and extrinsic motivation to develop personally and professionally. For instance, one teacher (T8) from Tulu Mera School responded that, as professionals to develop, teachers need sufficient school resources and facilities such as internet access, library, laboratory and necessary professional supports .A teacher (T2) from Chobi added that without sufficient professional and material supports it is difficult for teachers to improve their own professional competencies through their personal efforts and a teacher(T1) from Gorba secondary school said that if teachers are proud of, enthusiastic, committed for and like their profession, they become successful learners throughout career-long learning. Some literatures state the crucial role of institutions administrators, supervisors, and teacher educators in the personal and professional development of teachers. They should facilitate the teachers with whatever way it is feasible for them. Because objective feedback and professional supports are important gate ways for successful acquisition of professional growth. Pierce and Hunsaker(1996) described personal directed professional development for the teacher, of the teacher and by the teacher. Day (1999) also suggested that where staff development opportunities are poorly conceptualized, insensitive to

the concern of individual participants and make little effort to relate learning experiences to workplace conditions, they make little impact upon teachers or their pupils.

### **4.3 Difference in Attitude of Rural Secondary Schools Teachers towards Improving Professional Complacencies by Background Factors.**

The data collected on rural secondary school teachers' attitudes towards improving their own professional competencies were further analyzed to determine whether there was a significant difference between teachers' selected background factors using independent sample t-test and one way ANOVA as a measure of significance. Hereunder only the significant differences are presented.

#### **4.3.1 Difference in Attitudes by Sex**

Sex is one of the background factor that affect teachers' attitudes towards their professional development. An independent sample t-test shows that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers' perceptions on each statement about teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development at the 0.05 probability level (see **Table 4**). For all items t-calculated are greater than t-critical, where  $p > 0.05$

**Table 4 Independent Sample T -Test for Attitudes of Rural Teachers' towards their Professional development by Sex**

	t-test for equality of mean			
	T	df	(2-tailed)	Mean difference
Teacher should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on institution they work for	0.600	160	0.549	0.169
Teachers should take initiative and action for their own professional development	0.343	160	0.732	0.59
Teachers should be free to test any new ideas and techniques in teaching	0.160	160	0.873	.037
Teachers should involve in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge	1.592	160	0.113	0.249
Teachers should help each other evaluate teaching to identify strengths, weaknesses problems	1.272	160	0.205	0.238
Teachers should help each other produce solution to problems	1.540	160	0.126	0.248
Teachers should reflect up on their own practices to improve their profession	0.841	160	0.401	0.147
Teachers should be open to new ideas and changes	1.121	160	0.284	0.180
Peer observation should be used to gather information about their performance	0.408	160	0.684	0.076
Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvement	1.395	160	0.165	0.270

Based on the above sample t-test results one can easily understand that there is shared perceptions between male and female teachers on professional development, i.e. both males and females equally favor the professional development.

#### **4. 3.2 Difference in Attitudes by Age**

Age is one of the background factors which would be expected to be related to teachers' attitudes towards professions development. However one way ANOVA test shows that teachers at different ages do not statistically differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards professional development at significance level  $p= 0.05$ . The results indicate that teachers of all ages have similar attitudes towards professional development.

The results of ANOVA test for each variable indicate that there is no significant difference between different age groups of respondents because the fact that the obtained p Values, which range from .06 to .83 were greater than 0.05(where the mean difference is significant) for all items (see **Appendix E**). This indicated that the groups of the respondents had similar awareness about professional development. It could be due to the fact that majority of the respondents were in the similar age group

#### **4.3.3 Difference in Attitudes by Teachers Experiences**

Teaching experience is one of the background variables which affect teachers attitudes towards their professional development.

**Table.5. Difference in Teachers Attitude towards Professions Development by Teaching Experiences.**

Professional development items	F	Sig.
Improving their professional skills and knowledge	1.565	0.185
Taking initiative and action	0.873	0.482
Freedom to test new ideas and techniques in teaching	0.576	0.587
Evaluating their teaching skills and knowledge	0.808	0.512
Identifying their teaching problems, strengths and weariness's	0.536	0.504
Helping each other in producing solution to the problems	0.378	0.324
Be open to new own practices	0.454	0.769
Reflecting on their own practices	0.185	0.941
Peer observation to gather information	1.042	0.387
Keeping themselves up to date	1.069	0.314

For any F ratio,  $P > 0.05$  –the values of ANOVA test in the above **Table-5** which range from 0.185 to 0.941 are greater than 0.05 for all items also shows that teachers with varying years of teaching experiences do not differ significantly in their attitudes towards all statements under title professional development at the 0.05 level. Since background variable of age and teaching experience are parallel to each other, similar results on this variable are expectable. This is due to the fact that less experienced teachers who form the largest group of respondents (90.8%), have similar perceptions on the most variables.

#### **4.3.4 Difference in Attitudes by Qualification**

Teachers' qualification is one of the important background variables that affect teachers' attitude towards their professional development. However, the ANOVA test in this finding shows that teachers from different qualification do not differ significantly from each other in their attitudes towards statements stated under title professional development at significance level 0.05 ( see **Table 6**). The reason for this may be that the majority of the teachers who participated in the study were with the same qualification-BA//BSC/Bed degree holders (92%). This makes them have similar attitudes towards professional development.

**Table 6 ANOVA Test for Attitude of Teaches towards their own Professional Development by Qualification.**

	F	Sig.
Improving their professional skills and knowledge	1.210	0.301
Taking initiative and action for their profession development	0.276	0.757
Freedom to test new ideas and techniques	1.649	0.195
Evaluating their teaching skills and knowledge	2.272	0.108
Identifying their teaching problems, strengths, weaknesses	0.338	0.724
Helping each other to produce solution to the problems	0.429	0.652
Be open to new ideas and changes	0.1391	0.252
Reflecting up on their performance	0.980	0.378
Peer observation to gather information	1.828	0.146
Keeping themselves up to date	0.914	0.403

For ration,  $p > 0.05$ -the results of calculated F indicated in the above table are less than critical F and P-values in this table are greater than the 0.05 ,where the mean differences are not statistically significant

#### **4.4 Major Professional Development Activities**

The second purpose of the study is to explore rural secondary school teacher's perceptions of major professional development activities and to what degree they make use of these activities (research question number 2). Teachers' responses to the statements in the third section of the questionnaire provide data on what major professions development activities they perceive as critical to their development as professionals and to what degree they make use of these activities.

Teachers were asked to rate the given professional development activities to collect data on how important they perceive these activities for development, then, teachers were asked to respond

how often they make use of them. **Table 7** displays the importance given to the activities by teachers and **Table 8** displays how often teachers make use of these activities.

**Table 7 Degree of Importance Given to Major professional Development Activities (in percentage and frequency)**

	Not important all	of title important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Mean	SD
Sharing experience and problems with colleagues	3 1.9	1 0.6	13 8.0	51 31.5	94 58	4.43	0.81 8
Asking for professional help from colleagues	1 0.6	4 2.5	19 11.7	69 42.6	69 42.0	4.24	0.80 2
Working on developing new materials with colleagues	1 0.6	1 0.6	16 9.9	64 39.5	80 49.41	4.36	0.37
Peer observation	1 0.6	6 3.7	26 16	60 37	69 42.6	4.33	0.77 1
Conducting action research	0	6 3.1	12 7.4	50 37	80 49.4	4.17	0.87 5
Trying out new ideas or suggestion teachers performance	1 0.6	7 4.3	18 11.1	60 37	77 47.5	4.30	0.85 5
Gathering information about ones teaching performance		6 3.7	16 9.9	59 39.4	80 49.4	4.27	0.84 9
Following research literature on related field	2 1.2	8 4.9	25 15.4	79 49.9	53 32.7	4.30	0.86 3
Reading magazines and publications	1 0.6	5 3.1	17 10.5	66 40.7	70 43.2	4.07	1.84 2
Training other teachers	6 3.7	3 1.9	24 14.8	58 35.8	71 43.8	4.19	0.01 1
Attending professional development	1 0.6		6 3.7	51 31.5	99 61.1	4.20	0.90 4
Searching internet	6 3.7		19 11.7	55 34	77 47	4.17	0.90 .3
Working on new techniques and activities with colleagues	1 0.6		15 9.3	66 40	77 47.5	4.49	0.76 6

Table 7 shows majority of teachers report that they find asking for professional help from colleagues also very important 69 (42%) and important 69 (42.6%). In addition, working on developing new materials with colleagues is agreed to be very important 80 (49.41) and important 64 (39.5%). Similarly, most teachers give importance to working developing techniques and activities with colleagues 143(88.25%). The fourth item of this theme is peer

observation which the majority of teachers considered as very important 69 (42.6%) and important 60 (37%) factor for professional development.

In addition to collaborative activities, research and reflection on own practices are necessary in teachers' professional lives for self-development. Action research, trying out new ideas or suggestions in practices, gathering information about one's teaching performance and reflection on own teaching were asked to rate for their importance to teachers. The majority of teachers find trying out new ideas or suggestion in practice 137(84.5%) and reflection on own teaching 142(88%), action research 140(86.6%) and following literature in related field 139(82.6%) are very important/important respectively.

There is no doubt that teachers can improve their skills and knowledge by working with or getting help from their colleagues and through research reflections and practices. Majority of the teachers also think following professional development programs are very important/important 150(92.6%). 129(79.3%) of the teachers find following literatures on the field very important/important. Search internet and reading magazines and publication are found very important/important 132(81.5%) and 1368(83.9%) to teachers respectively.

When asked whether training other teachers is important for professional development 79.6% responded that it is very important/ important.

The mean score of all items in Table 7.which are greater than 4.00; also reveal that all major professional development activities were considered as important by teachers.

**Table 8 Degree of making use of Major Professional Development Activities by Rural secondary School teachers (in percentage and frequency)**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Mean	SD
Sharing experience and problems with colleagues	8	28	83	20	23	3.14	1.02
	4.91	17.3	51.2	19	14.2		6
Asking for professional help from colleagues	11	31	84	19	17	3.00	1.00
	5.8	19.1	51.9	11.7	10.5		3
Working on new techniques with colleagues	19	40	59	28	16	2.86	1.13
	11.7	24.7	38.4	17.3	9.9		1
Working on new techniques and activities with colleagues	14	45	59	26	18	2.93	1.11
	8.6	27.8	36.4	16	11.1		0
Peer observation	10	37	87	13	16	2.91	0.96
Action research	6.7	22.8	53	53.7	8.0	2.51	1.26
	49	31	46	22	14		7
Trying out new ideas or suggestion in practice	3.2	19.1	28.4	13.6	8.6	2.64	1.29
	43	26	58	16	19		5
Gathering information about one's teaching performance	11	20	89	17	25	3.15	1.04
	6.8	12.3	54.9	10.5	15.5		9
Following literature on related field	19	45	68	16	14	2.76	1.06
	11.7	27.8	42	9.9	8.6		8
Reading magazines and publications	32	34	60	24	12	2.56	1.3
	19.8	21.0	37.0	14.8	7.4		
Training other teachers	17	56	60	19	10	2.69	5.1
	10.5	34.6	37.0	11.7	6.2		
Attending professional development programs	5	14	91	29	23	3.31	1.16
	3.1	6.8	56.2	17.9	14.2		5

Table 8 shows how often teachers make use of the major professional development activities. All the collaborative activities are sometimes made use of by majority of teachers more than half of

the respondents 83(51.2%) sometimes do sharing experiences and problems with colleagues, 43(26.4%) often or always do and 8(4.9%) do not make use of this opportunity for their professional development. Similarly, 83(51.9%) of teachers sometimes ask for professional help from colleagues and less than one fourth 36(22.2%) of teachers often or always get benefits from their colleagues by asking for professional help and there are teachers who do not ask for help from colleague11 (6.8%).

When asked if they work on developing new materials with colleagues, about one third of the teachers report that they sometimes do this 59(36.4%), while19 (11.7%), 40(24.7%) and16 (9.9%) of the teachers never, rarely and always do it respectively. When it comes to working on developing new techniques and activities with colleagues the results are similar, 36.4% sometimes, 19(11.1%) always,14( 8.6%) never and 45(27.8%) rarely work on developing new technique and activities with colleagues.

Peer observation is one of the occasionally used activities by the teachers. Teachers who sometime make peer observation consists of 87(53.7%), while 10(6.2%) never do it and 37(22.8%) rarely observe their peers. Teachers' responses to how often they use the activities for professional development relying on research, reflection and practice show that almost half of the teachers rarely or never conduct action research 80(49.3%). There are teachers who sometime carry out action research 46(28.4%), the minority of teachers often or always undertake action research in their classes 36(22%). Almost one third of 58(35.8%) of the teachers sometimes try out new ideas and suggestions in practice. Nearly half of the teachers 71(43.5%) never or rarely do this activity.

Gathering information about their own teaching performance is sometimes fulfilled by the majority of teachers 89(54.9%). 34(19.1%) of the respondents never or rarely do this activity, whereas 42(25.9%) often or always gather information about their own performance. When it comes to searching the internet, more than half of the teachers85 (52.5%) reported that they never or rarely do it and nearly one fourth of the respondents sometimes browse the internet.

The majority of teachers 68(42%) sometimes or rarely follow the literatures on related field .64(39.5%) never or rarely, 16(9.9%) always14 (8.6%) often do it. Reading magazines and publications is one of professional development activities teachers never or rarely used. 37% of

teachers sometime read magazines and publication, meanwhile 24(14.85%) often, 12(7.4%) always do it. Professional development programs are sometimes followed by the majority of teaches 91(56.2%), 52(32.1%) often or always follow, while 5(3.1%) never and,14(8.6%) rarely do that.

As the responses indicate the actual use of professional development activities for improving professional competencies sometime occurs and there are teachers who do not or rarely practice professional development activities in improving their professional competencies.

The data on how important teachers perceive professional development activities of improving their professional competencies and how often they make use of these were further analyzed to find out how much the response of teachers differ in importance given to and making use of the major professional activities. In order to see if there is difference between the importance given to and how often make use of these activities, the mean scores were used. The results presented in table 9 indicate that the importance given to and the use of all the major professional development activities found to be different from each other. The mean scores of the importance given to the activities are all higher than the mean score of making the use of the same activities. This means that, although teachers give importance or somewhat importance to the activities, they do not make use of these activities as much as they give importance to these activities.

**Table 9 Comparison of Teachers' Perception of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Degree of Making use of the Activities.**

Professional development activities	Importance		Use	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	4.43	0.818	3.14	1.026
Asking for professional help from colleagues	4.24	0.802	3.00	1.003
Working on new materials techniques	4.36	0.737	2.86	1.131
Working on new activities techniques and techniques	4.33	0.771	2.93	1.110
Peer observation	4.17	0.875	2.91	0.961
Conducting action research	4.30	0.855	2.51	1.267
Trying out new ideas and suggestion in practice	4.27	0.849	2.64	1.293
Gathering information about one's own teaching performance	4.30	0.863	3.15	1.049
Following literature on related field	4.07	1.842	2.76	1.068
Searching internet	4.19	0.011	2.56	1.351
Reading magazines and publications	4.20	0.904	2.69	1.165
Training other teachers	4.17	0.903	2.69	1.018
	4.49	0.766	3.31	0.929

The mean scores of making use of major professional development activities, which range from 2.51 to 3.31, show that teachers did not regularly make use of these activities their own professional development.

The data obtained through interviews also revealed that rural secondary school teachers did not frequently make use of many professional development activities. Majority of informants emphasized the importance of personal initiated professional development activities for professional and personal growth of teaching forces and thereby for improving their own professional competencies. However, they complained about limitation of formally organized professional development programs. The School –Based Professional Development Initiative, which has fixed schedule for implementation of formally designed activities, does not include all activities teachers need to engage in to become competent in the fast changing world and actualize their potential. They also underlined that such program lacks fluidity and flexibility

,and makes teachers implement what had been planned by somebody else .Furthermore ,these teachers indicated that to fill the gap and address their need ,teachers were aware of the importance of self-initiated professional development activities and personally started engaging in some of these activities to certain degree .For instance teacher (T6) from Toke Secondary School said that teachers had sometimes made use of professional development activities such as mentoring ,participating in discussion meeting ,searching internet , and peer observation .A teacher(T7) from Bebichi secondary school stated that even if teachers gave importance to major development activities .they had rarely made use of activities like action research ,collegial supervision ,training other teachers because of lack of experience ,skills ,knowledge and resources. A teacher (T3) from Gute indicated that teachers in her school rarely conduct activities such as action research, observe peers while they are teaching, reflect on their own performances and never train other teachers .This is because majority of teachers lack knowledge, skills, experiences, techniques and even motivation to engage regularly in many professional development activities. School physical resources and facilities were main constraints for practicing the major professional activities `

From document analysis, it was observed that even though teachers were maintaining their professional portfolio, there were much limited numbers of professional development activities included in their files. In addition, majority of teachers did not up date and insert necessary contents into their portfolio. According to MOE (2009) teachers' portfolio should contain individual CV (personal and professional data); individual action plans, evidence of all professional development activities which have been taken by the individual teachers in the last two years, feedback from other professionals, teachers' self-reflections on progress, annual appraisal reports, example of examination result with analysis, example of lesson plans with the evaluation results etc... However, the content of analyzed teachers' portfolio varies from school to school and even from teacher to teacher.

On the other hand, some informants said that, to develop professionally, teachers frequently practice professional development activities such as speaking in their classroom lessons, reading text books, managing their classrooms and planning lesson. But they rarely do activities like assessing and evaluating peers, reading other books, listening radio programs, use of teaching materials, reading magazines and publications, watching movie and TV

According to (Dickinson 1987), in order for teaching professionals to keep abreast with changes-renew and review their own knowledge skills attitudes and competencies -they need to involve themselves in a number of learning activities such as self-initiated learning collaborative learning, reflective practices and experiential learning. It is centrally important in maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the schools. It has also confirmed that where teachers are able to access new ideas and share experience more readily there is greater potential for school and classroom improvement. Improving school invest in the development of their staff create opportunities for teachers to collaborate and to share best practice (Day, 1999). Little 1993) adds that in order to achieve improvement in teaching and better learning out comes for students, teacher need to be engaged in professional development that promotes inquiry, creativity and innovation. MOE (2009) also states that all teachers must be engaged in a wide range of professional development activities that will bring improvement in teachers' professional competencies

To sum up, as it can be understood from the data obtained through questionnaire, interviews and document analysis rural secondary school teachers were participating in some of professional development activities. The majority of activities which are very important in improving teachers' professional skills, knowledge and attitudes were not so much practiced by rural secondary school teachers. According to Anderson (2001), obtaining knowledge and sharing existing knowledge and skills with other to join teaching forces are valuable to for change and improvement. However, some activities contribute a lot to teachers' development of knowledge and skills and attitudes are questionable in the target schools.

#### **4.5 Difference in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Background Factors.**

The data collected from the third section of the questionnaire were further analyzed to determine if there is a significant difference between teachers' perception and selected background factors using independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA as a measure of significance.

#### 4.5.1 Difference in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of the Activities by Sex

The difference between sex and the importance given to all major professional development activities is not significant.

**Table 10 Difference in Teacher's Perceptions on Importance Given to Professional Development Activities by Sex-T-test Results**

Professional development activities	T-test		For	
	t	Different	Sign. (2-tailed)	Mean different
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	0.317	160	0.57	0.57
Asking for professional help from colleagues	0.793	160	0.433	0.143
Working on new materials with colleagues	0.325	160	0.746	0.052
Working on techniques activities with colleagues	0.795	160	0.428	0.133
Peer observation	0.665	160	0.502	0.127
Conducting action research	0.103	160	0.910	0.019
Trying out new ideas and suggestion in practice	0.585	160	0.573	0.105
Gathering information about one's performance	0.0401	160	0.69	0.188
Following literature on related field	0.593	160	0.554	0.109
Researching internet	1.157	160	0.249	0.254
Reading magazines and publications	0.977	160	0.330	0.192
Training other teaches	0.413	160	0.6820	0.079
Attending professional development programs	1.314	160	0.187	0.220

As Table 10 displays, there is no significant difference between male teachers' and female teachers' perception of the major professional development activities at the 0.05 level. This is because t-calculated for each item is less than t-critical at the 0.05 level- where  $p > 0.05$

When it comes to the actual use of professional development activities, teachers' sex appears to be related to only actual use of one variable. As independent sample t-test shows female teachers

differ significantly from male teacher in actual use of sharing experience and problems with colleagues at the 0.05 level (see **Table 11**).

**Table 11. Difference in Teachers Actual use of Professional Development Activities by Sex**

Professional development activities	t	Df	Sig.	Mean difference
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	2.132	38.998	0.039*	0.397
Asking for professional help from colleagues	1.089	160	0.280	0.239
Working on new materials with colleagues	1.586	160	0.114	0.389
Working on new techniques and activities with colleagues	1.436	160	0.153	0.345
Peer observation	0.868	160	0.328	0.182
Conducting action research	0.982	160	0.66	0.175
Trying new ideas or suggestion in practice	0.008	160	0.993	0.419
Gathering information about one's teaching performance	1.850	160	0.312	0.002
Following related literature field	1.015	160	0.153	0.236
Searching internet	1.435	160	0.191	0.420
Reading magazines and publications	0.506	160	0.614	0.290
Training other teaches	1.312	160	0.191	0.128
Attending professional development programs	0.437	160	0.663	0.088

As independent sample t-test shows female teachers differ significantly from male teacher in actual use of sharing experience and problems with colleagues at the 0.05 level (see **Table 11**) T-calculated is less than t-critical for all variables for except one variable -sharing experience and problems.

**Table 12. Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Making use of the Activities by Sex.**

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Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues		Mean	Standard deviation	N
	Male	2.56	0.733	137
	Female	3.01	1.130	25

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t (38.998) 2.132 p=0.039 and Mean scores indicate male teachers rarely share experience and problems which colleagues whereas female teachers stay uncertain (see **Table 12**)

Mean scores are based on a five point Likert scale where 1=never 2=rarely 3= sometimes 4=often 5= always

#### **4.5.2 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and actual use of the Activities by Age**

One way ANOVA test indicates that there is no significant difference between different age groups in teachers' perceptions of importance given to all major professional development activities expect training other teachers at selected probability level (see **Table 13**).

**Table 13 ANOVA for Teachers' Perception of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities by Age**

		Df	F	Sig.
experience and problem sharing with colleagues	Between Groups	4	.381	.822
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
asking for professional help from colleagues	Between Groups	4	.277	.893
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
working on new materials with colleagues	Between Groups	4	.716	.582
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
working on techniques and activities with colleagues	Between Groups	4	.964	.429
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
action research	Between Groups	4	.977	.422
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
gathering information about one's own teaching performance	Between Groups	4	1.188	.318
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
following literature on related field	Between Groups	4	.692	.599
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
research the internet	Between Groups	4	.831	.507
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
reading magazines and publications	Between Groups	4	.989	.415
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
training other teachers	Between Groups	4	2.986	.033*
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		

**Table 14 Mean and standard Deviation Scores for Importance Given to Major Development Activities by Age**

<b>Training other teachers</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>21-25 years</b>	4.21	0.852	57
<b>26-30 years</b>	3.93	1.00	86
<b>31-35 years</b>	4.36	1.204	12
<b>36-40 years</b>	4.10	0.590	6
<b>&gt;41 years</b>			1

F (157) = 2.986, p= 0.033

To further analyze the difference in perceptions of teachers on some activities by age at significance 0.05 level, mean and standard deviation scores, and Tukey test were used. Accordingly, there is significant difference among teachers with various age groups at in importance given to training other teachers ( $P < 0.05$ ). The mean standard deviation scores also show the existence of differences (see Table 14). For the teachers who are between years and the ones aged between 26 and 30, it is more important to work on training other teachers. A further Tukey test indicates the only significant difference exists at 0.05 level between who are 21-25 years and the ones aged 31-36 years are more open to the activity training other teachers than other age groups. However, there is no significant difference between teachers who are 26-30 years and 36-40 years ( $p > 0.05$ )- see Appendix-F

Mean scores are based on a five point Likert scale, where 1=not important at all, 2= of little important, 3= somewhat important, 4= important and 5 =very important.

**Table 15 Difference in actual use of major professional development activities by age**

Professional development activities	Degree of freedom	F	Sig.
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	157	1.025	0.313
Asking for professional help from colleagues	157	.381	.893
Working on developing new materials	157	.245	.896
Working on techniques and activities with colleagues	157	1.840	.238
Peer observation	157	3.42	0.037*
Conducting action research	157	.826	.623
Gathering information about one's teaching performance	157	.783	0.502
Following literature related field	157	2.103	.630
Searching internet	157	.895	0.130
Reading magazines and publications	157	.870	.507
Training other teaches	157	.783	0.130

On the issue of whether professional development activities are made use of, there is significant difference between age and certain activity-peer observation- at the 0.05 level of significance (see Table 15).

**Table 16 mean and standard deviation scores for making use of activities by age**

Peer observation	Mean	Standard deviation	No
21-25 years	3.105	0.087	57
26-30 years	3.083	0.162	86
31-35 years	2.85	0.537	12
36-40 years	2.78	.724	6

Peer observation is sometimes done by young teachers between 21-25 and 26-30 ages and those who are 31-35 and 36-40 ages rarely observe their peer, while teaching in the classroom to learn from them and provide suggestion to their peers for improvement(see Table 16 )

### 4.5.3 Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Make use of the Activities by Teaching Experiences

Teaching experience is another background variable that has influence on the teachers' professional development activities.

**Table 17. Difference in Teacher's Perception on Importance Given to and Make use of Major Professional Development activities by Experiences.**

Major professional development activities	How importance			Make use	
	Df	F	Sig	F	Sig
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	161	.283	.888	.499	.736
Asking for professional help from colleagues	161	.154	.981	.976	.439
Working on developing new materials with colleagues	161	1.232	.127	.722	.578
Working on techniques and activities with colleagues	161	.406	.804	1.146	.337
Peer observation	161	.412	.772	2.057	.030*
Conducting action research	161	.337	.857	1.017	.401
Gathering information about one's performance	161	.338	.852	1.969	.153
Following literature on related field	161	.207	.924	1.549	.191
Searching internet	161	.886	.486	.916	.456
Reading magazines and publications	161	1.161	.336	.962	.430
Training other teaches	161	1.270	.284	1.698	.153
Following professional development program	161	.813	.284	.672	.612

As Table 17 shows there is no significant difference in terms of importance given to any professional development activities. But this table shows that there is significant difference in making use of only one professional development activity-peer observation - at the 0.05 level.

ANOVA test shows that teachers from different teaching experiences statistically significantly differ from each other in using peer observation for professional development (see **Table 17**).

**Table 18 Mean and Standard Deviation Sores for Make use of Professional Development Activities by Teaching Experience.**

Peer observation	Mean	Standard deviation
1-5 years experience	3.5	0.92
6-10 years experience	4.02	0.602
Above years experiences	4.30	0.574

F (159) =2.67, p=0.037 and Table 18 shows that the significant difference between teachers of various experiences in making use of certain activities at the 0.05 level. Teachers of varying teaching experience use peer observation differently. It is more frequently made use of by more experienced teachers. Teachers who have more than six years of experience often engage in peer observation. Teachers working for 1-5 years sometimes peer observe. When these Groups are compared in pairs with turkey test, significant difference is found within the pairs in the groups. Teachers with 1-5 service years significantly differed from these who have 11-15 years of service (see Appendix-G).

Mean scores are based on a five point liker scale where 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometime 4=often 5= always.

#### **4.5.4 Difference in Teachers' Perception of Importance Given to Major Professional Development Activities and Actual Use of Activities by Qualification**

The qualification teachers have is another background variable, which is found significantly differed in importance given to major professional development activities and in how often these activities are made use of at the 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 19 ANOVA for Importance Given to and How Often Teachers Make Use of Major Professional Development Activities by Qualification.**

	How importance		Make use	
	F	Sig	F	Sig
Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues	.981	.377	.6.6	.547
Asking for professional help from colleagues	.973	.380	2.096	.126
Working on developing new materials with colleagues	.267	.788	.990	.374
Working on techniques and activities with colleagues	.460	.632	1.622	.201
Peer observation	3.676	.027*	.056	.945
Conducting action research	.545	.581	1.132	.325
Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice	.631	.512	.996	.372
Gathering information about one's performance	.597	.552	4.104	.018*
Following literature on related field	.669	.514	1.681	.189
Searching internet	.374	.688	1.840	.62
Reading magazines and publications	1.298	.276	2.598	.078
Training other teaches	1.202	.302	2.374	.096
Attending professional development programs	1.023	.299	1.616	.202

The relationship between teachers' qualification and the importance given to one professional development activity is significant at the .05 level (see Table 20). All teachers from different qualification think that peer observation is important. Mean and standard deviation scores show that there is slight difference between teachers who have first degree and those who have diploma. Both find this activity important where as MA/MSc degree holders considered peer observation as very important of successful professional development (see table 20). Tukey test

proves the existence of significant difference between pairs in this group at 0.05 levels (see Appendix-H).

**Table 20. Mean and Standard Deviation scores of the Importance Given to Major Professional Development activities by Qualification.**

Peer observation	Mean	Standard deviation
Diploma	4.12	.600
BA/BSC/BED	4.08	.894
MA/MSc	5	-

$$F(159) = 3.676 \quad p=0.027$$

Mean and standard deviation scores are based on five point Likert scale where 1= not important at a 11, 2= of little important, 3=somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

One –way ANOVA test also shows that teachers with varying qualification differed significantly in gathering information about one’s own teaching performance (see Table 19). The mean scores indicate that teachers who have degree and those who are diploma holders sometimes make use of gathering information about one’s own teaching performance for the sake of professional development, but there’s slight difference between these teachers in making use of this activity where as MA/MSc holders never gather information about one’s own teaching performance ( see Tables 21). A Tukey test shows that teachers with diploma and teachers with degree significantly differed from the ones who own MA/MSc degree at 0.05 levels. There is no significant difference between teachers who have fist degree and teachers with diploma holders (see Appendix-I).

**Table 21 Mean and Standard Deviation Score for the How often Make Use of Major Professional Development Activities by Qualification.**

Gathering information about one's own teaching performance	Mean	Standard
Diploma	3.50	1.080
Degree	3.16	1.027
Masters	1.67	1.155

$F(159) = 3.682, p=0.027$

Mean scores are based on five point Likert scale where 1= never, 2=rarely, 3=sometime, 4= often, 5= always.

#### **4.6 Work Environment Factors Affecting Teacher's Professional Development**

The third purpose of this study is to explore what environmental factors affecting teachers' professional development (research question number 3). Teachers' response to the statements in the fourth section of the questionnaire provided data on how important teachers perceive some factors that affect teachers' professional development.

**Table 22 Degree of Importance Given to Some Work Environmental Factors Influence Teachers Professional Development in Percentage and Mean**

Work environment factors influencing teachers' professional development	Not important	Little important	Some important	Important	Very important	Mean	Std	N
Students practice	4.9	5.8	11.1	29	49.4	4.26	.994	162
Work load	22.2	14.2	22.2	27.2	14.2	3.115	1.358	162
Communication among colleagues	2.5	4.2	14.2	38.3	40.7	4.175	.871	162
Collaboration with colleagues	4.3	3.1	17.3	34.8	40.7	4.075	1.035	162
Institutional support for professional development	3.7	3.1	12.3	29	51.9	4.28	.9365	162
School physical resources	1.9	4.9	11.7	43.2	38.3	4.23	.83	162
School rule and regulation	3.7	4.9	9.3	29.6	52.5	4.41	.838	162

Table 22 reveals students' practice as work environment factor in professional development effort is seen to be very important/ important by more than three fourth of teachers (78.4%). The minority of the teachers find this factor somewhat important (11.1%). Less than half of the teachers perceived workload as very important element of work environment for teachers' professional development. But more than one third (36.4%) of them think that work load is of little important/ not important at all. This implies that majority of rural school secondary school teachers have no impact of work load in improving their professional competencies.

Further, three- fourth of the teachers (75.3%) report that collaboration among colleagues is very important factor in professional development efforts. Nevertheless, there are small proportions

(14.2%) who believe it is somewhat important. The absence of work load pressure on the rural schools teachers may make them have sufficient time for collaboration and communication with each other.

Lack of communication among colleagues is found to be a very important/ important factor influencing teacher's growth and change by 79% of the teachers and the minority thinks that this is something important.

Among all the factors that influence change and growth in rural secondary schools teachers' institutional support and school physical resources for professional development are perceived to be the most important factors by the majority of teachers -86.4% of the teachers find institutions support as very important/ important to their growth. Fortunately school physical facilities are considered to be very important / important by the majority of the teachers (85.5%).

Furthermore, another factor that affects professional development of the teachers is school rule and regulation. 81.5% of the teachers find that school rule and regulation is very important/ important. These results suggest that all the mentioned factors except work load are perceived to be very important/ important by the teachers with slight difference.

The mean scores indicated in the Table 23 also prove that all factors of work environment except workload seem to be important for professional development. Likewise the gathered data from interviews also convey similar suggestions with questionnaire data. The informants indicated that teachers give due attention for works environments as critical factors for improving their professions and have positive feeling about their professional development.

Concerning work environment factors, all interviewees complained about constraints that teachers face, when implementing the professional development activities .The constraints mentioned were inadequate resources, lack of incentives and teachers attitudes.

Regarding inadequate resources, 90% of interview participants stated that teachers face inadequate resources as a constraints .The constraints mentioned were inadequate funds, inadequate facilities unavailability's of resource materials .For instance, teacher (T4) from Bake secondary school stated that resources are not enough to adequately participate in self-driven professional development effort, a teacher (T2) who teaches at Chobi secondary school stated

that resources are not enough and Toke's secondary school a teacher (T6) summed it by saying lack of facilities funds and institutional supports are the root cause of ineffective teachers' professional development activities.

All respondents stated that personal initiative teachers' professional development activities face lack of recognition for those who are capable of carrying out various professional development activities. For instance a teacher (T8) from Tulu Mera asserted that lack of recognition rewards to individuals demoralize those who, actively engage in personal initiative professional development activities, a teacher (T5) from Goro Sole secondary school confirmed that there is no monetary incentive for teachers who collaborate with colleagues.

Teachers' attitudes as work environmental factors in influencing professional development activities were perceived as important by majority of respondents. Teachers felt that any teachers' upgrading program held at school has no value compared to courses or any other instruction of higher learning. For instance a teacher (T7) from Bebichi Secondary School asserted that some teachers look down upon these initiatives. They prefer accredited courses, a teacher (T9) from Danno Secondary School concurred that teachers had developed negative attitudes towards school-based workshops and another teacher (T8) suggested that if teachers could take the initiative seriously they can see changes in their professional growth.

Fullan (1991) observed that financial and political factors inhibit expansion of induction program. This evidence shows that financial constraints are contributory to limited professional practices undertaken to update teacher's knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Understanding the professional development activities can be one of the factors that act as barrier to effective teachers' growth.

Birhanu(2014) stated that teachers underlined schools' limited resources provision and encouragement mechanisms as major factors for conducting professional development activities

#### **4.7 Difference in Teachers Perceptions of Importance Given to Some Work Environment Factors that Affect Teacher's Professional Development by Background Factors**

The data collected from the fourth section of the questionnaire were further analyzed to determine if there were significant differences between the importance given to some factors in

the work environment that affect teacher’s professional development and selected background factors using

Factors	Sex	Mean	SD
School Physical resources	Male	4.05	0.953
	Female	4.40	0/707

independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA as measures of significance.

#### 4.7.1

#### Difference in

#### Teachers Perceptions of Importance Given to Some Work Environment Factors by Sex

The relationship between sex and the importance given to certain factors of work environment that influence teachers’ professional development is significant at the 0.05 level (see **Table 23**).

**Table 23 T-test for Equality of Mean by Sex**

	t	df	Sig 2-tailed	Mean differences
Students practice	1.337	160	.126	.374
Work load	1.395	160	.165	.415
Communication among colleagues	.982	160	.328	.207
Collaboration colleagues	.397	160	.692	.091
Institutional support for professional development	.728	160	.468	.163
School physical resources	2.093	160	0.042*	.342
School rule and regulation	2.402	160	0.017*	.541

There is significant difference between male and female teachers on perception on school physical resources and school rule and regulation at the 0.05 level (see Table 23).

School Rules and Regulations	Male	4.14	1.099
	Female	4.68	0.157

**Table 24**  
**Mean and**  
**Standard**  
**Deviations**

**Scores for Importance Given to Certain work Place Factors by Sex**

Mean scores are based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=not important at all, 2=of little importance, 3 = somewhat important, 4= important, 5= very important.

As mean scores in table 24 displays female teachers give more importance to both school physical facilities and school rules and regulation for professional development than male teachers do. These results might indicate that female teachers are more affected by certain work environment factors that affect teacher’s professional development than male teachers are.

**4.7.2 Difference in Teachers’ Perceptions of Importance given to some Work Environment Factors that influence Teaches’ Professional Development by Ages, Experiences and Qualifications**

Teachers of different ages, teaching experiences and qualifications do not significantly differ in their perceptions of importance given to work environment factors that influence teachers’ professional development (see Appendices – J&K). This is because obtained P-values are greater than 0.05(the level of significance)

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This final chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendation of the study.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The main purpose of this study was to assess the rural secondary school teachers' attitudes towards their own professional development in selected school of West Shewa zone .The study also attempted to explore the importance given to professional development activities, the extent to which the teachers make use of these activities. The environmental factors that affect teachers 'professional development to draw the conclusion and to suggest possible solution for the identified problems .In order to attain these objectives the following related questions were raised and answered in the course of the study

- 1) What are the rural secondary school teachers' attitudes in improving their own professional competencies through their personal initiation?
- 2) What types of professional learning personal initiative activities do rural secondary school teachers engage in to improve their own professional competences ?How do they perceive and how often they make use of these activities ?
- 3) What aspects of rural secondary schools' work environment factors influence teachers' participation in self-initiated professional development activities?

To deal with these questions ,descriptive survey method was employed .Questionnaires , interview guides and document analysis were used as instrument of data collection .In providing relevant data 176 respondents were involved in the study .The obtained quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software. The qualitative data gathered from teacher respondents were analyzed thematically following the discussion of quantitative data .After the completion of data analysis and interpretation ,the following major findings were drawn .

### **5.1.1. Rural Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes towards their own Professional Development**

One of the main purposes of this study is to find out teachers attitude towards their own professional development through their personal efforts. The survey study results indicate that almost all the teachers who participated in this study strongly agreed or agreed with statements that reflect some of the major ideas about professional development. Almost about two- third of the teachers support the idea that teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for. Majority of teachers are also positive towards the idea of taking the initiation for the professional development rather than dependence on the institution they work for and freedom to test new ideas or techniques in practice during professional development efforts. Other important themes, which are reflection and evaluation of oneself in order to improve teaching skills, are favored by the large proportion of teachers. They give importance being involved in the evaluation of their teaching and to reflecting upon their practice to prove professionally. Furthermore, majority of the teachers are enthusiastic about collaboration during professional development efforts. Consequently, they should help each other to evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths and weaknesses, and produce solutions to problems. When it comes to another collaborative activity, peer observation, almost majority of teachers believe it should be used to gather information about one's teaching performance and also similar number of teachers think that they should be open to new ideas and changes, try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvement in education system.

### **5.1.2 Major Professional Development Activities**

Rural teachers' perceptions of major professional development activities and to what degree they make use of these activities are examined. The collaborative activities like sharing experience and problems with colleagues, asking for professional help from colleagues and working and developing new materials and techniques important by almost all the teachers.

However, all collaborative activities are rarely or sometimes made use of by most teachers. Thus, sometimes or rarely they share experiences and problems with colleagues and ask for professional help from colleagues. Working on developing new materials and techniques and activities, and observing peer are also rarely or sometimes conducted by the majority.

Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practice, reflecting on own teaching are all developmental activities that rely on research and practice. Majority found out that these practices are important for their professional development. When it comes to the actual use of these activities like action research and trying out new ideas or suggestion in practice are never or rarely made use of by teachers only, a minority of teachers sometimes or often initiated action research and practicing new ideas and suggestions in teaching. This result due to two reasons: Teachers may not have enough or any knowledge about action research and how to conduct it. Besides, they may be lacking the incentive, time and available resources to conduct action research in their classes.

Gathering information about one's teaching performance is less frequently done by the teachers. Information about teaching performance is sometimes gathered by about half of the teachers. Professional development through outside resources like following literature on own field, and professional development programs, reading magazines and publications, and searching internets are perceived to be important by the majority of teachers. When it comes to the actual use of professional development activities, the teachers report that they sometime follow literature on own field and reading magazines and publication. They never or rarely make use of internet. Furthermore, teachers may not be encouraged enough to continue their professional development through outside resources such as following workshops and training program. Although favored by many, training other teachers is rarely or sometimes done by teachers.

As the results indicate most of the teachers consider the major professional development activities important, but they do not make use of these activities as much as they give the importance to.

Teachers do not show significant differences in importance given to major professional development activities and making use of these by many background factors/variables. This implies that teachers from different background factors did not differ from each other in making use and in giving due attention of these activities.

### **5.1.3 Work Environment Factors Influencing Professional Development**

All work environment factors except work load are found to be important in influencing teachers' professional development by the majority teachers. Students' practice, collaboration and communication among colleagues are perceived to be important. The absence of workload may help teachers to have enough time for sufficient collaboration and communication among them. The main factors that are taken as important by many teachers in addition these factors are institutional support and school physical resources which considered being important for development by majority of teachers. This may indicate that the teachers may be aware about the role that work environment factors play in teachers' professional development. School rule and regulation which govern the activities of teachers, are perceived as very important factors.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

In the realization of teachers' professional development, teachers have a responsibility to themselves and their professions to deepen their knowledge, extend their professional skills and keep themselves up to date on major development activities in their performance. There are several factors that enhance teachers' professional development and could be obtained through both formal and informal learning experiences. Therefore, the teachers are assuming the responsibility as professionals need to be equipped with motivation for continuous and career long learning in order for teaching professionals to keep abreast with change renew and review their own knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to involve themselves in a number of learning activities. However, the results of this study also revealed that rural secondary school teachers of the zone under investigation do not usually participate in major professional activities such as sharing experience and problems with colleagues, action research, searching for the internet asking for professional help, working and developing new materials techniques and activities with colleagues, peer observation for gathering in form. On the other hand, majority of the teachers are positive about professional development and find all the major professional development and find all the major professional development activities important. There is no doubt that the low participation of teachers in and make use of major professional development activities have hindered teachers' professional development.

### 5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the overall study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed.

- Schools, woreda education offices, zonal education office and other concerned bodies need to give more emphasis to stimulate teachers' interest in the commitment to make them engage actively in their professional development activities personally. This could be done by creating conducive working environment. This could also include providing internet access, library and laboratory facilities, training .workshops, career promotion, etc.
- Many teachers' development programs are formally organized and have fixed schedules to be conducted. Such programs may not include all activities teachers consider important and want to undertake. The formally fixed time table may not be suitable for the teachers to participate in the program. Thus, it is recommended that to make the teachers fully utilize their potential, personal initiative for professional learning and professional development activities should be encouraged by making them autonomous ,feel free and confidence responsible
- It was understood from the finding that teachers are positive about their own professional development and give much importance to many professional development activities, but they do not make use of these activities as much as the importance they give to. Hence, they should regularly make use of these professional development activities which contribute to continual enhancement and maintenance of professional skills, competencies and experiences .It is necessary to Schools and Woreda Education offices to provide sufficient school facilities such as laboratory, library and internet access
- The most influential work environments are students' practices, institutional support on school rules and regulations. Therefore, influencing factors should be managed and utilized properly to enhance teachers' personal initiatives improving their professional

competencies. In addition, there should be an opportunity to stakeholders to support teachers' effort and an incentive for the teachers' endeavors;

- The more opportunities the teachers have, the more effective the teachers work is, and significant impact on the success of students' learning. Personal initiated activities help to acquaint teachers with current education system and encourage them to be lifelong learners. Thus, it is recommended that self- initiated learning need be regular activities for teachers. Beside this, providing the necessary support for their efforts in creating awareness about the importance of self- initiated learning and activities should be taken as a part of improving the quality of learning-teaching process;
- Unless the significance as well as outcomes of teachers' personal initiative activities is evaluated, it is hardly possible to conclude that such effort bring necessary change and improvement in terms of personal and professional life. So, it is suggested that the education institutions from regional education bureau up to the school should decide and institutionalize the follow up system by using observation check list, analyze individual portfolio, interview and questionnaire.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Addis Ababa University

#### College of Education and Behavioral Studies

#### Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional Development Studies

Personal Initiative in Improving Professional Competencies Questionnaire to be filled by  
Secondary School Teachers

#### Dear Colleague

I am Hirpa Bane, MA Student in Curriculum and Teacher Professional Development Studies at Addis Ababa University. I am going to conduct research on the Personal Initiative in Improving Professional Competencies. This questionnaire is designed to investigate rural teachers' personal initiative in improving professional competencies. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated. Your responses will only be used for this research only and be kept confidential

Thank you for your cooperation

#### Section I: Background Questions

**Instruction: Indicate your choice by putting a tick mark (√) in the box**

1. Sex? Female  Male
2. Age? A, 21-25 years  B, 26-30 years  C, 31-35 years  D, 36-40 years   
E, Above 41
3. Teaching experience? A, 1-5 years  B, 6-10 years  C, 11-15 years  D, 16-20 years   
E, Above 21 years
4. Qualification? Diploma  BA/ BSc/ BEd  MA/MSC

## Section II: Teachers Attitude towards Improving Professional Competencies

**Instruction: Indicate your choice by putting a tick mark (√) in the box**

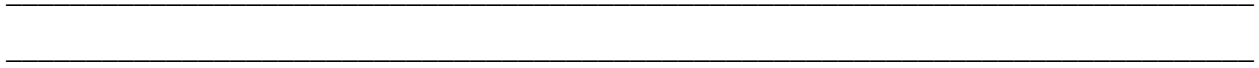
The items in this section are designed in order to explore rural teachers' attitudes towards improving their own professional competencies. Please read each statement and put a tick mark (√) to the column that most closely reflects your idea.

SD strongly disagree = 1 D- Disagree =2

U- Uncertain = 3 A – Agree =4 SA- Strongly Agree =5

	SD	D	U	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Teachers should improve their professional skills and knowledge without too much dependence on the institution they work for					
2. Teachers should take the initiative and action for their own professional development					
3. Teacher should be free to test any idea or a new technique in teaching					
4. Teachers should involve in the evaluation of their teaching skills and knowledge					
5. Teacher should help each other evaluate teaching to identify problems, strengths and weakness					
6. Teachers should help each other produce solution to the problems					
7. Teachers should be open to new ideas and changes					
8. Teachers should reflect up on their own practices to improve their profession					
9. Peer observation should be used to gather information about teacher performance					
10. Teachers should try to keep themselves up to date with changes and improvement in education					

If you have further comments on teachers feeling and opinion toward improving their professional competencies, please write in below



### Section III

#### I The Importance Given to Personal Initiative Activities

The items in this section are designed in order to find out what major personal initiative activities in which rural teachers engage in improving their professional competencies and how importance they perceive these opportunities. Please, read each statement and put a tick mark ( ) to the column that most closely reflects your idea.

Personal Initiative Activities	How Important				
	not important at all (1)	Of little important (2)	Somewhat important (3)	Important (4)	Very Important(5)
1. Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues					
2. Asking for professional help from colleagues					
3. Working on developing new materials with colleagues					
4. Working on techniques and activities with colleagues					
5. Peer observation					
6. Teacher initiated conducting action research					
7. Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practices					
8. Gathering information about one's own teaching performance					
9. Following research literature on related field					
10. Searching the internet					
11. Reading magazines and publications					
12. Training other teachers					
13. Attending professional development program					

## Section III

### II. The Degree to Make use of Personal Initiative Activities

The items in this section are designed in order to find out what major personal initiative activities in which rural teachers engage in improving their professional competencies and what degree they make use of these opportunities. Please, read each statement and put a tick mark (✓) to the column that most closely reflect your idea

Personal Initiative Activities	How often you do it				
	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	often 4	always 5
14. Sharing experiences and problems with colleagues					
15. Asking for professional help from colleagues					
16. Working on developing new materials with colleagues					
17. Working on techniques and activities with colleagues					
18. Peer observation					
19. Teacher initiated conducting action research					
20. Trying out new ideas or suggestions in practices					
21. Gathering information about one's own teaching performance					
22. Following research literature on related field					
23. Searching the internet					
24. Reading magazines and publications					
25. Training other teachers					
26. Attending professional development program					

## Section V: Work Environment Factors that Influence Teachers Professional Development

In this section there are some elements of work environment influence professional development of teachers. Please read each statement and put a tick mark (✓) to the column that most closely reflects your idea.

	Not important at all (1)	Of title Important (2)	Somewhat important (3)	Important (4)	Very Important (5)
1. Students practices					
2. Work load					
3. Communication among colleagues					
4. Collaboration among colleagues					
5. Institutional support for professional development					
6. School physical resources					
7. Rule and regulation					

If you have further opinions and suggestions regarding various aspects of professional development activities and problems faced in professional please write in below

**Appendix B**  
**Addis Ababa University**

**College of Education and Behavioral Studies**

**Department of Curriculum and Teachers Professional Development Studies**

**Interview Guide Questions For Secondary School Teachers on Rural School Teachers  
Personal Initiative in Improving Their Professional Competencies**

**1. Introduction**

My name is Hirpa Bane. The purpose of this discussion is to explore the attitude, practices and problems of rural teachers regarding personal initiative activities in improving their professional competencies. This research is conducted to in partial fulfillment of Masters of Arts Degree in Curriculum and Teachers Professional Development offered at Addis Ababa University. I am interested in understanding your attitudes and practices of personal initiative activities in improving your professional competencies. Thus, your reliable response is important and appreciated for it is completing the result of the study.

**2. Interview Guide Questions**

2.1. Do you engage personally in professional development activities?

2.2. Would you mention self-initiated personal development activities you are practicing?

2.3 How do you see the effects of personal initiated professional development?

- ✓ Their importance to you
- ✓ Their effect on your personal and professional development
- ✓ Their impact in increasing student' performances

2.4 What do you think are the major challenges that affect teachers' personal initiative activities in professional development?

2.5 What suggestion do you have with regard to tackling the challenges and improving self-initiated activities?

**A. Note Taking Format for Document Analysis**

1. Teachers portfolio

1.1. Name of teacher \_\_\_\_\_

1.2. Sex \_\_\_\_\_

1.3. Education \_\_\_\_\_

1.4. Activities performed \_\_\_\_\_

2. Report files

2.1. Major activities \_\_\_\_\_

2.2. Planned activities \_\_\_\_\_

2.3. Challenges encountered \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C**

**C. Questionnaire Validity**

The Experts Rating

Item		Scale value given by the 5 experts	
	-		

Part	No	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	Average
Two	1	4	4	2	5	1	3.2
	2	5	5	5	4	4	4.6
	3	5	5	5	5	4	4.8
	4	4	5	5	5	4	4.6/
	5	4	5	5	5	5	4.8
	6	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
	7	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
	8	4	5	5	4	5	4.6
	9	4	4	4	5	5	4.8
	10	5	5	5	4	5	4.2
Three	1	5	5	5	5	5	5.0
	2	5	4	4	5	5	5.0
	3	4	5	5	5	5	4.6
	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
	5	5	4	5	4	5	4.6
	6	5	4	5	5	5	4.8
	7	4	4	5	5	5	4.8
	8	4	5	4	5	5	4.6
	9	5	5	5	4	5	4.2
	10	5	4	5	4	5	4.8
	11	4	4	5	4	5	4.6
	12	4	4	5	4	5	4.4
	13	5	5	5	5	5	4.6
Four	1	4	4	4	5	5	5.0
	2	4	4	5	5	5	4.4
	3	4	4	4	4	5	4.4
	4	5	4	5	4	5	4.2
	5	5	5	5	4	5	4.6
	6	5	5	4	4	5	4.8
	7	4	5	4	4	5	4.4

## Appendix D

### D. Reliability

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0

Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.726	7

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	27	90.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	3	10.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.833	43

## Appendix E

ANOVA for Comparing the Importance given for PD by Age

		Df	F	Sig.
improving their professional skill and knowledge	Between Groups	4	1.999	.097

	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
taking initiative and action	Between Groups	4	2.308	.060
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
freedom to test new teaching idea and techniques	Between Groups	4	.542	.705
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
evaluating their teaching skill and knowledge	Between Groups	4	.522	.720
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
identifying their teaching problems, strengths and weaknesses	Between Groups	4	1.242	.296
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
helping each other in producing solutions to the problems	Between Groups	4	.639	.635
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
reflecting upon their own practices	Between Groups	4	.657	.623
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
peer observation to gather information	Between Groups	4	1.374	.245
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		
keeping themselves up to date	Between Groups	4	.740	.566
	Within Groups	157		
	Total	161		

### Appendix - F

Importance given to Training Other Teachers by age

#### ANOVA

Importance given to training other teachers by Age(Table 13) &Appendix-F

B	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.042	3	2.347	2.986	.033
Within Groups	123.430	157	.786		
Total	130.472	160			

Dependent Variable: importance given to training Other teachers by Age

Tukey HSD

(I) age of respondent	(J) age of respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
21-25	26-30	-.437*	.151	.023	-.83	-.04
	31-35	-.088	.282	.989	-.82	.64
	36-40	-.421	.381	.686	-1.41	.57
26-30	21-25	.437*	.151	.023	.04	.83
	31-35	.349	.273	.579	-.36	1.06
	36-40	.016	.374	1.000	-.96	.99
31-35	21-25	.088	.282	.989	-.64	.82
	26-30	-.349	.273	.579	-1.06	.36
	36-40	-.333	.443	.876	-1.48	.82
36-40	21-25	.421	.381	.686	-.57	1.41
	26-30	-.016	.374	1.000	-.99	.96
	31-35	.333	.443	.876	-.82	1.48

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## Appendix -G

Make use of Peer observation by experience

ANOVA

peer observation ability

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.146	3	2.715	3.057	.030
Within Groups	139.457	157	.888		
Total	147.602	160			

### Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: make use of peer observation ability by experiences

Tukey HSD

(I) respondent teaching experience	(J) respondent teaching experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-5	6-10	-.289	.158	.264	-.70	.12
	11-15	-.856*	.315	.036	-1.67	-.04
	16-20	-.006	.482	1.000	-1.26	1.25
6-10	1-5	.289	.158	.264	-.12	.70
	11-15	-.567	.322	.295	-1.40	.27
	16-20	.283	.486	.938	-.98	1.55
11-15	1-5	.856*	.315	.036	.04	1.67
	6-10	.567	.322	.295	-.27	1.40
	16-20	.850	.558	.425	-.60	2.30
16-20	1-5	.006	.482	1.000	-1.25	1.26
	6-10	-.283	.486	.938	-1.55	.98
	11-15	-.850	.558	.425	-2.30	.60

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## Appendix-H

Importance given to Peer Observation by Qualification

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.080	2	3.040	4.104	.018
Within Groups	117.050	158	.741		
Total	123.130	160			

### Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: peer observation ability

Tukey HSD

(I) qualification of respondent	(J) qualification of respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Diploma	Degree	-.708*	.281	.034	-1.37	-.04
	Masters	-1.500	.667	.066	-3.08	.08
Degree	Diploma	.708*	.281	.034	.04	1.37
	Masters	-.792	.613	.401	-2.24	.66
Masters	Diploma	1.500	.667	.066	-.08	3.08
	Degree	.792	.613	.401	-.66	aa2.24

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

## Appendix-I

### Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable make use of: gathering information about one's own teaching performance(Table 19)&Appendix-JI

	(I) qualification of	(J) qualification of	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval
--	----------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	------------	------	-------------------------

	respondent	respondent				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	Diploma	Degree	.339	.337	.574	-.46	1.14
		Masters	1.833 <sup>*</sup>	.679	.021	.23	3.44
	Degree	Diploma	-.339	.337	.574	-1.14	.46
		Masters	1.494 <sup>*</sup>	.602	.037	.07	2.92
	Masters	Diploma	-1.833 <sup>*</sup>	.679	.021	-3.44	-.23
		Degree	-1.494 <sup>*</sup>	.602	.037	-2.92	-.07

## Appendix-J

**ANOVA for Teacher's Perceptions of Importance Given to Factors that Influence Teacher's Professional Development by Age**

---

	Df	F	Sig
--	----	---	-----

Students practice	between Groups	4	0.344	0.848
	Within groups	157		
Work load	between Groups	4	0.426	0.790
	Within groups	157		
Communication among colleagues	between Groups	4	0.073	0.990
	Within groups	157		
	Total	161		
Collaboration among colleagues	between Groups	4	0.180	0.948
	Within groups	157		
	Total	161		
Institutional support	between Groups	4	0.567	0.687
	Within groups	157		
School physical resources	between Groups	4	0.094	0.984
	Within groups	157		
	Total	161		
School rule and regulator	between Groups	4	.344	0.48
	Within groups	157		
	Total	161		

---

For any f (4,157),  $p > 0.05$

## Appendix-K

**Teachers' Perceptions of Importance Given to some Factors of Work Environment by Teaching Experience**

	Df	F	Sig
Students practice	4	1.731	0.146
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
Work load	4	0.777	0.542
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
Communication among colleagues	4	1.143	0.339
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
Total			
Collaboration among colleagues	4	0.427	0.789
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
Total			
Institutional support	4	1.438	0.224
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
School physical resources	4	0.313	0.869
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		
School rule and regulator	4	0.519	0.722
between Groups	157		
Within groups	161		

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, this thesis is my original, work has not been presented for a degree of any other University, and all sources of material used for the thesis have duly acknowledged.

Name Hirpa Bane

Signature-----

Date of submission -----

### **SUBMISSION APPROVAL SHEET**

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University advisor

Name Fetene Regassa (PHD)

Signature-----

Date of submission-----

.

