ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BOLE SUB CITY, ADDIS ABABA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of teachers and students towards cooperative learning and thereby to examine the benefits of this method to students with special needs. To this end, a descriptive survey design was selected and the research employed various data collection methodologies and processed both primary and secondary data sources using quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. The study was conducted among grade eight teachers and students. Eight primary schools found in bole sub city of Addis Ababa were randomly selected out of sixteen primary schools found in the sub city. A total of randomly selected 146 respondents (i.e. 66 teachers and 80 students) participated in the study by filling in the questionnaire prepared for data collection. In addition, classroom observation was conducted and interviews with students with special needs were held. The data collected was analyzed using frequency distribution, weighted mean and percentage. These were triangulated with qualitative data obtained from the observations and interviews. The findings of the study revealed that the teachers' perception towards a cooperative learning is positive. Besides, the school teachers confirmed that this teaching method benefits more to students with special needs. Nonetheless, the student respondents strongly disagree with the relevance of a cooperative learning and considered it as wastage of time. They also lacked motivation to actively participate in this teaching method. The researcher strongly suggests that teachers should motivate the students in primary schools to use cooperative learning method for the positive effect of the students' performance. Further research is needed for a low perception of students towards a cooperative learning need to be done thoroughly.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Cooperative learning is one of the most remarkable and fertile areas of theory, research, and practice in education. In the past three decades, cooperative learning has become a widely used instructional strategy across different grade levels and subject areas (Tsai, 2005; Tseng, 2004). Numerous studies have shown the effectiveness of cooperative learning with primary-level students (Ghaith& El-Malak, 2004; Law, 2011; Liao & Oescher, 2009). Studies have shown that cooperative learning instruction creates opportunities for students to interact with peers, increase their communication with each other, encourage reading-comprehension development, and lower anxiety (Gillies & Ashman, 2000).

Ziba (2010) also asserts that cooperative learning, in which small team of students with different levels of abilities and a variety of learning styles included, is a successful teaching strategy to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a given team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping their teammates. This creates a conducive atmosphere for students to work together on a given task (e.g. assignment) until all members successfully understand and complete it. Besides, cooperative learning which is student centered approach has changed the practice of traditional methods of teaching and resulted in a betterment of learners and their academic achievements.

Ethiopia is a country which has diverse cultures, languages and societies. Teachers have to develop approaches or strategies that are suitable for students who differ in their backgrounds, ways of learning, achievements and interests. Different students will react differently in the classroom they

attend. The critical issues here are how teachers can take good care of their students and construct a well-integrated and effective teaching-learning environment for students. Hence, cooperative learning strategies is claimed to effectively address this challenge (Johnson & Johnson, 1990).

The traditional teacher-centered method of teaching has been criticized for its lack of active learning of students. Actually, according to this method, education was conceived as a process of transmitting knowledge, facts rules, or action (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, Amare, 2000). The teacher is considered as the center of everything while the learner remains a passive receiver. These days, however, as the result of the impact of educational research and the development of new educational technologies, new methods are advocated for better learning and it is these factors that forces Ethiopia to advocate new teaching approach. The new education and training policy proclaimed in 1994 promotes active learning and problem solving approaches to overcome the shortcomings of the previous traditional method of teaching. One of the strategies of active learning in schools is cooperative learning (TGE, 1994).

According to Ziba (2010) cooperative learning techniques have the following benefits: promoting students learning and academic achievement, increasing students' retention, enhancing students' satisfaction with their learning experience, helping students develop skill in oral communication, developing students' social skills, promoting students' self – esteem. However, although most research findings point out the positive aspect of cooperative learning in students' academic achievements and towards their social skills development, there is little study conducted at a primary level of education regarding its implementation. Hence, the attitude of teachers and students towards cooperative learning need to be investigated.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the reality in Ethiopia, there are still some problems challenging the education sector. The first problem is that classes are very large. Although there have been consistent effort to bring down the number of students per class, large class size remains a problem. As a result it would be difficult for the teacher to manage a class activity for the students and design teaching strategies which still meet students' needs. Through the researcher's observation, normally, teachers are not able to cope with so many students at an individual level due to time constraints. Therefore, a teaching strategy should be put in place, which enables teachers who have to teach large classes to better meet individual student's needs.

The second problem is that students have a range of motivations towards their learning. Students with different level of proficiency are often placed in the same class. Some teaching strategies are suitable for some students and inappropriate for the others. Therefore, teachers again should seek relevant teaching strategies that create an effective environment that promote high motivation among the students.

The third problem is concerned with the teacher-centeredness of teaching. In most schools teachers' role is mainly to act as instructor, explainer and corrector of errors (Liang, 2001). Meanwhile the students' role is to do what the teacher tells them to.

One way to address the three challenges discussed above is to cultivate students' potential for independent study through group work and set up a suitable environment for the students in order to learn the targeted objective. Cooperative learning groups encourage student-student communication where oral language is emphasized (Harmer, 2003). It could also move the focus of the source from the teacher to the students. Group work enables students to help each other. Thus, it could be a useful teaching strategy for large classes.

Therefore, some teaching and learning activities based on cooperative learning might alleviate the problems outlined earlier that exist in the classrooms. However, to apply and use cooperative learning, the attitude of teachers and students must be identified and recommendations suggested so that they can play a major role in its proper implementation and achievement of the intended goals.

Hundreds of studies have been conducted over the past 90 years to give an answer to the question of how successful competitive, individualistic, and cooperative efforts are in promoting productivity and achievement (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). As the researcher mentioned above, the current Ethiopian educational policy promotes active learning and schools are expected to implement active learning strategies. However the attitudes of the major stakeholders (teachers and students) have major impacts on the applied strategies and their success to achieve the intended objectives.

This study therefore tries to assess teachers' and students' attitude towards cooperative learning. The research also intends to examine the attitude of other stakeholders on the application of this method. Furthermore, this study is believed to throw some light on the cooperative learning method and to motivate other researchers for further investigation.

The following basic research questions are guides to this study:

1. What does the attitude of teachers towards cooperative learning look like?
2. To what extent do the primary school teachers apply cooperative learning in to their class??
3. What are the attitudes of students towards cooperative learning?
4. How does cooperative learning benefit students with special needs?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The main aim of this study was to assess the attitude of teachers and students towards cooperative learning in some selected primary schools in Bole sub city.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

1. To examine the attitude of teachers towards cooperative learning.
2. To find out how often teachers apply a cooperative learning method in their classroom.
3. To examine the attitude of students towards cooperative learning.
4. To investigate the particular benefits of cooperative learning method for students with special needs.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is believed to yield the following benefits for stakeholders like teachers, school managements and educational authorities at all levels. To begin with, the results of the study will improve teachers' attitude towards cooperative learning method in terms of its relevance, management and enhancing students' learning within their school context. The results of the study will also raise the awareness of educational institution officials (e.g. at school, woreda and sub-city level) towards cooperative learning. The finding of this study is also believed to shed light on the improvement of the teaching and learning process at a classroom level. Moreover, it may serve as a reference for further research in the area of cooperative learning.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in only one sub city of Addis Ababa due to the researcher's limited resources. From this sub city eight schools were randomly selected to serve the purpose of the study on the teachers' and students' attitudes and applicability of cooperative learning.

1.6. Organization of the paper

This paper has five chapters. The first chapter introduces the problem, aims and scope of the study. Chapter two contained reviewed relevant literatures on cooperative learning. The methodology used in this study is explained under the third chapter. Discussion and major findings of the study are presented in chapter four. Finally, summary, conclusions and recommendations are outlined in chapter five.

1.7. Operational Definitions of terms

The following are the definitions of major terminologies used in this research.

- **Cooperative learning** is an active and inclusive instructional method in which a group of six heterogeneous students (due to achievement level, sex, age, and disability/special need) work together in a structured form with each member's taking an active role to maximize their own and one another's learning.
- **Attitude**: is an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person, place, thing, or event

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter begins with definition of cooperative learning. The history of cooperative learning and theories that highlight its importance are presented next. Then cooperative learning is compared with the traditional approach of teaching. Following that, elements of cooperative learning are outlined. Then cooperative grouping and students' role in the groups are explained consecutively. Next inclusion in cooperative learning is addressed. And finally research finding regarding cooperative learning are shared.

2.1. Definitions of Cooperative Learning

Different scholars define cooperative learning differently. For Johnson and Johnson (1990), cooperative learning is small groups of students that work together to maximize their own and their teammates learning. Parkay and Stanford (2007) explain cooperative learning as students working in small groups, or teams, sharing and helping one another with their task. Similarly Sharan (1990) also gave another perspective to the approach as a group-centered and student-centered approach to classroom teaching and learning. Slavin (1987) stressed on the composition of the group stating it as small, mixed ability learning group in which students are encouraged or required to work together. Christison's (1994) definition signifies the motivational and retention advantage of cooperative learning as a strategy that develop a positive image of self and others, and providing a tool for critical thinking and problem solving as well as promoting collaborative social skills. For Salend (1994) cooperative learning is an organized method, in which students work for common academic goal rather than competing or working separately from their peers. However, one can observe in all the definition working together and helping one another is emphasized.

In this research, Johnson and Johnson's definition of cooperative learning is adopted as an umbrella definition which states cooperative learning as instruction method which encourages students to learn and study together as a group, with members actively involved in giving their suggestions and ideas, getting help and clarification from each other rather than from the teacher.

2.2. Background of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning has a long history. Many philosophers and educators had promoted it through the ages. However, competitive and individualistic learning was given emphasis in the early 1900s, but cooperative learning and the research into it were given renewed attention in the 1980s (Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Slavin, 1991).

The work of Deutsch (1949) had laid the framework of cooperative learning. His theory has served as the major conceptual structure for this area of inquiry (Johnson & Johnson, 1983). He came up with three types of goal structures: cooperative, competitive, and individualistic. In cooperative goal structure, the goals of individuals are supportive. One attains his or her own goal only when the others attain theirs. Individual excellence and understanding doesn't benefit one unless the others are part of it. This brings the team members together for the common goal. Students need to learn the material themselves and make sure that others have learned it (Johnson & Johnson, 1985).

In a competitive goal structure, goals are not directly associated with the attainment of others; when one attains his or her goal, the others may not. This type of goal situation presses individuals to selfishly aim at their goals only, affecting others negatively from achieving their goal.

In an individualistic goal structure, goals are not related one to another. This dictates individuals to seek their own goals, with no connection with others. Students in competitive and individualistic goal situations are instructed to

learn the concept themselves, without cooperating with others (Johnson & Johnson, 1985).

2.3. Educational Theories that underline cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is advocated by numerous theories of education. These include motivation theory, social learning theory, developmental theory, and cognitive theory (Murray, 1994; Slavin, 1995; Tudge, 1990).

2.3.1. Motivational Theory

Motivational theories focus on reward that derives students to behave in a certain manner. A cooperative environment creates a context in which students want to help one other. This motivates students to do well for themselves and make sure the other members of the group are also doing so. Students striving to meet their goals are motivated to encourage and support their group members to bring forth their best effort. Cooperative goals create norms that affect students' achievement positively (Slavin, 1995). In turn academic achievement leads to social acceptance (Slavin, 1995). In the traditional classroom the competitive and/or individualistic goals, are not related positively. Actually, an individual's academic achievement is unrelated to the rest of the class or it is against it. Academic achievement is not seen positively by the other students. This discourages students from striving for academic excellence (Slavin, 1995).

2.3.2. Social Learning Theory

Like motivational theories, social learning theories focus on the idea of rewards. However, the rewards anticipated in social theories are approval and expectation of group members. In the cooperative learning situation, it is demonstrated by the teachers through praise and peer pressure to encourage students to earn positive feedbacks from their peers. Cooperative learning

provides positive social rewards for students to participate in the group. In addition, students build friendship with their group (Murray, 1994).

2.3.3. Developmental Theory

The basic idea of developmental theories is that individuals' interaction helps in learning. This collaboration brings forth cognitive growth (Murray, 1994). This theory is supported by the learning theories of some educational psychologists, such as Vygotsky and Piaget (Murray, 1994; Slavin, 1995; Vygotsky, 1997). According to Vygotsky, learning and our mental development take place in a social space; students learn through interaction with others. In his zone of proximal development, Vygotsky states that next level of development by the student is mainly achieved by adult guidance or during cooperative interaction with peers. That is, cooperative learning should be increased to optimize learning. In contrast to traditional way of transmitting knowledge, teachers motivate or guide student to achieve learning among themselves (Murray, 1994; Vygotsky, 1997). Similary Piagetian psychologists believe that knowledge is learned in interaction with others. Therefore, social interaction promotes cognitive development (Tudge, 1990). Many Piagetians propose cooperative learning as an effective means. It provides social interaction, resulting in cognitive development and student achievement (Slavin, 1995). The teachers who incorporate Piagetian ideas place students in situations where the students are asked to work with other students who may have different views. Through this interaction, the teacher hopes to bring about academic development (Murray, 1994).

2.3.4. Cognitive Theory

Researchers from cognitive psychology also advocate the use of cooperative learning. Like the theories mentioned above, they believe that cognitive development is more achieved by the collaborative activity of the group (Murray, 1994; Sharan & Shaulov, 1990; Slavin, 1995; Wittrock, 1978).

For example, one of the most helpful methods in cognitive learning involves explaining what one knows to another person. Giving and taking explanation is beneficial to student achievement according research done on cooperative learning (Webb, 1985). Students who give the explanations go through cognitive restructuring in order to make the concept more understandable for others (Sharan & Shaulov, 1990; Slavin, 1995; Wittrock, 1978). In the cooperative learning environment, students discuss and explain the material to their group members (Johnson & Johnson, 1983; Slavin, 1995).

Another aspect of cognitive learning is, particularly in the process of tutoring, students develop the model of a tutor. By tutoring and receiving help from a tutor, they develop the qualities of an expert. This gives a chance for both parties to exchange position as a tutor and one tutored and develop the cognitive structure by doing so. The teacher guides the students until he/she stands by herself (Murray, 1994).

2.4. Cooperative Learning verses traditional learning

In traditional educational systems, students are expected to be passive recipients of knowledge from the all knowing teacher. But education has shifted from this teacher-centered approach to a student-centered approach, where student are actively engaged to discover knowledge for themselves (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1992). Many researchers agree that the primary means for achieving the new paradigm in the teaching learning process is cooperative learning (Johnson et al., 1992, Dees, 1991; Gillies, 2008; Slavin, 1996).

The following table summarizes the key differences between cooperative group learning and traditional group work (Putnam, 1997; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008; Johnson & Johnson, 1999, 2000).

Table 1: ***Differences between traditional group work and cooperative group learning***

Traditional Learning Groups	**Cooperative Group Learning**
Social skills are assumed: social skills are not systematically taught.	social skills are taught and practiced teachers teach social skills needed for successful group work
group membership is homogeneous	group membership is heterogeneous
individuals are accountable for self: some students let others do most or all of the work, then copy	Individuals are accountable for self and group members: each pupil must master the material
Positive interdependence is not structured: students work on their own, often or occasionally checking their answers with other students.	Positive interdependence is structured: students sink or swim together. Face –to face oral interaction is emphasized.
Emphasis is on academic development of learners only	social development is as important as academic development
emphasizes the positive aspects of learning	emphasizes the experiential process of learning
focus is on learning a body of knowledge	learning to learn is the focus
knowledge is constructed by authoritative figures and organizations	learners construct knowledge through collaboration with peers and the teacher
The teacher does not monitor group work or provide group functioning. No discussion of how well students worked together, other than general comments such as “Nice Job” or “Next time, try to work more quietly.”	The teacher continually monitors group work, and provides feedback on group functioning. Feedback and discussion of students’ behaviour is an integral part of ending the activity before moving on to another.

Moreover the difference between cooperative learning and group work should be underlined (Fehling 2008). One essential difference is the product of both methods. In group work the group product is the main focus, however for cooperative learning the focus is on learning and social achievement of students in the task. Another difference is in traditional group work, there is dependence of low achiever students on the high achiever. And yet another difference is that in traditional groups, how the group should function is not focus of attention, while in cooperative learning group work is carefully prepared, planned and monitored (Jacobs, 1997). Therefore just putting

students in groups does not mean cooperative learning. Discussing with other students, giving and receiving help from each other or sharing materials in the group are all important in cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1990).

What is more, members should appreciate the importance of team work. The following conditions are essential in cooperation and are identified as critical elements of cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1990a, 1999; Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1993): positive interdependence, individual accountability, interpersonal and small group skills, face-to-face promotive interaction, and group processing.

2.5. Elements of Cooperative Learning

The five essential elements are critical for the success of any cooperative learning. However varied the approach and the focus, these five elements are indispensable for the success of any cooperative learning methods. These elements distinguish cooperative learning form other types of group learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1990). These five make up a cooperative learning group. Each element is discussed below.

2.5.1. Positive Interdependence

The first and the most essential element is positive interdependence. According to Johnson and Johnson (1990) positive interdependence is the most important element because it implies the presence of cooperation. Positive interdependence instills the concept in group members that they cannot succeed unless their group members do. In other words, students understand that they "sink or swim together" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1998). Students realize that the effort of all group members and including each individual's effort is required for the group to achieve its goal. Positive interdependence requires students for contributing

their share of the work, and helping other group members to achieve the group's goal (Johnson & Johnson, 1990). Therefore, the absence of interdependence results in individualistic efforts. Positive interdependence instills the concept that each group member's effort is required and for group success, and each group member has a role to play to the joint effort (Johnson et al. 1993). This generates a commitment to the success of group members and one's own and is the heart of cooperative learning. If there is no positive interdependence, there is no cooperation.

2.5.2 Individual Accountability

Individual accountability means each member of the group is accountable for completing his or her part of the work. It requires each member in the group to develop a responsibility to learn and to help the rest of the group to learn (Jolliffe, 2007). Slavin (1996) also stresses the importance of individual accountability to achieve group goals in cooperative learning. Individual accountability assures members' commitment to the groups' success. The assessment of the individual student warns that individual accountability exists and the feedback to the group and the individual tells who needs more assistance, support and encouragement (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In other words, groups and individual members are accounted collectively and individually. Individual accountability also assures cooperation. One way to do this is, after a cooperative learning task, students should do the tasks by themselves. Teachers must assess and provide individual feedback to ensure that each member has contributed her/his fair share. Structuring individual accountability by the teacher raises the students' level of involvement. Students should be informed about the follow up so that they will be actively involved and show their best effort (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

According to Johnson, et al. (1983), teachers can have individual students explain what they have done to another student to emphasize individual

accountability. Another way to assure individual accountability might be by conducting random oral examinations. And yet students might be selected to represent their team, this possibility will motivate them to effectively take their role in the group.

2.5.3 Interpersonal and Small Group Skills

The other goal of cooperative learning is to develop social skills and acceptable social attitudes so that students can improve social relations within and between groups (Terwel, 2003). For the groups to function effectively appropriate social and communicative skills are required. Interpersonal and small group skills refer to these skills. Jolliffe (2007:3) express these skills as "lubricant of cooperative group work". Social skills must be taught to students just as purposefully and precisely as academic skills. Leadership, decision-making, trust building, communication, and conflict management skills empower students to manage both team work and task work successfully.

Social skills are life time endeavors and determine the success of students in most careers, family life, and community life. Social skills dictate the way students interact with each other and the teacher should assess this progress of the students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:197).

2.5.4 Face to Face Promotive Interaction

Face-to-face interaction creates an active learning. Students interact to do real work together in which they promote each other's learning by sharing, helping, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other's efforts to learn (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Students benefit in their cognitive and personal development if they are involved in promoting each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Slavin, 1996). Students are involved in different activity like explaining, sharing, asking, answering, and sharing experiences.

Each of these activities can be well organized to bring about academic and a personal support system by the group to each individual student. By doing so members become personally committed to each other as well as to their mutual goals (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec,1993).

2.5.5 Group Processing

The last element of cooperative learning is group processing. This comes about when students reflect about their achievement and relationship (Johnson & Johnson, 1999b). Students need to be taught to share recognition rather than claiming ownership of an idea. Moreover, group members need to feel they have a safe zone to express their ides, concerns and appreciation. As a group they should discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1998, 1999), group processing refers to intra-group reflection to identify supportive and ineffective interaction and to decide which group behaviors' should continue or be terminated. Its reflecting on the actions, that were helpful or not and what to do in the future. This helps build the groups social identity (Dornyei, 1997).

Similarly, Putnam (1997) mentioned that students should be encouraged to reflect on the groups goals from time to time. They can identify areas for improvements. They also need the teacher's feedback for effective reflection. Together, students and their teachers build understanding about why groups function well and why they struggle and sometimes fail the functioning of groups.

2.6. Cooperative Grouping

It is believed that how students are grouped can affect participation rates, particularly participation in cognitive activities. According to Johnson and Johnson (1990b), and Slavin (1993) grouping can improve the performance of students.

Cooperative grouping in the classroom is one of the important elements of cooperative learning. What students can learn from working together in a collaborative and cooperative setting depends on careful grouping. Teachers can use cooperative grouping successfully if they plan carefully, set clear goals, and then letting students a more hands-on and interactive learning experience, and giving on the spot feedback.

The four major types of cooperative learning teams are heterogeneous, random, homogeneous, and student-selected. All four have their merits and demerits as shown in the table below. Therefore, the type of team should match the educational objectives of the lesson. Among the types heterogeneous groups are most common (Cohen, 1994; Borich, 2007). This is because heterogeneous groups naturally consists of students of different abilities and peers assisting peers comes natural and both benefit from it (Kagan,1990). However, all four can be implemented throughout the school year to support instruction (Kagan & Kagan, 2009).

Table 2. **The advantages of and cautions against different types of cooperative teams.**

The Advantages of and Cautions Against Different Types of Cooperative Teams		
Team Type	**Advantages**	**Cautions**
Heterogeneous Mixed-ability, sex, race teams	Balanced Maximizes tutoring Easier management	Requires more teacher preparation time Ranks students Limited leadership opportunities
Random Teams Randomly formed teams	Fairness Novelty, variety, fun Quick and easy	Diversity not ensured Potential for off-task behaviors All-"low" or all-"high" teams may develop
Student-Selected Teams Students select own teams	Novelty, variety, and fun Familiarity Easy decision making	Not balanced Potential for off-task behavior high
Homogeneous Teams Teams with a shared trait (ability, interest, language)	Leadership opportunities High esteem for top groups Differentiated instruction	Lack of equity Poor esteem for low groups Negative stereotypes

(Adapted from Kagan & Kagan, 2009)

2.7. Roles of Students in Cooperative Learning Groups

In the world of education, many teachers have come to reframe their thinking about group work. Instead of simply throwing students into a group and assigning them a project or task to complete, the teacher goes a step further and assigns each student a role. These groups of students are working cooperatively together to accomplish a goal and learn the material, hence the educational term "cooperative learning groups."

Here are some examples of roles individual team members can play. Different groups may require somewhat different roles or combinations of roles (Johnson, et al., 1991; Millis & Cottell, 1998; Smith, 1996):

- **Group facilitator**: moderates discussions, keeps the group on task, assures work is done by all, and makes sure all have opportunity to participate and learn.
- **Timekeeper**: monitors time and moves group along so that they complete the task in the available time, keeps area clean, assumes role of any missing group member if there is no wildcard member.
- **Recorder**: takes notes of the group's discussion and prepares a written conclusion.
- **Checker**: makes sure that all group members understand the concepts and the group's conclusions.
- **Summarizer**: restates the group's conclusions or answers.
- **Elaborator**: relates the discussion with prior concepts and knowledge.
- **Research-Runner**: gets needed materials and is the liaison between groups and between their group and the instructor.
- **Wildcard**: assumes role of any missing member.

2.8. Importance of Students' and teachers' Attitude

According to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action, "attitudes are a function of beliefs" (p. 7). Based on this theory, believing that performing a task will result in mainly positive outcomes results in taking a favorable attitude towards the task. On the other hand, mistrust of the success of performing a task will lead to taking an unfavorable attitude. Therefore, if participants believe that, for example, cooperative methods will have a significant effect on their achievement, then this method will be to their benefit. Attitudes, once formed, can shape the way students think, understand, feel, and behave. "Attitudes and beliefs are a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions" (Richardson, 1996, p. 102, as cited in Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004). The evaluation of students' attitude may provide new insights into the way these attitudes may hinder or facilitate learning.

2.9. Cooperative Learning and Inclusion

Students with disabilities learn better in cooperative classrooms than the traditional one. According to Stevens and Slavin (1995), students with disabilities learn better when explanations and models are provided by their peers. Cooperative classrooms are more engaging. This is because students in these classrooms share their thoughts more freely, receive constructive feedback, exercise questioning techniques, receive more practice on skills, and have more chances to respond. It is also convenient for teachers to assess their students because they can hear students discussing, therefore, they can easily address individual or group needs. By monitoring students learning in cooperative activities, teachers are able to redirect groups to their goals. This accelerates the comprehension process (Bucalos & Lingo, 2005).

Ncube's (2011) research showed that flexible mixed-ability groups have advantages over homogeneously grouped students because the higher achieving students can help less achiever students. At the same time, the students who have mastered a particular concept or skill reinforce their own learning by applying higher level thinking skills while helping others. Heterogeneous groups are most widely used for cooperative learning because they naturally provide the opportunity for team members helping one another, improve social acceptance of all team members (Kagan & Kagan, 2009).

In summary, cooperative learning promote active learning for students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. Such methods especially benefit students who require additional practice and feedback. Cooperative learning support inclusive practices and advance more academic and social skill development. In inclusive cooperative learning students learn together to improve academic achievement and social acceptance of all!

2.10. Research findings on cooperative learning

Research on cooperative learning has given benefits for the students. For the example, Yu (1995) carried out a research study of 48 learning hours in 16 weeks. Cooperative learning techniques were implemented in English language classroom. The students in the experimental and control groups were considered to have similar learning motivation and attitudes. Even though there is no significant difference was found in academic performance, Yu discovered the cooperative learning affected on developing self-esteem, changing behavior and improving personality. In addition, Slavin (1995) reviewed fourteen studies examining cooperative learning effects on self-esteem. He pointed out that eleven of them increased self-esteem.
According to Iqbal (2004) cooperative learning is more effectual as a teaching learning method for mathematics as compared to traditional teaching method.

Students in cooperative learning method were more effective for English as compared to the traditional learning method. Haberyan (2007) and other have reported that team based learning is motivating, interesting and enjoyable, and has been utilize in science, education, business and medical disciplines with positive results.

In Ethiopia, there are few studies on active learning. Gara and Asrat (2009) conducted a research to find out the attitude of teachers towards the use of active learning method in Bahir Dar University English department and they concluded that the study have demonstrated positive outcomes.

A study by Betel (2011) investigated practice and attitude of Bulbula school community towards the implementation of Active Learning in Bulibula high school. The result showed that active learning tasks they used were fewer in number and lacked variety, misperception of teachers towards active learning, lack of pre-service training in active learning, large students' number in their classes, and lack of essential resources were some of the constraints the researcher identified. Enhancing teacher's awareness of active learning method and providing resource book involving active learning tasks were among the remedies suggested.

In conclusion, cooperative learning approaches take advantage of heterogeneity in classes by encouraging learners to learn from one another and from more and less knowledgeable peers. Bonds thus develop among learners which can lead to increased understanding and acceptance of all members of society, a benefit of cooperative learning that expand beyond the walls of the school itself.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design and Methodology

Research design serves as a blue print for conducting the research. Research design focuses more on the end product and the research problem while the methodology focuses more on the process, the tools and procedures to be used in the research (Bobbie and Mouton, 2001). The design selected for this study is descriptive survey design, which can entertain both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Onwuegbuzie and Daniel, 2003). Descriptive survey describes the status of a given phenomena. It describes the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exists between specific events at a given time (Abiy et.al.2009). Therefore, a descriptive survey method was selected because it serve the intended purpose of assessing the perception of teachers and students towards cooperative learning strategies, its implementation and its benefit to students with special needs. As stated by Sidhu (1985), descriptive survey is a method that describes and interpret what exists at present form of practice, effects, attitudes, etc. (Sidhu, 1985)

3.2. Data Sources and subjects

Both primary and secondary data sources were used to gather pertinent data for the study. Primary data were gathered from main subjects of the study (i.e. grade 8 teachers and students) through questionnaires, observation and interviews. Secondary data were obtained from documents from governmental offices like Bole sub city of Addis Ababa.

3.3. Sampling and sampling Techniques

The primary education sector in Ethiopia has built an impressive track record of achievement of access. Building on these achievements, there is an increasing necessity for a shift of focus to questions of quality. The quest for quality in primary education is a compelling contemporary issue in school, within the family, and within the policy process. In response to this concern, the focus and effort made so far by government to improving teaching methods through school based implementation of the method. The researcher believe a concrete base for quality in all education tries must be laid at primary schools so it is one of the researcher grounds to choose primary school teachers.

This study was conducted among selected primary level (i.e. grade eight) students and teachers found in Primary schools of Addis Ababa city. From the ten sub cities found in Addis Ababa, only Bole sub city was selected purposely because it was near to researcher's living area and working place. In this sub city there are sixteen primary schools. The researcher randomly selected eighth of them. These were Alpha, MisrakBer No. 2, Hidase, Addis Raeyi, March 8, BirhaneZare, Misrak Dill, and Bole Garji Primary Schools.

A total of 146 respondents (66 teachers and 80 students) participated in this study from the eight schools selected. The teachers selected were all the teachers teaching at grade eight in the selected schools in 2013/14 academic year. Similarly, the student samples were pursuing their grade eight education during data collection. Among the total students in the selected schools, 80 of them (i.e. around 10%) were selected by using a proportional random sampling technique. Grade eight students were considered purposely since they were relatively more mature than their juniors and were thought to participate more actively in the teaching learning processes than other primary/middle school grade level students and give a clearer feedback on their experience.

3.4. Instrument

The main data gathering tools used in this study were questionnaires, interviews and observations.

3.4.1.Questionnaires

The main data gathering tools used in this study were questionnaire which were distributed to 66 teachers and 80 students. All the questionnaires which were prepared in Amharic (for both teacher and student respondents) were filled in successfully. Two sets of questionnaires were distributed among teachers and students in order to obtain information from teachers and students regarding their perceptions and opinions on cooperative learning. A brief description of these two sets of questionnaires is presented below.

1) Teacher questionnaire

The questionnaires were developed and distributed to sample teachers. This questionnaire has three parts each, in which teachers were expected to give necessary information for the study. The first part includes five items which ask teachers to provide general background information like name of the school, their age and gender, quality of teacher training, service years and training in special needs. The second part of the questionnaire was designed as close-ended questions captured through a five point Likert scale anchored through one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). A sample question in this part reads as follows " I support the use of cooperative learning in regular classes". This part contained three categories with a total of 14 items. (See appendix 1B).

2) Student questionnaire

In order to understand the students' perceptions towards cooperative learning, a questionnaire, which has two parts, was constructed. The first part includes four items which asks students to provide general background information including name of the school, age, gender, and grade level. In the second part, there are fifteen items. Like teachers' questionnaire, the second part was designed consisting of close ended items at a five point Likert Scale with the range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A sample question reads that " I feel confident when I be in group" (See appendix II).

3.2.2. Observation

Qualitative data for this study were collected through observations. Classroom observation served as a useful tool for looking into the situations in the classrooms as the study was being conducted. Generally, the observations were made in classrooms where the researcher kept a diary for recording observation. In order to provide the researcher with a clear picture of the students' participation when they involve in cooperative learning activities, the classroom observations proved helpful. The researcher was able to examine and investigate the reality in the classroom as to how teachers and students participated when cooperative learning method was implemented. Observation checklists were used to collect data on classroom activities. There were two types of observational checklists: one, observing teachers and the other, observing students' activities (See appendix IV).

3.2.3.Interview

Interview was conducted with five students with disabilities so as to capture their perception towards cooperative teaching learning strategies. Since interviews can be used to corroborate on information obtained through observation (Maxwell 2005), the data from the interviews were used to compare what was observed. Additionally, an interview enables the researcher to compare between past and the present. The interview also provided rich insight for the analysis, because it was helpful to validate the study and fill the gap that may occur in the responses for the questionnaire items. (See appendix III).

3.3. Procedures of Data Collection

In order to find basis for the study related literature was reviewed from the work of different scholars. On the basis of the literature review and research questions, instruments were developed to gather data. After the instruments were developed, they were tested in Waragano primary school and Bulbula primary school. After giving explanation on the objectives of the study and on how the questionnaires need to be filled, the questionnaires were distributed to six teachers and ten students of grade eight. In addition the classroom observations were made in the same schools. Before conducting the classroom observations to test the observation checklists, the researcher trained two observers. These observers together with the researcher tested the appropriateness of the instruments. The tested instruments were improved on the basis of the pilot responses. The modified questionnaires were distributed to 66 teachers and 80 students. All teachers and students submitted back the distributed research paper. Furthermore, by using the modified observation checklists the observation data was recorded. Finally, the data collected from different sources were analyzed accordingly.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

The intent of this study was to understand teachers' and students' perception towards cooperative learning. Hence, both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used. The data collected through different instruments were tabulated, coded and analyzed. For reporting, analyzing and interpreting the data frequency distribution, mean value and percentage were employed.

Percentages and frequencies of the responses to the items related to the participants attitudes and opinions towards cooperative learning approach were calculated. The teachers' and students' individual scores were tabulated in tables of frequency so that the researcher was able to see each value on the scale of measurement. Meanwhile, the data collected from the observation forms were also tabulated and analyzed. All the data gained from the classroom observations were presented in tables. In addition, in order to provide better clarity of analysis in the questionnaire, the Likert scale of "strongly agree", "agree", "uncertain", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were used. For the open-ended questions included in the teacher questionnaire, the analysis had been done qualitatively and respectively. The open-ended items were used to elicit more elaborative responses from the teachers. The data was finally triangulated with the data collected from the interview.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of major findings of the study collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observation checklist. The data collected was examined, compiled and analyzed to address the research questions. Tables are used to illustrate findings. For, complete reference purposes, the survey questionnaires, interview questions and observation checklists are attached as appendices.

4.1. Background of respondents

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by Sex and Age

Participants	*Gender*				*Age*										*Total*	
	Male		*Female*		*<20*		*21-30*		*31-40*		*41-50*		*51+*			
	F	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*
Teachers	28	42.4	38	57.6	-	-	35	53	22	33.3	7	10.6	2	5.1	66	45.2
Students	33	41.3	47	58.7	78	97.5	2	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	54.8
Total	61	41.8	85	58.2	78	53.4	37	25.3	22	15.1	7	4.8	2	1.4	146	100

As shown in the table above, the number of female teacher respondents (N=38) is more than male teacher respondents by 15%, implying that in the sampled schools the participation of female teachers in the teaching –learning process is significant. Similarly when we compare the students by sex, the number of female students is higher than the male students' number by 17.4%. This indicates that in the schools the data collected, teachers and students are more of females.

Pertaining to the age of respondents, the majority of the teacher participants (i.e. about 53%), fall between the age group of 21-30, while about 97.5 percent of the student participants fall in age group below 20. About 33.3 percent of teacher participants are in age group of 31-40. The rest are above 41 years old. The findings of this study indicate that the middle school students are teenagers except 2.5 percent of them who were above 20 years of age during data collection. Most of teachers are concentrated in the young adult group, between the age group of 21-40. Table 4 below presents the number of respondents with their respective schools.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by their respective schools

Participants		**Schools**								**Total**
		Alfa	MB2	Hidassie	AR	March 8	BZ	MD	BG	
Teachers	F	10	9	8	10	7	9	5	8	66
	%	15.2	13.6	12.1	15.2	10.6	13.6	7.6	12.1	100
Students	F	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	80
	%	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	100

MB2 (MisrakBerkutir 2);AR (Addis Raiye); MD (MisrakDile); BG (Bole Gerjii); BZ (BirhaneZare)

Table 4 shows that the student respondents are evenly distributed in the given eight sample schools. With regard to the teacher respondents' ratio, it is more or less the same except in Misrak Dile school which is half far less from the highest (i.e. 10) number of the respondents. Generally, the figure indicates that both the teacher and student participants distribution over the selected schools. Table 5 below presents the educational background of respondent teachers. Note that all student respondents were selected from grade eight.

Table 5: Distribution of teacher respondents by their educational qualifications

Participants		Educational qualification		Total
		Diploma	Degree	
Teachers	F	38	28	66
	%	57.6	42.4	100

As shown in Table 5, the majority of the teacher participants (N= 38) were diploma holders, where as 28 of them completed their first degree study. The qualification of the teachers is in accordance with the requirements of the ministry of education. That is, according to the new educational policy of Ethiopia, second cycle of primary level teachers should have at least a diploma (MoE 1994). Nonetheless, the degree holders who are supposed to teach at secondary levels seem over qualified to teach at a primary level.

4.2. Teachers' Attitude towards Cooperative Learning

As discussed in the literature part, using cooperative learning method in the teaching learning process is vital because it promotes academic achievement, social and personal development and learning (Slavin, 1998). That is why current thinking and practice in education highly advocate the need to actively involve learners in different active learning techniques mainly in cooperative learning. The table below shows the actual attitude of teachers towards cooperative learning in the selected schools of Bole sub-city of Addis Ababa. The attitude of teachers was captured through a five point Likert scale (1-5) - strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree.

Table 6: Distribution of Teacher respondents in their attitudes towards cooperative learning

No	Teachers' attitudes statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		uncertain		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	I support the use of cooperative learning in regular classes.	2	3	1	1.5	4	6.1	28	42.4	31	47	66	100
2.	Cooperative learning brings benefits to the students learning.	2	3	1	1.5	3	4.5	18	27.3	42	63.6	66	100
3.	I am willing to use cooperative learning teaching method.	7	10.6	14	21	12	18.2	12	18.2	21	31.8	66	100
4.	Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion.	18	24.2	31	47	2	3	8	12.1	9	13.6	66	100
5.	I believe that students get an intensified support and follow up from teachers in cooperative learning than in old method.	26	39.4	20	30.3	8	12.1	4	6.1	8	12.1	66	100

As shown above in Table 6, most of the respondent teachers to the question ***"I support the use of cooperative learning in regular class***es" responded more or less a bit closer to -*strongly agree* 47 %(31) and *agree* to the statement 42.4 (28). Only few of them (< 5%) disagreed with the use of a cooperative learning in a regular class, where as 6.1% of them were *uncertain*. From this it can deduce that significant number of teachers (almost nine out of ten) had a readiness to implement a cooperative learning method in their classrooms, perhaps much associated with their training while they were in teacher training colleges.

It can be seen that teachers response to the second opinion item (i.e. "Cooperative learning brings benefits to the students learning."), nine out of ten teachers have agreed (*strongly agree* 63.6% (42) and 27.3% (18)-*agree)* with the benefits of a cooperative learning. In relation to the same attitude measure statement, only 3 % (2) of them opted for *strongly disagree* and 1.5% (1) for *disagree.* Here *the reaming* 4.5% (i.e.3) out of the total 66 respondents reflected

their opinion as *uncertain.* Again here it can be said that a cooperative learning is much beneficiary to students according to the teachers.

With the third attitude measuring statement "I am willing to use cooperative learning teaching method." There is a discrepancy closer by half in the teachers' responses strongly agree and agree 10.6% (7) and disagree 21% (14); and those who agree are 18.2% (12). Here unlike what the attitude measuring statements number one and number two a significant number of teachers' respondents reflected their opinion to uncertain-18.2% (12).

Regarding the statement "Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion.", a relatively small number/percent of teachers respondent reflected their opinion to uncertain i.e. 3% (2). And here an almost equal percent/number of respondents gave their opinion between strongly agree 13.6% (9) and agree 12.1% (8). Unlike the responses given in alternative reflective points strongly agree and agree, it has been shown that a significant difference existed. Those teachers who disagree are 47%(31) and 24.2% (18) strongly disagree.

In the last attitude measuring statement "I believe that students get an intensified support and follow up from teachers in cooperative learning than in old method.", there is the biggest percent remaining with uncertain which 12.1% (8) for anyone item in the category. However those who responded to strongly agree were 12.1% (8) and those who agree . 6.1% (4). surprisingly large number of respondents reflected their opinion with strongly disagree and disagree : 39.4 (26) and 30.3% (20) respectively. This implies that teachers do not follow students while doing activities in a class room.

From the above description of this table, the attitude of the teacher respondents show that an increased number of teachers perceived to support the use of cooperative learning in that it brings benefits to their students, provides an intensified support and follow up by teachers on students, does not waste a lot of time to cover a single portion. They are even willing to use

this learning method in their regular classes. This implies that the teachers' respondents have supportive attitude towards this method of learning. However, they don't think students get better follow up and support from cooperative learning.

4.3. Benefits of Cooperative Learning for Students with Special Needs

Table 7: Distribution teacher respondents in their attitude on benefits of cooperative learning for students with special needs

No	Benefits of cooperative learning methods with special needs students	Strongly disagree		Disagree		uncertain		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Students with disables participate actively in their group.	1	1.5	4	6.1	14	21.2	25	37.9	22	33.3	66	100
2.	Using cooperative learning method students with special needs show improvement in their academic performance.	4	6.1	11	16.7	9	13.6	16	24.2	26	39.4	66	100
3.	Student with disables learn better when the teacher gives a lecture.	6	9.1	20	30.3	9	13.8	21	31.8	10	15.2	66	100

With the first attitude measuring statement a relatively closer number/ percent of respondents reflected their responses in *strongly agree* and 33.3% (22) and *agree* 37.9% (25). The number of respondents to *uncertain* is biggest here with this opinion measuring statement i.e. 21.1% (14). From this, according to the teachers' response, it can be deduced that if given the opportunity students with disabilities actively participate in a cooperative learning.

In the second attitude measuring statement "Using cooperative learning method students with special needs show improvement in their academic

performance." 63.6 % respondent teachers have agreed (24.2% agree 16 and 39.4%strongly) that with these method students with special needs have shown improvements. Hence, we can say that a cooperative learning method is of a great importance particularly for students with disabilities. Nonetheless, around a quarter of teachers (almost 23%) have disagreed with this statement; perhaps they have not noticed the improvements made by students with special needs after a cooperative learning.

In general, according to the teacher respondents, it can be said that students with special needs have benefited much from cooperative learning method by participating actively in their group, participating and improving in their academic classes, learning better and behaving disciplined in their class. However, the overall result found from the interview conducted with students with disabilities indicted that they generally did not benefit. From these extreme points of results, the implication is remained doubtful on whether special needs students can benefit from cooperative learning or not. A further study on this point is recommendable.

4.4. Teachers' Application of Cooperative Learning Method in Class rooms

As can be seen from Table 8 below, for the statement "My students prefer to learn by doing than the teachers' lecture", the majority of teachers (66%) have confirmed that students prefer to learn through a cooperative learning method. In other words, a cooperative learning method has become popular among students as perceived by their teachers.

To the statement "The students do more work when they work with others", seven out of ten teachers (50 % strongly agree and 21% agree) respondents reflected in a very supportive way about more tasks performed by students during cooperative learning. Yet, one out of five (21.2%) teachers disagrees with this statement.

Table 8: Distribution of teacher respondents in their application of cooperative learning method in their class room

No	Teachers' application of cooperative learning methods	Strongly disagree		Disagree		uncertain		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	My students prefer to learn by doing than the teachers' lecture.	3	4.5	20	30.3	6	9.1	16	24.2	21	31.8	66	100
2.	The students do more work when they work with other.	5	7.6	9	13.6	5	7.6	14	21.2	33	50	66	100
3.	When the students work in group, it is difficult to stick with the plan.	13	19.7	31	47	1	1.5	14	21.2	7	10.6	66	100
4.	Learning in group brings benefits to the students learning.	5	7.6	9	13.6	5	7.6	14	21.2	33	50	66	100
5.	Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion.	18	27.3	29	43.9	8	12.1	11	16.7	-	-	66	100
6.	Using of cooperative learning method will disrupt classroom discipline.	21	31.8	31	47	8	12.1	6	9.1	-	-	66	100

In the case of the third statement "When the students work in group, it is difficult to stick with the plan", only 31.8% of teachers have agreed. Contrarily, two-third of respondent teachers have disagreed with the statement. In other words, the majority of the teachers did not see delay in their teaching plan due to the implementation of a cooperative learning.

Pertaining to the statement, "Learning in group brings benefits to the students learning", the majority of the respondents (71.2%) have agreed with the statement. However respondents had shown lesser (additive) reflecting their disagreement and strong disagreement 14 (21.2%). Only 5 out of the total 66 respondents showed uncertain.

A relatively greater number of respondents disagree and strongly disagree to the attitude measuring statement "Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion " which is 47 out of the total 66 selected respondents (i.e 78.8%). In contrast 11 out of the 66 respondents agreed to this item. And only 8 respondents remained uncertain.

The last attitude measuring statement is "Using of cooperative learning method will disrupt classroom discipline" Respondents by majority disagree and strongly disagree to this statement. In contrast a relatively few number of respondents agree to the item. Out of the total 66 selected respondents, only 8 respondents reflected their opinion of uncertainty.

In nutshell, from the preceding results and discussions, teachers incline in using the method since it allows their students to learn by doing, do more work when they work with the others, and bring holistic benefits.

4.5. Students' Attitude towards Cooperative Learning

Under Table 7 below is presented the attitudes of students towards cooperative learning which shows both in frequency and percent the data collected from selected respondents.

Table 9: Distribution of student respondents in their attitude towards cooperative learning

No	Students' attitude towards cooperative learning	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	In most of the activities I have full understanding	10	12.5	35	43.8	25	31.3	8	10	2	2.5	80	100
2.	I feel confident when I am in group	33	41.3	23	28.8	14	17.5	6	7.5	4	5	80	100
3.	I find group work activities are boring. I always feel sleepy in class room.	37	46.3	22	27.5	4	5	11	13.8	6	7.5	80	100
4.	I am just sit to see what other students do	46	57.5	20	25	4	5	4	5	6	7.5	80	100
5.	I hate group work, but I have no choice.	35	43.8	19	23.8	5	6.3	14	17.5	7	8.8	80	100
6.	Whenever I have question, I turn to my teacher or classmates for help.	39	48.8	21	26.3	5	6.3	8	10	7	8.8	80	100
7.	I don't care to find out the answers even if I encounter some problem	48	60	21	26.3	5	6.3	21	26.3	1	1.3	80	100

The majority of respondents reflected their disagreement in favor of the first attitude measuring statement. That is, as shown in table 7, around 56.3% of students have disagreed for having a full understanding of the given lesson while working through cooperative learning. Only 12.5 % of them claimed for having a full understanding of the lesson. Likewise, seven out of ten students have disagreed with the statement that reads "I feel confident when I am in group". This implies that there is a great challenge in implementing a cooperative learning method in classrooms.

On the other hand, the majority of the students (73.8%) did not find a cooperative learning method boring as can be seen from number three response in the above table. Again, the response for question number 4, "I just sit to see what other students do." Confirmed that the majority of the students do not simply sit in the group, rather they participate as can be seen from their response rate which is 82 5% of disagreement. It seems that the response of students is not consistent. Hence, a further researching is recommended by using another strong scale.

4.6. Results of Class room observation

In order to see what is going on in the classrooms, observation was also conducted using the check list prepared for the purpose. The following tables are the summary of classroom observation that shows the observation activities and classroom conditions conducted in eight schools (one observation in each primary school).

Table 10: Distribution of teacher respondents by their activities in class room

	Activities of the teacher	*Yes*		*No*		*Total*	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	The teacher has introduced the topic	8	100	-	-	8	100
2	The teacher has clarified the learning objectives	7	87.5	1	12.5	8	100
3.	The teacher discuss the rules and procedures before starting the lesson	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100
4.	The teacher has confirmed that students are actively engaged on assigned tasks in the subject	6	75	2	25	8	100
5.	The teacher has reacted constructively to the students responses	2	25	6	75	8	100
6.	The teacher has given appropriate feedback based on the students' responses	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
7.	The teacher goes around the class and gives individual support to the students who are doing the task	-	-	8	100	8	100
8.	The teacher has managed the classroom properly	-	-	8	100	8	100

As indicated in the table above, out of eight (8) classroom observation made, the teachers introduced the topics in all cases, while learning objectives were not clarified. That means, the students were not informed what they would be able to do after the lesson. When it comes to whether the teachers discuss the rules and procedures before starting the lesson, the majority of the teachers-5(62.5%) did that and those who did not discuss-3(37.5%) also were not insignificant. After the teacher has confirmed students to engage on assigned tasks, the teachers felt to do the activities listed in number 1.7 and 1.8 as they left out the classroom and wondering what was going on outside. As a result, the teachers have struggled to react constructively to the students' responses and give appropriate feedback based on the students' responses. This implies that the role of the teachers in doing the most common activities while cooperative learning going on is significantly limited.

Table 11: Distribution of students in their activities in class room

No	*Activities of the students*	*Yes*		*No*		*Total*	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
2.1.	The students were active in the lesson	7	87.5	1	12.5	8	100
2.2.	The students were freely participating in the activities	2	25	6	75	8	100
2.3.	The students were doing task assignments in subject by their own initiations	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
2.4.	The students were misbehaving in the classroom	7	87.5	1	12.5	8	100
2.5.	The students were ready to do in their group	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100
2.6.	Group contains all the members						
	2.6.1. The group has time keeper	-	-	8	100	8	100
	2.6.2. The group has resource manager	-	-	8	100	8	100
	2.6.3. The group has scribe	-	-	8	100	8	100
	2.6.4. The group has facilitator	-	-	8	100	8	100
	2.6.5. The group has presenter	8	100	-	-	8	100

The observation with student activities was also carried out. During cooperative learning activities, the class was divided into five students under each group. The groups of students were assigned by the teacher heterogeneously. The students were grouped based on students' abilities and education levels.

As the data showed in the table above, about 87.5% of the class seemed interested in group activities in the given lesson. However, they did not look free enough to participate in group activities and they did not show initiation to do the tasks by themselves, by far. Again even if significant number of students were ready to involve in their own group, a larger number of respondents misbehaved in the classroom. With regard to the members with a single group who should be nominated were not there at all except the presenter.

In addition, during the observations in the classroom while the lesson was going on, I have observed that most of the students' chairs and tables were not suitable for implementing such a method. In the informal discussions, students with disabilities also informed me that they understand well while they learn individually.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

This study tried to investigate the attitude of primary level students and teachers towards cooperative learning in some selected primary schools in Addis Ababa. An attempt was also made to examine how teachers apply the method in their classroom, to assess the extent about the benefits of the method for students with special needs. For the purpose, randomly selected teachers and students were involved in the study. Relevant data were gathered mainly through a survey questionnaire and corroborated with interviews. . Besides, class room observation was conducted to examine whether or not a cooperative learning method has been implemented. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive analysis techniques by using frequency and percent and results were presented in tables. In the sub-sections following, the major findings of the study are summarized first, followed by a conclusion and recommendations.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the attitude of teachers and students towards cooperative learning strategies. The subjects of the study were 80 randomly selected students and 66 teachers who were teaching at grade 8 level in 2013/14 academic year in some selected eight primary schools found in Bole sub city of Addis Ababa.

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The majority of the teachers (89.4%) support the implementation of a cooperative learning method in regular classes.
2. Most of the teachers have positive attitude towards a cooperative learning method.
3. Most teachers (about 90% of them) agree on the benefits of cooperative learning methods and thus were striving to practice the method in their classroom.
4. The majority of the students strongly disagreed with the positive aspect of a cooperative learning method. For example, 67.8% of them agreed that they sit in classrooms during cooperative learning sessions only because they had no other choice. During interview session, some students have also argued that the method over favors high achiever (mostly assigned as a leader) students. As a result they were of opinion that the leader is assumed as better than the other and he/she gets more chances in doing activities, presenting group results etc.
5. Most of the students with disabilities have developed a negative attitude towards cooperative learning, perhaps related with a subordinate activity assigned to them in group activities as observed in the classrooms. For example, none of them was assigned as a group leader during classroom observation sessions. Of course, this is in contrary to most teachers' (47%) claim that students with special needs have benefited much from a cooperative learning method. The teachers seem indifferent about the benefits of a cooperative learning specially for students with disability. For example, four out of ten respondent teachers (39.4%) disagreed with such a positive claim.

5.2. Conclusion

Recently, there is a consensus among scholars that a cooperative learning strategy is better than the traditional lecture methods in enhancing students' participation in classrooms. In this study too, primary school teachers were much aware of the benefits of cooperative learning strategies and were implementing them in their respective classrooms. This is in consistence with previous similar research works (Vygotsky, 1978). Hence, it can be concluded that primary teachers found in Addis Ababa (at least in Bole sub city) have developed a positive attitude towards cooperative learning method.

None the less, unlike teachers, primary school students' strongly disagreed about the relevance of a cooperative teaching learning method, mainly related with the way it has been implemented in their classrooms. This is in contrary with previous research works which revealed that students have a positive attitude towards a cooperative learning method (Ghaith, 2003).

In nutshell, it can be said that there is a practice of a cooperative teaching learning method in Bole sub city primary schools though there are some weaknesses in its implementation.

Students with disabilities have developed a negative attitude towards cooperative learning, perhaps as a result of being assigned to subordinate activities in the groups as observed in the classrooms.

5.3. Recommendations

It is difficult to realize the intended objectives and practices without considering various factors that could contribute in one way or the other to enhancing learning at any level. This is because educational achievements are the outcomes of interwoven factors. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher would like to forward the following recommendations for the improvement of the practices of cooperative learning.

1) School teachers should exert their utmost efforts to raise the attitude of students towards cooperative learning methods by running the activities it entails properly.

2) The concerned body (e.g. woreda education office) should provide on the job training for primary teachers on effective implementation of a cooperative learning method in classrooms. This would redress the problem of over attention towards high achieving students.

3) Teachers should encourage students with special needs to actively participate in tasks given during a cooperative learning method. Such encouragement would boost the confidence of those students with special needs to claim tasks deemed as important in group activities (E.g. group leadership, presenting discussion results in front of other students, etc).

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ድህረ ምረቃ ትምህርት ቤት

በትምህርት ኮሌጅ

የትምህርት ጥናት ተቋም

<u>በመጀመሪያ ደረጃ መምህራን የሚሞላ መጠይቅ</u>

ውድ መምህር/ት፣ ይህ መጠየቅ የተዘጋጀበት ዋና ዓላማ መምህራን በጥመርታ የመማር ዘይቤ ላይ ያላቸውን ምልከታ ለማጥናት አስፈላጊወን መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው። በመጠይቁ ውስጥ የሚገኙ ዝርዝሮች በቀጥታም ሆነ በተዘዋዋሪ የግለሰቧን/ግለሰቡን በጥመርታ መማር ተግባር ላይ ያላቸውን ስሜት ይዳስሳሉ።

እርሶም ምን ያህል ከእያንዳንዱ ዝርዝር ጋር እንደሚስማሙ ወይም እንደማይስማሙ ከተሰጡት ባለአምስት ደረጃ አማራጮች አንዱን በመምረጥና እንደምትስማማ/እንደምትስማሚ አሳዩ። አምስት አማራጮች 'በጣም እስማማለሁ' 'እስማማለሁ'፣ 'እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም' እና 'አልስማማም'፣ 'በጣም አልስማማም' ናቸው።

ትክክለኛና አስተማማኝ ምላሽ ለጥናቱ መሳካት ታላቅ አስተዋጽኦ ያደርጋል። ስለገሱኝ ውድ ጊዜዎና ትብብርዎ ከልብ አመሰግናለሁ

ክፍል 1፡- አጠቃላይ መረጃ

1. የት/ቤቱ _____

2. ፅድሜ _____ ፆታ _____ የትምህርተ ደረጃ _____

3. አጠቃላይ የስራ ልምድ _____

4. የልዩ ፍላጎት ስልጠና ወስደዋል? _____

ክፍል 2፡-

ተ.ቁ.	ስለጥመርታ መማር የመምህራን ምልከታ	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	ለመወሰን እቸገራለሁ	አልስማማ	በጣም አልስማማ
1	በመደበኛ ክፍለ ጊዜ የጥመርታን የማስተማር ዘዴን ደግፋለሁ					
2	በጥመርታ መማር ስተማሪዎች ጠቃሚ ነው					
3	የጥመርታ ትምህርትን ለመተግበር ፍቃደኛ ነኝ					
4	የጥመርታ የማስተማር ዘዴን መጠቀም ጊዜን ያባክናል					
5	በጥመርታ መማር የሚሳተፉ ተማሪዎች ከተለምዶ ማስተማር ከሚማሩ ተማሪዎች የበለጠ ድጋፍና ክትትል እንደሚያገኙ አምናለሁ።					

ክፍል 3፡-

ተ.ቁ.	የልዩ ፍላጎት ተማሪዎች በጥመር ትምህርት ተጠቃሚነት	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	ለመወሰን እቸገራለሁ	አልስማማ	በጣም አልስማማ
1	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተማሪዎች በቡድናቸው ውስጥ በንቃት ይሳተፋሉ					
2	የጥመርታ ትምህርትን በመጠቀም ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተማሪዎች ትምህርቸው ላይ መሻሻልን ያሳያሉ					
3	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተማሪዎች በሌክቸር መንገድ የተሻለ ይማራሉ					

ክፍል 4፡-

ተ.ቁ.	የመምህራን የጥመር ትምህርት ትግበራ	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	ለመወሰን እቸገራለሁ	አልስማማ	በጣም አልስማማ
1	ተማሪዎቼ አስተማሪን ከማዳመጥ ነካክተው መማርን ይመርጣሉ					
2	ተማሪዎች እርስ በርስ ሲማማሩ ብዙ ይሰራሉ					
3	ተማሪዎች በቡድን ሲሰሩ ዕቅዳችንን ለማሳካት ይከብዳል					
4	በቡድን መስራት ለተማሪዎች መማር ጥቅም ይሰጣል					
5	የጥመርታ የማስተማር ዘዴን መጠቀም ጊዜን ያባክናል					
6	የጥመርታ ትምህርት የክፍል ስርዓትን ያውካል					

APPENDIX B

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ድህረ ምረቃ ትምህርት ቤት

በትምህርት ኮሌጅ

የትምህርት ጥናት ተቋም

<u>በመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ተማሪዎች የሚሞላ መጠይቅ</u>

ውድ ተማሪ፣ ይህ መጠየቅ የተዘጋጀበት ዋና ዓላማ መምህራን በጥመርታ የመማር ዘይቤ ላይ ያላቸውን ምልከታ ለማጥናት አስፈላጊወን መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው፡፡ በመጠይቁ ውስጥ የሚገኙ ዝርዝሮች በቀጥታም ሆነ በተዘዋዋሪ የግለሰቧን/ግለሰቡን በጥመርታ መማር ተግባር ላይ ያላቸውን ስሜት ይዳስሳሉ፡፡

አንተ/አንቺ ምን ያህል ከእያንዳንዱ ዝርዝር ጋር እንደምትስማማ/ እንደምትስማሚ ከተሰጡት ባለአምስት ደረጃ አማራጮች አንዱን በመምረጥና እንደምትስማማ/እንደምትስማሚ አሳዩ፡፡ አምስት አማራጮች 'በጣም እስማማለሁ' 'እስማማለሁ'፡ 'እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም' እና 'አልስማማም'፡ 'በጣም አልስማማም' ናቸው፡፡ ስሜትህን/ስሜትሽን በተሻለ ይገልፅልኛል የምትለውን/ የምትይው ምላሽ 'X' በማድረግ በማድረግ አመልክቱ፡፡

ትክክለኛና አስተማማኝ ምላሾ ለጥናቱ መሳካት ታላቅ አስተዋጽኦ ያደርጋል፡፡ ስለገሳችሁኝ ጊዜ አመሰግናለሁ፡፡

ክፍል 1፡- አጠቃላይ መረጃ

1. **የት/ቤቱ**

   _____

2. **ፅድሜ** _____
3. **ፆታ** _____
4. **የክፍል ደረጃ** _____

ክፍል 2፡-

ተ. ቁ.	ዝርዝር (ባህሪን በተመለከተ)	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	ላመወስን እቸገራለሁ	አልስማማም	በጣም አልስማማም
1	ክፍል ውስጥ የምንሰራቸው አብዛኛው ነገሮች ይገቡኛል					
2	በቡድን ስሰራ የመተማመን ስሜት አለኝ					
3	የቡድን ስራዎች አሰልቺ ናቸው					
4	ሌሎች የሚሰሩትን ቁጭ ብዬ እከእተላለሁ					
5	የቡድን ስራ አልወድም ግን ሌላ አማራጭ የለኝም					
6	ጥያቄ ሲኖረኝ አስተማሪዬንና ጓደኞቼን እጠይቃለሁ					
7	የቸገረኝ ነገር ቢኖርም መልሱን ለማግኘት አልጨነቅም					

APPENDIX C

የቃለ መጠይቅ ጥያቄዎች

1. **በክፍል ውስጥ የጥመርታ ትምህርት ጥቅምና ጉዳት ምንድን ነው?**
2. **የጥመርታ ትምህርት ትምህርትህ/ሽ ላይ ረድቶሻል?**
3. **በጥመርታ ትምህርት እንደ ልዩ ፍላጎት ተማሪነትህ /ሽ ምን ተጠቅመሃል/ተጠቅመሻል?**
4. **በጥመርታ መማር የበለጠ ውጤታማ እንዲሆን ምን ሀሳብ ትሰጣለህ/ትሰጪለሽ**

APPENDIX D

Addis Ababa University

School of graduate studies

Institute of educational research

Research questionnaire

To be filled by primary school teachers

The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect necessary information for the study, on < Teachers' attitudes and practices of cooperative learning > statements presented in this scale directly or indirectly express attitudes or feelings that person may have concerning the practices of cooperative learning in regular classes.

You are expected to show the extent of your own agreement and disagreement on each statement by marking one of the given options in a three point scale. The five options are strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree. Put on 'X' mark on the given space that best indicates your feeling.

Giving clear and dependable feedback is highly important for the success of this study. Thank you in advance for your co- operation.

Part one

Back ground information

1. Name of the school _____
2. Age _____ Sex _____ Qualification level_____
3. Total service (work experience) in years _____
4. Have you taken training in special needs?_____

Part two

No	Teachers' perceptive towards cooperative learning	Strongly agree	Agree	uncertain	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I support the use of cooperative learning in regular classes					
2	Cooperative learning bring benefits to the students learning					
3	I am willing to use cooperative learning teaching method					
4	Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion					
5	I believe that students who participate in cooperative learning get an intensified support and follow up from teachers than who used old method.					

Part three

No	Special needs students' benefits cooperative learning	Strongly agree	Agree	uncertain	disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Students with disables participate actively in their group.					
2	Using cooperative learning method students with special needs show improvement in their academic performance.					
3	Student with disables learn better when the teacher gives a lecture.					

Part four

No	Teachers application of cooperative learning	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	My students prefer to learn by doing than listing to the teachers instruction					
2	The students do more work when the they work with other					
3	When the students work in group, it is difficult to stick with the plan					
4	Learning in group brings benefits to the students learning.					
5	Using cooperative learning method wastes a lot of time to cover a single portion.					
6	Using of cooperative learning method will disrupt classroom discipline.					

APPENDIX E

Addis Ababa University

School of graduate studies

Institute of educational research

Research questionnaire

To be filled by primary students

The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect necessary information for the study, on < Teachers' attitudes and practices of cooperative learning > statements presented in this scale directly or indirectly express attitudes or feelings that person may have concerning the practices of cooperative learning in regular classes.

You are expected to show the extent of your own agreement and disagreement on each statement by marking one of the given options in a three point scale. The five options are strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree. Put on 'X' mark on the given space that best indicates your feeling.

Giving clear and dependable feedback is highly important for the success of this study. Thank you in advance for your co- operation.

Part one

Back ground information

1. Name of the school _____
2. Age _____
3. Sex _____
4. Grade level _____

Part two

No	Item (attitude statement)	strongly agree	Agree	uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	In most of the activities I have full understanding					
2.	I feel confident when I be in group					
3.	I find group work activities are boring. I always feel sleepy in class room.					
4.	I am just sit to see what other students do					
5.	I hate group work, but I have no choice.					
6.	Whenever I have question, I turn to my teacher or classmates for help.					
7.	I don't care to find out the answers even if I encounter some problem					

APPENDIX E

Interview questionnaires

1. What are the main merits and demerits of cooperative learning method in class?
2. Does the cooperative learning bring benefits to your learning?
3. Do you think cooperative learning method benefit students with special needs? How?
4. What would you suggest to make cooperative learning method more effective in the future?

Appendence 4

Classroom observation check list

I. General information

1. School
2. Grade
3. Subject
4. Number of students in the class
    - Male _____
    - Female _____
    - Total _____

II. Information about the teacher

1. Sex _____
2. Qualification _____
3. Experience _____

III. Lesson plan

1. Related to the topic
2. Objectives are states

IV. Observation about the classroom instruction

1. Activities of the teacher

	Activities of the teacher	Yes	No
1.1.	The teacher has introduced the topic		
1.2.	The teacher has clarified the learning objectives		
1.3.	The teacher discuss the rules and procedures before starting the lesson		
1.4.	The teacher has confirmed that students are actively engaged on assigned tasks in the subject		
1.5.	The teacher has reacted constructively to the students responses		
1.6.	The teacher has given appropriate feedback based on the students' responses		
1.7.	The teacher goes around the class and gives individual support to the students who are doing the task		
1.8.	The teacher has managed the classroom properly		

2. Activities of the students

	Activities of the students	Yes	No
2.1.	The students were interested in the lesson		
2.2.	The students were freely participating in the activities		
2.3.	The students were doing task assignments in subject by their own initiations		
2.4.	The students were misbehaving in the classroom		
2.5.	The students were ready to do in their group		
2.6.	Group contains all the members		
	2.6.1. The group has time keeper		
	2.6.2. The group has resource manager		
	2.6.3. The group has scribe		
	2.6.4. The group has facilitator		
	2.6.5. The group has presenter		

3. Classroom condition

Classroom condition	Yes	No
3.1. The number of the students in the was moderate		
3.2. The classroom has enough space for movement		
3.3. The classroom has adequate chairs and disks		
3.4. The disks are comfortable to do group work		

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other universities and that all source of materials used for the thesis have been fully acknowledged.

_____

HANNA YESHINEGUS ADAMSEGED

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

_____

YIRGASHEWA BEKELE (DR.)