

**The Utilization of Active Learning: The Case of  
Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-City Governmental Upper  
Primary School**

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*“A thesis Submitted to the school of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree MA in Educational Research and Development in Institute of Educational Research.”*

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## **Abstract**

The main purpose of this study was to assess the utilization of active learning, to identify factors affecting the implementation of active learning either positively or negatively in terms of teachers' commitment, classroom conditions, instructional facilities and teachers training. Mixed methods were used to conduct the study. The study mainly conducted in upper primary schools in Addis Ababa city administration, in Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City. Data were collected from 169 teachers, 282 students and 3 pedagogy instructors of Kotebe college of Teachers Education. Because 75% of teachers were graduates of Kotebe college of teachers education. In the selection of sample population purposive and random techniques were used. The instruments of data collection were questionnaire, interview and observation checklist. The data were analyzed using percentage. The findings of the study proved that the implementation of active learning was low. Among the factors affecting the implementation of active learning, teachers training, teachers' commitment, classroom conditions, class size, beliefs and interests of teachers in their profession were the major ones. Finally, the following recommendations were forwarded, it is important to conduct in- service training so that their use of active learning strategies will be improved, Even if appropriate class size may not always be possible, the implementers of active learning should see alternative solutions such as, dividing students into groups, demonstration fields, field trip, laboratories and others. In addition to this, government bodies and stake holders have to construct extra classes to solve the problem and In order to solve the problems of teachers' commitment and lack of interest in the profession, school administrators, wereda educational leaders, Addis Ababa City administration Education bureau and Ministry of Education have to do different awareness creation programs.

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## **Acronyms**

AL:	Active learning
I:	Implementation
IA	Instructional approach
KCTE	Kotebe College of Teachers Education
MOE	Ministry Of Education
P:	Project
SCI:	Student-centered instruction
UP:	Upper primary

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Education contributes a lot in solving poverty problems, realization of economic, potential and cultural development G.M Coverdale (1973:7), remarks about the greater profitability of investment in primary schools than investment in any other educational level, for it is the basis of all educational endeavor aimed at inculcating the young generation for better life

In modern world, there is a shift from learning that capitalizes on memorization and rote learning isolated bits and pieces of information, primarily for the purpose of passing examination, to learning that emphasizes understanding, making connections in the world around us, collecting information, using and communicating in active manner Lue, (2001: 10).

This shift was required because, memorizing facts and bits of knowledge is not effective learning and does not prepare learners to understand their environment or function in it effectively. To put differently, teacher centered approach does not prepare learners to understand and participate in complex world. However, in learner centered approach the purpose of education is not to ensure success in exam. It is rather to help the learners learn what is useful in their life and to develop the individual ability to learn independently, to enjoy learning and continue to learn throughout life Margaret, (1988).

As modern method of teaching, active learning approach has got world wide acceptance and are being exercised in all parts of the world. As indicated by Peter et al. , (2002:2) an example of problem based learning curricular or courses can now be found in almost all parts of the world (North America and South America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and South Pacific). More emphasis was given to active learning method in the world because, learning is meaning full when it is relevant to students` lives, needs and interests and when the students themselves are

actively engaged in preparing. Thus, as a part of the world Ethiopia cannot remain an exceptional to implement this method.

Studies shows that the best designed active learning approach is more effective than traditional method of teacher centered approach of teaching. For instance, Peter et al. , (2002:4) indicated that student from learner centered curricula are superior to their counter parts from traditional curricula with respect to their approach, perceptions of their education, long term retention of knowledge and motivation for learning. The learner centered method is based on the fact that, students who are given the freedom to explore areas based on personal interests, and who are accompanied in their striving for solutions by a supportive understanding facilitator, not only achieve high academic results but, also experience and increase in personal values, such as flexibility, self confidence, social skills and problem solving capacity.

In the Ethiopian context the new Educational Training Policy of Ethiopia emphasizes the development of problem solving capacity and culture in the context of education, curriculum structure and approach, focusing on the acquisition of scientific knowledge and practicum MOE, (1994:4). Also the general objective of education has stated that education is geared towards the development of physical, mental, potential and problem solving capacity of individuals by expanding education and in particular by providing a basic education for all. Furthermore, the policy indicates that the general objective of the education and training policy is to cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by appropriately relating education to environment and social needs MOE, (1994:7 and8). Therefore, the new education policy calls for active learning method as the basis of the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, active learning approach enables the learning process be unified around purpose and to bring about a creative self-responsible learner. It also produces a citizen who can integrate what is learned with his/ her dynamic personality and will become truly part of him/ her and not something memorized for the purpose of repetition. The learning approach helps to weave the skills and abilities, attitudes and principles learned in to the already existing fabric of the student`s knowledge and abilities.

Even though learner centered method is widely accepted, and given due attention by our Educational and Training Policy and helps to prepare learners to solve problems, makes them creative and use of information from their environment and other sources to make better life for themselves and the society and as a whole the country, its proper implementation is doubtful and might not go beyond lip service. Therefore, assessing the implementation of active learning approach is found to be crucial.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In teacher centered approach, the teacher is considered to hold most of knowledge necessary for students and student`s success in school was measured only by passing examination. The teacher uses chalk and talk method of teaching in which the teachers are active and the students are passive. This leads the students to the memorization of information and facts from their textbooks and notes. This was considered to be the most ineffective method of teaching. This, however, is the lowest level in the development of cognitive abilities. That is why Amare, (2000:10) noted the absence of appropriate balance between the concrete and the abstract experiences as one weakness of the teacher centered approach.

Therefore, a thoughtful and scholarly approach to skillful teaching requires that teachers become knowledgeable about the many ways or strategies promoting student`s active learning and problem solving abilities. With this in view, what are the practices of teaching learning process in Ethiopian schools? In relation to this earlier observation by Wilcox, (1980) noted that teaching in most of Ethiopian schools is heavily stereotype. Fixed patterns of lecture, recitations, and drill predominate. A formal classroom atmosphere prevails, sometimes accompanied by a heavy-handed branded brand of discipline. With the constant focus on the right answer to an examination question, students commit large chunks of information to memory in the hope that it can be repeated on the day. The notion of discovering information is linked with the idea of teachers failing to their jobs properly or as evidences of the teacher`s ignorance.

In away to fill such gap and bring about significant changes that the 1994 educational reform, among other things, demanded a new paradigm of teaching and learning, the

development of new strategies of teaching and learning based on active learning and student centered approaches MOE, (1994).

The active learning approach aimed at producing people with sound knowledge, practical skill, and positive attitudes about themselves, as about the society and environment as a whole. Considering that the nation`s future will be shaped through its programs of education and as well being of its citizens, by employing active learning approach is a sound decision. In practice, the policy document does not seem to be practical appropriately by engaging students in activities of these natures.

Even though the learner centered method is theoretically advanced, in practice the teacher centered method may predominant in the most cases. The term child centered method is one of the most misunderstood in the whole of education Schofield, (1972:78). In addition, regarding teaching learning process in primary schools, Pollard et al., (2000:60) indicates that, teaching in today`s primary schools is very much a matter of teachers talking and children listening. Classroom practices in primary schools are intense and more teachers controlled. Pupils are less autonomous in their use of space and time and in their choice of activities.

Moreover, the old method of focusing on lecture, chalkboard, and text book skill prevails the majority of teachers not utilize the new approaches as intended. The absence of qualified professional assistances, lack of pre and post training in implementation of active learning and absence of instructional facilities the instruction process hinder the progress Amanu Oligira, (2005:23).

Therefore, based on the above mentioned experiences, The researcher doubt in the following points: Teaching in Nifas silk Lafto upper primary schools may/ may not be a matter of teachers talking and children listening, Classroom practices in Nifas silk Lafto upper primary schools may/ may not be intense and more teachers controlled and their may/ may not be absence of qualified professional assistances, lack of pre and post training in implementation of active learning and absence of instructional facilities the instruction process hinder the progress of active learning.

Thus, it is very essential to conduct research in the upper primary schools, to assess utilization of active learning approach, because any problem and misunderstanding committed at primary level affect the whole educational system.

Based on the above purposes, this study is expected to find some possible solutions to the following research questions.

### **1.3 Research Question**

1. To what extent do teachers gain the necessary knowledge in implementation of active learning approach during their pre and in-service training?
2. What are the factors that affect positively or negatively implementation of active learning approach in the schools in terms of
  - 2.1.The level of commitment of teachers
  - 2.2.Instructional facilities?
  - 2.3.Classroom size and condition?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

#### **14.1. General objective**

The general objective of the study is to assess the extent to which active learning is practiced in upper primary schools of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City.

#### **1.4.2. Specific objective**

1. To assess whether teachers gain the necessary knowledge in implementation of active learning approach or not during their pre and in-service training.
2. To identify the factors that affect implementation of active learning approach in the schools of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City.
3. To identify the availability of instructional facilities which helps to implement active learning approach the case of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City.
4. To assess whether there is committed supervisors who could give technical assistance to teachers or not in implementation of active learning approach the case of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

It is proved to that the learner centered method of teaching prepares the learners to solve problems, makes them creative and use information from their environment and other sources to make a better life for themselves and society. Based on this notion,

assessing the status of implementation of active learning approach and identify the major factors that hinder the implementation of active learning method. Therefore, the result of this study has the following significances:-.

1. It may help planners, educational officials, and policy makers to be aware of the problem of implementation and thereby to seek solutions.
2. It will enable the concerned educational officials and teachers to gain valuable information on the actual status of teaching learning process and the implementation method.
3. As the study was expected to find out factors that affect the implementation of active learning method, it may indicate areas that need remedies, and may create awareness among teachers, educational officials and concerned bodies to take corrective action
4. It may initiate other interested researchers to carry out extensive studies in the areas.
5. It may encourage other interested bodies to be involved in strengthening implementation of the approach to practical conditions.

## **1.6 Delimitation of the study**

In order to carry out any research, it is important to delimit the scope of the study to manageable size. Accordingly, the scope of this study was delimited to teachers` readiness, commitment and facilities which deserve the utilization of the active learning approach the case of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City governmental upper primary schools. The logistic and time constraints have forced the researcher to delimit this study to one sub city instead of considering ten sub cities.

## **1.7. Limitation of the study**

The researcher strongly agrees that the inclusion of a larger part of the Addis Ababa schools and population size in the study could help to get more relevant and broader information. However, because of time, financial and other resources constraints the researcher could not able to conduct the study in depth. The researcher also believes the importance of including content analysis on the study is more reliable and stronger

in its evidences but due to time and other resources constraints the study data has been limited on questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation.

## **1.8. Definition of terms**

**Active learning:** - requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing.

**Implementation:** refers to the actual use of active learning approach for realizing the actual planned curriculum into practice.

**Instructional approach:** - refers to systems of transferring ideas and skills to pass on and gain knowledge in a tangible and widespread way

**Project: refers** to a situation where a learner relates activities by investigation and solving problems.

**Student-centered instruction [SCI]** is an instructional approach in which students influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning.

**Upper primary:** refers to grade levels 5-8.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. Review of Related Literature

#### 2.1. Epistemologies of Learning and Teaching

Learning is a journey not a destination (Holzer, 1992:2); and it involves much more than an interaction with an extent body of knowledge. Thus, learning takes place when the learner has to make sense of things that confront him/her self MOE, (2003:42).

Similarly, in (Silberman 1996: ix) it is stated that learning is not automatic consequence of pouring information in to students` head. It requires the learners` own mental involvement and doing. Explanations and demonstrations by themselves will never lead to real learning only learning that is active will do it (ibid: ix). Moreover, expression telling by itself does not always produce the desire result (learning), teachers` understanding and conclusions cannot be transferred directly in to pupil`s understandings and conclusions. In support of these ideas stated:

*``Teaching is helping students to learn. It is not merely telling something to a group of listeners, nor explaining some topics, nor demonstrating your mastery of an important topics, course when you are helping students to learn, you may engage in telling, explaining or demonstrating, but you do this only as a means of helping your students to learn.``*

Teaching does not mean just lecturing, or delivering information, rather it is the arrangement of opportunities for learners to follow a natural human inclination to become educated. For instance, (Martin 1997:8) while stating about the role of elementary school teachers mentioned that:

*``Elementary teachers do not have to have extensive knowledge in order to be able to teach it well and they do not need to master a huge collection of facts, concepts, generalizations, theories, and laws about science. Rather they need to know how children learn science and how to teach children, apparently what a teacher does and how he/she does it in the classroom is*

*far more important than what a teacher knows or the curriculum he/ she uses.``*

Real learning is not memorization, due to the fact that most of what we memorize is lost in hours, that is, learning cannot be swallowed (Cape et al, 1995). Thus, to retain what has been thought, students must chew on it, they must put what they hear and see in to a meaningful whole, they should get the opportunity to discuss, debate, argue, do, perhaps even teach someone else, so that, long lasting and real learning occurs, which represents active learning (Ibid)

Similarly,( Cobern, 1993 ) stated that learning does not occur by transmitting information from the teacher or the textbook to the children brain. Instead, each child should construct his/her own meaning by combining prior information with the new information such that the new knowledge provides personal meaning to the child.

In the teaching learning process as stated in (ICDR, 1999:65), points that need to be remembered on the side of both the teacher and students are:

*“Teaching is effective only when students are learning, learning is effective when it is effective when it is meaningful to students, learning is meaningful when students can use it, connected it to their lives, or actively participated in it, memorizing facts and bits of knowledge alone is not effective learning, we will prevent meaningful learning from taking place when we teach only by giving facts” .*

In spite of the fact that, teaching is far more than delivering information in to someone else, and learning is not receiving readymade information pupils believe that they are in school to learn and the teacher is to teach. It follows that according to such pupil belief the active role is for the teacher, and the appropriate role of pupils is to be passive and receive teacher presentation. As stated by (Bleich and Boland, 1998) this may be because, from the time we encounter school we assume that teachers do the teaching which is a traditional approach that places student at the receiving end of teachers` transmission.

## **2.2. Instructional methods and their classification**

Breaking down teaching and learning styles, helps to outline the options that the teachers are offered (Glasgow, 1996:1). Based on the person responsible for making decisions of what learners are going to learn and how they learn it, teaching learning style can be categorized as teacher centered and student centered (Ibid:1).

### **2.2.1. Active Learning**

Is generally defined as, any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing. While this definition could include traditional activities such as homework, in practice active learning refers to activities that are introduced into the classroom. The core elements of active learning are student activity and engagement in the learning process. Active learning is often contrasted to the traditional lecture where students passively receive information from the instructor (Ellis, 1995:219).

Active learning is a broadly inclusive term, used to describe several models of instruction that hold learners responsible for their own learning. The leaders in the field of active learning, (Bonwell and Eison, 1991) have contributed heavily to its development and to the acceptance of active learning as a viable approach. Proponents of active learning describe a process in which students engage in “doing things and thinking about what they are doing” in the classroom (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 2).

Active learning encompasses various practices, such as pausing in lectures for students to consolidate their notes, interspersing short writing exercises in class, facilitating small-group discussions within the larger class, incorporating survey instruments, quizzes, and student self-assessment exercises into the course, leading laboratory experiments, taking field trips, and using debates, games, and role play (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). (Bonwell and Eison, 1991) suggest that active learning provides the following benefits: students are more involved than in passive listening; students are engaged in activities such as reading, discussing, and writing; student

motivation is increased; students can receive immediate feedback; and students may engage in higher-order thinking, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In order to have a positive effect on students, the management educator must apply the principles of active learning to the practical setting of the classroom. Auster and Wylie (2006) suggest that four dimensions are necessary to create a systematic approach to promote active learning in the classroom: context setting, class preparation, class delivery, and continuous improvement. Context setting refers to creating an open and relaxed atmosphere for learning in the classroom. Class preparation involves thought, planning, and creativity before the class session. Class delivery refers to the implementation of the planned lesson in the classroom. Continuous improvement entails seeking and using feedback concerning the teaching approach.

#### **2.2.1.1. Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning is an associated concept in which students learn from relevant experiences provided in the course of instruction (Kolb, 1984). Management educators should be aware of two cautions. First, experiential exercises alone may not be sufficient to induce learning and, secondly, students will need time to reflect on the experience. Kolb (1984) explains that learning is a process, not an outcome; that learning comes from experience; that learning requires resolution of dialectically opposed demands; that learning is holistic and integrative; that learning requires interplay between a person and an environment; and that learning results in knowledge creation.

#### **2.2.1.2. Problem-Based Learning**

Another approach is problem-based learning (Albanese & Mitchell, 1993; Miller, 2004), which structures a course around the resolution of a real-world problem. This approach traces its beginnings to the philosopher and educator, John Dewey, who claimed that problems are a stimulus to thinking (Miller, 2004). To discover the solution to a problem, students must learn the basic principles of a subject. Having borrowed the concept of problem based learning from service learning in which students learn by performing some service for the community, Miller (2004) applied the approach to organizational behavior classes in the business school.

### **2.2.1.3. Participative Learning**

Participative learning is defined as engaging the student in the learning process by giving him or her opportunity to take part in selecting activities and/or assignments in the class (Mills-Jones, 1999). For example, students may be allowed to choose elements in the syllabus, to write exam questions, or to participate in the grading of some class projects. By involving students in choosing some direction for the course, students should take on responsibility and become accountable for positive outcomes in the class.

### **2.2.1.4. Cooperative Learning**

In cooperative learning, students are required to work together in small groups and class discussions. In order for small groups to develop cooperative learning, five basic elements are necessary: positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction (promote each other's success), individual and group accountability (no social loafing), social skills, and group processing or feedback (Johnson et al., 1991). When the five elements are present, cooperative learning in small groups can maximize each student's learning as one helps another.

### **2.2.1.5. Learner-Centered Teaching Approach**

Weimer (2002) described five learner-centered practice areas that need to change to achieve learner-centered teaching: the Function of Content, the Role of the Instructor, the Responsibility for Learning, the Processes and Purposes of Assessment, and the Balance of Power. The functions of the content in learner-centered teaching include building a strong knowledge foundation and to develop learning skills and learner self-awareness. The roles of the instructor should focus on student learning. The roles are facilitative rather than didactic. The responsibility for learning shifts from the instructor to the students. The instructor creates learning environments that motivate students to accept responsibility for learning. The processes and purposes of assessment shift from only assigning grades to include constructive feedback and to assist with improvement. Learner-centered teaching uses assessment as a part of the learning process.

The balance of power shifts so that the instructor shares some decisions about the course with the students such that the instructor and the students collaborate on course policies and procedures. While Weimer's model appeals to faculty, they find that is less pragmatic in describing ways to implement change (Wright, 2006). Since these five practices are broad abstract categories, they do not identify specific learner-centered behaviors for many instructors. To assist faculty, I defined each practice into specific components and incremental steps between instructor-centered and learner-centered teaching. Incremental steps allow instructors to make changes gradually over time. These incremental steps define a manageable transition process from instructor-centered to learner-centered teaching.

### **2.2.3. Passive Learning**

Passive learning is prevalent in the traditional teaching approach taken by many professors in business schools. In traditional classes, professors deliver lectures for the majority of the class time and there is little opportunity for student input through discussion or experiential exercises (Stewart-Wingfield & Black, 2005). Additionally, professors provide a syllabus and class schedule and determine grades in traditional classes by a small number of exams, typically based on multiple-choice, true-false, or matching questions. The traditional lecture approach has been used for many years in higher education because it provides a convenient and expeditious mode to impart knowledge and introduce basic principles to large classes of undergraduate students (Whetten & Clark, 1996). By using the traditional lecture method, professors can present a large amount of material in a relatively brief amount of time (Miner, Das, & Gale, 1984). Although the traditional lecture method is still predominant, some studies have shown that students fail to retain as much material after the class has been completed in comparison to classes taught in an active environment (Van Eynde & Spencer, 1988). Another drawback to this method appears to be a lack of student attention, which many educators have observed in their own classes (Dorestani, 2005). Educators conjecture that many students are not actively engaged in most traditional lecture classes. Therefore, it is common for some students to drift off to sleep, for others to talk among themselves, and for some students to play games or send messages on their laptop computers during class. To counter the above-listed behaviors, educators have turned to active methods of teaching.

### **2.2.3.1. The teacher centered approach**

This approach gives the priority role and responsibility to the teacher. The teacher is considered as the source and the student as a recipient. This approach includes methods like recitation and classroom lectures. Some people agree that this method, if properly handled by experienced teachers, it can give students the necessary knowledge. However, many scholars in the field of pedagogy emphasize its disadvantages rather than its advantages. Accordingly, the following points are some of the shortcomings mentioned by scholars.

Since traditional methods have no variety, they became monotonous and boring the learning process depends on the talking of the teacher where the learner becomes a passive listener. Moreover, it inhibits active participation and ability of the learner and encourages him or her to be submissive (Yallem, 1999:27)

The teacher-centered approach gives emphasis to the teacher as a knowledgeable person of the subject matter. Although the role of the subject matter specialist cannot be underestimated, equally important factors are the students and their experiences whose role have not been recognized. Yet, the recognition of student activities in learning does not go beyond lip service by educational authorities (Elizabeth, Leu 1999).

The teacher-centered approach focuses on content, emphasizes knowing what student works as individuals and often in competition with each other. Students are highly dependent on the teacher's activities and learning objectives are imposed; lecture dominates as the mode of curriculum delivery. The teacher's role is that an expert (Ellis, 1995:219). Therefore, the role of traditional method of teaching in the current world is decreasing in its relevance. Rather it seems as problem endangering for fruitful results of education. Although education is fundamental to social regeneration, yet there is a danger that it will fail to play the role to bring about changes.

## **2.3. The Teacher versus Student-Centered Approaches**

### **2.3.1. The Teacher Approach**

The underlying principle of the teacher/expert approach to education is rooted in the psychology of behaviorism and of positivism philosophy. Behaviorism understands learning as a system of behavioral responses to physical stimuli, driven by reinforcement, practice and external motivation. Applied to the educational sphere, educators devote their time and resources to deconstructing subject matter into its constituent parts and developing a sequenced, well-structured curriculum. This method is based on the Mastery-learning Model (Bloom, 1976), which assumes that just as wholes can be broken into parts; skills can be broken into sub-skills. In this context, successful learning is associated with the mastery of specific designated skills and behavior. With this teacher approach, learners are viewed as relatively passive, and their behavior needs to be shaped by external reinforcement controlled by teachers (Skinner, 1953).

Learners need an “expert” to fill them with information: they are “empty vessels to be filled with knowledge” (Garfield, 1995; Moore, 1997). Knowledge is defined as an entity that can be given or transmitted and absorbed by students. Popper, for example, labeled this “the bucket theory of knowledge” (Popper, 1986). A good teacher is therefore someone who transfers information clearly and at the right pace (Moore, 1997). Learning is viewed as a linear process, progressing steadily from “not knowing” to “knowing”.

The teacher approach is characterized by the predominant use of traditional methods of teaching such as formal lectures, seminars and examinations. The teacher provides structured material during lectures, where students listen while taking notes. Then, during seminars, the teacher asks students the extent to which they understood this material. Finally, received knowledge is tested by administering examinations several times during the term. This approach is relatively efficient since it allows educators to teach many students within a rather short period of time. Unfortunately, in most situations such conditions may promote a “surface” rather than “deep” level of understanding and orient students towards performing only at the minimal level

required to obtain a good grade in the course (Biggs, 1999). The teacher/expert approach is also rooted in the positivist philosophy, which refers to the theory that knowledge can be acquired only through direct observation and experimentation, and not through metaphysics or theology. The concept was first coined by Auguste Comte, the first modern sociologist in the 19th century, and was followed by other scientific and philosophical thinkers.

In the context of education, positivism implies that learning emphasizes observable facts while excluding metaphysical speculation about origins or ultimate causes. This would serve as an explanation for how children learn, and how reality is perceived through discourse of knowledge, by which teachers are providers and experts. Hence, this doctrine contends that perception through the senses is the only admissible basis of human knowledge where the figure of authority transmits precise thoughts.

### **2.3.2. The Student-Centered Approach**

Practices associated with the teacher approach are opposed by the school of “constructivism” (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978), that we refer here to as the student-centered approach. Constructivism proposes that people have no veridical access to objective reality, but are constructing their own version of reality while at the same time transforming it, and themselves in the process. Concept development and deep understanding are given priority over specific skills and behaviors as the goal of instruction. It is a theory of learning, not a description of teaching, and hence not a “cookbook teaching style” (Fostnot, 1996). The theorizing of Piaget, whose main goal was to understand the mechanism of learning, is fundamental to constructivism. Piaget’s contribution to the learning process has been applied extensively in education (Panofsky et al., 1990). Piaget’s core idea was that children are active thinkers, constantly trying to construct a more advanced understanding of their world. He focused on the development of logical or systematic concepts through social exchange. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) considers the articulation of systematic concepts to be developmental. Emphasis is placed on the social environment surrounding children as a model for the development of many of their thoughts, beliefs and behaviors. According to scientists (Cobb et al., 1992), the individual’s cognitive structures cannot be understood without observing the individual having

commerce with their social environment. From a constructivist perspective, students are actively and individually construing their own social knowledge, rather than merely copying knowledge (Garfield, 1995). In the educational context, ideas and concepts of constructivism led to the development of a student-centered approach to learning. Learning is considered to be a complex process that is not possible to deconstruct into logical parts. The learner is not a passive receiver of knowledge but, rather, an active participant. The learner has the responsibility to accommodate the learning process to his/ her own unique learning style in order to structure his/her own learning. The teacher's role is that of a guide who assists the learner in the difficult process of constructing his/her individual system of knowledge. For instance, teachers will need to show students how to become responsible for their learning by giving them opportunities to frame questions effectively on their own, to see how problems can be represented, and to determine how to gather information relevant to these problems (Burbules and Linn, 1991). Another example highlighting the role of the teacher in the student-centered approach ensures that children operate within their zone of next development. More precisely, teachers need to shape expectations so that students can recognize relevant information as it emerges, as well as to interpret new data in constructive and organized ways. These actions will contribute to their capacity to retain knowledge over time and to have an active role in it.

#### **2.4. Benefits of the Student-Centered Approach over the Teacher/Expert Approach**

According to researchers in the field of education, there is evidence to support the view that a student-centered approach has positive consequences to learning (Darling, 1994). Specifically, the student-centered approach, or what Darling (1994) refers to as the Child-Centered Pedagogy (CCP), promotes class participation. This new approach allows students to become more open and more efficient at making decisions on their own, and it also recognizes that interactions between teacher and student are natural, thus breaking the psychological barrier whereby students see their teachers as experts (Darling, 1994). Another important consequence of the student-centered approach is the notion of cognitive processes. What is to be learned is determined by the child's understanding at the precise moment and knowledge is build upon and constructed on what the learner already knows (Darling,1994). When we compare evaluation

methods, the student-centered approach is more successful than the former traditional teacher/ expert structure since students engage in “real-world” tasks rather than multiple-choice tests. Specifically, the student-centered approach allows teachers to evaluate students according to criteria that are important for actual performance for their future instead of their memorization of skills (Wiggins, 1989). Consequently, the student-centered approach supports the development of higher order thinking, both cognitive and meta cognitive, as well as performance skills which are based on a constructivist perspective building upon learners’ strengths and needs (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Frenay et al., 1998; Piaget, 1973). In fact, the teacher/expert approach is criticized with regards to traditional standardized testing, more precisely for placing students in a passive, reactive role, instead of engaging their capacities to come up with ideas, solve problems or structure various tasks (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Garfield, 1995) which greatly fail to measure acquired knowledge and stimulate learning. Therefore, “the quality of education made available to many students has been undermined by the nature of the testing programs used to monitor and shape their learning” (Darling- Hammond, 1994, pp. 12–13).

## **2.5. Factors Affecting Active Learning Approach**

### **2.5.1. Human Related Problems**

#### **2.5.1.1. The Training of Teachers**

The success of educational process depends to a greater extent on the character and ability of teachers. Teaching in modern school must be vastly enabled to produce better educated person than was formerly. Found. Teaching demands the ability to adapt boldly, invent, create procedures and to meet the ever changing demands of learning situation. Teachers must know much more subject matter, method of teaching the learner and his growth, the settings for and environment of learning, about the interaction between learner and environment. Therefore, the modern professional teacher must posse` a system of principles and habits of thinking which guide the operational process. Scholars have suggested that, if education is to be successful, next to curriculum, teacher training is of special significance, which needs considerations so as to maximize the development and changes in education (Gerhard 1982:21).

Andrew Pollard and Jill Burne, (1994:80), Cooper (1986:4-5) suggest similar views about the need to have teacher`s competencies resulted from training. They mentioned about the general areas of the teacher`s competence related commands of theoretical knowledge, about learning, and human behavior, mastery that requires practical application in concrete situation, curriculum arrangement, knowledge of general and specific methods of teaching etc. because theoretical knowledge can be used to interpret situation and solve problems, many classroom events that might or remain inexplicable otherwise can be recognized and go unnoticed reserves by applying theories and concepts of human behavior. They stress that quality of teaching has direct relation with the teacher`s extensive training and repeated exercises.

Teacher`s pedagogical skills can be improved by emphasizing courses that develop the teacher`s ability to reason about the content of instruction. As already has been discussed teachers should have a sound knowledge of the curriculum and be able to transfer it to the students. They must be able to analyze critically the material to the interest and abilities of their students. Teachers must be able to organize and manage the classroom evaluate discipline, and encourage students in manner that promotes better learning.

Teachers are central to the delivery as well as the quality of education. The academic and professional training of teachers has direct and positive bearing on the quality of their performance and consequently on the achievement of students (Lockheed 1991:62-63, and Gerhard 1982:23). Effective teaching is determined by the individual teacher knowledge of the subject matter and mastery of pedagogical skill Ibid). The above scholarly ideas support the need for a sound training of teachers in order to change the curriculum to real situations in the classroom teaching.

Due to the lack of professional preparation, they frequently demanded curriculum packages that are worked out right down to individual sequences of instruction, for these facilities the preparation of their own lessons. They are forced to be dependent upon others. They do not try to fill the gap between reality and ideas in the curriculum (Ibid25).

As tried to mention in the above paragraphs it is important to note that, teachers should be knowledgeable, competent and enthusiastic in their subject, classroom management, and understanding and sympathetic to students needs. It is important,

but sufficient, to be an expert in the subject matter. It is also crucial to have the ability to select and apply the most important methods or approaches of teaching.

## **2.5.2. Non Human Influencing Factors**

### **2.5.2.1. Classroom conditions**

#### **Class size**

Class size refers to the number of pupils regularly scheduled to meet in the administrative and instructional units, known as class or section, usually under the direct guidance of a single teacher (Monre, 1956:212). Class size concerns educators for various reasons because learning can occur positively when lessons are under appropriate conditions both for the student and teachers. The classroom size has its own impact in facilitating or hindering activities of teaching and learning.

The central problems of class size relates to the effects upon administrative efficiency, pupils achievement, teacher health and moral in addition to this as Monre further noted that, there are significant correlation`s between class size and student achievement (Ibid. 213).

A universal complaint, even among teachers with usual success in large section, was inability in such classes to find adequate time to treat individual differences in pupils (Ibid. 214). Studies made in United States of America as in the policy of 1960`s indicated 35 student is the maximum limit for effective primary school classes. Harries (1960: 1497) also mentioned that the class size in elementary school teacher taught 30 to 34 students each in 27% of states, while in the other 18% states fewer than 25 students, 11% of them 40 or more students to be taught. The average was 31 students in one class.

According to the above scholarly ideas there is a strong belief to have smaller group of students in the classroom for better learning. An excessive number of student`s means that a diminishing amount of time is available to undertake necessary guidance responsibilities for these children.

For efficient use of time and labor, and for reaping the maximum benefit from minimum quantity of input, it is essential that any action in the process of teaching

and learning in schools would delineate consciously. The objective of the intended action should be viewed with comparable degree of school situations and resources so that, attainments should be made.

Most pedagogues agree about the population in the classroom to be manageable size 20-35 students (Marry Print, 1993:253, Andrew Pollard, 1994:154). Furthermore, studies made in various countries like Sweden the classroom population was 24, Japan 30, china 40-50 were mentioned in the works of Nobuk,(1998: 168).

The Ethiopian primary school standard allows 50 students per class while in the high schools 60 students. This is stated in the Ministry of Education school standard documents as the maximum limit, with the understanding of they, classrooms to be conducive, manageable and create interactive situations for the process of teaching and learning (MOE, 1988:20).

The large number of students requires more resource materials to use for practical activities, and makes difficult for the teacher to select and apply which method for whom? Because as the number of students in a classroom increases, complexity of the students personality is also demanding serious attention.

#### **2.5.2.2. Classroom Facilities**

There are numerous ways to think about classroom. One way is to think about them as ecological system in which a set of inhabitant`s teachers and students interact with a specific environment (classroom) for the purpose of completing value activities and tasks (Arendes, 1997:17). A rich learning environment promotes independent and self regulated learning. Stimulating bulletin boards, displays, and serves as motivates for independent inquiry. The physical environment should also communicate clearly to students the importance of teacher attach to self regulated learning. Effective teachers accomplish to this end by displaying the results of the students work and by encouraging students to the results of the students work and by encouraging students to displaying their own work when they think they have done good job (Ibid, 268).

Building, grounds, supplies and equipments should correspond to both the educational purpose and the means by which teachers and students achieve. Making schools more child- centered would require the use of large rooms (J. Crag, Helen et al 1998:49).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

As mentioned in the introduction, the aim of this study was to assess the status of implementation of active learning approach in governmental upper primary schools of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub City. To analyze this descriptive survey design was employed. Descriptive survey method was employed because, it helps to explain educational phenomena in terms of the condition that exist, opinions that are held by students, teachers and instructor, possesses that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. At times descriptive survey is the means through which opinions, attitudes, suggestions for educational practices can be obtained.

#### **3.2 Research Method**

In addition to descriptive survey, qualitative approach was used to supplement an in-depth understanding of complex process specially related to human behavior that affects the implementation of active learning method.

#### **3.3 Sources of Data**

The main sources of data for this study were primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are first hand information. Among types of primary sources the researcher used teachers, students and Kotebe College of Teachers Education pedagogy instructors as primary source. The secondary source of data for the study was school documents. Like, written documents, encyclopedias, Encarta and students result.

#### **3.4 The Samples and Sampling Techniques**

The sample size corresponds to 40 percent of total teachers of upper primary grade teachers, which were 169 teachers out of 300. A total of 6 upper primary schools were included out of 13 schools. Three pedagogical teacher from the college were included in interview. Besides, 282 students were included out of 5000 students. With regard to determining the composition of the sample, multi-stage sampling technique was used to

select participants for the proposed study. First, purposive sampling technique was used to select sub cities. Then simple random sample was used to select woredas and schools. Whereas, regarding teachers, students, purposive sampling were used.

### **3.5 Data Collecting Instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

The researcher used both close and open-ended questionnaires. The open-ended questionnaires were used to enable respondents to express their feeling without restriction. Two types of questionnaires were prepared. The questionnaires were prepared for the students and teachers and were requested to respond about the school suitability and facilities, their training background, their attitude to the profession, how they implement the approach and the content and organization of the textbooks as well as teachers guide. In addition to this, teachers and students of the sampled schools were requested to give ideas about resource and instructional material availability supplementary instructional materials. The researcher and one other selected assistant were administered the questionnaires in 10 days. The assistant was a degree holder in Biology and serve as supervisor in the wereda. The assistant was offered with the necessary orientation before he started the data collection.

#### **3.5.2 Observation/Interaction Analysis Record**

Relevant data related to classroom observation were collected through the completion of observation/ interaction analysis record sheets. As neatly stated in the introduction part, classroom observation using observation/interaction analysis record sheet was the focus of this study.

#### **3.5.3 Interview schedules**

Interview schedule was used to collect information from pedagogical teachers of Kotebe College of teachers' education. This is important to discover supplementary information to the main task (direct observation). Through interview valuable information about the classroom activities teachers and their opinion regarding issues, relating to the use of active learning method was obtained. Interview schedules were prepared based on document analysis. Then interview was conducted with pedagogical teachers.

### **3.6 General Data Collection Sheet**

Data Collection sheet was used to record influencing factors on teaching methods, for example, class size, availability of materials and equipment, libraries, laboratories etc. Like the interview schedules, this data collection sheets were prepared to obtain supplementary information for the main task (classroom observation). The general data collection sheet were prepared in such a way that various influencing factors could be organized under some general categories so that it was easier for data analysis to support generalization on the obtained results. Then data were collected from teacher, and through the prepared sheets.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation**

To analyze the collected data both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were used. For the quantitative data collected through observation analysis record sheet can be systematically organized and the summary was presented using tables and percentage. Information obtained from interview and general data collection record sheets is presented in support of the major findings obtained from class room observation. On the other hand, the qualitative data gathered through interview and document analysis, textual content analysis was used. In here, some amounts of descriptive information were organized into categories and themes through coding. Coding was designed to reduce the information in ways that facilitate interpretations of the findings. Hence, detailed descriptions of the codes and the coding procedures prepared in advance. To minimize error of qualitative information, consideration was given for careful records of notes and observations. To this effect, interviews were often tape-recorded and transcribed. Moreover, through triangulation of results, information from different instruments in the study, such as questionnaire, interview, observation and document analysis converges to support interpretation.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. Presentation and Analysis of Data**

#### **4.1 Analysis of the Main Data**

Under this chapter, data analysis, interpretation and major findings of the study can be presented. This can be done through; questionnaires, observation checklist and interview are presented using tables. The chapter is divided in to three sections. Characteristics of the respondents (subjects), analysis of the main data and discussion of the major results are presented, respectively.

##### **4.1.1 Characteristics of the Respondents**

Before discussing the data related to the major questions, a summary of characteristics of the respondents were presented below. As mentioned in chapter three, the intended information for the study has been gathered from three groups; they are teachers, students and pedagogy instructor of Kotebe College of teachers Education. A total of 169 and 282 teachers and students of upper primary grades and one pedagogy instructor were included in the study.

**Table 4.1.1 Profiles of teachers**

sex	Total No students		Experience								Educational status		Teaching load									
			>4		5 - 8		9 - 12		13 - 16		diploma		degree		8 - 10		11 - 15		16- 20		21 - 27	
	No	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%		
Male	10	62	30	29	35	33	25	23	15	14	60	57.	45	43	25	24	30	29	40	38	10	10
Female	64	38	20	31	22	34	16	28	6	9	40	63	24	38	6	9	23	35	20	31	15	23
Total	169	100	50	30	57	34	41	24	21	12	100	60	69	40	31	16	53	33	60	35	25	38

The above profile of teachers shows that 62% of male and 38% were female teachers. Regarding their experience, 30% of teachers were 4 and below, 34% of teachers were 5 - 8, 24% of teachers were 9-12 and 12% of teachers were 13-16 years of teaching experience. Their educational status is, 59.8% of teachers were diploma and below and 40.18% of teachers were degree holders. The teachers teaching load per week is, 18% of teachers were 8-10, 31% of teachers' were 11-15, 36% of teachers` were 16-20 and 15% of teachers` were 21-27 teaching load per week.

## 4.1.2 Teachers Training how to Implement Active Learning

**Table4.1.2 The level of training on how to teach active learning**

Question	Total No of teachers		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
The level of training u7uoon how to teach active learning	169	100	15	9	22	13	35	20	97	58

According to Table4.1.2, 9% of teachers were responded “Very high”, 13% of teachers were responded “High”, 20 of teachers responded “Moderate” and 58% of teachers responded “Low” about the level of active learning training. The data were organized in one category. It is pedagogy instructor’s role in their college. Perception plays a great role to facilitate or hinder individual activity. According to Morgan, et al (1986: 1580) perception of an individual refers to the way any event in the world and the world itself looks sounds, feels, tastes or smells to him

*The instructor (x): the college has been giving active learning method since 2006 but it was not in organized and sustained ways. Most of the time, instructors cannot implement active learning in the classroom this is why, it is because they want to finish the course with high speed.*

*The instructor (Y): we gave active learning training for students as a part of course. On the other hand, our college encourages all instructors to use active learning techniques while teaching their different courses. If we teach our student in active learning method, they also teach their students in active learning method. But when we see the extent of applicability, it is not as such a satisfactory. Many teachers still teach using only lecture method. As a rule the college forces teachers to use active learning method but most instructors stick themselves to the old method. As a pedagogy department we usually fight and*

*encourage our college teachers to be a good model by using active learning method in their courses.*

*Instructor (Z): now a day our college is slightly giving active learning as part of each subject. It doesn't mean active learning is fully implemented. This is because most of the teachers were giving attention to complete the course but they can't think off the method they were using. Rather, they were thinking about how to complete the course.*

It is said that “able teachers, under favorable circumstances, do make an important differences in students learning” (Goodlad, 1984). Much of teachers preparation (training) in Ethiopia emphasize the acquisition of subject knowledge with little emphasize given to create an understanding and skill in the use of pedagogical approaches which encourage students to venture in to areas of higher order thinking. In the Ethiopian education and training policy it was mentioned that the primary reason for the poor quality of education in the past was the training as well as the overall attitude towards teachers (MOE, 2002). In order to correct this deplorable situation profile that teachers at every level must fit has been determined; teacher training institutions have been strengthened and enriched; and teacher advancement or promotion scale have been set and are under implementation.

Therefore, as collected data from questionnaire, observation checklist and interview the study shows that the level of in-service and short term training is insufficient. Hence, the absence of organized training negatively affected the implementation of active learning.

### 4.1.3 Teachers commitment to implement active learning

**Table 4.1.3 do you prepare instructional materials from locally available materials?**

**If No, why?**

No	Question	Total no of teachers		Response			
				Yes		no	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Do you prepare instructional materials from locally available materials? If No, why?	169	100	57	34	112	66
2	Have you ever tried to improve your teaching skill on active learning by your own? If No, why?	169	100	47	28	122	72
3	Do you bring variety of teaching techniques to the class to motivate your students? If No, why?	169	100	40	24	129	76

Based on table 4.1.3, 34% of teachers responded “Yes”, whereas, 66% of teachers responded “No” for do you prepare instructional materials from locally available materials. They also mentioned the lack of material preparation skill and shortage of hand tools as the cause of why they are not preparing.

According to the teachers response 28% of teachers tried, whereas, 72% of teachers have never tried to improve teaching skills on active learning. The reason they raised for the question were, the shortage of time, the lack of willingness, the absence of awareness how to improve by their own and lack of access.

According to teachers’ response 24% of teachers were brought variety of techniques to the class whereas, 76% of teachers responded as they are not using variety of teaching techniques. They reasoned out that they have no adequate knowledge of teaching methodologies in a large class size.

Researcher: how helpful is the commitment of teachers for the effectiveness of active learning?

*The instructor(x): without commitment it is difficult to accomplish a task properly. To make a task effective, it needs the commitment of teachers with collaboration to students.*

*The instructor (Y): teachers` commitment and motivation is a key to the success of teaching learning process. Active learning methodology demands teachers` time, effort and creativity. So that without commitment and complete engagement teachers cannot effectively implement active learning technique.*

*The instructor (Z): teachers` commitment is a key factor for the effectiveness of teaching learning process. Students` performance highly affected by teachers` commitment. So, committed teachers contribute a lot for the success of active learning process.*

The study shows that most of the teachers do not prepare instructional materials from locally available materials. This is because of lack of material preparation skill and shortage of hand tools. Most of the teachers do not tried to improve their teaching skill on active learning. They mentioned the reason as shortage of time, lack of willingness, the absence of awareness how to improve by their own and lack of access. And also the study shows most of the teachers do not apply or use variety of teaching techniques. This was because they have no adequate knowledge of teaching methodologies in a large class size.

Committed teachers may have strong psychological ties to their school, students or their subject areas in loosely coupled organization like schools where there considerable disagreement on what outcomes should be accomplished and great difficulty in inspecting and controlling work (Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976) voluntary commitment is especially important. Recent attempts to tighten couplings in education through tough standards and increased tastings for both teachers and students might seem to lessen the need for teacher commitment (Firestone, Fuhrman and kirst, 1991).

## 4.2 Teachers Interest towards the Profession

**Table 4.2.1 Teachers interest towards the profession**

Question	Total No of teachers		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Teachers` interest and belief towards the teaching profession and the subject he or she teaches	169	100	20	12	30	17	52	31	67	40

For the question, your interest and belief towards the teaching profession and subject you are teaching, 12% of teachers responded “Very high”, 17% of teachers responded “High”, 31% of teachers responded “Moderate” and 40% of teachers responded “Low” meaning they do not have interest in the subject they are teaching.

There has been convergence of available research data pertaining to the question of what factors contribute to teachers` effectiveness over decades some of the factors fall under the heading of characteristics (Anderson, 2004). And he further states teachers characteristics are related to and influence the way they practice their profession. In this light, most research reports suggests that teacher`s beliefs related to their classroom practice. According to Brophy and Good (1974) in MC Kenzie and Turbil (1999) a better understanding of teacher`s belief system or conceptual base will significantly contribute to enhance educational effectiveness. As the study shows most of the teachers cannot have interest towards the teaching profession and the subject they teach. Therefore, teachers` lack of interest towards the profession negatively affects the implementation of active learning.

For the question, your belief towards the teaching profession, 9% of teachers responded “Very high”, 18% of teachers responded “High”, 36% of teachers responded “Moderate” and 38% of teachers responded “Low” interest towards the teaching profession.

### 4.3 Factors that affect the implementation of active learning

**Table 4.3.1 Qualities of school facilities**

Question	Total No of teachers		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
qualities of school facilities like: library, libratory and pedagogical center	169	100	15	9	30	18	60	36	64	38

Based on table 4.3.1, 9% of teachers responded "Very high", 18% of teachers responded "High", 36% of teachers responded "Moderate", whereas, 38% of teachers responded "Low" the quality level of school facilities.

### 4.3 Factors related to instructional materials

**Table 4.3.2 Do the text book and teacher guide suitability to implement active learning**

Question	Total No of teachers		Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Do the text book and teacher guide suitability to implement active learning	169	100	121	72	48	28

Based on table4.1.12, 72% of teachers responded "Yes", whereas, 28% of teachers responded "No" for the suitability of text book and teacher guide to implement active learning.

## 4.4 Students Profile

**Table 4.4.1. Profiles of Student**

Sex	Total No of students		Sub city Nifas silk Lafto		wereda				Grade			
	No	%	No	%	04	05	06	08	05	06	07	08
Male	141	50	141	50	20	20	70	31	35	35	36	35
Female	141	50	141	50	20	20	70	31	35	35	36	35
Total	282	100	282	100	40	40	140	62	70	70	72	70

The above table shows, 141 male and 141 female students responded the questionnaire. The students were from Nifas Silk Lafto sub city wereda 04,05,06 and 08. Regarding their grade level, 70 students were from 5, 6 and 8, whereas, 72 students were from grade 7.

### 4.4.2 Teacher related problems

**Table 4.4.2. Commitment of teachers to implement active learning**

Sex	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	141	50	17	12.1	27	19.1	35	24.8	65	46.1
Female	141	50	15	10.6	23	16.3	35	24.8	65	46.1
Total	282	100	32	11.3	50	35.5	70	24.8	130	46.1

For the question, the level of commitment of your teacher to implement active learning, 11.3% of the respondents responded “very high”, 35.5% of student responded “High”, 24.8% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas, 46.1% of students responded that commitment of teachers to implement active learning is low.

Committed teachers may have strong psychological ties to their school, students or their subject areas in loosely coupled organization like schools where there considerable disagreement on what outcomes should be accomplished and great difficulty in inspecting and controlling work (Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976) voluntary commitment is especially important. Recent attempts to tighten couplings in education through tough standards and increased tastings for both teachers and students might seem to lessen the need for teacher commitment (Firestone, Fuhrman and kirst, 1991).

#### 4.4.3 Instructional materials related problems

**Table 4.4.3 Adequacy of training or text books**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Adequacy of training or text books	282	100	160	56.7	56	19.9	40	14.2	26	9.2

Table 4.4.3 shows, that 56% of students responded “Very high”, 19% of students responded “High”, 14.2% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas, 9.2% of students responded “Low” adequacy of training or text book.

**Table 4.4.4, the level of text book encourage student to enhance their knowledge and skills**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
The level of text book encourage student to enhance their knowledge and skills	282	100	151	53.9	58	20.6	48	17	25	8.6

Table 4.4.4 shows that 53.9% of student responded “Very high”, 20.6% of students responded “High”, 17% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas 8.6% of students responded “Low” for the level of text book in encouraging student to enhance their knowledge and skills.

**Table 4.4.5, Teachers tendency to the traditional lecture method has affected the implementation of active learning**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Teachers tendency to the traditional lecture method has affected the implementation of active learning	282	100	163	57.8	80	28.4	18	6.4	21	7.4

Table 4.4.5 shows that 57.8% of students responded “Very high”, 28.4% of students responded “High”, 6.4% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas, 7.4% of students responded “Low” tendency of teachers to the traditional lecture method has affected the implementation of active learning.

**Table 4.4.6, level of adequate activities and exercises in the text book to practice active learning**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Level of adequate activities and exercises in the text book to practice active learning	282	100	163	57.8	80	28.4	18	6.4	21	7.4

The above table shows that 57.8% of student responded “Very high”, 28.4% of student responded “High”, 6.4% of student responded “Moderate”, whereas, 7.4% of student responded “Low” level of adequate activities and exercise in the textbook to practice active learning.

**Table 4.4.7, Shortage of time to practice active learning**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Shortage of time to practice active learning	282	100	141	50	58	20.6	46	16.3	37	13.1

Table 4.4.7 shows that 50% of students responded “very high”, 20.6% of student responded “High”, 16.3% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas, 13.1% of students responded “Low” for the question, shortage of time to practice active learning.

**Table 4.4.8, the level of classroom condition to implement active learning**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
the level of classroom condition to implement active learning	282	100	26	9.2	40	14.1	54	19.1	162	57.4

Table 4.4.8 shows that 9.2% of students responded “very high”, 14.1% of student responded “High”, 19.1% of students responded “Moderate”, whereas, 57.4% of students responded “Low” level of classroom condition to implement active learning.

**Table 4.4.9, the level of class size to implement active learning**

Question	Total No of students		Very high		High		Moderate		Low	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
The level of class size to implement active learning	282	100	43	15.2	52	18	67	23.8	120	42.6

Table 4.4.9 shows 15.2.4% the respondent responded “very high” 18.4%,of the respondent responded “high” 23.8% of the respondent responded “moderate” where as 42.6% of the respondent responded “low”.

#### **4.5 Presentation and analysis of data obtained through observation**

The analysis and presentation obtained through observation is presented below. To fulfill the observation, 7 (seven) randomly selected teacher were observed. The data based on the requirement of the classroom observation checklist (see appendix D) were collected. They are analyzed in separate tables. The observation was conducted by the researcher and the result of observed cases were added up and presented in the following table.

**Table4.5.1, Observation checklist for classroom facilities**

No	Observed items	Level of training						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	The classroom and sitting arrangement			2	29	5	71	
2	Condition of the chalk board			4	57	3	43	
3	Enough light to see in the class			3	43	4	57	

As depicted in table 4.5.1 the data obtained from classroom observation proved that the classroom size and sitting arrangement are not convenient to implement active learning. Majority 71% of the observation result indicates that the classroom design is not arranged to facilitate active learning. Regarding the physical environment of the classroom do not reflect enough light for active learning process.

**Table 4.5.2, Observation checklist for instructional methods**

No	Observed items	Level of rating						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Problem solving					7	100	
2	Group work					7	100	
3	Pair work					7	100	
4	Panel discussion					7	100	
5	Case study					7	100	
6	Role model					7	100	

In the table 4.5.2, the classroom observation result indicates that majority of the activities expected to be practiced by teachers were not observed. For example, 100% of the observed classes did not show the use of different instructional methods to implement active learning.

**Table 4.5.3, Observation checklist on utilization of instructional materials**

No	Observed items	Level of rating						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Availability of textbook	7	100					
2	Availability of teacher guide	7	100					
3	Availability of charts, posters			3	43	4	57	
4	The quality of library, libratory and pedagogical center	1	14	1	14	5	72	

Availability of instructional materials in classroom is the major factors to enhance the whole process of education, whereas, in table 4.5.3 the observation result indicates that in 64.5% of the observed classes, there was low availability of instructional materials. Moreover, in 100% of the observed classes, the teachers do not use instructional materials. Regarding the availability of textbook and teacher guide 71% of teachers and students have it to implement active learning.

#### **4.6 Discussion of Results**

In this part of the paper an attempt is made to explain the results of the study with reference to the basic questions formulated under the statement of the problem. The major ideas of the discussion are:

1. Teachers training how to implement active learning
2. Factors affecting the implementation of active learning method positively or negatively in terms of:
  - 2.1 instructional facilities
  - 2.2 the level of teachers commitment
  - 2.3 classroom condition and class size

#### **4.6.1 Teachers Training how to Implement Active Learning**

It is said that “able teachers, under favorable circumstances, do make an important differences in students learning” (Goodlad, 1984). Much of teachers preparation (training) in Ethiopia emphasize the acquisition of subject knowledge with little emphasize given to create an understanding and skill in the use of pedagogical approaches which encourage students to venture in to areas of higher order thinking. In the Ethiopian education and training policy it was mentioned that the primary reason for the poor quality of education in the past was the training as well as the overall attitude towards teachers (MOE, 2002). In order to correct this deplorable situation profile that teachers at every level must fit has been determined; teacher training institutions have been strengthened and enriched; and teacher advancement or promotion scale have been set and are under implementation.

Therefore, as collected data from questionnaire, observation checklist and interview the study shows that the level of in-service and short term training is insufficient. Hence, the absence of organized training negatively affected the implementation of active learning.

#### **4.6.2 Factors affecting the implementation of active learning**

Class size concerns educators for various reasons because learning can occur positively when lessons are under appropriate conditions both for the teacher and student (Monre, 1956:212). The central problems of class size relates to the effects up on administrative efficiency, pupils achievement, teacher health and moral. The data gathered from questionnaire, interviews and observation checklist shows that, the number of students in a class is large so it is difficult to evaluate, manage and implement active learning as a whole.

Beside social environment of a given institution, the location, size, shape and construction of the classroom, the presence and effective management of different instructional facilities like: furniture, resource center, laboratory and library services have bearing in the instructional methods. Teachers who teach many students in overcrowded classroom often say that it is certainly not suitable to provide activities and group works for such classes (Lue, 200:17). The study shows that there is mostly poor

classroom condition which cannot be suitable to implement active learning method in the classroom.

Authors like Dary and Terry; (1993:88) have stressed the importance of students' past experience, which is a transformative rather than passive accumulation of knowledge. They notice that unless learner considered the implication of the ideas there own lives and decided to act, know and believe in the ways; they are likely to adopt a passive acquiescence to the teachers' knowledge structure. And ultimately, this passive students' learning has not been transformed and at best resulted in some accretion of knowledge. Therefore, from the study collected from questionnaire, interviews and observation checklist, the researcher point out that the students' dependency on the traditional teacher mode of delivery highly affects the implementation of active learning.

Committed teachers may have strong psychological ties to their school, students or their subject areas in loosely coupled organization like schools where there considerable disagreement on what outcomes should be accomplished and great difficulty in inspecting and controlling work (Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976) voluntary commitment is especially important. Recent attempts to tighten couplings in education through tough standards and increased tastings for both teachers and students might seem to lessen the need for teacher commitment (Firestone, Fuhrman and kirst, 1991).

The study shows that most of the teachers do not prepare instructional materials from locally available materials. This is because of lack of material preparation skill and shortage of hand tools. Most of the teachers do not tried to improve their teaching skill on active learning. They mentioned the reason as shortage of time, lack of willingness, the absence of awareness how to improve by their own and lack of access. And also the study shows most of the teachers do not apply or use variety of teaching techniques. This was because they have no adequate knowledge of teaching methodologies in a large class size

There has been convergence of available research data pertaining to the question of what factors contribute to teachers' effectiveness over decades some of the factors fall under the heading of characteristics (Anderson, 2004). And he further states teachers characteristics are related to and influence the way they practice their profession. In this light, most research reports suggests that teacher's beliefs related to their classroom

practice (Thompson, 1992;Fang, 1996; kagan, 1992). According to Brophy and Good (1974) in MC Kenzie and Turbil (1999) a better understanding of teacher`s belief system or conceptual base will significantly contribute to enhance educational effectiveness. As the study shows most of the teachers cannot have interest towards the teaching profession and the subject they teach. Therefore, teachers` lack of interest towards the profession negatively affects the implementation of active learning.

Shortage of time is among dominant factors with respect to this problem the three groups of respondents agreed that the rime was the major problem negatively affecting the implementation of active learning. Supporting this fact, (Frant, 1980) explains the effect of time. The author stresses that shortage of time limits the teachers and students from implementing active learning in the classroom.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations. In this section first, a summary of the study and major findings are made. Second, conclusions of the basic findings are drawn. Lastly, some possible recommendations are forwarded on the basis of the findings of the study.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The purpose of this study was to assess the implementation of active learning approach in some selected upper primary governmental schools of Nifas Silk Lafto Sub city. In order to achieve this purpose, the following questions were raised in the study.

1. Do teachers gain the necessary knowledge in implementing active learning approach?
2. What are the factors negatively or positively affect the implementation of active learning in terms of:-
  - 2.1 Instructional facilities
  - 2.2 teachers commitment
  - 2.3. class room condition and class size.

The data were gathered mainly through questionnaires observation check list and interview from all respondents. The data obtained were analyzed in percentage. Based on the analysis of the data the following findings were obtained from the study.

#### **5.2. Major Findings**

##### **5.2.1. Training of Teachers**

The analysis of data indicates that almost all of the respondents of the study have confirmed training on active learning was in sufficient. However, the extent of perception varies between teachers and instructors; i.e. it is low among teachers than instructors.

### **5.2.2. Factors affecting the implementation of active learning**

The findings on eight factors indicated how active learning is affected in various ways. Some of them were presented below.

1. Large class size is indicated as major problem in implementing active learning.
2. Teachers' commitment is also another dominant factor in implementing active learning.
3. Teachers' interest towards the teaching profession is also among the major factors in implementing active learning.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The commitment of teachers in implementing active learning is low. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers commitment negatively affect the implementation of active learning.
2. The quality of library, pedagogical center and library are the major component in the implementation of active learning. But the findings of the study have shown that there is shortage of the above mentioned center in active learning class rooms.
3. Concerning the key factors that affect the implementation of active learning, the following are found to be negatively affecting.
  - Teachers interest towards the teaching profession.
  - Teachers interest towards the subject he/she teaches.
  - Lack of instructional materials
  - Large class size
  - Shortage of time
  - Teachers commitment

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Teachers' Training**

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 active learning.

From the study, the majority of teachers did not get training on active learning. This hinders the implementation of active learning. Therefore, it is important to conduct in-service training so that their use of active learning strategies will be improved.

### **5.4.2 Class size**

Class size was one of the major factors which hinder the implementation of active learning. The condition of the classrooms and the number of students do not match in the study area and this affects the implementation of active learning. Even if appropriate class size may not always be possible, the implementers of active learning should see alternative solutions such as, dividing students into groups, demonstration fields, field trip, laboratories and others. In addition to this, government bodies and stake holders have to construct extra classes to solve the problem.

### **5.4.3 Classroom conditions**

The result of this study revealed that the classroom condition to implement active learning tends to be low. The major reasons appear to be, large class size, lack of resources and other instructors and students related factors. Hence, an overall assessment and discussion is needed between implementers of active learning (teacher and students) to enhance the implementation of active learning.

In order to solve the problems of teachers commitment and lack of interest in the profession, school administrators, wereda educational leaders, Addis Ababa City administration Education bureau and Ministry of Education have to do different awareness creation programs.

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## Appendix – A

**Addis Ababa University**

**School Of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Educational Research**

I am post graduate student at Addis Ababa University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the teaching learning process. Hence, to make the study complete your honesty reaction is highly desirable. You are, therefore, kindly requested to give genuine information. Be also informed that the response you give is only for study and it will be kept confidential. Remember that the truthfulness of response you give contributes a lot to the success of the study. You do not write your name.

Thank you in advance

Part one; questionnaire to be filled by students.

### A. Background information of students.

Instruction; the characteristics of students are provided below please, select the appropriate answer and encircle it.

1. City -----
2. Sub city----- 3. Wereda----- 4. School-----
5. Grade----- 6. Sex-----

### B. Main data

**Instruction: items related with practice of active learning and perceptions of students are provided below. Please, select the appropriate answer based on your experience and encircle it.**

1. Commitment of teachers to implement active learning?
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
2. Adequacy of training books or text books.
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low

3. The level of adequate activities and exercise in the book to practice active learning
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
4. Your tendency to the traditional lecture or explanation method has affected the implementation of active learning
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
5. Teachers` tendency to the traditional lecture or explanation method has affected the implementation of active learning
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
6. The level of Students` lack of interest in affecting implementation of active learning approach in your class.
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
7. The level of shortage of time to practice active learning
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
8. The level classroom condition to implement active learning.
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
9. The level of class size to implement active learning.
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low

## **Appendix- B**

**Addis Ababa University**

**School Of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Educational Research**

I am post graduate student at Addis Ababa University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the teaching learning process. Hence, to make the study complete your honesty reaction is highly desirable. You are, therefore, kindly requested to give genuine information. Be also informed that the response you give is only for study and it will be kept confidential. Remember that the truthfulness of response you give contributes a lot to the success of the study. You do not write your name.

Thank you in advance

### **Part two: A questionnaire to be filled by teachers.**

#### **A. Background information of teachers**

Instruction: the characteristic of teachers are listed below. Please, select the appropriate answer form alternatives given and encircle it.

1. City----- 2. Sub city -----3. Wereda-----  
----

4. Sex -----

5. Age. A. 18-25 years B. 26-33 years. C. 34-41years. D. 42-49 years. E. 50 and above  
6. Qualification: - A. T.T.I B. Diploma C. Degree D. Master  
E. If any other, specify-----

C. Area of study A. Biology B. Mathematics C. Physics  
E. If any other, specify-----

8. Teaching experience outside this wereda

A. 4years and below

C. 9 – 12 years

B. 5 – 8years  
-----

D. 13-16 years E. specify if any-----

9. Teaching experience in this wereda

- A. 4years and below
- B. 5 – 8years
- C. 9 – 12 years
- D. 13-16 years
- E. specify if any-----

10. Teaching load per week

- A. Below 10
- B. 11 – 15
- C. 16 – 20
- D. 21 and above

**Instruction II. Research related information direction give your appropriate answer for the following questions. In some of the items it is possible to give more than one another.**

**Teacher related questions**

1. The level of training on how to teach active learning
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
2. The level of having special training how to teach active learning in large class size
  - A. Very high
  - B. High
  - C. Moderate
  - D. Low
3. To what extent you implement active learning in classroom?
  - A. Always
  - B. some times
  - C. Not at all
4. Did you face problem while implementing active learning?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No

4.1.If Yes, list the problems?-----  
-----
5. Did you prepare instructional materials from locally available materials?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No

5.1.If No, why?-----  
-----
6. Have you ever tried to improve your teaching skill on the active learning by your own?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No



## **Appendix C**

**Addis Ababa University**

**School Of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Educational Research**

I am post graduate student at Addis Ababa University. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the teaching learning process. Hence, to make the study complete your honesty reaction is highly desirable. You are, therefore, kindly requested to give genuine information. Be also informed that the response you give is only for study and it will be kept confidential. Remember that the truthfulness of response you give contributes a lot to the success of the study. You do not write your name.

Thank you in advance

Interview for Kotebe teachers Education College pedagogy instructors

1. Did your college give active learning training for its student? Explain briefly.
2. What are the factors which affect implementation of active learning?
3. How helpful is the commitment of teachers for the effectiveness of active learning?

## **Appendices D**

**Addis Ababa University**

**School of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Educational Research**

I am post graduate student at Addis Ababa University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the teaching learning process. Hence, to make the study complete your honesty reaction is highly desirable. You are, therefore, kindly requested to give genuine information. Be also informed that the response you give is only for study and it will be kept confidential. Remember that the truthfulness of response you give contributes a lot to the success of the study. You do not write your name.

**Thank you in advance**

### **Classroom observation checklist**

1. General information

1.1.Observers name -----

1.2.Wereda -----

1.3.Name of school-----Grade-----

1.4.Subject observed-----

2. Teachers information

2.1.Qualification (state qualification(s) of teacher (current studies)-----  
-----

3. Classroom observation scale indicators. Please, ask for a lessons plan before the lesson starts use (√) mark for the answer you assume it appropriate.

3.1.Relevant experiences in teaching -----

2. Observation checklist for classroom facilities

No	Observed items	Level of training						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	The classroom and sitting arrangement							
2	Condition of the chalk board							
3	Enough light to see in the class							

Observation checklist for instructional methods

No	Observed items	Level of rating						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Problem solving							
2	Group work							
3	Pair work							
4	Panel discussion							
5	Case study							
6	Role model							

Observation checklist on utilization of instructional materials.

No	Observed items	Level of rating						Remark
		High		Moderate		Low		
		No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Availability of textbook							
2	Availability of teacher guide							
3	Availability of charts, posters							
4	The quality of library, libratory and pedagogical center							

## **Declarations**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a Masters Degree in any university, and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Approval**

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_