

# TEACHER-EDUCATORS' AWARENESS, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF HIGHER DIPLOMA PROGRAM TRAININGS: A STUDY IN GILGEL BELES COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Tuji Eresso

Gilgel Beles CTE, Professional Department

[betituji@gmail.com](mailto:betituji@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

This study attempted to assess the awareness, attitude and current practice of instructors towards application of Higher Diploma Training Skills like: active learning, action research, lesson planning and evaluation in classroom instruction as well as identifying to whether there are possible challenges that hinder the successful application of the training skills. To this end, 20 HDP graduated instructors, heads of the five Departments operating under the college and Dean of the college were participated in the study. Multiple instruments with multiple sources were used in data collection in the following order: questionnaire for all HDP graduates, classroom observation with 5 selected instructors for each Department, interview with the five observed instructors, interview with Department Heads and the Dean. To analyze the collected data percentage, mean score, standard deviation and one sample T-test were used. Then, the study implied that though the HDP graduates have good awareness /knowledge/ and positive attitude towards practicing the training skills, they were not applying Higher Diploma Training Skills to the expected level. Factors for the failure of implementing Higher Diploma Program training skills attributed to: lack of commitment from instructors' side, lack of learning materials at hand, the need to cover portion /large portion/, lack of well organized work place, lack of pressure and follow-up support from the heads of the institution, lack of interest from students' side, the need to behave as usual and large class size. Based on the findings, recommendations which may help to alleviate or minimize the effects of barriers like: raising awareness continuously among learners on the benefits of learner-centered approach, setting rules and regulations by responsible bodies that help to facilitate the implementation of that training skills, provision of effective follow-up services by HDP office after licensing instructors, budgeting adequate instructional resources were forwarded.

**Key words:** Attitude, Awareness, Higher Diploma program, Teacher-educator, Training skills, Practice

## Introduction

Higher education institutions are now actively taking advantage of instructional technology to enhance teaching effectiveness. They often do so by establishing instructional technology centre(s) to support the institution's technology integration initiative. For many of these centers, the first and most important task is to bring teaching staff members up-to-date with developments in new technology and pedagogy, and to support them in implementing change in their teaching practices (Berry, 1996 in Bulter & Chao, 2001). Short-term workshops and one-on-one services are some of the activities these centers often offer to assist teaching staff in their exploration of

the possibilities for instructional technology (Chamber and Stearns, 2001 cited in Bulter & Chao, 2001).

That is why, since the last few decades, the emphasis on accelerating new technology and pedagogy has changed the nature of the teachers' task, and instruction is moving away from the concept of teaching as teacher dominated talk to that of assisting learners to learn, away from the delivery of knowledge, ideas and principles by the teachers to the learners, by paying more emphasis to the acquisition of such knowledge by the learners through their own activities and experiences (Alebachew, 1996; Bulter & Chao, 2001).

To improve and make sustainable such experience of instruction in a required level, there is need to prepare efficient and effective teachers. So, what makes a teacher efficient and effective? In fact, this question has intrigued and challenged philosophers, researchers, policy-makers and teachers for the past hundred years. It is also a question that has generated diverse answers, varying in their nature and degree of specificity in different countries and across different periods in history. Educational thinkers and writers have variously emphasized different aspects of teaching role- the teacher as expert in his/her subject: the teacher as facilitator of learning, the teacher as a motivator and source of inspiration, the teacher as upholder of moral standards (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997).

Indeed, the 20<sup>th</sup> century's scientific and technological achievements were due, in large part, to the growth of higher education and the immense contribution and endeavor of the personnel trained within it. Without adequate higher education and research institutions providing a critical mass of skilled and educated people, no country can ensure genuine indigenous and sustainable development (UNESCO, 1998 in Desta, 2007).

To bring such intended change, besides its rapid expansion, Higher Education in Ethiopia, therefore, was required to revise certain number of dogmas and legacies inherited from its previous models. In addition to its traditional role of educating, creating knowledge and developing the mind, it is increasingly asked to train student-centered, practice oriented, society focused, and to teach professions that require skills and hands on training as well (Desta 2007).

To ensure that, there has always been a serious need for training qualified teachers in the kind of training that is needed to institutionalize for teacher trainees. Accordingly, the TESO program was developed as part of the implementation strategies of the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia. The Ministry of Education (MOE, 2003) claims that TESO is intended to bring about paradigm shift in the Ethiopian teacher education system. This paradigm shift implies change in what is valued in society, and what knowledge society thinks should be learned in schools. According to TESO (2003) document cited in Wudu, Tefera and Woldu (2009), the paradigm shift particularly in the context of teacher education involves (a) teaching which makes change in ideas and directly in learners life (b) taking the real world in to the classroom and taking teachers out into the real world (c) democratizing teacher education giving teachers, students, and citizens confidence to make decisions and take initiatives, to take control of their world.

To achieve such objectives, Alebachew (1996) suggests that there should be short in-service and up-grading courses for teacher educators to ensure that, they, too, keep up-to-date with new development and techniques in their profession. Because, Pre-service education alone is not adequate to fully prepare a teacher for a lifetime of teaching. Instead, continued professional development is essential (Mohamed, 2006).

Accordingly, the first action taken by TESO was designing curriculum material in a modular approach following the educational policy of Ethiopia that aimed at developing the culture of active learning and problem solving approach of instruction (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE, 2004)

A case in point is that Ministry of Education of Ethiopia has introduced Higher Diploma Program for teacher educators, which has been designed to improve the quality of education through provision of a licensing program that will develop the skills and professionalism of teacher-educators.

Basically, the rationale of the establishment of this program is, according to MOE (2002), cited in Desta (2007), most teacher educators have no adequate professional preparation for their role, and many have provided no practical experiences in the school cycle for which they are preparing teachers. Most have little or no staff development and are assigned to, rather than selected for their profession. While many have good academic qualifications and knowledge, they are unable to employ the teaching approaches, methods and assessments that are set out in education policy documents and are essential for successful, teaching in TEIs institutions.

The Higher Diploma Program is a new compulsory qualification for all teacher-educators that equip them with a practical program to support their development as reflective practitioners and effective teachers with enhanced professional status, able to model active learning, manage change and make a difference in the education system (HDP, 2003-2005 cited in Desta, 2007)

The focus of the program is on the process of assisting others to become effective teachers. According to MOE (2004) the objectives of HDP i.e., the program will enable teacher-educators to:

- support the implementation of the TESO program;
- identify their own needs and become a reflective teacher-educator;
- develop teaching as a skill, based on sound theoretical knowledge and experience;
- use active learning and student-centered teaching methods;
- become a role model of good practice;
- have high standards of professional ethics and clear values;
- provide a high quality experience for student teachers;
- help school teachers be more detective in their own teaching;
- be involved in action research;
- develop team working skills;
- address gender issues;
- support disadvantaged students in the institution;
- promote good citizenship;
- play an active part in community development ;
- play an active part in institutional development;
- plan their own professional development and career ;

Generally, the program is on-the-job training for one academic year targeting at ensuring the competence in learning and teaching methods, assessment methods as well as key elements of the roles required of teacher-educator's: reflection, collaborative work, planning and coping to change. To this end, the training of HDP comprises the following major teams: the reflective educator, time management, active learning methods, continuous assessment, and school placement and action research. Hence, teacher-educators expected to complete a number of curriculum research and design projects showing that their work for the diploma puts a great influence on changing their own teaching practice. Through the course of training, reflection on their classroom practice and research should lead to continuing and sustainable improvement in their teaching. Continuous assessment, including self-assessment, will contribute to a portfolio of evidence, which will be the basis of a continuous professional development plan for teacher-educators completing the program. The full time teaching commitments and training of the program carried out at the same time (TESO, 2003).

The particular assumption of providing such in-service training program is that teachers better practice any new instructional method when they are aware about and develop the attitude that brings about the change they look for in their students and when they have the freedom to practice it. As clearly stated out in the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994), problem solving teaching method is the major educational premise that to the principles of learner centered approach. To realize such practice and improve the quality of instruction in the TEI, there need to

be a shift from the traditional teacher dominated teaching approach to learner centered approach (Yalew, 2004).

Furthermore, besides, awareness or knowledge of the new instructional method, teachers' attitude is crucial for their effective performance. The way teachers think about, understand, and value instruction influences their classroom practice (Thi Thu Nga, n/d).

Many researches reveal that teachers suggested that learner centered methodology is very important for student learning. Because they believe that learner centered method gives a chance for the students to help each other by sharing ideas, gives an opportunity to do practically, be active participants, and be creative independently. In addition, it increases students' achievement, helps to develop their self-confidence and make students free by avoiding fear and helps the students to be free from expecting every thing from the teacher (Wudu, Tefera and Woldu, 2009)

In fact, though teachers showed positive attitude towards the utilization of learner-centered methods and attempting to apply the method (Flores, 2001; Beyene and Bihonegn, 2006; Btan-Friendlander, Drefus, & Milgram, 2004 in Mohamed, 2006 and Gara Latchama and Asrat dagnew, n/d) uncover that there are a number of factors hindering teachers (instructors) from utilizing the approach properly.

And, some scholars also believe that attitudes and expectations vary from society to society and attempting to copy learning and teaching strategy from one society into another, without trying to adapt in to the local conditions may not be successful (Derebssa, 2006 cited in Gara Latchama and Asrat Dagnew (n/d). As is stated above, in Ethiopia, as the culture is characterized by high degree of power where teachers are expected to be dominant and know "every thing" (Hotstede, 1980 in Oettingen, 1995 as cited in Yalew, 2004), teachers who present lesson in a more expressive way dominating the class, give notes to students, strictly manage the class, and tell the students what to do are mainly considered as effective teachers.

In addition, there are scholars, who argue against the way a new innovation of instruction is introduced. For instance, according to Kedir (2006), employment of HDP is a way in which learning tasks encourage the largely adult participants to memorize, imitate, and implement national directives and prescriptive teaching principles. As his argument, knowledge and skill is considered as imposition. Knowledge and skill is taken for granted without taking into account contextual factors. HDP is a conduit in this regard. Despite the 'positive' outcome claimed by organizers, participants while HDP training often dropout in some cases no matter what the consequence might be.

Despite such challenges, recently, the buzzword for educational reform in TEIs is learner-centered learning. National and regional education personnel are advocating for learners to be actively engaged in learning, constructing understanding and meaning, not receiving it. Even though a learner-centered approach may not be the cure for all the education quality problems in TEIs it is a step in the right direction, although it is a widely phrased, but it seems poorly understood concept in practice.

So, to put into practice this learner-centered approach in its effective way through the HDP program, which is a government initiative and the control is highly centralized, is taking place in all TEIs and Universities' Faculty of Education in Ethiopia. As the result the program is launched in 2005/06 in the Gilgel Beles College of Teacher Education, and by now (as of December 2009) only two batches have graduated in the beginning two consecutive years, and then after, no teacher-educators have been taking the training because no minimum required number of teachers to continue the training program. So, this research focused on assessing the already HDP graduated instructors' awareness, attitude and as well the extent to which all batches are applying the training skills into their classroom instruction, and, also factors challenging its effective implementation.

### **Statement of the problem**

According to Aklilu, Alemayehu and Mekesha (2008), there is enough theoretical background to argue that it is the pedagogical content knowledge that is the most control and values the need

for adequate content knowledge of the field of study. However, they uncovered that, in Ethiopia, still there are people who force-fully argue that the core of teacher education programs should be equipping teacher with strong subject matter. Such people believe that once the teacher has mastery of the subject matter, presentation of it will take care of itself.

So, as to cope-up with such challenges, the training of teacher-educators in the HDP program, the offering of action research courses to both students and teacher educators in abide to promote reflective and student-centered learning and teaching are some of the most important gains of TESO by MOE (2002) cited in Aklilu Alemayehu and Mekesha (2008).

Following the provision of the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994), learner-centered learning methodology has been introduced to the education system in general and to the higher education institutions in particular. And, consequently, the use of learner-centered learning in the classroom has been taken as one of the basic educational quality indicators (MOE and Academy for Educational Development, 2008).

Hence, in addition of the reform efforts made, the concern for quality teacher education seems still Prevailing. A Quality of teachers and teacher education programs have now become more serious issue in relation to the current expansion of enrollment in the education system.

In light of the above idea, HDP program is launched in 2005 in the GBCTE and currently under practice in the College and instructors are expected to be effectively implementing it. However, to make sure whether the program is being implemented as intended, it is essential to investigate the overall progress in line with the objective to be achieved. In light of the abovementioned, Craft (2000) claims that developmental (formative) evaluation is very essential to see the overall picture of a program, and to take measures that help to improve its progress.

Similarly, literature on staff development practice indicates that the success of a given professional development training measured by the degree of the transfer of the training skills into classroom instruction (Guskey, 2000). Conducting out-come assessment at the classroom level can do this. According to Guskey, out-come assessment enables the concerned body to identify the extent to which the training skills are realized at the classroom level, points to the possible factors/problems which could hinder the successful application of a program and could enable the concerned body to take progressive action based on the feedback obtained. This will enhance the sustainability of the program.

Fortunately, recently, the researcher as staff member of GBCTE, had the opportunity to observe the teaching-learning practice in the classroom of the college (GBCTE), and he had also the opportunity to learn through close members of staffs. Nevertheless, most of the instructors seem not practice the training skills of HDP at the actual classroom level. And then, in many occasions, the researcher observed and confirmed that the HDP program, which is under practice, in the college has not yet been investigated (evaluated) systematically.

Therefore, this triggered the researcher to conduct a study to investigate the teacher educators' awareness, attitude and practice of Higher Diploma program training skills. Consequently, this study initiated to cover the gap mentioned, but focusing mostly on active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment. The researcher intentionally selected these elements because of that the researcher through his experience perceived that these components seem given less emphasis. In line, the study addressed the possible limitations that hindered the application of the training skills to the optimal level.

To address these issues, the following basic questions were formulated.

- ❖ What is the awareness level of teacher educators in training skills of HDP like: active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment that they acquired from the HDP training?
- ❖ 2. What is the attitude of teacher-educators towards practicing training skills of HDP like: active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment that that they obtained from the HDP training?
- ❖ 3. To what extent HDP graduates are using the training skills (out puts like: active



learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment) in their classroom instruction?

- ❖ 4. Are there possible factors or challenges that hinder instructors from practicing experiences that developed from HDP training?

The general Objective is to assess the awareness, attitude and the current practice of teacher educators, licensed in Higher Diploma Program in GBCTE, the specific objectives are intended to:

- assess awareness, attitude and practice of instructors on how far HDP [active learning, action research, lesson planning and evaluation and continuous assessment] in their teaching practice being implemented
- determine factors affecting the implementation of HDP program
- recommend strategies that could escalate the application of HDP training skills into classroom teaching.

### **Methods and materials**

This study was designed to assess the instructors' awareness, attitude and practice of Higher Diploma Program training skills, and the challenges that inhibited them from practicing the training skills among teacher-educators of GBCTE. The study followed descriptive survey, in which quantitative and qualitative data analysis method was applied.

The target population of the study was Gilgel Beles college of Teacher Education Instructors. From the total number of instructors teaching in the college twenty HDP licensed instructors, the Dean and five Department Heads (the college consists of five departments) were selected using comprehensive sampling method, and five instructors again selected from the total, an instructor from each department that who was voluntary. The total instructors of HDP graduated (20) teaching in the college made to fill questionnaires, and 5 of them were selected for classroom observation and interview, and also the Dean and Department Heads were interviewed for further information. However, unfortunately no HDP training is currently being carried-out in the college, as the result no any assigned HDP Leader and Tutor there in the college. Hence the researcher confessed for missing valuable information from such subjects.

### **Instruments**

Being harmonized with rules suggested by Yin (1994), which witnessed that to construct validity of, for instance, an assessment study can be maintained by using multiple source of information and by establishing chain of evidences. Accordingly, the researcher used three instruments for collecting relevant data for the study. The instruments were questionnaire, classroom observation check-list and interview.

All the instruments were extracted from the review of related literature by the researcher. In such a case, indeed, an instrument can be judged for its content validity by individuals who can be expected to render an intelligent judgment for the adequacy of the instrument (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000 cited in Adula. 2008), hence, to ensure the validity of the instruments determined to collected data with, three lecturers of Faculty of Education and Behavioral sciences of BahirDar University and the researcher's advisor had commented on the instruments before the pilot testing. At the same time, two lecturers of Faculty of Humanity of the same University had offered professional comments on the same instruments.

After screening the items, all instruments were pilot tested. The pilot test was conducted at BahirDar University on eighteen randomly selected teacher-educators. Because, since, all HDP licensed instructors in the college (GBCTE) were selected as participants the researcher determined to conduct pilot test where similar subject was found. And fortunately the University was the nearest available institution for the researcher to conduct the pilot test. Based on the pre-test, some questions for instance, No. 3, 4, 29, 33, and 37 were reworded and a few additional instructions were added to make sure that the respondents were clear about the intent of each item.

Finally, Cronbach alpha was used to calculate the reliability of each item in the three sets of questionnaires. Thus, the reliability was found to be 0.74 for first set of questionnaire; 0.84 for the 2<sup>nd</sup>; and 0.85 for the 3<sup>rd</sup>. All of the reliability coefficient can be regarded as an indicator of high reliability

In order to measure the awareness level and attitudes of teacher educators, 21 and 18 closed-ended items were employed for each variable indicated above respectively, that designed based on four point Likert scales, which was made of positive and negative questionnaire. The questionnaire was supposed to obtain information to assess teacher educators' awareness level and attitude mainly focusing on active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment in their teaching practice.

Concerning the items based on likert scales, the researcher was used direct scoring for positive items and reversed scoring for negative items. In the cause of positively worded items strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree will be scored as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. For negatively worded items, strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree will be scored as 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

To measure the instructors' level of practice through questionnaire, 14 close-ended questions with frequency rating scale (4=often, 3=sometimes, 2=seldom, 1= never), and additionally two open ended questions were employed, together, which mainly was focusing on active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment in instructors' teaching practice, and factors inhibiting effective implementation of these skills

Classroom observation was conducted in order to collect first hand information regarding the application of HDP training skills in classroom instruction, and a structured observation checklist was used to get data from sample (selected) instructors in actual classroom situation. Accordingly, the observation check-list was adapted from HDP MOE-"A to Z of active learning methods" and lesson plan components from HDP, for Teacher Educators Handbook, MOE (2004). The observation check-list focused on HDP trained instructors' use of HDP training skills: HDP training skills with reference to active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment in their classroom instruction.

The observation check-list is prepared with a structured and three point rating scale (Y=yes, NS=not sure, and N=no) which was used to examine the HDP graduates' practice in promoting HDP training skills. In order to detect the instructors' practice of HDP training skills in classrooms, one instructor was observed three times, once by the researcher and twice by the assistants to make the data obtained more reliable.

For classroom observation two assistants were recruited. Two of them have degrees in education and have teaching experience greater than two years. All the recruited observers had trained for one day before they are assigned. Finally, each assistant under strict supervision of the investigator had conducted the observations

To collect further information structured and semi-structured interview was employed for the Dean, Department Heads, and the five selected instructors. The purpose of the interview was to get additional and detail information about the Higher Diploma licensed teacher educators of over all classroom practices. The interview items prepared to enquire instructors' skills and capabilities to raise classroom instruction using HDP training skills and whether there was any follow-up support arranged for HDP graduates to practice the skills continuously and tackle factors inhibiting its effective implementation.

In the process of testing the instruments and collecting data for the final study, the following procedures were followed.

Since the respondents were instructors, the researcher considering that they can well understand the questionnaire, he didn't translate the questionnaires into Amharic (mother tongue).

The questionnaire was administered in a face to face situation in order to avoid refusals and to clarify any vague points are there and if additional explanations are there regarding on how to respond was required.

Regarding classroom observation, first the researcher was met the Dean of the college and discussed the purpose of the research activity. Then through office of Dean the support letter was distributed to all departments. And then the researcher was approached to select one HDP graduates from each department. The selection was taken place in such a way that the researcher and the assistants would visit the department in the morning and ask the target instructor, clarifying the objective of the research, if s/he is willing to be observed during his/her classroom instruction and then interviewed. In addition, agreement was made with the selected instructors to treat their classroom or teach as usual to control biased. Then, the classroom observation, with the help of observation check-list, occurred on the followed two consecutive days before noon in order to maintain the “natural circumstances”. Data collections during classroom observation was taken place in such a way that the researcher and the assistants thereby tick as yes (Y), no (N) or not applied (N/A) and took note immediately after the session.

The interview was held with the respective instructors, then the respective Department Heads, and finally with the Dean to investigate further information about the application of HDP training skills by instructors, and factors they think could hinder the application of the HDP training skills to reach its optimal level. Interview places for study were arranged where privacy was maintained based on agreement with the interviewee. Similarly, time for the interview was set (in the morning) in such a way that the interviewee would not get tired and then reasonable time was considered, not too long for fear of fatigue.

Data drawn from the questionnaire, observation checklist and interview about teacher educators of awareness, attitude and practices mainly focusing on active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment in their classroom instruction, and the major challenges in implementing the program were analyzed using Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation and in addition, whether awareness & attitude of instructors was significantly different from average, One sample t-test was employed. And regarding qualitative data descriptive methods was employed. Finally, summary of data from all sources and instruments discussed all together. Then conclusion and recommendation were drawn.

#### **Presentations and Analysis of Data**

In this chapter results obtained through questionnaire, observation and interview from the three sources (Instructors, Department Heads and the Dean) are presented and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results regarding instructors’ awareness, attitude and practice towards HDP training skills like: active learning methods, action research, lesson plan & evaluation and continuous assessment, and also, challenges or factors inhibiting effective implementation of the training skills and possible solutions for challenges are presented consecutively as the following.

**Table 1: Results of One Sample t-test for Awareness of Instructors towards HDP Training Skills**

variable	N	Expected mean, X	Observed mean, X	SD	t-observed	df	P-value
Awareness	20	52.2	71.85	4.92	17.85	19	< 0.05

The mean score of measured value of awareness of instructors towards HDP training skills like active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment was significantly higher than the expected mean ( $t = 17.85$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). As clearly indicated in the table (see table, 1), observed mean ( $X = 71.85$ ) was significantly greater than expected mean ( $X = 52.2$ ). This illustrates that the subjects have better knowledge of the HDP training skills.

Nevertheless, until recently, much discussion of educational quality is concerned on only system inputs, but many scholars conformed that the effectiveness of the teaching learning process depends largely on teachers’ ability to use learner-centered methods of teaching to help students learn (Derebssa, 2006 & MOE, 2003). Hence, it is possible to conclude that the program (HDP) could equip instructors with required knowledge of learner-centered method that enhances or maximizes effective teaching and learning.



**Table 2: Results of One Sample t-test for Instructors' Attitudes towards practicing HDP Training Skills**

variable	N	Expected mean, X	Observed mean, X	SD	t-observed	df	P-value
Attitude	20	45	57.25	5.13	10.682	19	< 0.05

Table 2, illustrated that the mean score of the measured value of attitudes of instructors towards practicing HDP training skills like active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment was significantly higher than the expected average ( $t = 10.682, P < 0.05$ ). The observed mean ( $X = 57.25$ ) was significantly greater than the expected mean ( $X = 45$ ). This shows that the respondents have better attitudes towards practicing the HDP training skills.

Similarly, Derebssa also reveals that many teachers broadly agreed that teacher dominated pedagogy is undesirable, although they are frequently using teacher dominated methods.

**Table 3(a): Instructors' Response on the Application of Active Learning Methods**

No	Statements	Response category									
		often		sometimes		seldom		never		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
40	I set goals and methods in a variety of student learning style	3	15	5	25	12	60	-	-	20	100
41	I provide activities that encourage students to develop their own ideas about the content issues	4	20	14	70	2	10	-	-	20	100
42	I define what students must learn and how they should learn	11	55	8	40	1	5	-	-	20	100
43	I give students opportunity to set their own pace for completing self and /or group projects	4	20	5	25	10	50	1	5	20	100
44	I use lecture method in my classroom	11	55	5	25	4	20	-	-	20	100

Regarding instructors' application of active learning methods (see table 3(a), when only 3(15 %) of respondent instructors said that they often set goals and methods in a variety of student learning style, the others, 5(25 %) of them reported that they did it sometimes. But, 12(60 %) of the respondents disclosed that they practiced it rarely. Accordingly, the result of this study is reporting that majority of the respondents are not giving better emphasis for setting goals and methods in a variety of student learning style, for which is a component of learner-centered approach.

However, literature portrays that the strategic nature of learning requires students to be goal directed, and effective learning takes place when learners are challenged to work toward appropriately high goals. According to MOE (2003), teachers should produce differentiated materials catering for all students' different learning needs. Rather than rigidly delivering the same program for all students, with in the same syllabus, different groups of students can tackle

the work at different levels and/or with different expected outcomes. Enabling learners to achieve such goals, what needs to be considered is that learners have different strategies, approaches, capabilities, and preferences for learning that are a function of prior experience and heredity. Hence, the degree to which differences are accepted and adapted to is directly correlated with learners' successful learning (McCombs, 2007). Similarly, HDP handbook describes that the same method does not work for every student. Therefore, the more variety a teacher is used in teaching methods, the better individual needs of students be addressed (MOE, 2004).

In relation to providing learners activities that encourage them to develop their own ideas about the content issues, 4(20 %) of the subjects responded that they often provide activities that encourage students to develop their own ideas about the content issues, but 14(70) of the respondents provide it sometimes, the rest 2(10 %) of them reported that they seldom provide learners such activity. Hence, the study portrayed that large proportion of respondent instructors have given less emphasis in providing activities that encourage students to develop their own ideas about the content issues. This implies that, offering students the opportunity to reflect their own ideas is not well considered as a means of active learning methods in which learners could benefit from it. Basically, learning requires the learner's own mental involvement and action, in such practice; they could develop skills on how to reflect ideas effectively by their own selves.

As indicated in the table 3(a), the majority, 11(55 %) of instructors responded that they often define what students must learn and how they should learn, where 8(40 %) reported that they sometimes did the same thing. However, 1(5%) of them revealed that they rarely involved in such activities. As clearly portrayed above in the table, a large proportion of respondents usually define what and how students should learn. However, if what and how learners learn is not determined by students themselves, they could fail to learn by themselves. Because, many scholars believe that learning is student-centered in the sense that students take initiative and responsibility for their own learning (Derebssa, 2006).

According to McCombs (2007), self motivated learning is only possible in context that provide with the choice and control. When students have choice and are allowed to control major aspects of their learning ( such as what topics to pursue, how and when to study, and outcomes to achieve) they are more likely to self-regulate their thinking and learning process than when they have little or no choice or control.

In relation to giving students opportunity to set their own pace for completing self and/ or group projects, 4(20%) of the subjects responded that they have often given such opportunities while 5(25 %) of them did it sometimes. However, 10(50 %) of the respondents practiced it rarely. On the contrary, 1(5 %) of them never attempted the strategy at all. This indicates that majority of the respondents have hardly ever given students the opportunity to set their own pace for completing self and / or group projects. This implies that, if they lacked the opportunity to set their own pace for accomplishing project like activities, students could fail to accomplish the tasks by themselves, which is contrary to student centered approach. The fact is that, where there are fast, medium and slow learners, considering the differences, a teacher expected to provide learners opportunity to set their own pace in completing project like activities. In this respect, McCombs underlines that as learners have different strategies, approaches and capabilities for learning, they have their own pace at which they learn and then she adds that education need to be sensitive to individual differences.

In respect to instructors' frequency of using lecture method in the classroom, 11(55 %) of respondents replied that they often use lecture method in the classroom, and where 5(25 %) of them use it sometimes. But a bit interestingly, 4(20 %) of them reported that they infrequently used it. Hence, this study reveals that majority of respondents still yet using lecture method in the classroom more frequently. Similarly, a research conducted by Derebssa (2006) denoted that 72.5 percent of the students replied that teachers are not showing sufficient enthusiasms and encouragement of active participation of by students. But, Hudelston & Unwin(1997) in Derebssa(2006) reveal that students prefer strategies promoting active learning over traditional

lecture. According to him, other research studies evaluating students' achievement have demonstrated that many strategies promoting active learning are more effective than lectures in promoting the development of the students' skills in thinking and writing.

**Table 3(b): Instructors' Response on the Application of Continuous Assessment Methods**

No	Statement	Response category									
		often		sometimes		Seldom		Never		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
45	Students might describe me as a "coach" who works closely with someone to correct problems in how they think and behave	2	10	15	75	3	15	-	-	20	100
46	I try to identify individuals' learning problems	3	15	4	20	13	65	-	-	20	100
47	I provide learners opportunity to make self-assessment	4	20	7	35	8	40	1	5	20	100
48	I encourage students to do peer and/ or group assessment	3	15	5	25	12	60	-	-	20	100

The results of this study also revealed that about the practice of continuous assessment. As indicated in the table 3(b), 2(10 %) of respondent instructors witnessed that they often described by their learners as a "coach" who works closely with their students to correct problems, where 15(75 %) of them reported they believed that as they were considered sometimes. But, 3(15 %) of them reportedly assumed that they have rarely been considered. Nevertheless, according to Derebssa, the common element in the active learning approach is that teachers are removed from their role of standing at the front of a classroom presenting the material. Rather the students are placed into the position of teaching themselves, and the instructor is converted into a coach and helper to work with individual learner to solve individual learning problems.

In regard to identifying individuals' learning problems, 3(15 %) of subject respondents replied that they often identify individual's learning problems while 4(20 %) of them reported that they practicing it sometimes. However, the larger proportion, 13(65 %) of the instructors responded that they seldom involved in such activities. This shows that majority of the respondents have given less emphasis in identifying individual's learning problems to support learners. This implies that following-up individuals and coaching each learner by identifying his/her learning problem that enhances individual learning, which is one of the objective of continuous

assessment, is not yet seriously considered by the subjects. In line with this idea, McCombs reveals that individuals are born with and develop their own capabilities and talents, in addition, through learning and social acculturation, they have acquired their own preferences for how they like to learn and the pace at which they learn. However, these preferences are not always useful in helping learners reach their learning goals, instructors need to help students examine their learning preferences and expand or modify them, when necessary.

As far as self-assessment is concerned, where only 4(20 %) of respondents often give learners chances of self assessment, the other 7(35 %) of subjects have given students such opportunity sometimes only. However, surprising enough, about 8(40 %) of them reported that they offered learners such opportunity rarely, where 1(5 %) of them confessed that never attempted it at all. Regarding peer assessment (see table 3(b)), 3(15 %) of the respondents always allowed learners to do peer and or group assessment while 5(25 %) of them have been doing it sometimes. However, 12(60 %) of the subjects replied that they seldom practiced it, which clearly illustrates, large proportions of respondents have given learner little opportunity to assess themselves. This implies that learners self assessment, peer or group assessment as part of continuous assessment is not well considered by the respondents. However, literature indicates that students self and peer assessment makes the assessment culture much more transparent, and students gain better ideas of exactly what will be expected of them in their efforts to demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning out-comes, and it allows students to learn from each others' success and build sense of justification (Taddele and Tilahun, 2006).

**Table 3(c): Instructors' Response about Using Lesson Plan in the Classroom & Lesson Evaluation after Lesson Delivery**

No	Statement	Response category									
		often		sometimes		Seldom		Never		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
49	I hold the lesson plan with me whenever I go to classroom to teach	-	-	3	15	3	15	14	70	20	100
50	I evaluate my lesson after I have delivered a lesson	2	10	6	30	12	60	-	-	20	100
51	I request my department colleagues to evaluate my lesson plan	-	-	2	10	7	35	11	55	20	100
52	I review my teaching method	3	15	6	30	11	55	-	-	20	100

Concerning whether respondent instructors entering classroom with lesson plan or not, only 3(15 %) respondents reported that they sometimes enter classroom with lesson plan where 3(15 %) of them practiced it rarely. And, surprisingly, 14(70 %) of subject respondents confessed that they never attempted entering classroom with lesson plan. This shows that majority of respondents were entering classroom entirely without lesson plan. Inline with this idea, Taddele and Tilahun, (2006) suggested that using of lesson plan in the classroom prevents wandering from the subject, helps to manage lesson time effectively, and helps to consider individual differences and adequately checking of the outcomes on instruction

In the case of lesson evaluation, the result of this study disclosed that 2(10 %) of subject respondents have been evaluating their lesson often after they delivered their lesson, where 6(30 %) of them reported that they did it sometimes only. The rest 12(60 %) of the subjects said that they practice it rarely. Similarly, when 2(10 %) of the instructors reported that they sometimes requested their colleagues to evaluate their lesson plan, 7(35 %) of them replied that they seldom involved in such effort. However, the larger portion, 11(55 %) of respondents confessed that they

have never attempted such practice. This indicates that when large numbers of respondents rarely request their department colleagues to evaluate their lesson plan, surprisingly, greater number of respondents totally failed to do so.

However, literature recommends that evaluation of lessons help to inform and guide subsequent planning, teaching and learning. The most important outcomes of evaluation of lessons are that the strengths are maintained and built up on and the areas for improvement are acted up on with subsequent changes in practice (Matchett, 2005). In the same way, Roenholtz (1986) revealed that more collaboration and collegiality, in such activities, for instance, making lesson plan evaluation with colleagues increases instructors' commitment to teaching which may in turn support and openness to new knowledge and practice, but to achieve such goals, instructors have to be engaged in sustained experience sharing efforts.

In relation to reviewing teaching methods (see table 3(c)), when only about 3(15 %) of the respondent instructors confirmed that they often reviewing their teaching methods, others, 6(30 %) of them said that they did it sometimes only. 11(55 %) of the respondents didn't hide that they have been reviewing it rarely. This portrays that still majority of the respondent instructors are not yet effort fully involved in reviewing their teaching methods frequently. However, literature recommends educators that learner-centered teachers should know which knowledge and skills they want students to acquire and the best methods for facilitating the learning process for individual learners with diverse learning interests and needs (McCombs, 2007). Logically, this is realized through reviewing teaching methods regularly.

**Table 3(d): Instructors' Response on Conducting Action Research to Improve Teaching Practice**

No	Statement	Response category									
		often		Someti mes		seldom		Never		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
53	I conduct action research to improve my teaching practice	-	-	2	10	5	25	13	65	20	100

As indicated in the table 3(d), conducting of action research to improve teaching practice, when only 2(10 %) of the respondents replied that they sometimes conduct action research to improve their teaching practice, and 5(25 %) of them have been conducting it seldom. However, the rest 13(65 %) of respondents have never conducted action research to improve their teaching practice. This reveals that when large proportion of respondents conducting action research rarely, surprisingly, the majority of them did not attempt to conduct action research to improve their teaching practice. Hence, the study uncovers that a culture of conducting action research to improve teaching practice is not yet well considered by respondent instructors.

Nevertheless, Tylor(n/d) in Desta (2007), reveals how instructors can develop their professionalism in a sustainable way through conducting research, mainly action research in their own classroom. Knowledge gained from this type of research can be very rewarding as instructors can develop a deeper understanding of what goes on in their classroom which in turn can become the basis for improving their instructional practices. Similarly, other scholars point out that conducting action research enables instructors to reflect on their daily practice so that they can work out possible solutions or answers to the teaching and learning problems they experience (Nixon, 1981 ; Hustler, 1986; Webb, 1990 cited in Desta, 2007). Hence, as literature tells instructors, regularly conducting such research helps them to solve instructional problems and points to appropriate way of teaching and learning. Similarly, MOE (2004) recommends that at best action research has a real impact on teaching, learning, organization and management in the institution. HDP graduates need to continue developing action research as part of their own CPD. CPD is through which HDP training skills are realized, since HDP is the beginning of CPD for teacher-educators.

### **Instructors' Response on Open Ended Questions**



Summary of instructors' response for what they benefited from HDP training (for open-ended item (54)) is indicated as the following; accordingly, they reported that the training equipped them with knowledge how to improve teaching by:

- introducing various active learning methods
- making effective continuous assessment
- preparing effective lesson plan
- making continuous lesson evaluation
- practicing self evaluation
- making effective time management.

And also the respondents replied that they:

- developed the skill of doing action research
- understood the purpose and importance of peer observation and feedback
- by updating their professional competence and offering sense of professionalism, it made them a good teacher-educators

The aforesaid report could be harmonized with the comment given by a teacher-educator at the end of the HDP in 2004, quoted as the following:

*"... active learning, student centered teaching and continuous assessment are not new in theory for us, but actually how it is carried out no one knew. The HDP has shown us how to do it. That is the main advantages. Now, when we go to teach the new course we will never go back to the old way of teaching."*(MOE, 2004:11).

In addition, it also supported with the findings disclosed in the table 1(see page, 46), which indicates that the instructors have acquired the necessary knowledge that enables them to carry-out the training skills in their classroom instruction.

**Table 4: Instructors' Response on Ranking Factors Inhibiting Implementation of HDP**  
(N = 20)

No	Factors	rank	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
1	Large class size	N	6	1	3	2	2	3	3
		%	30	5	15	10	10	15	15
2	The need to cover portion(large portion)	N	2	0	7	3	4	2	2
		%	10	-	35	15	20	10	10
3	Lack of learning materials at hand	N	1	9	0	3	1	3	3
		%	5	45	0	15	5	15	15
4	Lack of interest from students' side	N	1	2	2	3	4	4	4
		%	5	10	10	15	20	20	20
5	Lack of commitment from instructors' side	N	8	2	1	2	2	1	4
		%	40	10	5	10	10	5	20
6	The need to behave as usual	N	0	4	5	2	2	4	3
		%	-	20	25	10	10	20	15
7	Lack of well organized work place and follow-up support	N	2	2	1	5	6	2	1
		%	10	10	5	25	30	10	5

Instructors were requested to rank the already listed factors that could hinder the effective implementation of HDP training skills (see open-ended item (55)). Hence, as it is indicated in the table, the factors were ranked by the respondents from the most sever to lesser ones. Accordingly,

- First- lack of commitment from instructors' side 8 (40%)
- Second- lack of learning material at hand 9 (45%)
- Third-the need to cover portion (large portion) 7 (35%)
- Fourth- lack of well organized work place 5(25%)
- Fifth- lack of interest from students' side 4(20 %)
- Sixth- the need to behave as usual 4(20 %)
- Seventh- large class size 3 (15 %)

In addition to listed factors above, instructors were requested to forward if they have more to say (see again item (55)). And, accordingly, they reported more factors, such as shortage of time (i.e., implementing the training skills need much time), work load with different subject courses were also disclosed as further factors that inhibiting the effective implementation of the HDP training skills. Similarly, according to Adula (2008), major challenges for effective application of HDP training skills (a student centered approach) in to classroom practice were large class size, time constraint due to over load and program overlap, lack of willingness from teachers' side, material constraint, the need for extensive preparation, mismatch between content of the course & time allotted, and lack of follow-up support also indicated as barriers.

In order to prevent challenges and then, effectively applying the HDP training skills(see open-ended item(56)) like active learning, action research, lesson planning and evaluation and continuous assessment, the subject respondents recommended the following possible solutions:

- continuously creating awareness among learners on the benefit of learning by doing than through teacher dominated approach
- assigning one responsible person for the HDP unit, being free from other work loads and that can facilitate the implementation of the program.
- minimizing overload and overlapped programs of instructors
- providing adequate materials for instance, modules etc.
- establishing strong follow-up support
- minimizing large class size
- strengthening CPD program.

In addition, Derebssa(2006) indicates that student centered learning will be difficult without the use of appropriate resources, meeting of minimum standard of physical infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms.

Instructors were also requested to offer general comment on HDP training skills. According to their view, less emphasis has been given for the implementation of the program; they expressed their fear that, giving less attention possibly affects the quality of education for which the program is intended for. For instance, one respondent's direct words are quoted as follow.

"HDP equipped me with the knowledge of how to help my students to learn. Hence, it made me feel sense of professional teacher. I believe that effective implementation of it enhances quality of education. However, due to absence of follow- up support after end of training, things [practices] gradually returned to their previous position and behaving as usual is now become taking place. Though I have the knowledge & the skill, I am not usually applying the skills in the classroom. I think absence of follow-up support made us to consider as if the program was left."

Here, it seems that the respondent is strongly blaming the absence of follow-up support for poor implementation of the training skills. Hence, it could be wisely to consider Fullan's (2001) argument that teachers need pressure even in the direction they want.

As many scholars witness, assessment of the success of professional development program must not be based wholly on self report instruments such as questionnaires as these are hardly reliable indicators of actual practice. Systematic evaluation involving observation of classroom practice and interview are essential in order to evaluate the extent to which instructors implement new strategies (Mohamed, 2006). And then, the two instruments were applied to obtain more insight about the effective implementation of the training skills which is detailed as the following.

**Table 5: Classroom Observation on Instructional Procedures**

(N = 5)

No	Teachers' Role	Observations	Observations' result	%
1	Held lesson plan during classroom instruction	Yes	0	-
		N.S	0	-

		No	5	100
		Total	5	100
2	Communicated objectives of the lesson	Yes	1	20
		N.S	1	20
		No	3	60
		Total	5	100
3	Checked whether the lesson objectives were achieved or not	Yes	0	-
		N.S	0	-
		No	5	100
		Total	5	100
4	Provided extended activities	Yes	5	100
		N.S	0	-
		No	0	-
		Total	5	100

As it is indicated in the table (see table 5), among observed instructors no one was with lesson plan during classroom instruction. However, according to Adula (2008), one of the objectives of HDP is equipping instructors with skill of managing time or adapting to change as a result, instructors are recommended to use lesson plan for their teaching. However, his research also uncovers that none of participants observed using a lesson plan in their classroom teaching.

Consequently, when only 1(20 %) of the observed instructors communicated the objectives of the lesson the same percent were not observed communicating the objectives of the lesson. However, others, 3(60 %) of observed instructors were not communicated objectives of their lesson with students. Surprisingly, no observed instructor checked whether objectives of the then lessons were achieved or not. Indeed, communicating the objectives of a lesson keeps both the teacher and students on the same truck by making aware learners that what expected from them at the end of the session. In this respect MOE (2004) recommends that a teacher needs to communicate objectives of a lesson that s/he going to teach and finally expected to check at the end of the session whether communicated objectives are achieved or not, by supporting with evidences.

Finally, what a worth mentioning is that all of the observed instructors had provided extended activities at the end of class that students carry-out out side classroom (see table 5). This practice is notable in involving learners into different activities while they are out of classroom.

**Table 6: Classroom Observation on Instructors' Application of Active Learning Methods (N = 5)**

No.	Teachers' Role	Observations	Observations' result	%
1	Using active learning methods	Yes	25	10.2
		N.S	3	1.2
		No	219	89.4
		Total	245	100

Table 6, illustrated that (see appendix, D), 25(10.2 %) of active learning methods were used by observed instructors, and 219(89.4 %) were not used. The rest 3(1.2 %) of active learning methods were not observed being used by the instructors. Furthermore, the most active learning methods used by majority of observed instructors were: Assignment, Brainstorming, Questioning, Gapped Lecture and Ranking Tasks (see appendix, D). However, TESO (2003) argues that methods like questioning, gapped lecture, individual work are considered as traditional approaches. In addition, most of the observed instructors tried to support their lecture with questioning, although still the questions were strictly close-ended like asking for meaning, a word and so on, majority of them didn't give time for students to think and respond. Rather they

forwarded the question then responded themselves without involving students. This notion could be consolidated by other research results, for instance, Reda (2001) portrayed that instructors did not provide time for students to construct and work on problems with in potential for evoking a fresh look, at the concept previously discussed.

Furthermore, with regard to continuous assessment, specific to use of self, peer and group assessment only instructor 'B' (see table, 7(a) ), was encouraging students to make peer assessment by providing exercises and letting them to assess each other.

Generally, the observation result reveals that the observed HDP graduates were not applying the training skills in the classroom teaching learning as is intended. Similarly, Desta (2007), in his research conducted in BahirDar University Faculty of Education uncovered that in conducted classroom observation when only 40.8 percent of active learning methods were used by observed instructors, 45.5 percent were not used, the rest 10.1 & 36 percent of active learning methods were not observed being used by instructors.

In line with abovementioned notion, Daniel (2004) in Adula (2008) expresses that lecture method as dominating instructional approach is being used in higher learning institutions of Ethiopia. However, MOE (2004) recommends that the student centered instructor needs to avoid lessons dominated by the teacher, the lecture or the textbook.

**Table 7(a): Interview for Instructors Before and After Classroom Observation**  
**I. Before observation: (N=5)**

No	Types of active learning methods	A	B	C	D	E	Total
1	Brain storming					✓	2
2	Peer assessment						1
3	Assignment			✓	✓	✓	4
4	Questioning			✓	✓		3
5	Group work				✓		2
6	Pair work			✓		✓	2
7	Stimulus material			✓			1
8	Demonstration				✓		1
9	Project work				✓		1
10	Gapped lecture					✓	1
11	Presentation					✓	1
12	Debate						✓ 1
13	Field trip						✓ 1
14	Reflection						✓ 1
15	Discovery method						✓ 1
	Total	5	4	5	3	6	23

As it is indicated in the table 7(a), the observed instructors were interviewed before classroom observation to inform that what active learning methods they often use in their classroom (see appendix 'C' item (1)). Accordingly, instructors represented by: **A= 5; B= 4; C= 5; D= 3** and **E= 6** active learning methods they often use in their classroom teaching and learning (see table, 7(a)). However, even if the instructors have reported that certain active learning methods that they often use in their classroom, as indicated above in the table 7(a), for instance, peer assessment, demonstration, project work, presentation, debate, field trip& discovery methods were not observed during classroom observation. From this witness it is possible to conclude that including those listed active learning methods above in the table 7(a) but which were not seen

used while classroom observation and other various active learning methods found in the HDP handbook are not being effectively used by the instructors.

**Table 7(b): Application of a Student Centered Approach by HDP Graduates**

II. <u>After observation:</u> (N=5)		
Implementation level	N	%
Implemented	-	-
Implemented, but not accurately	3	60
Not implemented	2	40
Total	5	100

As indicated in the table 7(b), after classroom observation, the observed instructors were asked whether they considered their classroom teaching were student centered or not (see also appendix 'C' item (2)). Accordingly, when none of them replied that they implemented, 3(60 %) of them said that they implemented some extent and the rest 2(40 %) of them responded that they were not implemented the student centered approach. This shows that as instructors also witnessed, the student centered approach is not effectively being implemented to the intended level in the college by respondents.

#### **Department Heads Response on Interview Questions**

Department heads were asked to explain how far HDP graduates from their respective department were using student centered approach in their classroom teaching (see appendix 'C' item (3)). Accordingly, all of department heads(5) believed that even though there were changes in knowledge, attitude and skill regarding a student centered approach as the result of HDP training, instructors were not using the skills in the classroom teaching to the required level.

Justifications were forwarded by department heads for why instructors not applying a student centered approach (the HDP training skills) to the intended level, which is summarized as the following:

**Table 8: Justifications and Number of Respondents** (N = 5)

Justifications	No. of dept. heads	%
Lack of commitment from instructors' side	5	100
Lack of pressure and follow-up support from the heads of the institution	5	100
Material constraints( lack of prepared modules)	3	60
Unwillingness from learners' side	2	40
Work load	1	20
Absence of focal person for HDP unit & that facilitates the program	1	20

As it is indicated above, in the table 8, regarding major problems that hindering effective application of HDP training skills (a student centered approach) in to classroom practice, all 5(100 %) respondents of department heads unanimously reported that lack of commitment of instructors' side and lack of pressure and follow-up support from heads of the institution are the leading. In the same table, when 3(60 %) of the respondents complained about material constraints (lack of prepared modules) the other 2(40 %) exposed the unwillingness from learners' side. The rest 1(20 %) disclosed that work load and absence of focal person for HDP unit, that facilitates the program are respectively indicated as the barriers.

The following quote referring to aforementioned barriers was taken from the interview with one of department heads;

"I think instructors were effectively practicing the HDP training skills where and when there was tutors' and peer observation during the HDP training. However, post training no longer the practice has been continued, because of the absence of observation as during HDP training. This means that instructors usually need pressure to carry-out such practice and as I stated it above, since there is no



follow-up support after HDP training was completed, teachers seem retreated to their previous traditional practices. As my opinion, follow-up support and pressure from heads of the institution should be there until the instructors make their culture the employment of student centered teaching practice in their classroom.”

And, similarly, another interviewee words is quoted as:

“...immediately after training there was good practice of implementing the HDP training skills which was later diminished and instructors returned back to their previous ‘good’ traditional teaching methods like direct lecture. The reason could be besides lack of follow-up support, instructors’ attitude of teaching as they taught (practicing as usual), work load, lack of adequate material, learners’ lack of interest to actively participate in learner centered approach, because they expect every thing from the instructor are some factors I think inhibiting its implementation to the intended level.”

For the question that whether there is any follow-up support arranged for HDP graduates(see appendix ‘C’ item(4)), the Department Heads unanimously replied no, and their reason was that no clear instruction/direction has been given to departments on how to follow-up and ensure the sustainability of the program. However, MOE (2004) recommends that sustainability of HDP training ensured by CPD, i.e., HDP is the beginning of CPD.

Finally, on how to prevent the challenges (see appendix ‘C’ item (5)), the department heads response was:

- there should be follow-up support after HDP graduation
- there should be focal person for the HDP unit, who takes the responsibility
- determining clear instruction and direction on how to implement the program effectively
- providing adequate resource and material that help to facilitate its implementation

The aforementioned idea is supported with other researches which indicate that creative and innovative teaching does not flourish in a vacuum. The application of learner-centered methods should not be the sole responsibility of the individual teacher. Changes in teaching and learning methods are likely to mean that the institutions' resources facility will become more important to the quality of teaching. “Being a good teacher is sometimes a matter of being allowed to be a good teacher” (Derebssa, 2006).

#### **Summary of Interview Responses with the Dean**

In response to question addressing the implementation of a student centered approach (HDP training skills) by HDP graduates(see appendix ‘C’ item(3)), the dean responded that at the college level he could not say exactly they are implementing or not, as far as no consistent follow-up has taken place. However, since he himself is a graduate of HDP, he concluded from his experience that HDP training skill is rarely applied. Even if, that continuous assessment is said to be being implemented than other skills, it is not beyond provision of series tests. He attributed the failure to the following points: Unwillingness of instructors, learners’ lack of interest to actively participate in student-centered activities. The dean reported that students were not welcoming a student centered approach. Unless the instructors used lecture method, students did not consider that they were learning. Telling his experience, he said that at the end of the day when his students couldn’t learn what they supposed to learn, he would back to the traditional method. Therefore, he said that he was rarely applying the method.

Similar to abovementioned notion, literature reveals that it is not only teachers’ attitude that affects the effective implementation of a learner centered teaching approach. The attitudes and expectations of students also affect how learning is viewed and how teaching is organized. However, many researches uncover that in Ethiopia teaching is yet considered as the sole responsibility of teachers (Derebssa, 2006). This attitude seems prevailed in the college.

The dean was also asked if there was any follow-up support arranged for HDP graduates that could enable them to implement the HDP training skills (see appendix ‘C’ item(4)). Accordingly,

he gave the following responses. There was a program called continuous professional development designed in order to check whether the graduates applying the skills or not. The program was thought to be conducted by leaders involved in HDPT (Higher Diploma Program Team). However, due to the repeatedly turnover of HDP leaders and Tutors, and even (when this interview is conducted as April of 2010) the program is not functional. According to him, no required minimum numbers of newly employed instructors are there to begin the other round training. Therefore, currently the program is not active.

Above all, he said that no follow-up plan was designed. The factor for the absence of follow-up service, as described by the dean is attributed to lack of one responsible organizer, normally; instructors are running the program side to their normal class. No person is assigned or employed for such purpose only. Moreover, even some instructors, after they have been trained and experienced well for the leading and tutoring the program, they are joining another position or leaving the college for different purposes.

Finally, the dean stressed that in order to confirm the sustainability of the program (see appendix 'C' item (5)), instructors must believe the value of a student centered approach in bringing radical improvement in the performance of students and be committed to effectively practice the skills until they and as well as the learners make the student centered teaching learning approach their culture. And also, assigning one responsible person freed from teaching and that can facilitate application of training skills acquired through HDP training program, and ultimately, the dean underlined that strengthening the CPD program which is the continuation of HDP is paramount important for the realization of the program..

### **Conclusion**

The results of the study disclosed that, though HDP graduated instructors have good awareness (knowledge) and positive attitudes towards practicing the HDP training skills, greater proportion of them insufficiently practicing the training skills like, active learning, action research, lesson planning & evaluation and continuous assessment in their teaching learning practice. However, Ministry of Education has given great responsibility to the colleges to implement the practice of HDP training skills effectively and enhancing learner-centered approach.

Indeed, major factors for the failure of implementing Higher Diploma Program Training Skills attributed to: lack of commitment from instructors' side, lack of learning material at hand, the need to cover portion (large portion). Lack of well-organized work place, lack of facilitation and follow-up support from the heads of the institution, lack of interest from students' side, the need to behave as usual, and large class size. Ultimately, based on the findings raising awareness continuously among learners on the benefits of learner-centered approach, setting rules and regulations by responsible bodies that help to facilitate the implementation of the training skills, provision of effective follow-up services by HDP office after licensing instructors, budgeting adequate instructional resources were forwarded as a solution.

### **Recommendations**

This assessment revealed that the implementation of HDP training skills which is under practice in GBCTE is insufficient and instructors in the college didn't carry-out their responsibility in favor of maximizing learner-centered teaching learning strategies.

In general, in light of the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- HDP leaders, the institutions' and Department Heads should have specific rules & regulations that help to control the implementation of the training skills (student-centered method).

- HDP office should give equal emphasis to the follow-up service like that of initial training. There should be on workplace support that mobilized instructors to use the training skills
- Strategies by which the learning materials available for students should be there and adequate copies need to be stored and students could have the access to borrow.
- As knowledge is a creative and participatory process and not something that can be reduced to a matter of transmission, HDP graduates should research their own practice regularly.
- The teacher educators' awareness, attitude and practice could be assessed on each training skills to determine competency of instructors.
- Researchers in the future may use deep observations and other in-depth data collection methods to investigate those contributing conditions to better understand the problem and to examine success ways of change.

## References

- Adula Bekele (2009). *Application of Higher Diploma Program Training skills in Classroom Instruction: the Case of Educational Faculty, Jimma University (Ethiopia)*. Retrieved February 12, 2010 from <http://www.aduabekele@yahoo.com>.
- Aklilu Dalelo, Almayehu, T/mariam and Mekasha Kassaye (2008). *Some Reflections on the Challenges of Enhancing Quality of Teacher Educations Programs*. The case of the college of Education, A.A.U. 2 (2), 39-48.
- Alebachew Mekonnen. (1996). Pre-service and In-service Teacher Education and Training. *Educational Journal Published by public Relations services (MOE)*.A semi-Annual Bilingual Journal. A.A Ethiopia. 2(3), 35-49.
- Bulter, T. & Chao, T. (2001). *Active Learning in Higher Education*. Retrieved Feb.22,2010, from <http://alh.sagepub.com/cqi/content/abstract/2/2/101>.
- Calderhead, J. and Shorrock, S.B. (1997). *Understanding Teacher Education: case studies in the professional development of Beginning Teachers*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Craft, A. (2000). *Continuing Professional Development*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Derebssa Dufera. (2006). Quality of Teaching and Learning in Ethiopian Primary schools: Tension between Traditional and Innovative Teaching Learning. Retrieved Feb. 15, 2010, from <http://www.home.hiroshimau.ac.jp/cice/g-1derebssa>.
- Desta Alemayehu. (2007). Higher Diploma Program Training Impact on Teaching Methods of Education Faculty Instructors at Bahir Dar University. Unpublished M.A .Thesis BDU.
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), (2004, September). Report of Federal Government on Development of Education in Ethiopia to UNESCO Forty Seven.
- Fullan, M. (2001). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York : Teacher College Press.
- Gara Latchana and Asrat Dagnew (n/d). *Attitude of Teachers towards the Use of Active Learning Methods*. Retrieved January 5, 2010 from <http://www.spaweb.org/colloquia/Tamper/presituations/Lanakay.ppt>
- Guskey, Th. R. (2000). *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand oaks, California: Crown Press.
- . Kadir Assefa. (2006). Contradictions, Challenges, and Chaos in Ethiopian Teacher Education: *Journal for critical Evaluation Policy Studies*. 4 (1),no page.. Retrieved March 5, 2010, from <http://www.jceps.com?pageID=article&articleID=62>
- Matchett, M.J. (2005). *The Reflective Teacher Education and Training Inspectorate*. Retrieved January 30, 2010, from <http://www.denjigov.uk>
- MOE and Academic for Educational Development (2008). Review of Ethiopia

- Education Training policy and its Implementation. Addis Ababa : Ethiopia  
MOE. (2004). Higher Diploma Program for Teacher Educators Handbook. Addis Ababa,  
Ethiopia  
MOE (2003). Teacher Education System Overhaul. (TESO). Handook Addis Ababa,  
Ethiopi  
MOE(2003). Teacher education system overhaul. TESO). Hand Book Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
McCombs, B. L. (2007). *Learner Centered Classroom Practices and Assessments*.  
Maximizing Student Motivation, Learning, and Achievement Thousand Oaks:  
Crown Press.  
Mohamed, N. (2006). *An Exploratory Study of the Interplay between Teachers ' Beliefs, Instructional Practices & Professional Development*. Retrieved  
December 17, 2009 from [http://www.wisis.unam.na/fulltext/wanderson\\_web.pdf](http://www.wisis.unam.na/fulltext/wanderson_web.pdf).  
Rosenholtz, S. (1986). *Educational Reform Strategies: Will They Increase Teachers  
Commitment?* New York: Longman.  
Taddele Shiferaw and Tilahun Chekol (2006) Practicum III .Continuing and Distance Education  
Unit. Distance Learning Module. Gilgel Beles College Teacher Education. (GBCTE).  
Transitional Government of Ethiopia/TEG/.(1994)Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia.  
Addis Ababa  
Wudu Melese, Tefera Taddele and Woldu Assfa (2009). The practice of learner centered  
method in upper primary school of Ethiopia. *Ethiopian journal education*  
.4(2), 27-44. Retrieved April 5, 2010, from [wududang04@yhoo.com](mailto:wududang04@yhoo.com)  
Yalew Endawek (2004). Teachers Beliefs, Knowledge and Practice of Learner-Centered  
Approach in School Of Ethiopia. *The Ethiopian Journal of Education*.24 (2), 17-41.  
Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage  
Publications.

IJSER