

The Status of Action Research and Challenges in Conducting Action Research: The Case of Amhara Region Police College

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Abstract

The main objective of the study was to investigate the practices and challenges in conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. Therefore, this study was intended to investigate issues related with the status of action research and the major factors that either hinder or enable teachers in conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. The participants used in this study were teachers. The mixed method approach (QUAN+QUAL). To this end both qualitative and quantitative data have been gathering through questioner. The questioner has been administered to all 34 Amhara Region Police college teachers. And all questioners are returned to the researcher. A quantitatively descriptive method of data analysis like percentages has been employed so as to answer the research questions of the study. The qualitative data have been also analyzed through narratives. The status of action research in Amhara Region Police College has been found at the lower stages because of the existence of different factors that hinder teachers negatively to conduct action research. Teachers were not involved in conducting action research as it has been expected from them. The major factor that respondents were affected by lack of motivation, lack of reference material, lack of training, lack of budget to conduct action research and to implement it, teachers were waste their time by routine activities and lack of research professional in college were the major factor that hinder Amhara Region Police college teachers to conduct action research.

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1. Background of the Study

Research is about generating new understanding and solves the actual problems in a given areas. Various types of researches or methods could be employed to study different kinds of educational problems. Recently, however, one particular research that has been found to be quite amenable and appropriate to bring improvement in the practice of teaching learning processes is action research (Hewitt and Little, 2005) cited by (HASHIM HUSSEN SEID, 2016). Action research is one of the systematic methods of research in solving problems or making practice better. In the schools there are many problems related to teaching-learning process which affect students' achievement. In order to meet the challenges being faced, schools are encouraged to engage teachers in action research activities, so that the finding can be applied immediately and problems solved more quickly. Action research helps researchers to improve quality of action in their activities of teaching and learning process. At the same time, it encourages the practitioner to undertake inquiry in a systematic manner to bring improvement in the quality of their performance and improve the quality of school as well.

The Ethiopian Education Policy directives emphatically stressed the importance of action research at school and classroom levels. According to the policy documents, teachers at all levels are required to engage in action research activities. More specifically, as part of the teaching-learning processes, school teachers are expected to conduct action research practically to support and strengthen the teaching- learning process (MOE, 2002).

Therefore, in the light of such new improvement that encourage the culture of problem solving in the college by conducting action research, it is very essential to study the current practices and challenges in the context of Amhara Region Police College.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Action research can be conducted to improve the practices of teaching and learning process, the practitioners or teachers and to improve the practice of the school. Action research is to study a real school situation with a view to improve the quality of actions and results in it.

The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy has expresses the importance of research and related competencies such as problem solving, creative thinking and all rounded personality development of citizens. As teacher of Amhara Region Police College, there is a problem of conducting action research to solve teaching learning problem. Therefore, the researcher believes that it is necessary to examine the extent of teacher's involvement in action research. In addition, the study tried to identify the major factors which may hinder or enable the proper implementations of action research in Amhara Region Police College. To this end the study is designed to answer the following basic research questions:-

- What is the status of action research in Amhara Region Police College?
- What are the major factors that either hinder or enable the practice of action research in Amhara Region Police College?

1.2. Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the practices and challenges in conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. More specifically, the study is intended to:

- Assess the status of action research in Amhara Region Police College
- identify the major factors that either hinder or enable teachers to conduct action research

1.3. Significance of the study

The study aimed to investigate the levels of teacher's engagement in action research and try to identify factors that hinder/enable teachers in conducting action research. Therefore, the study is significant to give information about the status of action research in Amhara Region Police College and to create awareness for teachers about the importance of action research. It is important for other researcher as a clue for further research.

1.4. Delimitation of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the practice and challenges to conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. It is focused on only in Amhara Region Police College.

1.5. Limitation of the study

It is difficult to generalize the finding of the study in all police colleges that are found in the nation. Because of the study is conducted only in Amahar Region Police Pollege.

1.6. Operational definition of key terms

- **Action research:** - is the process in which practitioners study their problems systematically and scientifically in order to guide, correct and evaluate their decisions and actions.
- **Challenge:** - constraints that inhibit teachers practitioners from caring out action research.
- **Practice:-** the actual participation of teachers in research activities practically in Amhara Region police college.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Study Design

In this study, the researcher uses a mixed method approach (QUAN+ QUAL). Because the researcher give equal values for both quantitative and qualitative data and sees them as approximately equal sources of information in the study (John w.creswell, 2012).

2.2. Participants

The participants in the study include all teachers of Amhara Region Police College. Since the total number of teachers was 34 and that is manageable, the researcher used all teachers of Amhara Region Police College.

2.3. Data Collection instruments

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, researcher uses questioner.

2.4. Procedures of data collection

In order to obtain adequate data on the practice and challenges in conducting action research, the researcher used questionnaire. The questioner papers were distributed for all Amhara Region police college to fill the necessary information and researcher collects all questioners.

2.5. Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected from the above mentioned participants were analyzed through quantitative approach

3. Discussion of the result

3.1. The status of action research in Amhara Region Police College

The status of action research in Amhara Region Police College has been found at the lower stages because of the existence of different factors that hinder teachers negatively to conduct action research. Teachers were not involved in conducting action research as it has been expected from them. The data found through questionnaires list of teachers' were conducted action research while this shows a small numbers of teacher conducted action research.

3.2. The major factors that hinder/enables the practice of action research

The major factor that respondents were affected by lack of motivation, lack of reference material, lack of training, lack of budget to conduct action research and to implement it, teachers were waste their time by routine activities and lack of research professional in college were the major factor that hinder Amhara Region Police college

teachers to conduct action research.

4. Conclusion

Action research is the way of solving problems practically and improves teaching and learning process. It is also a tool that is used to help teachers and educators discover strategies to improve teaching practice and allow teachers to become the practitioners and provide opportunities for them to be learners by improving instructional practices. Therefore, this study discussed the practices and challenges in conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. Based on the major findings presented, the following conclusions have been made.

The status of action research in Amhara Region Police College was very low due to the following factors. For instance, lack of motivation, lack of reference material, lack of training, lack of budget to conduct action research and to implement it, teachers were waste their time by routine activities and lack of research professional in college were the major factor that hinder Amhara Region Police college teachers to conduct action research.

5. Recommendation

The findings of this study are believed to have some implications for practices. These implications may show the area of intervention to improve the practices of Amhara Region Police College in conducting action research.

- In order to improve the practices of action research, it is necessary to take measures to solve the factors that hinder teachers in conducting action research in Amhara Region Police College. Therefore, it is better if ARPC management create cooperation with Amhara Police Commission and other universities to search the means of providing in-service trainings, workshops and seminars for the sake of updating teacher's knowledge and skills in action research activities.
- Action research is a systematic and scientific mechanism of solving classroom problems practically. So as to solve problems practically, adequate budgets has to be needed. Therefore, it is recommended that Amhara Region Police college managements may allocate adequate budget for research activities to support teaching learning process with classroom research activities.
- Lack of motivation was one of the factors, which negatively affect the practices of action research in the study area. Therefore, so as to improve teachers' involvements in conducting action research, police college managements have to encourage and support teachers by providing incentives such as giving recognitions as a role model and facilitate conference in Amhara Region Police College and invite teachers to present their action research activities, promoting teachers, and facilitates a condition that Amhara Region Police College teachers participate in educational seminars and conferences by creating cooperation with different universities.

Generally, to improve teachers' involvement in action research, it is recommended that Amhara Region Police college teachers and management members are expected to develop the habit of working together and discuss about the current condition of action research in the college. On the other hand teachers doing their work and solve problems by conduct action research rather than routine activities.

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