



The Views, Cognizance and Practices of Stakeholders on Implementing Cooperative Learning in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the attitude, awareness and practices of the different stakeholders on implementing cooperative learning in secondary schools. The study was conducted on teachers, students, school principals, and supervisors in three districts of Benishangul Gumz Region. Methodologically, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), document analysis and interviews were used to gather data from the participants. As far as sampling techniques is concerned, convenient, purposive and comprehensive sampling were employed to select samples at various levels. Accordingly, 18 teachers, 3 school principals, 3 supervisors and 36 students (totally 60 participants) were taken as samples of the study. The results indicated that the teachers hold fairly positive attitude regarding cooperative learning in the schools, yet the study indicated that the teachers' understanding the actual application of cooperative learning calls for further attention. Conversely, the actual employment of cooperative learning was less practiced in the secondary schools. For the students to be more reflective about how they work as individuals and group, they should be encouraged to plan on academic, affective and social goals for both in and off school times. Besides, the teachers at schools, supervisors and the education offices should reassess the attention given to follow-up, support and evaluation mechanisms regarding the implementation of cooperative learning.

Keywords: cooperative learning; one-to-five-grouping; practice; secondary schools; Stakeholders

Introduction

One to five cooperative learning is meant to be forum for both academic and nonacademic issues. Within these cooperative learning groups, students discuss the material to be learned with each other, help and assist each other to understand it, and encourage each other to work hard. Students complete the group task, which requires group interdependence and assessments are individually and group determined. Cooperative learning is organised and managed group work in which students work cooperatively in small groups to achieve academic as well as affective and social goals (Syafryadin, 2020; Syafryadin, et al. 2013; Jacobs et.al. 1997)

Obviously, one to five networking members think and discuss in a group. This is often referred to as reflection, debriefing, or processing. It is important for students to reflect on what went well in their groups, as well as what could be improved upon during future collaborative work. Johnson and Johnson (1999) define group processing as, "a) reflecting on a group session to describe what member actions were helpful and unhelpful and b) making decisions about what actions to continue or change" (p.85). It is presumed that mulling over what worked and what did not work will help guide groups to being increasingly productive. Hence, the rationale behind group processing is to improve the group's ability to efficiently reach their goals. These group processing elements can be observed in the following specific issues: (i) lesson plans-the easiest tool for implementing group processing is the lesson plan. (ii) questions-prompt and structured questions could help students to initiate discussion in a group Sayonita G. (n.d)

Face-to-face interaction is the other substantial aspect of cooperative learning which indicates eye-to-eye contact in a group. This component insists that a substantial amount of time is arranged when students can meet with each other in person. Johnson and Johnson (1999) advice, "The discipline of using cooperative groups includes ensuring that group members meet face to face to work together to complete assignments and promote each other's success." The researchers reveal that it is the combination of both positive interdependence and face-to-face interaction which produce the most powerful allegiances between learners, as well as the greatest commitment to each other's success (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). When students are close enough they share a common material and their

conversations could be heard to each member of the group (Sayonita (n.d). And to elevate face-to-face interaction in groups, building the physical environment and arranging the desks would be very important to foster face-to-face interaction

Assigning students in one to five groups and letting them work together effectively is a way for failure. Students need to be properly trained to work collectively with their peers because students do not come to class routinely prepared to work successfully with other students. Johnson and Johnson (1999) state that students must be taught the social skills required for high-quality collaboration and be motivated to use them if cooperative groups are to be effective and positive. Due to the fact that human beings are egocentric and prone to individualistic and competitive, students must be given regular instruction on the following four different social interactions, behaviors and skills to be used while working cooperatively. They are basic cooperative skills, individual attitudes and skills, team interaction skills and team productivity skills (Sayonita, (n.d). Hence, teachers need to play an important role in developing the skills in students to carry out the cooperative learning to work in groups and be productive members.

Moreover, cooperative learning creates more opportunities for personal feedback. Because there are more exchanges among students in small groups, students receive more personal feedback about their ideas and responses.).“Concepts to Classroom” (n.d). This feedback is often not possible in large-group instruction, in which one or two students exchange ideas and the rest of the class listens. Generally, constructive cooperative-learning situations are not easy to set up. As a result, cooperative learning requires teaching the group members to work well with others by resolving inevitable conflicts

Collaborative learning could create positive interdependence and individual accountability. According to Sayonita G. (n.d) there are various ways to promote interdependence among the members. These are: (i) resource interdependence – resource interdependence is the practice of limiting the resources available to a team to elevate the need for collaboration. (ii) role interdependence –this is based on the concept of ‘division of labor’. (iii) reward interdependence – sometimes teachers use rewards to intrinsically motivate students to work in a group. All teams in a cooperative learning classroom should have the opportunity to earn rewards. (iv) goal interdependence – this can be accomplished by assigning each group one

project to complete and submit for grading; though each team member will be responsible for individual components in the project and combining together the final product. As a result, the members in the group can develop sense of positive interdependence throughout their academic engagements. Furter, Sayonita G. (n.d), suggests the following three ways to promote individual accountability. They are- (i) assigning roles: assigning particular tasks to each team member could promote individual accountability. This also comes under the "division of labor". Each individual can be assigned a discrete task and all the discrete components joined together to form the whole project of the team. (ii) Coding: in this, different colored pens or markers could be used by the team members so that each member has a different colored pen. Then everyone can identify at a glance which team members have contributed what. (iii) Quizzes and tests: formal assessment tools can be used to heighten individual accountability.

In addition, cooperative learning creates more opportunities for personal feedback. Because there are more exchanges among students in small groups, students receive more personal feedback about their ideas and responses.)."Concepts to Classroom" (n.d). This feedback is often not possible in large-group instruction, in which one or two students exchange ideas and the rest of the class listens. Generally, constructive cooperative-learning situations are not easy to set up. As a result, cooperative learning requires teaching the group members to work well with others by resolving inevitable conflicts.

Recently, Ethiopia has been implementing One-to-Five grouping as means of change army in educational institutions and other sectors. Accordingly, all educational institutions, including schools have to form and implement One to Five networking both on the teachers and students with the purpose of fostering peer learning, which one of the most important features of team is learning. Therefore, cooperative learning has been employed in secondary schools as additional options so as to enable members learn from their peers who hold similar status or age but possibly different potentials.

The classrooms in which the practical activities of One-to-Five grouping take place has to be conducive enough to ask the teacher and one another among the group members. Johnson et.al (1994) observed that students in cooperative-learning sections are more willing to ask the teacher questions in class or through office visits

than those in traditionally taught sections. Johnson & Johnson (1999) argues cooperative learning has its greatest effects of confidence on student learning when groups are rewarded based on the individual learning of their group members.

Research shows that students who work in cooperative groups do better on tests, especially with regard to reasoning and critical thinking skills than those that do not (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). In addition, Bruner (1996) stated that in extensive meta-analyses across hundreds of studies, cooperative arrangements were found superior to either competitive or individualistic structures on a variety of outcome measures, generally showing higher achievement, higher-level reasoning, more frequent generation of new ideas and solutions, and greater transfer of what is learned from one situation to another. Studies revealed that collaborative learning has positive effects, yet it has its own challenges in different levels and structures. Traditionally, many teachers see success as covering as much material related to the class topic as possible. The interaction among students and interaction between the teacher and students carried by far the largest weights and affected more general education outcomes than any other environmental variables studied, including the curriculum content (ibid).

The effective implementation of one-to-Five grouping requires consideration of various issues. The level of awareness raised among members concerning the aims and benefits of One to Five grouping in their academic achievements is very important issue. Alamirew (1992) stated that the low awareness of communicative competence of students would be improved if learners learn through proper group work activities than the traditional teacher centered approach. However, putting students in groups is not a group work unless appropriate groups are formed, relevant tasks are designed, class is monitored properly and finally both the process and the product of the groups' learning are assessed (Johnson et.al 1994).

On the other hand, stakeholders need to play their irreplaceable roles to foster effective cooperative learning. This is due to the fact that clear awareness is the basis for all stakeholders such as the students, teachers, district educational supervisors, and parents to understand and accomplish tasks as planned. Therefore, much needs to be done on the members and the learning environment on regular basis so as to enhance effectiveness of one-to-five networking in teaching learning

process. Particularly, when this is treated in the context of secondary schools in Benshagul Gumuz Region, the views, awareness and practices of stakeholders on implementing cooperative learning in secondary schools hasn't been studied yet. Thus, the researchers decided to study the challenges, effectiveness and prospects of implementing one-to-five team-work for teaching-learning in secondary schools.

Based on the previous explanation, the research study was conducted in order to: 1) investigate stakeholders' outlook towards cooperative learning in secondary schools; 2) analyze stakeholders' awareness about goals of cooperative learning in secondary schools and 3) examine the practical implementation of cooperative learning in secondary schools

Research Method

This study employed qualitative research method. Qualitative studies usually have an 'emerging' model which means the design of the study remains flexible to accommodate newly emerging facts in the process of doing the research (Creswell, 2014; Fraenkel, et al. 2012). The common objective of the different types of qualitative methods are used to make sense of sets of meanings in the observed phenomena which are linked to subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and to explore the participants' views and behavior of the situation being studied, (Dornyei 2007) and Animaw (2011) also stated that more genuine understanding of beliefs and actions within challenges of some types of human activities such as teaching can be achieved mainly through the qualitative methodology. So, the nature of the present study needs qualitative methodological paradigms.

Setting and Participants

The setting of the present study were three secondary schools which are found in the capital towns of three districts namely Bambasi District Menge District, and Homosha District, in Bambasi, Menge and Homosha towns respectively. The participants of the study were grade ten students and teachers from three government secondary schools in Bambasi, Homosha, and Menge towns. In this study, more than one sampling technique was employed. In the first case,

convenience sampling was utilized. Dornyei (2007) explains convenience sampling is used in research where an important criterion of sample selection in which a member of the targeted population is selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, ease accessibility or the willingness to volunteer. So, for determining the sites of the research, the schools, the number of sample from the students, teachers and the number of one-to-five groups for students. The reason for making the number of sample teachers and students small was to make the study manageable.

Secondly, the three districts were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Besides, sample departments of teachers for FGD were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Similarly, this technique was used to take one sample teacher from the selected departments in each school. The same technique was employed to determine sample groups of students for FGD.

Thirdly, purposive sampling technique was utilized to determine the number of schools because incorporating different schools helps the researchers to obtain adequate data for the study. Similarly, the grade level (grade 10) was selected by this technique; the reason is the students might be more aware of one-to-five teamwork than lower grade levels. Fourthly, the directors and supervisors were taken by using comprehensive sampling technique was employed to take sample for interview because they were small in number.

From the three secondary schools, the total number of grade ten teachers was 35 for 11 departments (11 teachers from Homosha, 11 teachers from Menge and 13 teachers from Bambasi). From these, the samples were 18 teachers within three groups of one-to-five (each teacher's one-to-five group for focus group discussion). In the same way, the total number of grade ten students was 343 (96 students from Homosha in two sections, 103 students from Menge in two sections and 144 students from Bambasi in 3 sections). Thus, the sample grade ten students were 36 students i.e. two student one-to-five groups from each school proportionally. And all directors of the schools and three supervisors were parts of the research samples. Therefore, from the whole populations (390), the total number of samples was 60 (18 teachers, 3 directors, 3 supervisors and 36 students).

Data Collection Technique

An interview was used to get information from directors and supervisors. Interview is vital to obtain greater depth of information, free and flexible responses and to get information concerning to feeling, attitude or emotion to certain questions that is not possible through questionnaire. Accordingly, not to limit respondents' explanations, both structured and semi-structured interview were used with supervisors and school directors focusing on awareness, attitudes and practices of one-to-five team-working in secondary schools.

FGD is another instrument used in this study in order to see the experience of students and teachers about one-to-five team-work. Dornyei (2007), explains that focus group format is based on the collective experience of group brainstorming, that is, participants thinking together, inspiring and challenging, each other, reacting to the emerging issues and points. Accordingly, semi-structured questions were used for both students' and teachers' one-to-five team FGD.

Document analysis was conducted mainly to triangulate the data obtained from FGD and interviews. The use of documentary methods refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study. Besides this technique is insightful to categorize, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources. It is only to supplement information collected through in-depth interviews and FGD. Accordingly, documented reports from the schools about the activities of one to five teams, minutes form meeting of one to five groups in the three schools were reviewed.

Data Analysis Technique

Firstly, the raw data from the results of the interview were translated into English. Next, all responses from the interview and FGD were written down, transcribed and categorized separately. Lastly, the analysis was made thematically. Lastly, document analysis was conducted about how one to five groups are formed and how activities are reported about the progress made. Accordingly, different documents and minutes were taken from meetings of the one-to-five groups and systematically analyzed in line with the objectives of the study based on pattern and

relations among the data groups. Then all data was analyzed side by side by using descriptive method.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

This study was set out with the aim of assessing the attitude, awareness and practices of implementing one-to-five cooperative learning in secondary schools. Accordingly, the main results drawn from the instruments are presented and discussed in topics categorized under main themes on the basis of the research objectives. These themes are gained from the results of coding data based on the nature of the results.

Stakeholders' attitudes towards One-To-Five Cooperative Learning

Based on the results of the interview and FGD to the stakeholders, there are three themes emerged related to the attitudes toward One-to-Five Cooperative learning. The themes are: 1) Cooperative Learning is important for students' behavioral changes; 2)

Cooperative Learning is important for students' behavioral changes

Based on the interview to the teachers, they admitted that the feeling held by the teachers about one to five grouping is likely to have substantial influence on the practices of one to five cooperative learning in the schools. In this regard, similar question was posed for all participants to find out their feelings about one to five grouping in general. Accordingly, all participants reflected shared feeling towards the importance of one to five cooperative learning. For example one of the teachers said

"...it is generally important as it helps to decrease dropout and attrition rates, to bring behavioral change among members, to reduce late coming and to foster students' social interdependence. It also encourages members to exercise problem solving with discussion" (Personal communication, 2020).

Similarly, FGD participants from another school express analogous feeling regarding one-to-five cooperative learning. One of the teachers mentioned *"... One to five grouping is a good way to teach and learn from others."* (Personal

communication, 2020). All the school principals also reflected similar views regarding cooperative learning. One of the principals said *"...one to five grouping is important for the teaching learning because it creates mechanism to support, shape and control students each other.* (Personal communication, 2020). The other principle confirmed *"...it is a vital way for teachers to share experiences."* (Personal communication, 2020). *"...it is important for both students and teachers as it reduces burdens"* (Personal communication, 2020)

Cooperative Learning is important to enhance students' participation

Based on the results of FGD, participants from another school revealed positive feeling about one to five cooperative learning. One of the teachers clarified, *"I feel that One to five grouping is generally worthy for the teaching learning as it creates chance for more student participation than the traditional teacher centered lecture method."* (Personal communication, 2020). Likewise the data sources from students' FGD also showed similar feeling towards one to five grouping. *"... One to five cooperative learning is a better way to learn."* (Personal communication, 2020). *"... One to five grouping helps us to learn from each other and to work together"* (Personal communication, 2020)

Cooperative Learning is important to help teachers control the students

The supervisors also reflected parallel feeling regarding one to five grouping. *"...one to five cooperative learning is important for all members, especially for students because it helps members to control on another"* (Personal communication, 2020). Another supervisor also expressed associated feeling about one to five networking as; *"...one to five grouping is very important to the students to support one another. It is also vital for teachers to share experiences."* (Personal communication, 2020). Additionally another supervisor reflected his views as *"one to five cooperative learning is important for both students and teachers because it reduces burden..."* (Personal communication, 2020)

Awareness of stakeholders on One Five Cooperative Learning

The other issue addressed was to find out what the participants thought about the goal of one to five cooperative learning in schools. The subsequent sections discuss the result in relation to stakeholders' awareness, understanding and group formation

in cooperative learning. Based on the results of Focus Group Discussion. Two main themes emerged; 1) Stakeholders' awareness about goals of one to five cooperative learning in schools; 2) Stakeholders' understanding on the particular uses of one to five grouping and 3) Formation of one-to -five cooperative learning groups. The descriptions of each theme are as follows;

Stakeholders' awareness about goals of one to five cooperative learning in schools

The data from the FGD revealed that stakeholders are aware about the wide ranging goals of one to five cooperative learning in schools, the major goals being assisting teachers and students to achieve their learning goals effectively. One of the teachers of FGD said

"...one-to-five cooperative fosters cooperation among teachers which paves the way to become fit for their teaching; it also aims at fostering team spirit and support among students which in turn encourages students to learn and develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes"(Personal communication, 2020).

Strengthening this idea, FGD participants from other schools reflected their thinking about the goals of implementing one to five cooperative learning in their schools as *"... the ultimate goal of one to five grouping is to improve students' results. (Personal communication, 2020). "...one-to-five cooperative learning aims at inculcating the culture of learning through experience sharing." (Personal communication, 2020).* Correspondingly, the supervisor's interviews also indicate similar reflection about the goal of cooperative learning in the schools as: *"...the major goal of one to five grouping is to improve students' result (Personal communication, 2020).* Another supervisor clarified; *"...the objective of cooperative learning is to develop positive relationship among students' (Personal communication, 20203).* Finally, other supervisor confirmed *"...one-to-five grouping help students learn from each other" (Personal communication, 2020).* However, some students were unable to state the goals of one to five cooperative learning stating that the groups are meant only for supporting the low achievers through marks (grades).

Stakeholders' understanding on the particular uses of one to five grouping

In addition to the goals of one to five cooperative learning, the participants were asked to reflect on the specific uses/benefits of one to five grouping. Accordingly, they raises various detailed issues on the benefit of one to five cooperative learning. The participants of Focus Group Discussion clarified *"...it helps learners know and assist each other and initiate and share ideas with others" (Personal communication, 2020).* Similarly, other participants from other schools explained the uses as:

"... it gives a real chance to pose positive challenges on students and to learn from different views. It also enhances the spirit of cooperation which ultimately improves student learning and results. It is also important to enhance discipline and to easily disseminate rules and regulations of the school (Personal communication, 2020).

Likewise, participants from other school share the above explanations and they also explained that in addition to the benefit of students one to five group learning also help teachers gain time. *"...one to five cooperative learning makes learning more active and student centered thereby help teacher to get time than the traditional lecture method"* (Personal communication, 2020). Similarly students reflected similar views like their teachers. *"... it is a better way to learn our subjects (Personal communication, 2020).* Other participants clarified *"One to five grouping helped us to do different tasks and assignments together which in turn gave us a chance to learn from each other"* (Personal communication, 2020). Conversely, supervisors also explained uses of one to five grouping as *"it supports the teaching learning process"* (Personal communication, 2020). Other supervisor confirmed *"...it is important to control the misbehavior of students..."* (Personal communication, 2020). Finally, other supervisor mentioned *"...one to five group learning is important to shape students who have disciplinary problem. (Personal communication, 2020)*

Formation of one-to -five cooperative learning groups

The participants were asked to explain about how cooperative learning groups are formed how students are selected to work in the groups. Accordingly, the participants reflected as *"First the mentor identifies high achiever students, then the five members of the group will be assigned to the high achiever who will remain the group leader throughout the year (Personal communication, 2020).* Other students from Focus Group Discussion clarified *"...students' groups are formed based on the mixture of different achievements by making high scorers a group leader (Personal communication, 2020).* Finally some students mentioned *"... relatively the high scorers become group leaders but these leaders sometimes might not be able to read and write properly let alone to lead a group (Personal communication, 2020).*

The school principals also disclosed similar explanations with the students about how one to five groups are formed at the beginning of the academic year. One of the principals said *"...the homeroom teachers are responsible for the formation of students' one to five groups which based on students' abilities (Personal communication, 2020).* Other principle mentioned *"...teachers' groups*

are formed by the director on the basis of natural and social science streams, whereas the students are placed into groups by the homeroom teachers by mixing different achievements" (Personal communication, 2020). Finally, one other principle confirmed

"As far as student grouping is concerned, the homeroom teacher forms one to five groups at the beginning of the school year on the basis of students' abilities in which distribution of sex and culture are also considered" (Personal communication, 2020).

The data from teachers FGD also confirmed the previous results. one teacher of Focus Group Discussion clarified; "... students' one to five groups are formed on the basis of students' results: one group contains high, medium and low achievers" (Personal communication, 2020). The other teacher confirmed "...the streams (social and natural) are the basis for the teachers one to five group formation" (Personal communication, 2020). Apart from these, the data also showed that some mix of students in students' Focus Group Discussion said that one to five cooperative learning has not worked properly "... but these leaders sometimes might not be able to read and write properly let alone to lead a group (Personal communication, 2020,) One of the principals clarified...students' tendency towards gaining income from gold mining is generally affecting the teaching learning process overall and one to five grouping in particular.(Personal communication, 2020). This was particularly reflected in Menge and Homosha Secondary schools where students engage in traditional gold mining activities after November. Therefore, since one to five groups are formed based on scores of students, those who scored relatively the highest mark will become leader of the group.

The actual Implementation of one-to-five cooperative learning at schools

The third objective of the research is to find out the actual implementation of one-to-five cooperative learning at schools. Based on the results of the interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD), six themes emerged as follows: 1) Stakeholders' responses on group activity planning; 2) The day-to-day application of one-to-five grouping in the teaching-learning; 3) Frequency of cooperative group discussions during and after school hours; 4) Students' involvement in one-to-five cooperative group activities; 5) Actions applied on members who avail and miss group

discussions; and 6) Mechanism to overcome domination and feeling of carrying burdens of a group. The descriptions of each theme are as follows:

Stakeholders' responses on group activity planning

The participants were asked to disclose the actual practice about the presence of plans, focus areas of the plans, who prepares the plans, the basis for the plans and if all the members were participants in the planning process. Accordingly, the participants responded as follows regarding practices on planning of activities for one-to-five groups.

Regarding the presence of group plans for teachers' one to five groups, the participants replied that all groups in the school have their own plans. *"...our one-to-five-group has an annual plan which focusses on improving discipline, solving problems and working together"* (Personal communication, 2020). Meanwhile, other participants clarified *"...only teachers' one-to-five cooperative learning groups have plan, and all group members participate in the planning process"* (Personal communication, 2020). Some principals also clarified *"...teachers' one to five groups have group plans, but not students"* (Personal communication, 2020).

The result indicates the presence of plans for teachers' one-to-five cooperative learning groups. Yet, the plans fail to be comprehensive and indicative of what should be improved on the teachers' parts. Besides the analysis made on documents shows that the plans were preoccupied with issues such as curriculum revision, improving student late-coming and disciplines which of course, are not the major goals of a cooperative learning group. Nonetheless, the presence of plans is a reputable step and shows that the schools were in an encouraging practice concerning the planning. This is also serves as an initial for upcoming planning and it is possible to say that teachers' one to five groups better prospects for a better planning in the future.

As fa as students are concerned, the participants reflected that the students one to five groups do not have plans about their activities. Some of the students clarified *"The students one to five groups have no plans"* (Personal communication, 2020), The other student said *"...our one to five group activities are not based on planning; we deal only with text book activities"* (Personal communication, 2020)."

The participants expressed similar thoughts regarding students' lack of planning of group activities. In other words, the groups are merely dealing with unplanned tasks which are emanating from immediate classroom activities that are oriented to completion of activities only in the class during school hours.

The day-to-day application of one-to-five grouping in the teaching-learning

The other major theme, mainly the teachers and students were asked to reflect, was how teachers use one-to-five cooperative learning groups when teaching. Accordingly, the participants explained that the application cooperative groups differ from subject to subject and topic to topic and the application of different approaches when applying the grouping in the classroom. For example, one of the students said *"...based on the text book exercises, teachers give us group activities for our cooperative learning groups in the class"* (Personal communication, 2020). Teachers also reflected similar ideas about the application of students' cooperative groups in the classrooms. For example one of the teachers asserted

"We use one-to-five groups for discussion where there are suitable and engaging activities that allow us to share the time we have with the students. This way students dig more on the given discussion issues" (Personal communication, 2020)

The other teacher clarified

"...it differs from teachers to teachers, but teachers use students' groups for classroom activities, and after the discussion some students will write on the board and students from other groups will be invited to comment and correct, but if the problem insists the teacher interferes" (Personal communication, 2020).

This shows that one-to-five grouping of students is mainly utilized for teaching and learning of textbook activities merely in the classroom.

Frequency of cooperative group discussions during and after school hours

Cooperative learning activities covers academic, affective, and social learning objectives that are undertaken within and outside the school hours. In this regard, the participants were asked to explain about how often teachers give activities for students to discussion with their group members in and outside the class hours. Accordingly, the participants stated that the text book was the key guide to decide at what time students should discuss activities in groups. For example, one of the teachers affirmed *"...teachers use one-to-five groups of students in the classroom based on the text book activities"* (Personal communication, 2020). The other

teacher confirmed *"the frequency to use students' one to five cooperative learning for engaging students to class spends on the titles of the lessons on the text book"* (Personal communication, 2020). This is indication for the use of students' groups according to what the text book of each subject requires students to do. Besides, the cooperative activities re confined only to classroom settings.

On the other hand, the teachers were also asked to explain about how often they meet for discussion with their one to five group members at off class hours. For example, one of the teachers said

"our one-to-five group members meet every fifteen days to discuss issue such as textbook review, how to document accomplishments, about the progress of works, students behaviors, and student-teacher relationships." (Personal communication, 2020).

Meanwhile, the other teacher confirmed *"Teachers one to five groups meet every day for 15-20 minutes except Monday and Friday."* (Personal communication, 2020).

Conversely, these claims were not verified by the document analysis made on the schools. The discussion minutes which were reviewed in this study indicated that the teachers had some meetings, yet the meetings were unscheduled. This shows that the teachers one-to-five grouping were not implementing the schedules they planned to use for their group discussion at the beginning of the academic year. Therefore, it is possible to say that both students' and teachers' cooperative learning groups were not practicing their grouping as desired, at least, what the teachers had planned to accomplish wasn't implemented. In addition, it was possible to realize the existence of gaps to provide proper follow-up and support from the school and other stakeholders regarding the practice of one-to-five cooperative groups in the schools.

Students' involvement in one-to-five cooperative group activities

As far as students' participation is concerned, the participants were asked to rate students' involvement in group discussions, to reflect on what students do when they work in one to five groups, to depict difficulties encountered when engaging in cooperative learning, and to explain the ways teachers use to promote participation of reluctant students in the group. Accordingly, participant students reflected about their participation in group activities as follows: *"We involve in activities and assignments of our one-to-five group, and usually some students participate"* (SFGD2). *"...students involve when activities and assignments are given for our one to five group, but the participation of students is less"* (SFGD1). *"...we don't have active participation of group members"* (SFGD3). Then again, the data from teachers' FGD revealed the absence of active involvement students when

they discuss in their one to five groups: "...generally speaking, students involvement in group discussions is less; usually few students are participants and others are listeners" (TFGD1). "students participation is generally weak in group discussions, particularly this year students involvement is very weak due to lack of better students to facilitate the group" (TFGD3). "Only few students, usually group leaders and one/two members, take part in group tasks and activities" (TFGD2). This shows that majority of the students were mere listeners of what some members had to say about the given tasks and activities.

The results show that teachers encountered difficulties when engaging students in cooperative learning groups. And the teachers stated to use various interventions to deal with those difficulties: "We faced many difficulties such as absence and lack of active participation, dependency on some students, copying from others, and tendency of some students to consider cooperative learning as useless. We attempted to attain participation of students through continuous follow-up and advice" (TFGD1). "leaving all tasks of the group to the group leader) so that group tasks and assignments reflecting knowledge of only some members (not all), less participation, reluctance from some leaders, changing medium of communication in the group to their mother tongues which we don't understand. ... we continuously discuss with and advise students about uses of working together for all learners are some of the intervention we do to minimize the effect of these difficulties" (TFGD3, (TFGD2).

Actions applied on members who avail and miss group discussions

The participants were asked to reflect on the rules they apply on members who don't participate or attend group discussions. The results indicate that one to five do not have common rules to apply on students who miss group discussions. For example one of the teachers mentioned "What happen on members who are frequently absent in group discussions should be determined by the groups' internal (ground) rules, though not functionally implemented in our school" (Personal communication, 2020). The other teacher clarified "...there are no rules applied on students who don't take part in group assignments" (Personal communication, 2020).

On the other hand, teachers reflected that they use negative reinforcement mechanisms to foster students' participation. For example, one of the teachers said *"...but we try to motivate participation through rewards such as connecting participation with marks/results so, less participants will lose points"* (Personal communication, 2020). It is affirmed by the other teacher who said *"...when group assignments are given, some points will be reduced on nonparticipant and absent students"* (Personal communication, 2020).

Mechanism to overcome domination and feeling of carrying burdens of a group

The participants were asked to reflect about the mechanisms applied to prevent and to alleviate the problem of some students feeling that they are carrying the burdens of works of the group. The data indicated that teacher use different strategies for overcoming such feelings of students. For example, one of the teachers admitted that *"...advising leaders to share tasks"* (Personal communication, 2020). Another teacher supports the opinion; *"connecting student participation in group tasks with marks. (Personal communication, 2020)"*. Finally, one of the teachers confirmed *"...when students complain, the mentor may change the group leaders based on evaluation of the complaints"* (Personal communication, 2020).

On the other hand, the FGD participants were also asked to explain about how teachers control domination of some students, usually group leaders, in the group. Accordingly, the data indicated that continuous advices and guidance were mainly used by the teachers to the students as a means to prevent domination of students in group tasks. One of the teachers said *"...to maintain participation of all group members, continuous encouragement and advice is given for group leaders to involve all members. (Personal communication, 2020)"*. This indicates that the teachers used different ways such as advising, linking participation with marks and altering the group leaders to alleviate the problem of students' feelings to have carried burdens of the groups.). However, FGD participants in two schools further reflected that problems in relation to domination of students didn't exist when they apply students' one to five groupings.

Discussion

The result in the preceding section revealed that the students, teachers and the directors and supervisors hold positive attitude about one to five cooperative

learning. This finding coincides with the results of Birhanu (2019) that indicate university instructors and students have positive attitudes towards cooperative learning and they prefer it to lecture-style. This is an indication that the school community considers one-to-five cooperative learning as important means to achieve the educational goals. Therefore, in terms of attitude, it is fair to say that favorable conditions are available for implementing cooperative learning at secondary schools. For that reason, the challenges against students and teachers that may arise during the implementation of one to five cooperative learning are relatively less in the schools assessed by this study, yet this is not enough by itself for the practical implantation of cooperative learning. Hence, it also requires all the stakeholders to work jointly on other issues for better implementation of one to five cooperative learning in the schools.

The results show that the goal of one to five cooperative learning is properly perceived by the teachers and supervisors. However, the students failed to express the goals of working in one to five cooperative learning. Hence, the awareness created on the students about the goal of learning in one to five groups seems insufficient. Accordingly, it is fair to say awareness creation opportunities need to be created mainly for students in order to have clear understanding about the roles of participating in cooperative groups and for better engagement in activities of one to five cooperative learning in the schools.

The above results depict the presence of analogous thinking among all participants about the specific uses of one to five grouping. In spite of stakeholders' reflections on the specific benefits of one to five cooperative learning, its implementation in the schools is not as such practical. So, it is possible to conclude that one to five cooperative learning is positively perceived by all stakeholders regarding the various practical benefits for both students and teachers. Therefore, the stakeholders can use this as an opportunity for better implementations and practicability in the schools.

Regarding formation of one-to-five-cooperative learning groups, the participants unanimously reflected that the major criteria for one-to-five group formation were achievement for students and the two streams for the teachers. The teachers' one-to-five groups are merely formed by considering the two streams of sciences. Therefore, regardless of the number of teachers, each school forms at least

two one-to-five groups for each stream. Besides achievement, some schools also attempted, where applicable, to consider mixing of other issues such as sex and culture when forming student one to five groups. This shows that the schools are practicing the notion of cooperative group formation that encourages heterogeneous grouping in ability, sex, and culture with the intention of learning from each other. However, none of the participants explained whether the schools consider re-grouping of the groups at the end of the first semester which also reshuffles the group leader and reassigns group members based on their scores in the semester.

This finding corresponds with the findings of a study by Birhanu (2019) which identified different factors including lack of knowledge and training that affected practices of cooperative learning and concluded that both instructors and students couldn't identify their roles because of lack of awareness on the guiding principle of cooperative learning. This was also apparent from the findings of the document analysis which showed the presence of only one student and teacher one-to-five groups that were formed at beginning of the school year. Besides, the majority of the groups in the schools did not incorporate cultural, religious, sex issues when forming cooperative learning groups. Therefore, it is possible to say that the attention given to follow up and support is inadequate on the schools. Therefore, all concerned bodies should work on providing continuous follow up, support and training for students and teachers on cooperative learning.

These results indicated that students do not have plans for their one-to-five cooperative groups. In other words, the students don't have common interests and issues about what to do in their groups. Besides, the groupings are applied only for classroom tasks and for completion of assignments. Therefore, it is possible to say that the major goals of students' cooperative learning is misused for the students as they are preoccupied merely with classroom activities neglecting the notion of scaffolding both inside classroom and outside the school. Moreover lack of plan means failing to consider the nonacademic affective and social issues which could be better dealt with non-school hours. However, due to lack of plans for one-to-five group activities for their off-school hours, the students were confined only to classroom academic issues which are dictated by the text book. The nonacademic concerns of the groups are neglected by the students. In general, the students were

not entirely using their free times for studying together and collaborating with their one to five cooperative learning groups. This result in contrast with what is stated by Jacobs et.al (1997) that dictates necessity of group work in which students work cooperatively in groups to achieve academic as well as affective and social goals. As a result, the affective and social goals of a cooperative learning groups which could be better dealt with planning was not concerned by the students' one to five groups. Consequently, the students one to five group activities were limited only to academic issues which are dictated by the text books. However, in a truly cooperative classroom, students are motivated not to think only of their own learning but of their group members as well.

The results indicate that students' use of one to five cooperative learning is confined to classroom activities only when teaching students in the class. Besides, all the activities that are given for students to discuss in groups are based on the text book. In other words, except the rarely given group assignments which are used for marking, teachers do not give tasks for students one to five groups to discuss outside the class during non-school hours. These discussions generally indicate that, the students do not engage in others noncurricular activities using their one to five groups. That means, the tasks students deal with their groups don't address what the student should do on other reference materials other than textbook. In other words, the students' cooperative learning groups are not applied for studying purposes in their non-school hours. Therefore, it is fair to say that one to five cooperative learning is not implemented in its full sense in the day-to-day teaching learning engagements of the students schools because of these and related challenges.

This indicates existence of different problems and challenges when applying students' one-to-five groups in the classroom. The overall result in general revealed the absence of active involvement students when they discuss in their cooperative groups. Therefore, creation of an inclusive discussion environment is vital to encourage student participation. In line with this, the results showed that the teachers maintained to give encouragements and advising. Therefore, teachers should do more on applying different strategies such as immediate feedback, intimate follow-ups, continuous guidance and counseling so as to enhance and maintain students' participation and attention in their cooperative groups.

This shows that teachers use both positive and negative reinforcement to foster attendance and participation of members in their one to five cooperative learning group tasks. Therefore, students/groups who actively involve and complete the given tasks before or with in the given time in the classroom will be prized points. Similarly, the teachers mentioned that marks/points are given for students after checking students' involvement when assignments are given for assessment. In spite of these positive steps to foster participation of students, the groups lack common/ground rules to apply on members who miss group discussions.

The overall analysis of the data to this point indicated that one-to-five cooperative learning was not properly implemented in the schools. The data from document analysis revealed that some groups were present only at the state of formation in the schools. Though the groups were formed once at the beginning of the academic year, even the available groupings were not sufficiently implemented. Additionally, environmental factors such as poor furniture, seating, arrangements, and large class size, teachers and students commitments were some of the constraints that affected the practice of one-to-five cooperative learning in the schools.

On the other hand, regardless of the fragile implementation, the schools attempted to apply cooperative grouping, but there was big gap of follow-up and support to the groups. There was no any document indicating the provision of follow-up and support from the supervisors and the school leadership. This is indication that the attention given for one to five cooperative learning is not sufficient by the different stakeholders so that the schools are not exhaustively implementing cooperative learning at a full sense. Besides, according to Jacobs et, al (1997), teachers who use cooperative learning have learning objectives that are academic, affective and social. Contrary to this, cooperative learning is organized and managed group work in which students work cooperatively in small groups to achieve academic as well as affective and social goals. Studies showed that, cooperative learning has been connected with advantages such as achievement, interpersonal skills, and attitudes toward school, self, and others (Johnson and Johnson, 1999). They argue that in this scenario, students are encouraged not to think only of their own learning but of their group members as well. However, the results of this study showed that students are

concerned only on academic issues neglecting the affective and social issues which could be concerns of non-school hour group activities.

Conclusions

In terms of attitude, the stakeholders, in general, consider one-to-five cooperative learning as important way to achieve the educational goals. Therefore, this encouraging and favorable condition should be reinforced with proper follow-up and support of the school and other concerned bodies such as regional and district level education offices and the school administration for better practices of one to five cooperative learning in the schools.

Training and continuous updates is compulsory for the teachers and students regarding the concepts, uses, methods, problems and the possible measures for the challenges to adequately publicize and disseminate to the end users. Additionally, the pro-social skills students need to work effectively with others in their groups such as sharing ideas and information, acknowledging and praising the ideas of others, checking the shared understanding with other group members and the mechanisms to promote those skills should be addressed through continuous training and updates.

Students' one-to-five groups failed to plan on academic, affective and social goals for both in and off school free times so that they weak to be more reflective about how they worked as individuals and as a group. Hence, what to consider and to prioritize should be the focus of follow-up and support from the concerned bodies such as the mentors, supervisors and the principals. Contrariwise, though the teachers endeavored to prepare-one-to five group plans with participation of all members, the plans should show the gaps to be filled and how to capacitate teachers' potentials, including the academic gaps.

Regardless of countless inconveniences, the teachers should be committed and urged to exert their maximum efforts for facilitating students to properly utilize cooperative learning groups both in the class and outside the class including non-school hours. Additionally, both students and teachers groups should be properly functional so as to achieve the goals of cooperative learning by addressing both academic and nonacademic needs of members.

The current practices and activities of students' and teachers one-to-five groups, which are dissimilar and unscheduled among schools, demonstrates that cooperative learning is not abundantly given attention primarily on utilizing students times both in and outside the class. Accordingly, stakeholder such as the schools, supervisors and the district education offices and others should reassess the existing attention given to follow-up, support and evaluation mechanisms regarding one to five cooperative learning. Besides, the provision of appropriate feedback and engagement for student discussions and activities in school and non-school hours needs considerable attention.

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