

EDITORIAL NOTE**Striving to Disseminate Research that Informs and Improves Educational Practices and Policies****Mulugeta Yayeh Worku (Ph.D.)**

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Dear readers,

I would like to welcome you all to this issue of our journal, BJE 23 (1). On behalf of the journal's editorial team, it gives me great pleasure to write this editorial message.

Bahir Dar Journal of Education (BJE), first named as Education Bulletin, is a scholarly publication at Bahir Dar University (BDU). It is a reputable bi-annual journal published by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Bahir Dar University. BJE was among a few journals in Ethiopia accredited by the then Ministry of Science and Higher Education in 2020. Since its establishment, 22 volumes, 44 issues, and many manuscripts with prominent significances for the Ethiopian education system and beyond have been published.

Compared with other BJE issues, the current issue is released at a time when the journal and its publisher are going through some major developments. The first significant development in this regard is the fact that CEBS and BDU are celebrating their 50th and 60th anniversaries respectively. CEBS, which was formerly known as the Academy of Pedagogy, was inaugurated in 1974 to train qualified teacher educators for the country's teacher training institutes (Fantahun & Tsegaye, 2014). Throughout its 50-year journey, CEBS has been a prestigious national institution in the field of education in general and teacher education in particular. The contribution of BJE to this institutional prestige, we believe, has been quite significant. The journal editorial team will strongly work to sustain this legacy. By publishing and disseminating quality research outputs that inform and improve educational practices and policies, BJE will remain committed to discharge its responsibility of maintaining the reputation and credibility of CEBS.

The present issue is published with another event of institutional significance. Recently, the senate of BDU has ratified a document that designates CEBS as a center of excellence for Teacher Education and Leadership Development. We believe that this decision is essential for the CEBS to have greater autonomy to discharge its institutional responsibilities. The forthcoming issues of BJE, therefore, will give due prominence to this new institutional duty of the college. In this regard, great emphasis will be placed on manuscripts that contribute significantly to teacher education and leadership development.

Another important historical event that makes the present issue different from its predecessors is the fact that it is published at a high time when journal indexing and abstracting

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have become one of the top priorities of BJE's editorial team. To improve the visibility and impact of manuscripts that we publish, we are rigorously working to index the journal in prestigious national, continental, and international journal indexing institutions and databases. So far, we are able to index BJE in the Ethiopian Journals Online (EJOL) and the Google Scholar Databases. Quite recently, BJE has been indexed in the African Journals Online (AJOL) database. The inclusion of BJE in these databases is improving the journal's visibility and impact. For instance, as editor-in-chief, I am observing more manuscripts coming to BJE from many African scholars. Motivated by this, currently, the journal's editorial team is making unreserved efforts to index the journal in other world-class journal indexing and abstracting institutions. We have already submitted applications to some well-known databases. We expect their positive responses soon.

As our esteemed readers may have observed, the journal has been striving to raise the quality of the manuscripts it publishes. As part of this effort, the editorial team has been diligently working to make the journal's double-blind peer review editorial process more rigorous and standardized. Due to this, encouraging results have been seen in issuing high-quality manuscripts submitted by academics from various local and international higher education institutions. By doing so, we believe, BJE is discharging its responsibility of publishing manuscripts that contribute to the advancement of educational policies and practices at the national and international levels.

Along with the issue of quality, we are currently working to increase the number of manuscripts published in one issue. So far, we have been publishing only four to five manuscripts per issue. In the previous issue (Vol. 22, Issue 2), however, we managed to publish six manuscripts that addressed various educational issues. Most importantly, in the present issue, we are able to publish seven manuscripts, in addition to this editorial note. We anticipate further improvements in the quantity of manuscripts in the upcoming issues. By doing this, we will not only create a better space for the publication of more manuscripts, but we will also adhere to our revised editorial policy, the research and publication guidelines of Bahir Dar University (BDU, 2019), and the new guidelines put forth by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education which is the national journal accreditor (MoE, 2022).

The editorial team of the journal is resolute that every effort should be made to improve the diversity of manuscripts published in each issue of BJE. The journal's revised editorial policy also makes this point very clear. As it can be noticed, so far, we have been predominantly publishing articles of original research works. Stated another way, BJE has not been sufficiently publishing other manuscripts such as reflections, document reviews, book reviews, letters to the editor, invited articles, and editorial notes. In response to this limitation and the directions of our revised editorial policy, the journal will do its best to publish other types of manuscripts in upcoming issues. The inclusion of this editorial note, the first in the history of BJE, needs to be considered as part of our effort in this regard. I would like to take this opportunity to invite academics, readers and subscribers to submit their reflections, document reviews, book reviews, letters to the editor, and other manuscripts addressing various educational issues to our journal.

In this issue, we published seven manuscripts that emanate from original research projects. They are authored by 17 scholars from four universities in two countries and continents. The

manuscripts could be broadly put under five categories. In this regard, two of the manuscripts exclusively focus on issues of Higher Education while the other two present research findings from the field of Educational Leadership. The remaining three manuscripts, on the other hand, deal with educational issues from the fields of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Curriculum Theory, and Language Teaching.

In the first manuscript of the present issue, the authors (Tsigie Genet Zegeye, Solomon Kassie Alem & Ayetenew Abie) sought to investigate the self-efficacy of in-service public primary school teachers in Amhara National Region State to practice the major professional responsibilities while teaching Inclusive Education. Using the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice (TEIP) scale, the authors examined the effects of teachers' gender, level of education, and teaching experience in practicing Inclusive Education. In their study, the authors explored that teachers had a low level of self-efficacy to practice the various principles of inclusive education in their classrooms. The authors also briefly showed the implications of their findings for future teacher education policies and practices.

The second manuscript by Medhanit Adane Solomon, Amare Asgedom Gebremedhin, and Kassahun Weldemariam Tigistu examined the conceptualizations and associated trends of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in higher education. It also explored the challenges that hinder academic staff from engaging in CPD in higher education. Based on the data they collected through Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses-PRISMA, the authors indicated that there were varied conceptualizations of CPD in higher education. They also highlighted the trends and challenges of CPD along with potential solutions for higher education institutions.

Coming to the third manuscript, the issue of employability skills acquisition, a less researched educational agenda, is given prominence. Using the legitimation code theory as a theoretical framework and questionnaires adapted from renowned scholars of the field, the authors (Sara Jehi Oumer, Meskerem Lechissa Debele & Amara Seifu Belayneh), attempted to analyze the employability skills acquisition of graduating students of three public universities in Ethiopia. In this study, the authors found evidence of all four specialization codes—knowledge, knower, élite, and relativist codes—in universities with regard to various sets of employability skills. They also showed how students' legitimation codes could be used to explain their employability skills.

The fourth manuscript of the present issue discusses secondary school principals' adaptive leadership practices in response to the COVID-19 crisis in Bahir Dar city administration, Ethiopia. Based on quantitative data gathered through a questionnaire from 242 randomly selected secondary school teachers, the two authors (Abebaw Ayana Alene & Melaku Mengistu Gebremeskel) came up with some findings about the city administration's secondary school principals' adaptive leadership practices in managing the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

In the fifth manuscript, Tadesse Melesse Merawi and Esuyawkal Tessema Ageze reflected on the curriculum development process of Ethiopia in light of Patrick Slattery's postmodern curriculum principles. Using the five curriculum development principles (rejection of metanarratives, artificial bifurcations, the interconnectedness of individual experiences in a global

context, the assertion and validation of everyone's voice in the school community, and understanding of the complexity of metaphysics) of this eminent scholar, the authors attempted to examine various educational and curricular documents of the country. They also came up with findings that have valuable implications for curriculum development practices in Ethiopia.

Then, in the sixth manuscript, we get a research report titled “the effect of transformational leadership, teachers’ openness to experience and gender on innovative work behavior in higher education institutions”. In this manuscript, Habtu Gebreslassie Bahru, Amare Sahle Abebe, and Tilaye Kassahun Ayen reported some insightful research findings. These findings, in my opinion, are of high significance not only to the higher education institutions that the researchers investigated but also for the field of higher education leadership in general.

In the seventh manuscript of the present issue, Haileyesus Wudu Mekonnen reported his research findings vis-à-vis early grade reading. In this manuscript, the author presented the experience of one primary school, Donaberber primary school, in helping students improve their skills of reading. The finding of this study revealed, through different strategies (e.g., by spending available resources differently, optimal use of instructional time, making reading an instructional priority for the first three months of the academic year, and through the application of some innovative pedagogies), the school was able to provide its students with the foundational opportunities that in turn helped them to read within a few months.

Finally, I would like to thank all the authors, reviewers, editors, and advisory board members for the interest you showed in our journal, and most importantly, for the vital roles you played in the editorial process of this issue. Using this opportunity, I would also like to call upon you all to continue the unreserved efforts and professional services you are rendering to our journal. I am confident that together, we can further improve the quality, visibility, and impact of BJE and make it a better, most preferred, and highly accessed publication venue for the educational research community in Ethiopia, Africa, and beyond.

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