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Research Articles

The Leadership and Supervisory Practices of Principals in Public Secondary Schools of the State of Amhara, Ethiopia, as Perceived by Teachers

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Abstract

This study aimed at examining the leadership and supervisory practices of secondary school principals in the State of Amhara in view of teachers. It investigated the leadership factors that attributed for poor education quality. To that effect, the leadership and supervisory practices of principals were examined. The study employed the descriptive survey research design of the quantitative approach involving 1115 teachers recruited through a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Data collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multivariate analyses of variance revealed that teachers perceived the leadership and supervisory practices of principals were weak. Teachers have very weak differences in terms of three demographic factors, except sex which has no difference at all, regarding their poor leadership practices. Regarding supervisory practices, qualification level demonstrated a weak difference, the rest three with no significant differences. In addition, teachers' acknowledgment of the supervisory role of their principals is inversely correlated to the qualification level former, despite the weak difference. That is, the higher teachers' qualification level the less they acknowledge the supervisory role of their principals. The findings also revealed that leadership and supervisory practices of principals are correlated positively and significantly. Such a perception may have far-reaching consequences on the commitment and effectiveness of teachers and the quality of education. Therefore, the assignment of principals needs to be based on competence to foster commitment and ownership among all parties. In addition, further research that triangulates data from students, principals, and other stakeholders through different methods shall be conducted to resolve leadership-related limitations in secondary schools

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Introduction

Educators and professionals of educational leadership (Ringler et al., 2010; Schlechty, 2011; Van Camp, 2005; Ward, 2013) argue that school leadership has an indispensable role in school success next to teachers. According to these sources, principals contribute highly not only to creating a convenient instructional environment but also to staff professional development. If schools are to provide the best quality and relevant education for their pupils, according to Ward (2013), they require effective principals. Just like they need trained and committed teachers, Ward argues, schools require competent and effective principals. In many parts of the world, she also

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contends, there is a wide range of recognition that effective leadership is one of the major determinants for schools to provide the best possible education for their learners.

Sergiovanni (2001), in the same vein, claimed that effective school leadership is the bond that ties teachers together with their job to ultimately succeed in their job and get job satisfaction. Consistently, Bush (2007) expounds that school leadership is an indispensable attribute for the creation of a convenient teaching-learning environment and school improvement. Ärlestig (2007), Daniels and Daniels (2007), and Gale and Bishop (2014), similarly, argue that principals play key roles in communicating and shaping staff behavior and helping them build smooth relationships with the local community to boost their social acceptance at the end of the day. The principal is responsible to undertake both strategic and operational plans for schools and implement and carry out strategic tasks and daily routines within a school (Hallinger, 2003). According to Schleicher (2012), consequently, school effectiveness has been strongly related to the role and functions of principals in the sense that school success depends on leadership effectiveness.

The relationship between the leadership competence of principals and school effectiveness is worth emphasizing (Wallace Foundation, 2013; Whitaker, 2012). While demonstrating the contributions of the principals' leadership role in this respect Wallace Foundation (2013, p.4) states that "… most school variables … have at most small effects on learning. The real payoff comes when individual variables combine to reach critical mass. Creating the conditions under which that can occur is the job of the principal." Consistently, Akinbode and Al Shuhumi (2018) claim that, unlike in old times, school leadership in our era is quite a complex task because of the steady and dramatic changes in society brought about by the dynamic technological and communication environment. As the desire of society changes, in other words, schools must change to address the steadily growing need of the community. In such a complex and steadily changing school environment the principal takes the lion's share in shouldering the brunt of realizing the dynamic school vision and mission. Therefore, leadership competence among principals has a significant contribution to student achievement and school effectiveness (Bush, 2007; Sunaengsih et al., 2019).

Different writers propose different indicators of principal effectiveness. Kempa et al. (2017, p.306), for instance, state that "effective principal leadership is a leadership that can foster cooperative efforts and maintains an ideal working climate in schools." Ubben and Hughes (1997) focus on creating a conducive environment, being visionary, change-oriented, and paying attention to professional development describe effective principal, among others. In this respect, Wallace Foundation (2013) suggested five competencies that demonstrate an effective principal: establishing a sound vision and communicating it focusing on the success of all students; creating a suitable school environment for effective instruction; building interactive cooperation among the staff; developing a harmonious leadership environment that motivates teachers and students towards realizing the vision; and managing subordinates, resources, data and the instructional processes towards school improvement and quality. Yildirim and Kaya (2019, p.3) also found out that principals that are considered to have effective leadership competence excel in "learning, teaching, sharing leadership, communication, interaction, a safe school environment, encouragement, and strategic planning."

Ärlestig (2007) and Duignan (2006) have presented more explanatory dimensions of school leadership competencies that characterize effective principals. One, it requires drawing and communicating a value-driven vision for future improvement not only to inspire hope among teachers in order to give a sense of purpose, meaning, and hope among them but to take and translate the spirits or vision of teachers into their daily work practices as well. Building trust, transparency, and open communications, in addition, helps significantly in creating a more suitable, purposeful, and inspiring school environment (Sezgin & Er, 2016). According to Fullan (2007), this process also helps teachers properly understand the purpose and direction of their day-to-day endeavors and create a sense of strategic thinking in their work. Two, it highly demands managing staff relationships toward school success. This is a more dominant theme in school leadership because an effective relationship is the engine of effective school leadership. Practices such as encouragement of staff morale and keeping them motivated as well as developing teamwork or team spirit and providing opportunities for staff development are built through a smooth and healthy relationship across the board.

Leading people is the third dimension of effective school leadership for Ärlestig (2007) and Duignan (2006). It refers to relationship building as well as the how of personal and professional relationships in schools. Leading people emphasizes not whether principals are friendly with teachers but rather how all the staff can cooperate in a team spirit to achieve school goals and objectives. Accordingly, leading people demands the existence of core values essential to professional relationships among principals. These include factors that play major roles in the development and maintenance of personal relationships such as honesty, trust, trustworthiness, respectfulness, tolerance, empathy, open-mindedness, team spirit as well as valuing students and the educational processes that altogether best serve the needs of students and their parents.

Fourth, according to Ärlestig (2007) and Duignan (2006), the capability of leading continuous change is another very essential element of effective principalship. Since we are in a time of rapid change and transition, it is necessary for the principal to realize that there may be casualties in the change process of education reforms. In such contexts, everyone may not come on board immediately (or even in the short term) with new ways of thinking and doing. For instance, aging teachers with long years of experience may get stagnated and complacent if they are not constantly encouraged and supported to cope with the changing school environment. Principals, therefore, need to be sensitive to the fears and anxieties of such people involved in the track of the change process. In addition, principals need to pay adequate attention to the issue of dealing with poor performance. In dealing with poorly performing teachers, it is better for the principal to confront and deal with the problem early and head-on in a responsible and professional manner that considers the interests of all concerned. That is because there is a deep concern for their students on the one hand and such situations are complex and multidimensional on the other. In other words, since there is high public pressure for accountability in schools, on the one hand, and constant pressure to improve student achievements on the other, these days, the competence of principals to lead change determines significantly. Such a school environment inevitably requires a strong demand for ‘doing more with less’ that in return demands from principals the competence of managing accountability and individual performance effectively.

Effective communication is the fifth element of principal competence. It refers to a meaningful engagement and dialogue of the principal with staff in their day-to-day activities in order to facilitate effective communication. As a whole good communication requires three things: the existence of something important to communicate; choosing the appropriate time and means to deliver the message; and active engagement with others beyond a simple one-way communication so that the intended messages and misunderstandings are clarified. Modern technology can be of great assistance in facilitating communication processes.

Sixth, balancing personal needs and professional responsibilities is another very essential ingredient of school leadership. Principals are often overwhelmed by pressures from different stakeholders to meet their targets they should not be flooded with a huge load of responsibility. Principalship demands not only coping with the pressures of heavy workloads but also having to do it with sufficient support. Principals who often accomplish their tasks in such a tight work environment should not be left to the tension of being thrown off balance or out of balance, with their work lives dominating their private lives.

In order to gain the recognition of teachers, principals shall convincingly carry out multidimensional tasks (Sergiovanni, 1996): setting a vision to inspire and mobilize the commitment of teachers, students, and parents; sharing and harmonizing stakeholders around the vision; institutionalizing values or translate the vision into practices and standards that guide behavior; motivating stakeholders; managing the daily procedures that make up a well-organized and effective school; working to relate requests for action directly to the common vision established by the stakeholders; providing the resources necessary to achieve a common goal and removing obstacles entangled against the common goal; contextualizing practices with community thought, deed, and expression; and supervising performance to support and ensure goal achievement.

Sergiovani's suggestion has, in one form or the other, been adapted into the Ethiopian education system as a standard for principal competence. The current education and training policy of Ethiopia, for instance, emphasizes that ensuring the quality, equity, and relevance of education requires effective management and leadership at all levels of the education system (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020). The policy further explains that principals' engagement with the school community, students, teachers, and all educational stakeholders is crucial to achieving school objectives. To realize this policy intention MoE has developed professional standards whereby principals are required to meet five major competencies: articulate, share and facilitate school vision; develop strong school–community relation and manage it towards school success; provide effective instructional (teaching and learning) leadership; develop team spirit in a school as well as lead individuals and team for school improvement; and lead and manage school operations and resources towards efficiency and effectiveness (MoE, 2013).

Problem Statement

As it is operating in a complex environment school leadership has been faced with diverse problems. Mulkeen et al. (2007), for instance, noted that many school leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa are unprepared for their leadership roles and responsibilities. Bush and Oduro (2006)

consistently claim that in most parts of Africa, these days, principals are not required to have any formal preparation and/or professional development. Other research results (Harris, 2003) concluded that problems with staff, principles and their relationship with the top authorities, problems with parents, and problems related to the personal characteristics of the principals themselves are the most common challenges principals are faced nowadays.

In the same vein, it has been widely echoed in Ethiopia in general and in the State of Amhara in particular that leadership competence is one of the key hurdles in the effectiveness of schools (MoE, 2015, 2020). The annual performance reports and inspection reports conducted by the Bureau of Education (BoE) of the State of Amhara, similarly, have been complaining about the weakness of school leadership as a function of quality deterioration in the study area throughout the last two decades. Those problems attract attention and evoke questions about the leadership competencies and effectiveness of principals. As a result, the researchers of the current study felt that there is a need to examine and identify the limitations of leadership practices that principals are faced with and suggest plausible solutions. Accordingly, this study intends to examine the leadership competencies of secondary school principals in the State of Amhara in view of teachers.

To that effect, the study is spearheaded by the following research questions: (1) is there a significant mean difference among teachers in terms of their sex, level of qualification, experience, and position regarding the leadership practices of their principals? (2) is there a significant mean difference among teachers in terms of sex, level of qualification, experience, and position in the supervisory role of their principals? (3) are there significant relationships between leadership practices and supervisory roles among principals?

Methods

In this study, the descriptive survey research design of the quantitative approach was employed. It has been undertaken in the State of Amhara and consists of 12 administrative zones and three city administrations under which there are about 105 *woredas* and 593 secondary schools by 2020. The populations of the study were all secondary school teachers in those all *woredas*. The target population of the study was 39,145 (29,776 Male and 9,369 Female) teachers deployed in 593 schools (BoE, 2020). To determine the sample size that filled out questionnaires, the single population proportion sample size formula of Daniel and Cross (2013)[2] has been implemented.

Daniel and Cross's formula is valid only for simple random or systematic sampling methods. But the sampling technique that was used for this study was multistage stratified random sampling. That is because, primarily, five zonal administrations and one city administration were selected through a simple random sampling (lottery) method. Then, two *woredas* from each zonal and city administration were selected through the same method. Finally, one secondary school had been selected from each *woreda* through the same sampling technique. Therefore, the calculated

[2] $n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2}$ *Note.* n = sample size, Z = Z statistic for the level of confidence, P = expected prevalence or proportion (in proportion of one; if 5%, P = 0.5), and d = precision (in proportion of one; if 5%, d = 0.05).

sample size requires to be multiplied by D. The design effect (D) provides a correction for the loss of sampling efficiency resulting from the use of stratified random sampling instead of simple random sampling. The design effect results in N = D x *n*, where N is the sample size for the stratified random sample, D is the design effect and *n* is the sample size obtained from the calculation.

By using the formula to determine the sample size for the simple random sampling method, the sample size was found to be around 384 when rounded off. Nonetheless, since the current study has implemented a stratified random sampling technique, the sample size obtained through a simple random sampling technique, which is three in this case, was multiplied by D because a three-stage sampling technique has been applied in the study. The stages included the selection of zonal administrations, *woredas* from each zonal administration, and schools from each *woreda* from where participants (teachers) were directly selected. All these procedures utilized the simple random sampling method. Thus, the actual sample size was found to be 3 x 384 (or 1152).

Participants were drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. This was intended to guarantee proportional representation of participants throughout the secondary schools in the study area. The strata of schools were framed on the basis of zonal and city administrations from each of which representative samples of schools were selected by using the systematic sampling method. Accordingly, 12 schools were involved among a total of 539 schools in the region. After obtaining a random sample of schools, teachers were selected using the proportionate stratified random sampling method from each school. The proportion of male and female teachers is also taken care of. The formula[3] indicated in (Bethlehem, 2009) was employed to determine the proportionate distribution of participants.

Table 1

Population and Sample Size

Zonal/City Administration	Population Size			Sample Size		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
East Gojjam	3612	1355	4967	212	80	292
Awi	2246	693	2939	132	41	173
South Gondar	2976	1027	4003	174	61	235
Gondar City	608	319	927	36	19	55
North Wollo	1989	551	2540	117	32	149
South Wollo	3433	784	4217	202	46	248
Total	14864	4729	19593	873	279	1152

Source. BoE (2020)

With respect to data gathering instruments, only a questionnaire was employed to collect data. The instruments were directly adopted from the N*ational Professional Standards for School*

[3] $n_k = \frac{n}{N} N_k$ *Note*. n_k = the sample size for k^{th} strata; n = the total sample size; N = the total population size; and N_k= the population size of the k^{th} strata.

Principals (MoE, 2013) with the intention of understanding teachers' perceptions about how much principals could change the competencies described in the standard into practice. Even though principals have six levels of competencies (extending from beginner to lead principal), only the competencies set for beginner principals were considered in the current study. This was done due to the fact that principals who fulfilled the minimum requirements among those involved in the professional competence assessment conducted in 2016 and 2019 (the only years data are available) were only 2.6% and not at all consecutively (BoE, 2020). Under such an objective reality, it sounds better to inquire whether principals fulfill the minimum competencies of a beginner principal instead of higher competence levels. Besides, the issue of manageability limits the investigation effort to focus only on one competence standard.

With the exception of six items set to collect demographic data, all the items in the questionnaire were close-ended. With the exception of demographic variables, similarly, all the variables of the study were measured using a rating scale (with scores between 1 representing *never* and 5 representing *always*). A rating scale has been preferred not only because it is easier to score but also because it is not that tiresome or boring to complete as many items as possible (Cohen et al., 2018; Gay et al., 2012).

In addition, teachers' demographic data that included experience, level of qualification, sex, and workplace position was emphasized. The intention was to examine whether teacher perceptions of the leadership practices of their principals vary in terms of those demographic factors. Among those factors, there seems essential to make a little bit of explanation about the rationale behind the classification of experience. Teachers' experience in the current study was sorted out based on the guideline set by the FDRE Civil Service Commission (2019) regarding the selection, placement, and promotion of teachers, principals, and supervisors. According to this guideline, teachers with service years below five years are a *beginner* or *graduate teachers*. Those who served for five years are *proficient teachers* whereas those with eight years of experience are *accomplished teachers*. In the same line those with 11, 14, 17, and 20 years of service are classified as *senior teachers, associate lead teachers, lead teachers,* and *senior lead teachers* consecutively. In this study, accordingly, beginner teachers scored 1, proficient and accomplished teachers 2, those with service years more than eight years and senior teachers 3, and the rest teachers (with services > 11) scored 4. The classification was decided based on the closeness and synchronization of the job descriptions specified for each category in the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* (MoE, 2013).

As can be seen from Table 2, the questionnaire other than demographic information had two major categories, leadership, and supervisory practices. Each of them has nine and four variables consecutively. The reliability of the variables described in the table certifies the plausibility of the data analysis.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Tests

Dimension	Variable	Number of items	Reliability coefficients
Leadership practices	Framing school goals	5	0.907
	Communicating school goals	5	0.736
	Evaluating instruction	5	0.740
	Coordinating curriculum	4	0.595
	Monitoring student progress	9	0.799
	Protecting instructional time	6	0.822
	Providing incentives for teachers	5	0.896
	Promoting professional development	5	0.807
	Providing incentives for learners	5	0.766
Supervisory practices	Instructional Leadership Role	5	0.888
	Evaluation Role	8	0.856
	Coordination Role	6	0.880
	Consultation role	5	0.864

Finally, data collected through the questionnaire were cleaned, systematically organized, and tabulated by using SPSS-23 software. The mean and multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA), were utilized to analyze the data. MANOVA evaluates differences among composite means for a set of dependent variables (DVs) when there are two or more levels of groups or IVs. MANOVA is useful in educational research when there are more than two groups (any number of DVs may be used) DVs in an investigation. Once statistically significant differences are found among more than two groups, a post hoc comparison is applied. MANOVA was, therefore, utilized in order to assess the influence of the demographic factors on independent variables (IVs). In addition, Tukey *posthoc* test was picked because it is not only applicable for all pairwise comparisons but is also more powerful than the other test type with the same utility, known as the Bonferroni test, when more tests such as the one under study are done (Cohen et al., 2018; Larson-Hall, 2010). Five percent ($\alpha = 0.05$) has been taken as a standard level of significance in the study because many scholars of the field (e.g., Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Gay et al., 2012) recommend it as a standard for social science studies. Nonetheless, notable sources of literature (e.g., Cohen et al., 2018; Muijs, 2004; Tabachnick, & Fidell, 2013) argue that dependence on significance level has limitations in effectively informing the strength of relationships because it is largely determined by sample size. That is, information about effect size tests is highly essential, if not the most essential index of all tests in social science research, either to substantiate or replace the significance test. In other words, effect sizes are often more useful and informative about the magnitude or strength of the difference that significance testing alone cannot do. Accordingly, a *partial eta squared* (η^2) effect size index has been implemented to measure effect sizes in the current study.

Results

Return Rate

Out of 1152 questionnaires distributed 1039 (90.2%) were filled out and returned. Among them, 1003 (96.5%) were found plausible for analysis. In other words, 113 questionnaires were not returned and 29 were deleted using the case-wise deletion approach among those filled out and returned because of the incompleteness of data. In addition, two demographic data were discarded at the analysis phase due to the incompleteness of many questionnaires that did not complete two items. The return rate of the questionnaires is high enough because, as a rule of thumb as low as a 50% response rate is tolerable for survey studies to be able to generalize about the population from which samples have been drawn (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Gay et al., 2012). In addition, this demographic data, in one way or the other, demonstrates the instruments found valuable and utilized in the analysis.

Table 3

Demographic Data of Participants

Measurement scale	Sex		Experience				Workplace position			Qualification level	
	Male	Female	< 5	5-8	>8-11	>11	Department head	Unit leader	Teacher	First degree	Second degree
Frequency	778	230	115	123	117	655	255	188	564	791	212
Percent	77.2	22.8	11.4	12.2	11.6	64.8	25.3	18.7	56.0	78.9	21.1

Leadership Practices of Principals

As displayed in Table 4, the mean scores of teachers' perceptions of their principals informed that the leadership practices of the latter are only a little more than average in all their aspects, except coordinating curriculum implementation and protection of the instructional time, both of which are below average. The results notify one to judge how poor secondary school principals are in their leadership practices because the items set for teachers to gauge the competencies of their principals utilized the competencies of beginner principals, the lowest level of competence in the principals' career hierarchy. On the other hand, the correlation relations among the DVs of principals' leadership roles investigated depict that there is a moderate and positive correlation among each composite variable. The correlation output implies that a successful practice in one component of leadership complements the same output on the other.

Table 4

The Bivariate Correlation among Leadership Variables

DVs	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.FSG	17.22		.606**	.536**	.480**	.423**	.386**	.246**	.393**	.442**
2. CSG	16.16			.569**	.486**	.472**	.434**	.269**	.438**	.410**

DVs	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. EI	16.44				.528**	.516**	.492**	.326**	.499**	.493**
4. CC	12.56					.526**	.544**	.356**	.412**	.400**
5. MSP	29.01						.713**	.425**	.425**	.433**
6. PIT	18.73							.490**	.485**	.468**
7. PTI	13.51								.493**	.411**
8. PPD	15.94									.663**
9. PIL	16.09									

Note. ** correlation is significant at 0.01 (two-tailed)
FSG – frame school goals; CSG – communicate school goals; EI – evaluate instruction; CC – Coordinate curriculum; MSP– monitor student progress; PIT – protect instructional time; PTI – provide teachers with incentives; PPD– promoting professional development; PIL – provide incentives for learners; LR – leadership role; ER – evaluation role; CR– coordination role; CN – consultation role.

The existence of a positive correlation among the composite variables paved the way for running MANOVA to examine whether there are significant mean differences among the demographic variables. Separate MANOVAs run against each demographic variable (sex, experience, position, and qualification), displayed in Table 5, revealed mixed outputs. To begin with, sex did not display a statistically significant difference among teachers' perceptions on the composite (or combined) scores of principals' leadership practices (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.969$, $p > 0.05$). The MANOVA result in terms of teachers' experience, however, demonstrated a very small mean score difference (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.960$, $F (27, 2915) = 1.507$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.034$). This implies that in the current study experience played a weak role in teachers' perception difference of the leadership practices of principals.

In the same vein, there was a weak mean difference among teachers in terms of their position with respect to the combined scores of principals' leadership practices (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.929$, $F (36, 3738) = 2.068$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.018$). Although the *p*-value informs that there is a significant mean score difference among teachers in terms of positions they held, the effect size test (or η^2) value is very small. This suggests that the actual difference in the mean values is very small. Alike experience, position implies that the contribution of position in segregating teachers' perception about the leadership practices of their principals is small in magnitude. Effect size index, similarly, informed that teacher qualification explained a small mean difference among teachers regarding the leadership practices of their principals (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.957$, $F (27, 2915) = 1, 64$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.015$), despite the fact that the *p*-value informs the existence of a statistically significant difference. Just like experience and position, this also implies that the difference in levels of teacher qualification did not bring about a strong difference in their perception of the leadership practice of their principals.

Table 5

Multivariate Analyses of the Leadership Roles of Principals

Variables	Wilk's Lambda	Hypothesis df	Error df	P	η^2
Sex	.969	27	2195	.238	.011
Experience	.960	27	2915	.045	.034
Position	.929	36	3738	.000	.018
Qualification	.957	27	2915	.020	.015

Despite small the mean score differences, *post hoc* tests were conducted for the IVs to find out exactly where the mean score differences are. The tests were run only on variables that revealed significant differences. With respect to framing school goals, to begin with, differences have been observed between beginner teachers and proficient and accomplished (5 – 8 years services) teachers (Mean of < 5 = 17.92, Mean of 5-8 = 16.14, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, there were differences in the same variable between senior and lead teachers (with experiences > 11 years) and proficient and accomplished teachers (Mean of >11 = 17.42, Mean of 5-8 = 16.14, $p < 0.02$). It can be learned that senior and lead teachers tone down the leadership practices of their principals when compared with proficient and accomplished teachers. The *post hoc* test revealed the same trend with respect to communicating school goals, too. Differences were observed between beginner teachers and proficient and accomplished teachers (Mean of < 5 = 16.79, Mean of 5-8 = 14.98, $p < 0.03$) as well as between beginner teachers and senior and lead teachers (services >11 years) (Mean of < 5 = 16.79, Mean of >11 = 16.38, $p< 0.022$). From the figures, it can be understood those beginner teachers as well as senior and lead teachers highlight principals' practices of communicating school goals more than proficient and accomplished teachers.

In relation to the level of qualification, teachers with a bachelor's degree had higher mean scores than teachers with a Master's degree in all the variables that demonstrated significant differences: in framing school goals (Mean of Bachelor Degree = 17.48, Mean of Master's degree = 16.38, $p < 0.01$); in evaluating instruction (Mean of Bachelor degree = 16.29, Mean of Master's degree 15.29, $p = 0.000$); in promoting professional development (Mean of Bachelor degree = 16.26, Mean of Master's degree = 14. 78, $p = 0.000$); and in providing incentives for learners (Mean of Bachelor degree = 16.33, Mean of Master's degree = 15.29, $p < 0.046$). Despite *post hoc* test results informed weak mean score differences, the figures indicated that teachers with bachelor's degrees acknowledge the abovementioned leadership practices of principals more than do teachers with Master's degrees. In other words, teachers' acknowledgment of the principals' leadership activities is inversely related to their qualification levels. In relation to teachers' perception of principals' leadership practices in terms of positions the former held, too, the omnibus MANOVA result uncovered a statistically significant mean score difference, even though the effect size test result reported a very small difference between pairs of categories.

Supervisory Roles of Principals

As displayed in Table 6, according to the perception of teachers, the mean scores of each variable are not more than average, implying subordinates (teachers) perceive that the performance

of their principals in supervisory practices is not more than average. The results inform one to observe how poor secondary school principals are in their supervisory practices because the items set for teachers to gauge the competencies of their principals depended only on the competencies of beginner principals. On the other hand, according to teachers' perceptions, supervisory variables are moderately and positively related to each other. That is, an increase in one variable is accompanied by an increase in another. Just like in the leadership practices, it implies that a successful practice in one supervisory dimension assists in implementing the other successfully. The prevailing relationship, therefore, informs the possibility of running MANOVA to examine the mean difference among the demographic variables.

Table 6

The Correlation between Variables of Supervisory Roles

Variables	Mean	1	2	3	4
Instructional Leadership role	15.26				
Evaluation role	24.85	.701**			
Coordination role	18.83	.621**	.760**		
Consultation role	15.00	.611**	.726**	.762**	

Pairwise MANOVAs conducted on the supervisory role of principals showed that there were no significant differences in each of the independent variables except with respect to levels of qualification (Wilk's $\Lambda = .970$, $F (12, 2654) = 2.548$, $p < 0.002$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$), despite the fact that the effect size test result displayed a very week mean difference with respect to qualification level too. MANOVA results for teachers' male and female comparison (Wilk's $\Lambda = .981$, $F (12, 2654) = 1.586$, $p > 0.089$, $\eta^2 = 0.006$), experiences (Wilk's $\Lambda = .986$, $F (12, 2654) = 1.20$, $p > 0.277$, $\eta^2 = 0.002$), and positions (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.991$, $F (26, 3062) = 0.599$, $p > 0.887$, $\eta^2 = 0.005$) did demonstrate no significant mean score differences.

Table 7

Multivariate Analysis of Supervisory Roles of Principals

Variables	Wilk's Lambda	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	P	η^2
Sex	.981	1.586	12	2654	.089	
Experience	.986	1.20	12	2654	.277	
Position	.991	.599	16	3062	.887	
Qualification	.970	2.548	12	2654	.002	.010

A *post hoc* test performed to identify the location of the significant differences regarding teachers' perceptions about principals' practice of supervisory roles is, therefore, limited to qualification levels of teachers. That is, teachers with a bachelor's degree perceived their principals are better in their instructional leadership practices than teachers with a Master's degree perceived (mean of bachelor's degree = 15.612, mean of master's degree = 13.882, p = 0.000). With respect to evaluation practices, too, teachers with a bachelor's degree than with a master's degree felt that

their principals demonstrated higher roles (mean of bachelor's degree = 25.448, mean of master's degree = 22.580, $p < 0.001$) in that regard. Similarly, teachers with bachelor's degrees highlighted principals' coordination role more than teachers with master's degrees did (mean of bachelor's degree =19.157, mean of Master's degree = 17.495, $p < 0.002$). In the same vein, teachers with bachelor's degrees perceived that their principals have higher consultation role mean scores than teachers with master's degrees perceived (mean of bachelor's degree = 15.226, Mean of Master's degree = 14.123, $p < 0.034$). It all implies the higher the teachers' qualification level the less they acknowledge the supervisory role of their principals, despite the difference being weak. That is, the higher their qualification level, the fewer the teachers who acknowledge the effectiveness of the supervisory role of their principals.

Relationship between Leadership and Supervisory Roles of Principals

The relationship between leadership role and supervisory role variables is depicted in Table 8. The output informs that the two variable groups are positively and significantly correlated to each other. That means, according to the perception of their subordinates – the teachers – when principals are good in their leadership roles so do they in their supervisory roles. According to the perception of teachers, a successful practice of any one of the leadership roles of principals is meant a successful practice of their supervisory roles. This implies that teachers understand the utility of both the leadership and supervisory practices of principals in the effectiveness of different school programs.

Table 8

Bivariate Correlations between Leadership Roles and Supervisory Roles

Variables	FSG	CSG	EI	CC	MSP	PIT	PTI	PPD	PIL
LR	.362**	.404**	.457**	.382**	.385**	.404**	.431**	.548**	.550**
ER	.372**	.416**	.472**	.379**	.402**	.426**	.378**	.552**	.515**
CR	.402**	.434**	.456**	.400**	.444**	.478**	.398**	.515**	.481**
CN	.374**	.485**	.434**	.375**	.412**	.465**	.397**	.507**	.494**

Note. ** Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-tailed)

Discussion

Although the scales set for to examine teacher perceptions in this study have limited their emphasis only on the competences of beginner principals, according to teachers' perceptions, principals' leadership performances in most cases were only a little more than average. To make things worse, reportedly, principals' leadership practices regarding coordinating curriculum and protection of instructional time are found to be below average. In a similar pattern, teachers perceive that the supervisory performances of principals are not more than average in all dimensions examined. These findings notify that secondary school principals under investigation are not good enough in both their leadership and supervisory practices because most of the schools

from which data have been collected were those with principals that have competences beyond beginner principals. In other words, principals hardly accomplished below what is expected both in their leadership and supervisory roles. Hence, although many sources of literature (e.g., Bush, 2007; Gale & Bishop, 2014; Ringler et al., 2010; Schleicher, 2012; Schlechty, 2011; Ward, 2013) advocate that principals contribute highly to school effectiveness, according to teachers' perceptions, their leadership practices in the current study area did not render the required services effectively. This does have far-reaching consequences on the quality of education because a wide range of research reports (e.g., Leithwood & Reihl, 2003; Louis et al., 2010) confirm that principals are second only to teachers in affecting school effectiveness and student achievement.

In this respect, Crane and Green (2013), Farmer (2010), and Ivie (2007) suggested that schools with principals who are competent in all dimensions of leadership and supervisory functions successfully enhance teacher job satisfaction and motivation and thereby student achievement and school effectiveness (Bush, 2007; Starcher, 2006; Sunaengsih et al., 2019; Williams, 2009). Consistently, other wide range of sources (e.g., Danielson, 2006; Fullan, 2007; Green, 2010; Kempa et al., 2017; Lambert, 2006; Levine & Marcus, 2007; Louis et al., 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 2007; Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Sezgin & Er, 2016; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008) confirm that leadership competencies of principals have positive relationships with school improvement and the academic achievements of students. In addition, Barlow (2015) found a significant and positive correlation between perceptions of teachers to principal leadership practices and their job satisfaction. In this respect, the ascription of poor student achievement and low education quality to poor leadership and supervisory practices of principals by BoE and MoE is well substantiated by this study. Hence, the current finding links past study findings (such as Crane & Green, 2013; von Fischer & De Jong, 2017; Norton & Kelly, 2013; Sergiovvani & Starratt, 2002) which claimed that principals serve just like a captain of a boat in schools in all aspects of school functions serving as the wherewithal of overall schooling.

According to teachers' perceptions, correlation coefficients among the different leadership and supervisory practices confirmed positive relationships – some with moderate and others with significant correlations – implying that a successful leadership practice complements the same output on supervisory practices and school effectiveness by implication. This aligns with the outputs by Munir and Khalil (2016) as well as Williams (2009) who found out that teachers' perceptions of their principals are one of the most important factors that determine the academic performance of the former. This in turn corroborates the concerns of the BoE and MoE who attribute leadership defects to poor school performance. That is because most of the variables treated in this study emphasized on major ingredients of transformational and servant leadership practices, all of which were confirmed by Cansoy (2019), Crane and Green (2013), DuPont (2009), Haj and Jubran (2016), Hauserman et al. (2007) and Salem (2016) as predictors of teachers' performance and job satisfaction.

In addition, a comparison of mean scores on leadership practices among teachers in terms of demographic variables demonstrated the existence of significant differences among teachers, except with respect to their sex. That is, although the effect size tests suggested that the actual differences in all the variables focused are very small, experience, position, and qualification level

demonstrated statistically significant mean score differences among teachers. The finding complies with the findings of Faith (2014), Hang (2011), Hao (2016), Salem (2016), and von Fischer and De Jong (2017) all of whom reported that statistically significant differences were observed in teachers' perceptions about principal's practices on the basis of qualification, experience, and gender, which implies that all these variables do not significantly predict teachers' perceptions about their principals' practices.

Despite insignificant differences were, moreover, *post hoc* tests conducted on variables that revealed significant mean differences disclosed information that need not be disregarded. With respect to framing school goals, proficient and accomplished teachers differed from beginner teachers as well as from senior and lead teachers in such a way that senior and lead teachers to tone down the leadership practices of their principals when compared with the other teacher categories. This finding contradicts other earlier findings such as Hang (2011) who found out that more experienced teachers perceived their principals' leadership capacities as significantly higher than the younger ones, which implies the need for further study. With respect to the practices of communicating school goals, however, the finding of the current study demonstrated not only a mixed pattern whereby beginner teachers as well as senior and lead teachers highlight principals more than proficient and accomplished teachers do, implying still inconsistency with Hang and the need for a further study.

In relation to qualification, on the other hand, teachers with a bachelor's degree had higher mean scores than teachers with a master's degree in all the variables that demonstrated significant differences: framing school goals; evaluating instruction; promoting professional development; and providing incentives for learners. Even though effect size test results inform weak mean score differences, data manipulation revealed that teachers with bachelor's degrees acknowledge the abovementioned leadership practices by principals more than do teachers with master's degrees. In other words, teachers' recognition of principals' leadership competence is inversely related to their qualification levels. This may probably be due to the fact that a lesser level of qualification and experience may have forced teachers to acknowledge practices that may not get sensed at the same level by their seniors. With respect to teachers' positions, too, effect size test reports show a weak difference among teacher categories.

Findings inform that teachers perceive that the performances of their principals in supervisory practices are below their expectations. This in turn informs that secondary school principals in the current study area are poor because the items set for teachers to gauge the competencies of their principals not only depended only on the competencies of beginner principals but were garnered from schools most of which have principals with experiences and competencies beyond beginner teachers. Such a perception may have its own effect on the performance of teachers because of different research reports (e.g., Birkenmeier & Sanséau, 2016; Colquitt et al., 2012; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Ferrin et al., 2007; Neves & Caetano, 2009) argue about the existence of a strong correlation between the perceptions of the employees to their supervisor and the trust they have in their supervisor, which in turn affects workplace commitment and job performance of subordinates. The argument of BoE and MoE about the role of leadership on the quality of education in the current study area sounds reasonable because other a wide range

of research reports (such as Colquitt et al., 2012; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Elnaga, 2012; Ferrin et al., 2007; Neves & Caetano, 2009; Vlaar et al., 2007) favor it in such a way that employee perceptions towards their supervisors affect their behavior, commitment, and effectiveness in their workplaces. That is, a positive perception of employees for their supervisors not only stimulated positive trust and cohesion between the two but also improved commitment, job performance, efficiency, and effectiveness among employees.

With respect to the supervisory role of principals, findings uncovered no significant differences in each of the independent variables except with respect to the level of qualification, which by itself displayed a very weak effect size result. The *post hoc* test conducted to identify the where of the weak difference in teachers' perceptions about principals' supervisory practices in terms of qualification levels of teachers, however, revealed that teachers with a bachelor's degree emphasized more principals in their practices of instructional leadership, evaluation, coordination as well as consultation than do teachers with master's degree. Despite the weak difference, it implies that the higher their qualification levels, the fewer teachers acknowledge the consultancy role of their principals. Just like in the case of leadership practices, this finding explains that the lesser the level of qualification and experience among teachers, the more the possibility to acknowledge the supervisory practices of their principals. That is, in turn, because likely teachers with less level of qualification and experience lens the supervisory practices of their principals on the basis of their qualification levels and experiences.

Conclusion

In the current study, the perception of teachers toward the leadership and supervisory practices of their principals is not favorable. The perceptions did not significantly vary in terms of the level of qualification, experience, position, and sex of the teachers. Weak differences were observed among three demographic factors, except sex, regarding the poor status of leadership practices and only the level of qualification demonstrated weak differences regarding the poor status of supervisory practices, the rest three with no significant differences. On the other hand, a wide range of literature demonstrates the existence of a strong relationship between employee perceptions of their leaders and the job performance of the employees. Accordingly, it is plausible to conclude that in the current study area the perception of teachers towards the leadership practices of their principals has far-reaching consequences on their commitment and effectiveness, the spillover effect of which could be reflected in the effectiveness of secondary schooling.

Implications

A wide range of literature across the globe informs that there is a positive relationship between principals' leadership behaviors and the job satisfaction, efficacy, and the normative and affective commitment of teachers. In other words, teachers' perceptions toward their principals play significant roles in their job performance and organizational commitment or in school improvement in general. According to the findings of the current study, teachers perceive that their

principals in most cases lacked to deliver in line with the instructional leadership practices of principals specified in their national professional standards (such as framing and communicating school goals, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating instruction and curriculum as well as reward systems and professional development practices, etc.). Hence, it is hardly possible to bring about job satisfaction, motivation and commitment among teachers so long as principals are not equipped with the competences required by the national professional standard, won popularity among teachers and has a sense of shared values with teachers. Similarly, provided that there are no communicative principals in secondary schools who can persuade teachers toward the realization of school goals, confronting the highly competitive and rapidly changing school environment of the 21st century – a workplace environment that is built from the congruence among principals and teachers – will be a highly challenging task in the current study area.

Recommendations

Plausibly, different remedial mechanisms are commendable in this study. From the outset, the assignment of people to the position of principalship needs to be based on knowledge, skill, and enthusiasm for the profession. Once they have assigned principals, secondly, woreda and state education offices must ensure that principals are capable of employing different complementary practices that not only foster a shared sense of school ownership and purpose among teachers but also endeavor towards the realization of school goals. The following are major mechanisms among others: creating supportive and distributive leadership; establishing a long-lasting culture of teacher development, reward, motivation, and retention system; shielding teachers from undesirable obstructive external pressures that threaten their social, political, and academic freedom; and build a continuous organizational learning culture in schools. Third, a sound and encouraging internal and external supervisory service (well-planned monitoring, evaluation, and reward system) that creates a teacher-friendly school environment must be in place because teachers with a sense of team spirit and shared purpose likely feel valued and supported in their work and remain in the profession. This entails education offices at all levels to endow schools with popular principals who can create a teacher-friendly school culture through closer follow-up, support, feedback, motivation, and a sense of teamwork. Bestowing and empowering principals with such responsibilities in one way or the other enhances not only the possibility of retaining competent and experienced teachers but also the attractiveness of the profession as a career choice, which ultimately improves the quality of teaching practices and student achievement or school effectiveness. Lastly, further research that involved students, principals, and other stakeholders, besides teachers, as well as different data types is commendable to effectively examine and resolve problems related to principals' performance and school effectiveness.

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Pre-primary School Teacher Training Program in Kotebe University of Education: Provision and Policy Implications

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Abstract

If someone plans to build a house, she/he needs to lay the foundation that supports the entire structure. A similar foundation is mandatory before a child enters primary school. Pre-primary education provides a stimulating environment for the physical, intellectual, linguistic, social, and emotional development of children. In that regard, this study explores the provision of the pre-primary teacher training program at the Kotebe University of Education. The research uses a qualitative case study. Data were gathered from the Ministry of education, Kotebe University of Education, and Addis Ababa city education bureau through interviews, observation, and document analysis. Six key informants were purposely selected, and a thematic data analysis technique was employed to analyze the qualitative data. The findings indicated that the pre-primary teacher training program is critically challenged by the shortage of trainers, financial and material constraints, inconclusiveness of the selection criteria of trainees', overcrowded workshops, and absence of connections with social service-providing organizations. Regardless of policy interventions, the pre-primary school teachers' qualification framework is not considered yet. Thus, the program requires the attention of every concerned stakeholder. Hence, the training college, the city education bureau, and the education planners need to prioritize the provision of quality training for pre-primary school teachers. The national quality framework of pre-primary teacher education should also be considered in order to measure the quality of training programs offered in multiple teacher training institutes.

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Introduction

Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) addresses the educational goals of the nation from pre-primary education (PPE) through higher education levels. The policy document in general has given considerable attention to the education of primary-grade children (1-8) (TGE, 1994). Preparing a child for primary schooling requires providing quality pre-primary education. Because whenever one plans to build a house, it is necessary to lay a foundation stone to support the entire structure. Thus, before a child enters primary school, a similar foundation must be laid at the kindergarten level. According to Khan (1993), the successful education of a child depends upon the foundation stones laid during the pre-school years. He rightly argued that

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children learn fundamental skills and develop the ways that are crucial to the success of their future education in their early years. Thus, one can understand that early childhood is a critical period in human life which requires due attention and a great deal of investment.

Pre-primary education is found to be the most vital area of human capital investment, which maximizes opportunities to make commitments toward a wide range of initiatives to build a person in the early years (Soytas, 2016; Young, 2002). Considering this, ETP included early childhood education in the structure of the education policy document stating that "kindergarten will focus on the all-round development of a child in preparation for formal schooling" (TGE, 1994, p.14). This indicates that though designing a policy alone is not sufficient, the provision of quality pre-primary education is a critical issue and will remain one of the current development agendas in the education system.

Since the high level of political support stimulates the accomplishment of the educational goals of early childhood care and education (UNESCO, 2007), investing in pre-primary education requires strong political commitment and cooperation (Doryan, Cautam, & Foege 2002). Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) requires political emphasis during policy formulation and implementation. However, as the evidence indicated, the attention from the government to the ECCE teacher's training is inadequate mainly due to a lack of necessary resources (Biniyam, 2014; Garcia, Pence, & Euans, 2008). Regardless of policy imitative, especially the pre-primary school teachers' training program is being ignored by the incident. This is mainly the case in Ethiopia wherein there is a less specified strategy for the expansion of pre-primary school teacher training centers (e.g., Biniyam, 2014). Evidently, due to insufficient resource provisions, pre-primary education and its teacher training programs are not given adequate emphasis throughout the nation (Biniyam, 2014; MoE, 2006). It has been set as a standard that pre-primary school teachers should hold a ten-month pre-primary school teacher training certificate which later was upgraded to a three-year diploma after consolidated courses from the training institutes (Biniyam, 2014). However, this is facing a problem due to a shortage of institutes to provide training for pre-primary school teachers (ibid).

The aforementioned idea is highly linked to the issue of prioritization. Pre-primary education receives comparatively low priority from the Ministry of Education compared to primary education. The provision of primary education in turn depends on the provision of quality pre-primary education. Since pre-primary education is a foundation for the promotion of the 'holistic' and well-balanced development of a child (UNESCO, 2006), prioritizing pre-primary education is mandatory in schooling activities, which in turn calls for an integrated effort of various sectors through policies to provide quality teacher training programs. Since teachers are central in the process of education, any attempt to provide the best education is logically associated with the teacher's capacity-building activities.

This in turn needs attention to design policies and set proper implementing strategies to train sufficient and qualified teachers for pre-primary schools. To this end, the present study is designed to explore the provision of the pre-primary teacher training program at the Kotebe University of Education, the only university of education holding a pre-primary school teacher training department in Ethiopia.

Statement of the Problem

Providing pre-primary school education programs of various sorts for children below the official school-going age is vital to prepare them for primary education. As indicated by UNESCO (2006), the main objective of pre-primary education is the all-rounded development of children in order to prepare them for formal schooling. Having this objective into consideration, the Ethiopian government has put its commitment to promoting pre-primary education through policies that enhance investment in pre-primary programs by the private sector and religious organizations. However, this policy initiative could not be extended to the provision of teachers' training. The government's role in primary education is limited mainly to setting standards, developing curricula, training teachers, and providing supervisory support (MoE, 2010b; Demeke, 2006).

On the other hand, early childhood is a critical period that requires due attention and visible cooperation from all the stakeholders (UNICEF, 2007). In addition to the education sector, ECCE needs to have a strong connection with other sectors and policies like health and social welfare, and economic sectors (ibid). To this end, policy documents on health, education, and social welfare articulate statements that uphold the protection, care, health, and optimal development of a child within their sphere of influence.

Though the degree of contribution varies, these sectors are playing a great role in the development of children. The problem here is the lack of integration among the policies of these sectors. The health policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1993) promotes and encourages the provision of care facilities and management of common childhood diseases (Article 10.6); whereas, ETP proclaims the provision of ECCE focusing on all-rounded development and preparation for formal education (Article 3.2.1). Similarly, the development and social welfare policy (TGE, 1996) promised to implement the international and regional conventions as well as legal instruments concerning the rights of children which Ethiopia has already ratified (Article 5.1.3). Thus, the purpose of the integrated policies is mainly to provide access to training to teachers who work in an ECCE setting with the necessary skills to meet the basic needs of young children in all areas of their development (physical, mental, emotional, and social) (Atmore, Lauren-Jayne, & Michaela, 2012). Integration is vital in every level of early childhood education including teacher training programs for the implementation of a better and integrated curriculum with the diversification of courses and teaching methodologies in teacher training programs. On top of this, the National Policy Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education of 2010 is built around four pillars (MoE, 2010b). The first two pillars, parental education and a comprehensive program of early child health and stimulation are focused on children from the prenatal period up to age 3 and fall under the roles of the Ministry of Health (ibid). In general, taking pre-primary schools as the administrative hub for integrated early childhood education, nutrition, and health services required integrated policy efforts to provide various social services. However, the practice informs us that, the integrations among the mentioned policies are less-tightened together and not well-thought-out in pre-primary school teacher training programs.

In addition to loosened integration of policies, the provision of pre-primary education in Ethiopia is facing a number of challenges including limited access and a lack of quality education. The participation of children in pre-primary programs is remained low as compared to the

population of children who are supposed to have been enrolled mainly due to poverty (UNESCO, 2007). Furthermore, the shortage of pre-primary school teachers with expected qualifications has highly affected the provision of the program (MoE, 2010a). Teacher training is one way of enhancing the quality and status of the profession of teaching. As noted by Maekelech (2002), "even when a more relevant curriculum is developed, school outcomes and students' performance depend to a great extent on the availability of sufficient teachers and their energy, motivation, and talent" (p. 3). This is also true for Girma (2014) who sorted out that the achievement of a child's holistic development in pre-primary schools is mainly dependent on the teachers' understanding of how to implement the curriculum.

Regardless of the facility in which a child is placed, a quality teacher can provide a learning environment in which a child can develop optimally and in a holistic manner (Atmore, et al, 2012). Thus, since teachers are key factors of success in education, teacher certification and program accreditation are helpful in preparing and qualifying pre-primary school teachers. However, to produce quality ECCE teachers, various training and education opportunities are mandatorily expected to be available through full ECCE teachers' qualification programs (ibid). But as stated in the education sector review (ESDP IV), one of the main challenges of the pre-primary education sub-sector is the shortage in the average number of qualified pre-primary school teachers (MoE, 2010a).

Statistically, the share of trained pre-primary school teachers declined to 37 percent in 2008/09 showing that though one of the quality indicators is teachers' qualification, about 63 percent of teachers are not trained to teach at the pre-primary school level (Yisak & Camfield, 2009). This has an indication of the severity of the qualified pre-primary school teachers' shortage at the national level. My closer observation of private pre-primary schools in Addis Ababa reveals that most of the pre-primary school teachers are either unqualified in pre-primary school teaching or graduated from fields outside the pre-primary school teaching professions. While most early childhood education teachers have no qualifications, few have received specific short-term training on how to handle children of early ages. A recent report on pre-primary education also showed that only 22% of pre-primary teachers are appropriately qualified and held the ECCE Diploma at the national level in 2019 (MoE, 2020a). Consequently, both parents and teachers are often complaining about the shortage of teachers with appropriate qualifications. Furthermore, although the number of pre-primary schools is increasing every year, the government is responding very slowly to the serious shortage of qualified pre-primary school teachers for young children (ibid). Even if the government has promised to play a critical role in policy development, curriculum designing, standard setting, and training of teachers (TGE, 1994), the training centers are not creating sufficient pre-primary school teachers. The government's strategy that left an expansion of pre-primary school education to private sector organizations, NGOs, and community-based institutions was unsuccessful mainly due to a shortage of qualified pre-primary school teachers (Yisak & Camfield, 2009; MoE, 2020a).

In addition to coverage and access, the provision of quality education is a challenge in pre-primary education programs. The existing services do suffer from poor quality which resulted in poor preparation of teachers and poor provision of facilities (UNESCO, 2007). Though a lack of

pre-primary school teachers is challenging the provision of quality pre-primary school education, the focus of the government on the issue looked disinclined (Hoot et al., 2004). This was also supported by Yekoyealem, Teka, Desta, Daniel, and Girma (2016) that the lack of adequate and pertinent training for pre-primary school teachers was a major problem facing the provision of quality pre-primary education mainly resulting from a shortage of institutions to train pre-primary school teachers. Consequently, teachers working in the "O" grades were placed among those who have trained for the first primary education training (Yekoyealem et al, 2016).

Regardless of the problem, all the private pre-primary teacher training institutions in Addis Ababa are officially closed and ceased the training program since 2009/10. Evidently, the private teacher training programs are closed following government decisions (ibid). This in turn created a burden on a single education university providing the pre-primary school teacher training program in the capital city. With regard to this, the study revealed that the majority of the pre-primary school teachers had certificates and did not meet the minimum qualification requirements as stipulated in the Ethiopian pre-primary education strategy (MoE, 2010b). Besides, there is a lack of in-service training for teachers and principals, and pre-primary school teachers are not getting adequate in-service training (Hailu, 2019; Rahel, 2014).

Moreover, many of the studies conducted on the current situation of pre-primary education in different areas of the country found that the implementation of pre-primary education programs was mainly challenged by a shortage of pre-primary school teachers qualified for the required level (Mamo, 2014; Admasu, 2014; Yigzaw & Abdirahman, 2017). On the other hand, Biniyam (2014) examined the policy provisions, practices, and challenges of Early Childhood Care and Education of teachers training at Kotebe University College (KUC). This research examined the perceptions of professionals on the policy provisions in ECCE teachers' training at the university college. The mentioned study found that ECCE teachers' training at KUC lacks the required quality. However, this study did not analyze the level of government intervention to curve the policy and practice challenges that the training provision is practically facing. Different from this, the present study mainly focuses on the interventions made by the government to mitigate the problems and the practices of the training provisions from the admission of the candidates to the assignment of the training to practicum teaching.

In general, the present study mainly treats the following research questions. (1) What do the practices of the provision of pre-primary school teachers' training activities look like at Kotebe University of Education? (2) How is the government intervention help to mitigate the challenges that interfere with the provision of pre-primary school teachers' training programs? (3) What challenges hinder the implementation of the pre-primary school teachers' training program at the Kotebe University of Education?

Significance of the Study

This study is intended to explore the provision of the pre-primary teacher training program at the Kotebe University of Education through analyses of the policy documents and data gathered from interviews of the key informants to understand the challenges and policy implications. Thus, the findings would help early childhood education planners, policymakers and program designers

gain an understanding of the extent to which their efforts to provide pre-primary teacher training programs are noticeable at the policy level. Specifically, the findings have a crucial message for pre-primary education experts and program designers as well as curriculum developers to evaluate the provision of the program and to identify major gaps that may require urgent interventions.

Delimitation of the Study

Conceptually, the study is delimited to the existing practices and challenges facing the provision of pre-primary teacher training programs. The study also looks at intervention strategies that the government undertakes to mitigate the challenges during the provision of pre-primary school teachers' training programs in practice. Furthermore, the study is delimited and bounded to investigate the case only at the Kotebe University of Education, College of education and behavioral studies based on its long-time experience in the provision of pre-primary school teachers' training.

Methods

This study employed qualitative case study design. Case studies put emphasis on the detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships (INTED, 2012). The design used to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods (Yin, 1984). It facilitates the exploration of a phenomenon within the context using a variety of data sources. A hallmark of case study research is the use of multiple data sources to enhance data credibility (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003).

So, the potential data sources of this study were the key informants from the Ministry of Education, Addis Ababa City Administration Education Bureau, and the department of pre-primary school teacher training program at the Kotebe University of Education. The respondents include pre-primary teacher training experts in MoE, the pre-primary school training program experts, teacher development coordinators from Addis Ababa city education bureau, and the pre-primary school department head and pre-primary school teachers' trainer at Kotebe University of Education. The study subjects were selected purposely considering their responsibility to the training program and their expertise to obtain information about pressing issues in the pre-primary school teacher training activities. Generally, six key informants (experts and program coordinators) were purposely included by non-probability sampling technique to participate in providing information through interview since they are the ones who have got a strong attachment to the program implementation due to their responsibility.

The data-gathering instruments employed in the study were document analysis, observation, and interview. The document analysis was employed to collect data from various policy documents including the education and training policy, the ESDPs IV, V, and VI, the national policy framework, and reports about the implementation strategies, standards, and procedures of the training program. The observation was used to gather information from the training college about the current status of workshop materials, and teaching facilities.

Furthermore, data were collected from experts and the department head through structured and unstructured interviews.

After the required data have been collected, various data analysis procedures have been followed. Accordingly, I read and organized the data from each question separately so as to focus on one question at a time. Then the explanations were grouped and categorized by themes, topics, or categories. For the analysis of the structured interviews, the transcribed interviews were initially auto-coded based on the direct question asked in the interview schedule, and then analyzed thematically to provide a more grounded analysis of the qualitative data. Based on an initial analysis of the answers to the questions, a framework was developed for ongoing coding. The initial coding framework was around the following codes: *Selection Criteria, Curriculum Development, Teaching Methodology, Professionalization, Promotional Possibilities, School Facilities, and Pre-primary Education Policies.* Thus, the codes were refined and re-read to form the transcript coding of the themes identified. Then after, the transcripts have been divided into groups of events that differ in important characteristics related to the program to make the kinds of comparisons in the analysis plan.

After all of these steps, interpreting the analyzed data from the appropriate perspective was used to determine the significance and implications of the data. Therefore, the data analysis in this study followed the steps such as reading through all the data and organizing explanations into similar categories, identifying the patterns and associations in the themes, and finally, labeling the categories or themes.

Results

Selection of Trainees

Here, it is relevant to raise a question related to the way trainees are recruited and who is recruiting them. Dependably, the recruitment of candidates for pre-primary school training is the responsibility of the training college. As evidenced by the interviewee in the college;

> the recruiting process in the college is somewhat varied. For the primary teachers, the city education bureau sends the selected trainees list and the department selected from each sub-city. However, in the case of Pre-primary school teachers, the recruiting responsibility lies on the shoulder of the college. The city education bureau has no contribution in the selection of trainees (R1, June 2017).

The major issue related to the selection process of the trainees is the set criteria the university used during the admission of the trainees. It is found that the only criteria employed during admission of the trainees were the candidates' high school Grade Point Average (GPA) and their grade 10 and grade 12 transcript result. In this regard, the respondents from the teacher training college were not satisfied with the current selection criteria. The department head and the trainers reported that "mostly what [we] (the department) suggesting is to use the variety of methods to select the trainees including, work experience, age, entrance exams, medical exams, and discipline as useful criteria for the entries" (R1 & R4, June 2017). Accordingly, the experience

of trainees was not considered in the selection process. Thus, it is difficult to evaluate the interest, language proficiency as well as pictorial, and handwriting abilities of the trainees during the selection process.

On the other hand, the experts from the city education bureau argued that "since the total number of applicants is large, it is difficult to conduct and manage entrance exams through interviews and written forms" (R2 & R5, June 2017). Although entrance exam has been suggested by the department to be employed as a selection criterion, it is not yet implemented in the selection process. This in turn has been affecting the quality of the training program since there is difficulty in identifying the language proficiency and required skills of the trainees; it is even difficult to identify the gaps to be filled during the training.

Professional Development and Promotional Possibilities

This part of the study elaborates the trends of promoting pre-primary teaching as a profession and the possible opportunities for teachers' career development. One progressive way for teachers to obtain initial qualification is a multi-month pre-school training certificate so that they can upgrade their skills to fully qualified ECCE teacher status over time (Orkin, Workeneh & Woodheed, 2012). To produce quality ECCE teachers, various training opportunities are needed to be availed through full ECCE qualifications, and through short-term skills development programs. In practice, pre-primary school teacher training is directly or indirectly linked with the policy and strategy of the nation's education system. The policies influence professional development practices by articulating the regulations and accountability, allocation of resources, setting out structural frameworks, and quality control mechanisms (Vargas-Baron, 2005). Thus, the policy document is a vital area in the determination of the provision of quality pre-primary teacher training programs.

Undeniably, proper schooling cannot be conceived without the presence of qualified teachers. Although teacher education has a long history of training teachers, unlike other levels of education, the idea of formal pre-primary school teacher training is a relatively recent phenomenon. To this end, the lack of qualified trainers in teachers' colleges has resulted in a shortage of qualified and trained teachers. Consequently, most pre-primary school teachers are untrained or have very limited and unrelated training. Similar findings are also obtained by Kassahun (2013), which revealed the irrelevance of the existing pre-primary school teachers' qualifications. In the same study, it is noted that in Ethiopia trainees join pre-primary school teachers' training colleges when they do not have options or opportunities to pursue higher education studies in other professions. This in turn has a negative implication on continual professional development.

According to the participants, there are some hopeful attempts to develop and improve teacher training programs. As has been replied by the participants from the teacher training college, "the provision of the training program is improving" (R1 & R4, June 2017). Accordingly, efforts have been made at least to include the pre-primary teachers' training program in education policy, and the framework has been prepared. Though, inadequate, further training opportunities have been arranged for teachers who are working at government and private preschools.

However, the respondent strongly argued that "the contribution of the government especially, in teacher training programs is invisible" (R1, June 2017). Evidently:

> there is a shortage of modern technologies and relevant facilities for updating and training the trainers; they have only limited opportunities for further education in the area since the higher educational institution is not furthering the pre-primary teacher training program; the salary for pre-primary school teachers is not attractive and the trainees' opportunity for the cost-sharing services is unlikely (R1, June 2017).

As result, the shortage of qualified teachers becomes practical which in turn inhibited the accessibility of the program. There is a clear absence of continuous professional development and ongoing support available for teachers.

On the contrary, experts from the city education bureau strongly argued that the program is relatively successful. They believed that fruitful evidence is stirring in this sub-sector. Accordingly, "the policies and strategies are designed to be used as frameworks all over the sub-sector, and teacher training is intended to provide quality education for the trainees" (R3, June 2017).

Financing pre-primary education was another theme presented during the data analysis considering its contribution to promoting the pre-primary school teacher's profession. Concerning the financing of pre-primary teacher education, a respondent from the education bureau strongly argued that:

> Since the government is not hiring trainees after the completion of the training program, the cost-sharing system is not a concern at this level. But for the overall program, the college is responsible to budget, program, and schedule its financial demand through a formal structure without expecting special treatment from the government for the program (R2, June 2017).

Undeniably, the shortage of school facilities and qualified trainers is a challenge to the pre-primary teacher training program. In light of this, the experts rightly argued that since one of the major objectives of the education bureau is supporting and facilitating the training program, it intends to develop a collaborative effort to provide an effective training program in the near future. To this end, the participants promised that "though the formal future plan is not yet officially introduced, the education bureau is planning to establish strong relations with the university to strengthen the program, and evaluate its implementation" (R3, June 2017). From this, one can understand that a career development strategy and professional development programs are not specified. Comparatively, there is a low salary structure and inconsiderate incentive system in the sector which in turn floods the interest of teaching staff in preschool sectors as a career path. Consistent with this, Rahel (2014) found low teachers' salaries and high turnover as challenges of kindergarten education provision. Consequently, new teachers often consider teaching in pre-primary schools only as a stepping stone for career opportunities other than teaching, and the sector is exposed to turnover.

Curriculum Development and Teaching Methodology

Curriculum development is a critical aspect of an educational program (Belete, & Hoot, 2005). The pre-primary education curriculum is designed to meet broad national educational objectives. It is used as a guideline for the scope and coverage of each content, time allotted and activities to be included during the course. In this regard, I reviewed the document prepared centrally for training colleges and institutions and interviewed the respondents on the issue. According to the respondents, the designed curriculum is currently used as a guideline for the course and its objectives, the time allocation for each course, and its scope. The realization of the curriculum is facing a challenge due to a lack of a facilitated classroom environment and a shortage of practically skilled trainers who are committed to apply an active method of teaching.

According to the respondent from the training college, "there is a mismatch between what trainees are learning and expected to teach as has been observed during the practicum program" (R1, June 2017). For instance, the interviewee argued, "most private pre-primary schools are using English as instructional media which is not included in the curriculum of the teacher training program" (R1, June 2017). Consistent with this, the research findings of Yekoyealem et al. (2016) also indicated the lack of conformity to national standards in the curriculum. The contradiction is that the training program in the college is being conducted using the Amharic language as the instructional media. On the contrary, private pre-primary schools use English as a medium of instruction.

Regarding the methodology of the training program, principally, the active learning method is the most advisable and critically emphasized method in the syllabus to train teachers of very young children, where education is inclusively expected to be practical and game-oriented (MoE, 2010b). However, its implementation has been jammed due to the shortage of necessary resources required to run the program. In relation to this, the respondent from the college said that "it [the training] especially should be learner-oriented for the teachers of very young children" (R1, June 2017). However, this is less practical on the ground due to the background of the trainees, large class size, shortage of teaching facilities, as well as lack of teachers' readiness and willingness. Consequently, these challenges influenced the teachers to rely on a teacher-centered training approach.

On the other hand, some attempts are made during a practicum session, where trainees are exposed to the actual teaching practice. According to the respondent, the teaching practice has a one-month duration in pre-primary schools which is followed by discussions focusing on "the general practices, challenges faced during real work practice, the nature of work and its environment, interaction with students, staff and the school management" (R4, June 2017). However, "finance-related problems and shortage of supervisors to assess continuous practical improvement are challenging the practicum program." (R1, June 2017).

School Facilities

It is true that school facilities play a vital role in the provision of education and training programs. It is impossible to expect quality outputs without supplying quality inputs and resources

in education the process of education. Thus, to ensure the success of the training the provision of important facilities is very crucial. In this regard interviews were conducted; some documents were analyzed, and observation was undertaken. Accordingly, it is found that the pre-primary school teacher training program is not physically facilitated with the required teaching and learning resources. It is facing challenges in relation to shortage of necessary teaching materials including textbooks, classroom facilities, practical workshops, and facilities.

According to the respondent from the training college, students are always complaining about photocopy costs. Additionally, there is difficulty in supporting the training program with modern technologies due to lack of ICT facilities in the college. As far as my classroom and workshop observation is concerned, the training center has only one workshop room for practice purposes. It is crowded with other materials which are unrelated to the objectives of the program. Strengthening my observation, the respondent added that "since there is a shortage in learning classrooms, we are teaching a large number of students within crowded rooms" (R4, June 2017). Thus, the space problem is the everyday reality; there is no pedagogic center for teaching aids; the playground is crowded, and the workshop hall is very loaded.

The Connections among Institutions

The connection between the city education bureau and the training college is one of the issues raised during the interview session. There were no interactive connections between the education bureau and the training college regardless of the coordinated responsibilities to make closer networks. According to an expert from the city education bureau, the connection between these institutions is "limited and invisible" (R3, June 2017). Their connection doesn't go beyond the meetings and proposal presentation sessions when there is a sort of change in the program implementation. This shows that there is a great structural gap that creates problems in facilitating and coordinating the training program. Additionally, the connection of the training center with other sectors and NGOs is almost nonexistent except few unintended and urgent relations for seminars and consultative meetings with the sub-cities.

The respondent from the training college believed that the connection with different supporting social organizations and the training college is "limited and selective". The respondent added that "it has fewer cooperative connections with health, social, women, children and labor affairs bureaus" (R6, June 2017). Similarly, its network with private pre-primary schools is less interactive and limited only to practicum programs.

Another point raised in this part is training opportunities for the trainers. Accordingly, "there was no long or short-term training program conducted for the staff" (R6, June 2017). This in turn critically affects the improvement and development of the training program.

The National Education and Training Policy and Intervention Strategies

The National Policy of Education, which emerged in 1994, encompasses overall and specific objectives, and implementation strategies, including formal and non-formal education, from kindergarten up to higher education levels. The policy incorporates the structure of education

in relation to the development of student profiles, educational measurement and evaluation, media of instruction and language teaching at various levels, the recruitment, training, methodology, organization, professional ethics, and career development of teachers (TGE, 1994). The document presents national objectives which include:

> The promotion of relevant and appropriate education and training through formal and non-formal programs, provision of basic education and integrated knowledge at various levels of vocational training provision of education that can produce citizens who stand for democratic unity, liberty, equality, dignity, and justice, and who are endowed with moral values, etc. (TGE, 1994, pp. 7-11).

Thus, the objectives for pre-primary education were derived from these national goals. Accordingly, kindergarten education plays an important role in "all-rounded development" in a child's preparation for formal schooling (TGE, 1994, p. 14). To this end, the policy expresses high expectations for its implementation from all stakeholders including the parents. The early childhood period before primary school is critical that needs to be the area of focus. However, the government has no direct investment at this level (Hoot, Szente & Belete, 2004; Tekeste, 1996; UNESCO, 2006). Principally, it has clearly outlined the objectives of pre-primary education including a smooth transition from home to school, preparing the child for the primary level of education, and providing adequate care and supervision for the children (TGE, 1994).

To ensure the effective implementation of the analyzed policy, education sector development programs, and frameworks have been designed at different times. These include all the education sector development programs like ESDP IV (from 2010/11- 2014/15), ESDP V (2015/16- 2019/20), and ESDP VI (2020/21- 2024/25). These programs are aimed at increasing access, improving quality, increasing effectiveness, achieving equity, and expanding finance at all levels of education (ADEA, 2000). They are crucially applied to translate education and training policy into practice. It has been narrated that:

> The ESDP is a twenty-year education sector indicative plan that translates the 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP) into action through long and medium-term planning cycles. It is a sector-wide approach that encompasses all the education and training programs of Ethiopia - spanning from pre-primary education to tertiary education (Mollaw, 2018, p.17).

The detail of the accomplishments of the ESDPs is beyond the scope of this study. Undeniably, however, these programs have played a role in improving the provision of early childhood education. Especially, since the ESDP IV (2010 to 2014/15), ECCE received much focus, which provides a useful analysis of lessons learned from the previous ESDPs. Relatively, tangible program outcomes and targets were set in ESDP IV more than the preceding ESDPs using different approaches to meet the objective of ECCE as specified in the education for all documents (Tsegai, 2015). As a success story, in the final year of ESDP IV, some Colleges of Teacher Education began multi-year diploma-level training programs for pre-primary school teachers (MoE, 2015).

The ESDP V also targeted a multi-year diploma for pre-primary teachers to aggressively continue to strengthen and expand the program to all colleges of teacher education (ibid). However, in the reality, regardless of the efforts to enhance the quality and access of pre-primary education, pre-primary teachers holding the ECCE diploma remained only 15% at the end of the ESDP V (MoE, 2020b). The rapid expansion of pre-primary education, particularly O-Classes, raises concern regarding the serious demand for pre-primary school teachers. As the result, primary school teachers are using available periods to provide O-Class instruction. Despite the existence of these efforts for the inclusion of ECCE in the ESDPs, ECCE teacher training was one of the most neglected areas (MoE, 2010b). Taking this into consideration, in 2010, UNICEF along with the concerned ministries (mainly the Ministry of education, the Ministry of health, and the Ministry of women children, and youth affairs), developed a national policy framework for pre-primary education. The basis for the ECCE policy framework is the National Education and Training Policy (ibid). The policy framework recognizes the pre-primary school teacher as the main responsible person for the pre-primary education program and designates the Ministry of Education as the responsible institution for the training of pre-primary school teachers (MoE, 2010b).

In nutshell, a national policy framework of ECCE 2010 has clearly indicated the expectations and roles of the government in the pre-primary school teachers' training systems and certification. Yet as stated during the interview session with participants of the study, the identified policy statements were not put into practice. Besides, the outcome of the education and training policy has been critically analyzed in recent times. The evidence identifies the challenge of low quality at all levels of education, including pre-primary education (Challa, 2020). In association with this, the newly drafted national education and training policy (FDRE, 2020) has declared pre-primary education to be free and compulsory. The draft policy also determines that the training institutions need to train ECCE teachers via their relevant mother tongue up to the diploma level after completion of grade twelve. Regardless of the efforts to strengthen pre-primary school teachers' training, the national pre-primary school teachers' training and education policy and national quality framework are not formulated yet. Thus, since there is no national quality framework on pre-primary teacher education, it is not possible to measure the quality of training programs offered in multiple teacher training institutes.

Discussion

Early childhood education is the least developed sub-sector in Ethiopia. The government has assumed responsibility for issuing the policy directives, setting the standards for curriculum, supporting teachers' training, supervising, and licensing the pre-primary education institutions (MoE, 2006). However, the finding showed that the training program is bounded by a number of challenges including a shortage in human resources (trainers), financial and material constraints, and limited contribution from the government in supplying learning facilities. It is also challenged by the inconclusiveness of trainees' selection criteria, overcrowded rooms, and workshops, and overlooked incentives and promotional activities of the trainers.

Moreover, the level of supervision to support and maintain the quality of the teacher training program is seriously constrained by the lack of professional staff and budget. The financial shortcomings resulted in the narrow resource base and high dependence of the training program on government revenues since the training college has not any additional options to generate internal income. The teacher training program is also facing a problem of inconsistency in the curriculum structure and instructional language application. Similarly, the findings of Kassahun (2013) revealed that curriculum development for the pre-primary school teacher training program is a bit tricky. Admiringly, the participants felt that the pre-primary teacher training program is a key missing element in the development of education at the national level.

Therefore, inadequate financial resources and a lack of capable planners to identify priorities through the diagnosis of issues affecting educational supply, demand, and processes of the pre-primary teacher training are policy challenges facing the program. Another challenging issue in the provision of quality pre-primary teacher training programs is related to the curriculum. As the data revealed, there was a critical variation in the contents of the curriculum and the instructional language between the teacher training program and pre-primary schools.

The findings also pointed out that pre-primary teachers' salary in public and private pre-primary school sectors is not encouraging. In addition, career development and motivational activities are not considered in the promotional structure of pre-primary school sectors. As supported by Biniyam (2014), pre-primary school teachers were rarely provided with the opportunity to develop their profession. Though the government has promised in its policy document to promote incentives to motivate teachers at all levels of education (TGE, 1994), the incentives of the pre-primary school teachers' is highly subjected to negligence. The status of the pre-primary teachers' salary is unpredictably lesser in amount. This, in turn, can result in a lack of interest, and dissatisfaction among the prospective trainees which ultimately exacerbated the turnover of personnel in the system.

As far as the intervention strategies are concerned, the analysis indicates that the government has attempted various policy initiatives, education sector development programs, and national policy frameworks. The sector development programs and policy frameworks paved the way for the intentions of the government to prioritize the pre-primary education sector. Regardless of these policy initiatives, national policy framework commitments, the concern of career development, and continuous professional development strategies for the pre-primary school teachers are missing.

In general, the pre-primary teacher training program is found to be given a limited attention with limited facilities. Shortage of trainers and the financial capacity of the trainees are also challenges that the program faced. The government provided insignificant contribution in solving these problems, and it only limits its attention on the policy issues and supervisory activities without supplying necessary resources, and financial and human requirement aspects to enhance and develop the training program.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The criteria employed in the selection of the trainees have to be diversified instead of using only a single variable i.e., a GPA-based approach. The experience of trainees, their interest, oral interviews and written exams to test their handwriting and pictorial practices are basic components to be considered during the selection process. Teacher training colleges need to consider alternative options to enhance internal revenue generation schemes like opening the model pre-schools for the dual purpose of financing the sector and solving practical concerns of the trainees. It is also possible to engage in pre-primary education consultancy services basically because of its amplified experiences in the area. Additionally, it is better to introduce cost-sharing schemes in the sector so as to solve the financial problem of the trainees.

An integrated policy is required in teacher training programs in line with the curriculum of early childcare and education in order to assure holistic child development through the provision of early childhood education-oriented training for pre-primary school teachers. In that regard, it is better to involve private organizations in teacher training programs by shifting the inclination of the government's role towards standardization and continuous inspection tasks. So essentially, the government is expected to design a policy and well-organized mechanisms to monitor and control the successful implementation of the program in private organizations.

The future of pre-primary school teachers' training programs looks left in a gloomy position wherein policymakers are less considerate about the professionalization and career development of pre-primary school teachers. Thus, the policy issues regarding the promotion of the trainers and trainees, career structure, salary and incentive issues, and professionalization aspects require great attention from the concerned stakeholders. Whereas, the career development and promotion policy need to be revised in parallel with the demand of the education system. Additionally, it is motivational to pre-primary school teachers if the career promotional structure is considered to be hierarchical from preschool teacher to pre-primary school supervisor and pre-primary school training coordinator or pre-primary school manager.

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Teaching History: Pedagogical Practices and Complexities in Upper Secondary Schools of Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study examined the pedagogical practices and complexities in teaching history in the upper secondary schools of Ethiopia. The study employed descriptive case study research design. Data were obtained from nine key informants, textbooks, syllabi, and other publications. Interview and document review were used as principal data collection tools. Data were analyzed using qualitative narrative approach. The findings revealed that teachers frequently use lecture, explanation, and discussion as the main methods of teaching. Debate, inquiry, justification, and multiple-interpretation methods were not properly used by teachers, and are rarely incorporated in the textbooks. Instructional activities such as what and why questions, explanations, and discussion questions appeared often in the prescribed textbooks. Moreover, the grand historical narratives and counter-narratives apparently made Ethiopia's history turbulent and complex as such narratives are influenced by political factors. Furthermore, interview respondents revealed that phrases incorporated in the Ethiopian history publications such as 'Assimilation', 'Amharanisation', 'Colonization', 'Restoration', and 'Oromization' are politically motivated discourse than academic concepts and they create complexities in the Ethiopian historical narratives. Besides, content overload, over emphasis on the country`s political and military histories than social and economic history, and lack of consensuses among politicians make the teaching of history very complex.

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Introduction

Following the downfall of the 'Dergue' regime in 1991, the then Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) dominated Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) politicians used ethnicity as the cornerstone of the major political initiatives (Merera, 2004), "at the risk of national unity, and overused historical grievances and pitfalls to evoke fear, and hatred" (Adamu, 2013, p. 24). Apparently, they operated against the grand Ethiopian historical narrative. In fact, since the 1960s, Ethno-nationalists attempted to reconstruct Ethiopian history along ethnic lines (Zahorik, 2014). The Ethno-nationalist parties and their affiliated elites, prominently the TPLF, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF) prioritized ethnicity and advocated the 'nationalities questions and self-determinations (Medhane et al., 2021).

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In Ethiopia, beyond the politicians, historical controversies are intense between the established grand narrativist and counter-narrativist (constructivist or revisionist) historians (Hultin, 1996; Marzagora, 2016). The grand narativist or master narrativist advocated conventional Ethiopian history and presented the linearity of the state, the notion of national unity 'oneness' and its glories (Toggia, 2008, p. 321). They celebrated victories of the country and Menelik -II- incorporation of the periphery and territorial expansion, and integration (Levine,1974; Marcus, 1994; Markakis, 2011). Against this discourse, the counter-narratives led the youth to violence by reinforcing fanatical identities and victimhood behavior (Paulson, 2015; Astrom et al., 2017; Catherine, 2017). Gebru (2012, p. xiii) described this complication as "there are few countries in Africa that are as enriched and burdened by the past as Ethiopia." Such critical discourse intensifies the complexity of history curriculum construction and pedagogical practices (Yilmaz, 2008; Thorp, 2014a; Psaltis et al., 2017). Besides, teaching history may be influenced, among other factors, by instructional methods, the nature of the subject matter itself, and the demand of the political groups. Hence, this research tried to find out the practices and complexities in history teaching in Ethiopian upper secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

The history of a nation is subject to interpretations, contradictory narratives, and is often a site of contention (Hultin, 1996). As a result, countries are forced to rethink their history (Catherine, 2017), and it is not advisable to ignore contradictory narratives in curriculum making (Astrom et al., 2017). To address contradictory narratives, teachers can employ a wide range of pedagogical approaches.

Previous studies suggested that *multi-perspectives* and *transformative approaches* are vital to respond to the growing diversity in history education (McCully, 2012) and to cultivate students' historical thinking and empathy (Psaltis et al., 2017). However, how often these approaches appeared in history textbooks is not yet studied meticulously. Besides, how complex narratives should be taught in school is a gray area for researchers (McCully, 2012) as such narratives need adequate care and attention (Marie, 2010). Besides, researchers advised that it is crucial, legitimate, and fair to investigate "How do we learn history?" (Williams, 2016, p. 10).

There are two contending views about Ethiopian history among Ethiopian nationalists and ethno-nationalists (Sorenson, 1992). Both used history as a mobilizing instrument to attain their political interest and promoted contending narratives (Sorenson, 1992; Keller, 2005). These contending narratives possibly will complicate history education because some school teachers may have political motives and are reluctant or blind to teach some of potentially contested history topics. Consequently, it could have a catastrophic effect on the construction of historical knowledge, on the scholarship of the discipline, meaningfulness of the subject, and construction of collective aspirations of a nation.

Previous studies conducted by local researchers in Ethiopia did not show in detail the complexity of teaching potentially contentious narratives in secondary schools. Rather they identified inadequate teacher performance (Bekele, 2006), crowded classrooms, and shortage of reference materials (Teshome, 1990) as the leading challenges in teaching and learning history.

Besides, study conducted by Cambridge international also revealed that there is slight evidence that learners are encouraged to think about the causation and consequence of events in history (UNICEF, 2019). For various reasons, there is also lack of enthusiasm and interest among students and some teachers towards learning and teaching history. Besides, as a complex undertaking and interpretative discipline (Hultin, 1996; Thorp, 2014a; Astrom et al., 2017), examining history education practices and complexities is vital, yet, none of the above studies critically addressed it in relation with contested issues. Hence, this study attempted to fill these gaps.

Thus, the following questions guided the study. (1) What pedagogical methods do teachers employ to teach history in Ethiopian upper secondary schools? (2) What are the main methods of teaching and instructional activities in prescribed upper secondary school history textbooks/syllabi? (3) How do teachers teach contents of contested narratives of the same history? (4) What are the major complexities in teaching history in Ethiopian secondary schools?

Objectives of the Study

The core objective of this study is to examine the pedagogical practices and complexities of history teaching. Specifically, this article intended to identify the pedagogical methods employed by teachers to teach history, and review the suggested methods of teaching and instructional activities incorporated in the prescribed textbooks/syllabi. It also examined teachers` position in teaching contested topics and the major complex issues in teaching history.

Significance of the Study

This study provides empirical information for teachers, curriculum planners and educational leaders that help them address historical controversies and complexities while teaching the subject in particular and history curriculum making in general. In addition, it is important for policy makers to revisit prescribed contents, suggested methods of teaching, and instructional activities designed to the upper secondary school history textbook. It can also potentially initiate a national project to settle historical controversies and complexities in the country at large.

Review of Related Literature

In line with the objective and basic questions of the study, this section reviewed contemporary methods of history teaching and complex narratives in Ethiopian history.

History Teaching Methods

In studying the teaching of history, the various methods such as *historical narratives, historical thinking, historical consciousness,* and *historical interpretation method* (Yilmaz, 2008; Fulda, 2014; Thorp, 2014b; Ahonen, 2017; Ramsey, 2017; Harrell, 2017) need to be considered by history educators. In addition, researcher has identified questioning, sourcing, explaining, connecting, critical reading, conceptualizing, discussion, writing and assessing as essential teaching methods in teaching history (Namamba & Rao, 2017).

Historiographic narration method combines both narration (as an act) and narrative (as a structure) (Fulda, 2014), presenting facts through connected events in a specific time and setting (Ramsey, 2017), and shaping how societies understand themselves. It is divided into two: (1) *Epistemological* (the past does not inherently possess a narrative structure), and (2) *Narrativist* (truth can be extended beyond exact historical facts) (Ramsey, 2017). It may be important for a historian to search the middle ground between these two contended thinking's. Besides, there are two common types of narratives: the *grand narrative* advocates the primordial origins of a nation and materialized it in school curricula to unify communities, construct collective identities (Ahonen, 2017), and create continuity. Divergently, *counter narratives* did not grant the collective identities (Ahonen, 2017). Moreover, Rusen in Ahonen (2017) categorized narratives into four perspectives: *traditional narrative*, *exemplary narrative*, *genetic narrative*, and *critical narrative*.

> *Traditional* narratives are the most pregnant with meaning which derived from big ideas, believed to imbed in the course of events. The *exemplary* approach implies picking events and acts from the past based on their moral meaning, while a *genetic* narrative impregnated the past with meanings that are relevant for the posterity. The *critical* accounts imply the deconstruction of the ideological meaning-content of traditional narratives. Subsequently, grand narratives have been eroded by critical multi-perspectival dealings with the past (Ahonen, 2017, p. 46).

All narratives are related with individual understanding of history (Thorp, 2014b), and this shows us the multiple layers of historical narrative method.

Historical consciousness is a vague and complex concept (Thorp, 2014a). In fact, in 1979 Karl-Ernst defined it as a notion that 'incorporates the connection, interpretation of the past, understanding the present, and perspective on the future' (Thorp, 2014a). According to Thorp (2014b, pp. 29-30) historical consciousness methods demonstrate various concepts such as *identity-creating, meaning-making, history-creating, gaining insight, value-creating,* and *heuristic concepts.* The heuristic concepts pose new questions to history and generate new perspectives in research. This method always involves a form of self-reflection and openness for interpretation to the various narratives (Maria & Robbert, 2019). This ability requires three specific competencies: *historical experience, historical interpretation, and historical orientation.* In a more detailed manner, Pandel, in De Rezende & Martins (2019, p.22) proposed seven dimensions of historical consciousness method: *time awareness, sensitivity to reality, consciousness of historicity, identity awareness, political awareness, economic and social awareness, and moral awareness.*

Historical thinking means the ability to understand how historical knowledge has been constructed and contextualize historical facts, events, and persons (Thorp, 2014a). This method involves "historical interpretation that consists of sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, evidence-based thinking, and attention to multiple perspectives in history, evaluating the historical significance and multiple causes of historical events" (Marie, 2010, p. 14).

Historical interpretation method incorporates interpretive decisions and considers multiple perspectives (Harrell, 2017). This method allows students to question, investigate, evaluate, reflect and revise (ibid) or *"doing history"* (Havekes, 2015). Hence, history teachers need to understand

history as an interpretative business and be subjected to multiple versions (Yilmaz, 2008). Moreover, a teacher is responsible to develop "young citizens' skill to distinguish fact from opinions, detect biases, prejudices, and unwarranted claims, weigh contrasting evidence…. and critically evaluate others positions and perspectives" (Yilmaz, 2008, p. 40). The very essential question in this regard is: Do our teachers have a clear understanding of the concept of *historical narratives, historical thinking, historical consciousness, and historical interpretation*s? Besides, how do they apply these concepts in the real classroom is still a gray area in the scholarship of history education and may need large-scale examinations.

Complex Narratives in Ethiopian History

Like many of the nationalist movements in Africa **(**Zahorik, 2014), in the 1960s, Ethiopian students shape the country's political and social movement (Vaughan, 2003; Siraw, 2016). Primarily, students fought the monarchical regime with the slogans of *'land to tiller', 'national equality', 'and social justice'* (Merera, 2006). The students' questions gradually deviated in line with their historical consciousness, understanding and interpretation, and their questions were confined to class, identity, and self-determination (Mohammed, 1999; Vaughan, 2003; Keller, 2005; Merera, 2006; Gebru, 2009). Slowly, a radical student group who has diverse views, incompatible goals and tactics led to factionalism and sectarianism (Gebru, 2009). The student movement was led by three groups, *'Ethiopianist'* (Assefa, 1999), *'Ethno-nationalist',* and *'Territorial-nationalist'* (Bulcha, 1996; Vaughan, 2003; Gebru, 2009; Zahorik, 2014). The Tigrayan students were the most successful *"ethnic entrepreneurs"* (Gebru, 2009, p. 33). According to Crummey (2001), *"Ethiopianists"* support the primordial interpretation of Ethiopian history. In contrary, some of Eritrean, Tigrayan and Oromo elites positioned themselves critically against the Ethiopianist tradition, and some of them are hostile; they are anti-centrist, anti-Ethiopianist and advocate ethnic-nationalism and territorial-nationalism or self-determination to secession.

In 1966, an Oromo student, Ibsa Gutama, questioned *"Itiopiawiwu mann naw?"* ("Who is the Ethiopian?") This Amharic poem raised the questions of identity (Bulcha, 1996; Vaughan, 2003). This idea was consistent with Walleligne Mekonnen's, an Amharan students` movement pioneer work *"On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia*" which attacked Ethiopian nationalism and cemented the wrong characterization of Amhara and Tigray as the oppressor (Walleligne, 1969). Then, some students regard the diversity of language and cultures as divisive and recognition of such diversity as dangerous and anti-Ethiopianism (Bulcha, 1996; Gebru, 2009). Since, 1991 the national question propagated in the late 1960s and early 70s has been institutionalized by TPLF led EPRDF government as state apparatus (Siraw, 2016), and put the country at risk of disintegration. Scholars such as Banks, Parekh in Siraw (2016) also argued that an unbalanced emphasis on diversity could lead the country to disintegration; by the same token unbalanced emphasis for national unity ultimately ends by discontents and conflicts.

Until now, some historical issues are contested among academicians and politicians (Siraw, 2016). Besides, Crummey (2001) disclosed that Oromo historiography has a complex relationship to the Ethiopianist historiography. In addition, Levine (1974) grouped the historical discourse as

the "*Amhara thesis," the "Oromo anti-thesis" and the "Ethiopian synthesis*," (Zahorik, 2011, p. 264). In addition, Merera (2006, p. 120) revealed the three perspectives '*the nation-building perspective', 'the national operation perspective' and 'the colonization perspectives'*. These are critical in the Ethiopian political circle since the 1960s. Besides, ethnicity and the national question are persistent problems in Ethiopia (Bulcha, 1996; Vaughan, 2003; Keller, 2005), and need new consensus (Merera, 2006). Some other scholars, for instance, Zahorik (2014) claimed that, Ethno-nationalism was not only a challenge to Pan-Africanism but also an obstacle for the emergence of democratic governance because it served as a means to mobilize people and instruct them to vote for their ethnic parties. As a pro-Ethiopianist scholar, Crummey (2001, p. 17) argued that "Ethiopian nationalism has a genuinely trans-ethnic dimension".

Many literatures revealed that Ethiopia is one of the oldest independent nations in the world (Siraw, 2016). However, the formation of Ethiopian state was questioned by ethnic-nationalists and considered as a contested process (Gebru, 2009). In this regard, Assefa (1999) argued towards Ethiopia as a colonial nation that was created by Menelik-II-. Concerning this historical process many authors and researchers used contested historical terms and phrases that further complicated the history of the country (Table 1) and tremor the teaching-learning process.

Table 1

Contested Historical Terms/Phrases

Terms/ phrase	Authors	Terms/ phrase	Authors
'subjugated'	Holcomb, 1999, Assefa,	'assimilation',	Bulcha, 1996
'colonization'	1999, Toggia, 2008	'Amharanisation'	Holcomb, 1999
	Merera, 2006	'control',' dominance'	Getahun, 2009
'conquest'		'assimilation',	Bulcha, 1996
'exploitation'	Sorenson, 1992	'Oromization'	Keller, 2005
'deculturation'	Mohammed, 1999		Hultin, 1996
'decolonization'		'restoration'	Vaughan, 2003
'*Neftanya'*			Marcus, 1994
'incorporation'	Bahru, 1991, 2000	'racism'	Assefa, 1999
'territorial, expansion'			
'invention'	Crummey, 2001	'territorial unity'	Markakis, 2011
		'reunification', 'expansion'	Merera, 2006
'genocide'	Bulcha, 1996	'settlers', 'colonial 'settlers'	Siraw, 2016
	Zahorik, 2014		

Some of the words and phrases stated in Table 1 lack criticality and framed to achieve political ambition in unbalanced manner. Many Oromo scholars promoted the colonial perspective terms and phrases. Others challenged the published materials of these scholars and rejected

politically charged colonialism propaganda (Vaughan, 2003), and they are considered as the extension of "Italian propaganda of de-Amharization campaigns" (Vaughan, 2003, p. 18). Besides, Marcus (1994) blessed Menelik-II- for his protection of the periphery from the colonizer and his act is considered as restoration and re-unification. As a result, the issue of colonial thesis in Ethiopia was contested. Even an Oromo prominent politician Professor Merera argued that the Oromo colonial thesis did not fit neatly into a historically recorded colonial system (2006, p. 125). Furthermore, in Ethiopia, the issue of domination has been a politicized and ethnicized agenda (Zahorik, 2014). The aforementioned narrations and explanations show how Ethiopian political history is contested, and consequently, hampering the normative teaching–learning process and complicate the history scholarship.

In addition, in the scholarship of history education, researchers often identified shortage of instructional aids, teacher-dominated instruction, low history teachers' classroom performance, low teachers subject matter and pedagogical knowledge as the major bottlenecks in Ethiopia (Bekele, 2006). These challenges may incapacitate students potentials and engagement in the teaching and learning process. Besides, a study conducted by Cambridge International revealed that the provision of so many topics in each grade, insufficient time, repetition of contents between grades contribute to overload, and it also hinders students' ability to develop higher order thinking skills (UNICEF, 2019). Apparently, ethnic consciousness (in some regions), the social media campaign and political propaganda may have negative effects on teaching some contested history topics.

Methods

This study aimed at qualitatively explaining the current pedagogical practices and complexities in teaching history in Ethiopian upper secondary schools. Thus, it is a descriptive qualitative case-study in its design as this design best fits such objectives (Cohen et al., 2011). The study was also informed by *critical theory* since this theory advocates for an independent enquiry and empowers learners (Freire, 1971) through problem posing, questioning, and learn to think critically, and develops a critical consciousness (Promise, 2022). The critical theory advocates Cohen et al., (2011) and Lingawa (2013) claimed that social realities are shaped by historical events. In light with these concepts, questions and activities, and suggested methods of teaching in textbooks were examined.

Prominent historians, history teachers and experts, the history curriculum framework, history syllabi, and student textbooks were used as data sources. A semi-structured key informant interview, and document and content review were used to collect relevant data. Interviewees were selected purposely because such informants should be chosen based on their in-depth expertise, experiences, knowledge, views, and suggestions on the topic (Vander-Stoep & Deirdre., 2009). As a result, two prominent historians, who have various publications in the discipline, six experienced secondary school history teachers, and one history education expert from the Ministry of Education (MoE) were interviewed. History student textbooks, syllabi, history curriculum framework, and previous publications in the area were reviewed carefully as reviewing documents is helpful to collect qualitative data (Yin, 1994; Creswell, 2009). In addition, content analysis was employed to

understand the frequency of suggested methods of teaching and the type of instructional activities and questions included in the textbooks.

Results and Discussion

The respondents` (R1, R2-R9) have teaching experience of 5- 47 years. Their minimum qualification was a BA degree in history and the maximum was Emeritus professor in history. Variation in both professional experience and academic rank helps to capture and understand the opinions and experiences of history teachers across qualification levels and years of teaching experience. The average interview duration for a respondent was 55 minutes.

Pedagogical Practices in Upper Secondary Schools

Multi-perspective and transformative teaching (McCully, 2012; Psaltis et al., 2017), inquiry-based teaching (Paulson, 2015), historical interpretation (Harrell, 2017), and mastering historical thinking (Thorp, 2014a; Havekes, 2015) are methods that are suggested to teach history. To check whether teachers employed these approaches or not, the respondents were asked one major probing question: What kinds of pedagogical approaches do you employ to teach history? Often, they replied that *they use lecturing in order to cover the contents* (R1, R2 & R3). According to other respondents, *discussion, lecturing and peer-discussion* were employed to teach history because the textbooks are designed with such methods (R6, R8, and R9). Senior historians replied that *Ethiopian teachers have followed traditional methods of teaching in their history classrooms* (R5 and R7). This is because the history textbook in Ethiopian secondary schools covers a broader topic. Based on these responses, it is safe to conclude that teachers often use lecturing whereby students are forced to remember historical facts and ideas. Moreover, it is possible to conclude that Ethiopian teachers worried a lot about content coverage than students understanding. These findings were consistent with the finding of Bekele (2006) that history classroom instructions were teacher-centered rather than employing group discussion and inquiry techniques. This may be linked with the level of history teachers` performance of questioning skills, facilitating classroom instruction, pedagogical and content knowledge. Besides, the teachers' over emphasis on lecturing methods should be discouraged to realize meaningful learning. When we look at the suggested instructional methods the result was consistent with teacher responses. Besides, we looked at the frequency of instructional activities, and type of provoking questions appeared in the textbook.

Table 2

Suggested Instructional Methods in the Textbooks

Suggested Methods	N *	%	N**	%
Explanation method, Expression/Elaboration methods	41	22.04	53	26.8
Discussion method	30	16.12	34	16
Analysis method	27	14.5	27	12.7
Identification method	26	13.97	14	6.6

Suggested Methods	N *	%	N**	%
Description method	15	8.06	22	10.4
Show, Locate, Mention, and Indication methods	9	4.8	14	6.6
Assess, Evaluation, and Examination methods	16	8.56	11	5.2
Point Out, Outline methods	8	4.3	13	6
Compare & Contrast method	7	3.76	7	3.3
Interpretation and Justification method	4	2.13	3	1.4
Realization method	2	1.07	7	3.3
Demonstration and Debating method	1	0.53	3	1.4
Total	186	100	212	100

Note. *N=number of suggested methods of teaching in **g**rade 11 history Syllabus and Textbook (MoE, 2006a)
** N=number of suggested methods of teaching in grade 12 history Syllabus and Textbook (MoE, 2006b)

Table 3

Type of Instructional Activities and Questions Included in the Textbook

Major type of instructional activities and questions	N *	%	N**	%
Explanation, Expression and Elaboration questions	41	10.6	53	8.84
Discussion questions	30	7.7	34	5.67
Analysis questions	27	7.0	27	4.5
Identification questions	26	6.7	14	2.33
Description question	15	3.8	22	3.67
Show, Locate, Mention, and Indication questions	9	2.3	14	2.33
Assess, Evaluation, and Examination questions	16	4.14	11	1.8
Point Out and Outline questions	8	2.07	13	2.17
Compare & Contrast questions	7	1.8	7	1.16
Interpretation questions	3	0.7	3	0.5
What questions	60	15.5	176	29.4
Why questions	15	3.8	104	17.36
How questions	19	4.9	58	9.68
Which questions	31	8.03	14	2.33
When question	1	0.25	5	0.83
Who questions	15	3.8	6	1.00
Where question	1	0.25	2	0.33
Other questions	62	16.1	36	6.01
Total	386	100	599	100

Note. *N= number of instructional activities and questions included in **g**rade 11 history Textbook (MoE, 2006a)
** N= number of instructional activities and questions included in **g**rade 12 history Textbook (MoE, 2006b)

Table 2 shows that in grades 11 and 12, the textbooks and the syllabus focused on explanation and discussion methods. There are limited examples that encourage the students to debate, justify, demonstrate, realize, interpret, and compare and contrast different tailored history

source materials. The suggested methods in the textbooks may bring history subjects boring. Consistent with these findings, Jackson (2005: 8) reported that the "history is dull and boring subject" because transmission methods of teaching permits very little room for students' creativity. Activities need to be challenging to process information, to think, raise questions, motivate and engage students in classroom interactions.

Based on the results in Table 3 one can conclude that questions included in the student textbook emphasized lower order thinking skills or cognition skills rather than developing higher order thinking skills. This finding was consistent with the report of Cambridge international on history education that content overload with insufficient time hinders the development of high order thinking skills (UNICEF, 2019). Therefore, it may be appropriate to revise the textbook in order to enhance students writing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and reasoning skills because these skills are mainly influenced by the learning materials provided. In addition, it requires appropriate teaching and learning environment to enhance students thinking skills.

Contested Narratives and the Role of the History Teacher

Grever and Tina, (2017, p. 289) reported that "political elites, opinion leaders, historians, education experts fight about which historical topics are relevant and worthy to be presented in textbooks, and in what ways". Then after the selection of the contents and delivering the selected contents in classrooms is not a simple undertaking because by its very nature, teaching history is a complex and multi-dimensional task. Besides, what teachers do when they are teaching contending narratives is still one of the gray areas in research. Having this in mind, first, respondents were asked one critical question to examine what teachers can do when there are contested narratives on the same historical event while teaching in secondary schools. Is there a contested historical narrative in Ethiopian history? They replied that: *Yes, there are contested historical narratives in Ethiopia. For example, the formation of modern Ethiopia is one of the contested issues. Some blessed the state formation of Menelik II, and others considered Menelik-II`s state formation as colonization (R1 & R2, R6).* Other respondent replied that: *Yes, because some historians considered history narrowly and they focused on counter narratives (R3, R7, R8, and R9).* Respondent from MoE believed that *Ethiopia has a contested history. Yet, the MoE did not identify contested topics.* Other respondent replied that: *history is a contested subject because it emphasized the political and military history, and biased narratives. Anomaly and over politicization are the causes of controversy (R5).* These explanations show that there are contested historical narratives in Ethiopia. However, the MoE did not recognize and include contested narratives in the textbook.

Besides, publications related to Ethiopian history convey contested terms such as *'assimilation', 'Amharanisation' 'colonization' and 'restoration' & 'Oromization'*, and respondents were asked about this discourse to further understand their perspectives. Respondents replied that: *'Assimilation', 'Amharanization' or 'Oromization' are politically motivated historical discourses (R1, R2, R3, and R6)* which is a response consistent with the arguments of Levine (1974), Marcus (1994), Crummey (2001), Vaughan, (2003) that in Ethiopia internal-colonialism was politically charged propaganda. Besides, one of the respondents replied in this

regard that: *Menelik-II`s territorial expansion was not colonization because it was to consolidate power and to incorporate territories which was similar to the American civil war" (R6*). With regard to the colonization and restoration discourse, majority of interview participants argued that: colonization and restoration narratives are the two extreme and politicized discourses used to mobilize the people for political purpose (R1, R2, R3, R6, R7, R8, and R9). Still, others felt that: "*Menelik-II`s expansion does not fulfil the criteria of colonization"* (R3, R6). Contrary to the dominant response, one of the respondents who is a prominent professor with an Oromo background replied that: *Menelik-II`s expansion was a colonization process because it fulfils the criteria of colonialism, but it was internally consolidated colonization (R5)*. However, contrary to this response, in the history literature there is only exogenous based domination (colonialism) (Lorenzo, 2011) than internally consolidated colonization. All the aforementioned responses and explanations depicted that in Ethiopia some historical topics are contested due to political and ethnic factors. In addition, historical narratives have political repercussions and it can be considered as political subject. Besides, some politicians and historians framed and used contested terms to mobilize people for political purposes. This act may affect the teaching practices in secondary schools. Supporting this assertion, Bahru (2000) argued that political regimes considerably influenced Ethiopian historiography.

Hence, respondents were asked about what they can do while teaching the stated contested narratives of the same past. They replied that: *I always try to be independent while teaching contested issues through allowing students to have multiple views on contested issues*" (R1, R2). Other respondents replied that: I didn`t face any challenge in this regard because the topics included in the textbook are not contested (R3, R6). Other respondents also reflected that: *I am trying to be careful, sensitive, and allow students to reflect their own opinions while teaching some contested topics* (R8, R9). As exit scheme, one of the respondents advised that: I suggest that *teachers should understand the reality, recognize divers' perspectives, and see diversity within unity not only unity in diversity, use sources while they are writing and teaching to reduce distortion and being biased* (R5). Based on the responses forwarded one can conclude that secondary school teachers have tried to be independent from biased narration in teaching history; they have tried to be careful, sensitive, and understand the reality. They also recognize diverse perspectives, use sources, and reduce distortion and bias while they teach contested topics. Despite the stated facts, two respondents reported that Ethiopian secondary school history textbooks did not include contested topics and narratives, and mostly focus on the dominant narratives and discourses.

The Major Complexities in Teaching History

In this study, respondents were asked about the major complexities while teaching history in secondary schools. They reported that: *content overload is the major problem because it is difficult to cover the topic within the given period of time* (R1, R2, R3, R6, R8, and R9). From this finding one can conclude that there is an issue of content overload or too much content in the history curriculum. Others replied that: *over politicization of history complicates the teaching of ethnically sensitive topics* (R6, R8, and R9). Therefore, it is worthwhile to understand the

discipline of history in a comprehensive manner than politicizing it, and recognize its complexity to make the learning and teaching of history more engaging and meaningful for students and educators. Other also reported that: low government attention towards history as a subject is a major problem (R1, R2, and R3). In addition, others responded that: *the textbook gives too much emphasis on the political and military history of the country than social and economic history* (R5 and R7). They also replied that: there is *lack of consensus and understanding among historians and politicians on some historical topics* (R5 and R7). Hence, instead of naturalizing contested topics it is advisable to consider transnational historiographical approach. Besides, they reflected that: *teacher domination in the classroom, low utility of the subject in the market, and utilization of conservative teaching approach are the major problems* (R5 and R7). Based on this report, one can understand that history education is under serious complications. Hence, it is useful to provide training to history teachers on the methodology and epistemology of history teaching and learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results and discussion of the study, one can conclude that in Ethiopia historical understanding, interpretation, consciousness, thinking and narration are framed by political factors. In Ethiopia, politicians used history as a mobilizing tool. Based on the evidence, one can conclude that the phrases such as *'Assimilation', 'Amharanisation' 'Colonization' and 'Restoration' & 'Oromization'* are mostly political discourses. However, these discourses are influencing the teaching and learning process of history as a subject. In Ethiopian secondary schools, history teachers employed lecture and group discussion as dominant methods of teaching despite the fact that inquiry methods and multi-perspective approaches are often suggested in the history literature. Hence, one can conclude that the prescribed student textbook activities and methods focused on lower order thinking skills rather than developing higher order thinking skills. Therefore, the history teacher should move beyond the traditional teaching model and allow for more interactive, innovative, and thought-provoking methods of teaching. In addition, students should be given opportunities to engage in critical discussions. They should also be provided with chances of visiting historical sites and then reporting what they have seen in the classroom.

In addition, over politicization of the subject, contention on the process of state formation, low government attention towards the subject matter, and content overload are some of the factors that complicate history education. These problems require instant and mutual intervention by key stakeholders including policy makers, teachers, and historians in order to reconstruct the textbook and the scholarship of the discipline. Besides, it is essential to enhance secondary school teachers understanding about the nature of contested historical narratives, multiple versions of history, and the pedagogy it requires in order to increase students' capacity to view past events from different perspectives.

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An Exploration of Barriers of Research-Knowledge Sharing: The Lived-Experiences of Academics in Higher Education Institutions in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study investigated the key barriers of research-knowledge sharing (RKS) that influence research-knowledge sharing practices among academics and the influence of top academic leaders on academics' research-knowledge sharing behavior. It attempted to explore the nature of sharing research-knowledge in HEIs in general, and to examine the lived-experiences of academics that act as key barriers on RKS. Previous research findings revealed a lack of research into research-knowledge sharing in higher education (HE). Most importantly, how RKS barriers in the university influence the academics' research-knowledge sharing practices has not yet been fully examined. Qualitative research method was employed to thematically analyze data collected from six academics and three top university managers, selected purposely, from three universities. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that key barriers of RKS in the Ethiopian public universities include: fear of losing power, lack of trust, fear of getting one's ideas taken, unavailability of Intellectual Property (IP) protection, time constraint, and lack of confidence. Suggestions are made to improve certain aspects of research-knowledge sharing among academics in higher education institutions. Top university academic managers shall look into the findings to further improve the culture, structure and policy of research-knowledge sharing and the overall research productivity of universities in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia. The findings of this study provide new insight into the field of research-knowledge sharing adding knowledge to the body of knowledge management and organizational culture. They are of great importance to research-leaders in HEIs to develop, improve and implement research-knowledge sharing strategies.

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Introduction

Knowledge is the key resource in this era of information. As Sallis and Jones (2002) put it succinctly, the problem today is not how to find the information, but how to manage it; the most important challenge for organizations is how to process knowledge and make it profitable in the knowledge-driven organization. For Wang and Noe (2010), knowledge is taken as a critical organizational resource that provides a sustainable competitive advantage in a dynamic economy.

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To gain this advantage, however, the focus should not simply be on recruiting staff with specific knowledge, skills, or abilities, but also on sharing knowledge between experts and novices that are already part of an organization (Wang & Noe, 2010).

Scholars recommend knowledge should be efficiently and effectively managed. Knowledge management (KM) at organizational, especially, at university level is in its infancy stage. It is not more than 30 years or so that a distinct field called "knowledge management" has emerged. In line with this, King (2009) averred that for centuries, scientists, philosophers, educators, researchers and intelligent laymen have been concerned about creating, acquiring, and communicating knowledge and improving the re-utilization of knowledge.

Riege (2005) argues that knowledge sharing (KS) is the cornerstone of many organizations. Organizations might be unable to function well as knowledge-based entities due to their lack of KS practice. The nature of knowledge affects the KS practice. Scholars (like Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka, Toyama and Nagata, 2000; Smith, 2012) have divided knowledge into two forms – explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge, often referred to as 'know-what', is generally saved in codified form in databases and can be easily conveyed to the receiver without any misunderstanding (Smith, 2012). It is presented in words and numbers and has the potential to be shared in manuals, specifications and scientific data (Nonaka et al., 2000). Tacit knowledge, 'know-why and 'know-how,' can be referred as experimental knowledge. It is unarticulated part of knowledge residing in an individual´s mind (Smith, 2012). It depends upon personal skills and expertise and develops through training and experience, therefore making it difficult to communicate with others particularly whenever the individual refused to do so (Nonaka, 1994).

Even though KS among individuals has been recognized as a positive force for the survival of an organization, factors discouraging KS intention in the organizational context are still poorly understood (Bock et al., 2005). In the context of Malaysia, Norulkamar and Hatamleh (2014) identified two main kinds of barriers (i.e., internal and external) that affect knowledge sharing among academics in Malaysian universities. Internal barriers represent individual barriers such as lack of trust, lack of rewards, lack of time, need for power, personal attitude, lack of self-efficacy etc. On the other hand, external barriers represent organizational (e.g., organizational support, incentive system, management system, organizational culture) and technological barriers (e.g., information technology literacy and application).

A study conducted by Muqadas, et al. (2017), on faculty members of three public universities in Pakistan, explored existence of a significant level of knowledge hoarding among academics and found that the need for power and influence, prevailing unsupportive culture, gaining promotion, and poor association between rewards and knowledge sharing behavior are the main drivers of knowledge hoarding.

In fact, lack of knowledge sharing among academics in universities is more dominant in developing countries (Alsuraihi, Yaghi & Nassuora, 2016). In a similar development, Dokhtesmati and Bousari (2013) conducted a meta-analysis on KS among the academic institutions in Iran and divides the KS barriers prevailing in their academic institutions into (i) human barriers (i.e., lack of trust, lack of time, lack of skill and capability, and knowledge hoarding), (ii) organizational

barriers (i.e., unsuitable organizational structure, organizational culture, and lack of team work), and (iii) technological factors (i.e., low acquaintance with information technologies).

One of the responsibilities of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ethiopia, as it is noted in the HEIs 2009 proclamation, is to undertake and encourage relevant study, research, and community services in national and local priority areas and disseminate the findings as may be appropriate; undertake, as may be necessary, joint academic and research projects with national and foreign institutions or research centers. There has been a rising concern with regard to an inadequate level of knowledge sharing among the academicians in tertiary institutions across the globe. Scholars argue that improving academic research and quality of education at these institutions greatly depends on the level of knowledge sharing practices among them. Thus, it is important to explore the potential barriers to such research-knowledge sharing. Research-knowledge sharing is all about sharing experiences in writing proposal, using appropriate approach and design, how to analyze data and interpret data. Research done by Yohanis (2015) at Assosa university titled 'Determinants of Knowledge Sharing Behavior in Higher Education Institution: Case Study of Assosa University Academic Staff, Ethiopia' indicated that even though most academics are aware of the importance of KS, most of the respondents were not engaged actively in KS behavior. Hence, the major purpose of this study is to investigate key barriers of research-knowledge sharing experience among academics in the selected public universities in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia.

The aim of this study is to investigate the major barriers of research-knowledge sharing (RKS) lived-experiences of academics in Ethiopian public universities in Amhara Region. This study has the following specific objectives: (1) Explore key barriers that affect the RKS practices among academics and top academic leaders in selected public universities of Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia. (2) Investigate the influence of key barriers on RKS behavior of academics.

Within the boundary of these research objectives, two research questions were developed: (1) What are the key barriers that affect the RSK practices among academics and top academic leaders in selected public universities? (2) How do the key barriers influence academics' RKS behavior?

The researcher believes that such approach helps to properly understand the complex phenomena of the lived-experiences of university academics and university top managers and uncover factors that inhibit research-knowledge sharing and improving the competitive advantages of the universities.

Methods

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is effective when the researcher's aim is to gather data related to attitudes, motivations and opinions (Yin, 2003). Qualitative approach was employed as the types of responses sought were largely opinion-based that require some degree of explanation. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews were undertaken because it was considered more personal and conversational, which would not only help elicit

more detailed responses but also attain in-depth understanding about barriers of research-knowledge sharing (RKS) among universities academics. As the research is qualitative case study, generalization couldn't be drawn.

Phenomenological study is employed for this purpose. A phenomenological study explores what people, in this case university academics, experienced and focuses on their experience of a phenomenon. It is an approach to research that seeks to describe the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who have experienced it. The goal of phenomenology is to describe the meaning of this experience—both in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore common themes emerging from the lived-experiences of higher education institutions (universities) academics, and top academic leaders regarding key barriers of research-knowledge sharing (RKS). Major challenges faced by academics in sharing research-knowledge were also explored. The data collection in the study included semi-structured and open-ended face-to-face interviews involving university academics and university top managers in three universities in Amhara regional state, Ethiopia.

Hence, participants in the aforementioned universities were involved and their experiences about their research-knowledge sharing experiences were analyzed using phenomenological study design.

Sampling

The researcher selected research participants based on the knowledge and experience about the particular focus of the study. As a qualitative research, data were gathered from multiple sources. As stated earlier, academics and top university academic managers were key participants for this study. The question of how many participants are needed to conduct a robust qualitative study is difficult to precisely answer. Nevertheless, Hatch (2002) contends that the decision depends on the purpose, kind, and research questions of the study, and suggests a simple formula of maintaining a balance between breadth and depth. Although finding the balance is not easy, specifying the projected number of participants and estimating the amount of time to be spent with them is a key element in qualitative research design (Hatch, 2002). In light of Hatch's recommendation, all academics and top academic managers found in the three universities were taken as a population of the study.

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants in this phenomenological study, which means that the 'researcher handpicks cases to be included in the study on the basis of their typicality' (Cohen et al., 2007). Six (two from each university) academics and three top academic leaders (one from each selected university) were selected for this study. The participants included were with varied research-knowledge sharing experiences. All of them had expressed willingness to participate in the study and were aware that the study was meant only for academic purpose.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher has chosen typical-case selection strategy. The researcher set out criteria that were typical of a person within a group. Based on demographic information, academics and top university academic leaders who had experiences in research activities in three universities were selected purposely for this qualitative research.

On the basis of their academic and leadership experiences, the participants were therefore asked to reflect on factors that inhibit research-knowledge sharing among academics. In addition to this, the researcher as an academic member also observed them in a few instances in sharing research-knowledge to see if the reflections were replica of what they actually practice in their institutions. For the sake of anonymity, letter 'T' was used to represent academics (university teachers) and letter 'L' was used to represent university top academic managers, respectively. The initial interview questions were: (1) What factors affect the RSK practices among academics in selected public universities of Amhara Regional State? (2) What are the barriers that inhibit academics practicing research-knowledge sharing among themselves? (3) How do key barriers inhibit academics in practicing research-knowledge sharing among academics/staff in the selected universities?

Data Gathering

Data were collected from the individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants. Polkinghorne, cited in Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. In this study, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from academics and top university academic managers. Interviews with key informants were carried out among some selected six academic staff and three top university academic managers from three universities in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological analysis pursues some basic steps. With regard to this, Moustakas, cited in Creswell (2007), states that the steps are generally similar for all psychological phenomenologists who discuss the methods. Building from the first and second research questions, the researcher went through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlighted significant "statements", sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Next, the researcher developed cluster of meanings from these significant statements into themes.

In this study, data analysis was guided by Creswell (2005) view of analysis as three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation, data display, and conclusion or drawing/verification. First, every piece of data gathered was labeled with the date, location, persons involved, and circumstances surrounding the collection of that piece of data for ease of access and analysis. In doing so, the researcher was engaged in writing summaries, developing themes, generating categories, and writing analytic memos. The data which were condensed into themes, summaries, categories, or memos were displayed through narrations, vignettes and descriptions based on the nature of the data.

For analyzing and interpreting the already collected and organized data, core themes and patterns were developed by meticulously examining the transcripts to unfold the lived-experiences and perceptions of the participants of this study. Developing themes from the data consisted of

answering the research questions and framing a deep explanation of the phenomenon of the lived-experiences of academic staff and top university academic managers on research-knowledge sharing.

Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, there are different ways to approach rigor. This study follows suggestions by Lincoln and Guba (1985) on the alternatives to the "reliability" and "validity" tests appropriate to qualitative research. These are "trustworthiness" and "authenticity".

Basically, trustworthiness is further divided into four categories: credibility (which parallels internal validity); transferability (which parallels external validity); dependability (which parallels reliability); and confirmability (which parallels objectivity). In this study, credibility is reached by discussing the work with expert qualitative researchers available. On the other hand, "dependability" was demonstrated by an auditing approach by colleagues. The researcher discussed with his colleagues and advisors about the categorization of data in order to practice the "inter-coder analysis" or "member checking. The researcher initially predetermined the codes. Before further categorized the data, the initial codes were then discussed with the other coders so as to find the possibly better connections between categories in progress; before the agreement is reached.

In terms of "confirmability", this study followed recognizing principles drawn in qualitative research, including multiple coding procedures and constant comparative method. Besides, opinions from peer auditors (i.e., the inter-coder analysis or member checking) were sought from time to time as the work progressed. "Authenticity" raises a wider set of issues concerning the context of the work. There are five criteria suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), including fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity. This study has demonstrated one of the authenticity criteria as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) i.e., "fairness". In this study, fairness is reached through its sampling strategy that ensures the views expressed are fair representations of the group.

Results and Discussion

This study found that there are several barriers that inhibit academics and top academic leaders from engaging in and facilitating RKS. Among such barriers, the key ones include: 1) fear of losing power 2) lack of trust 3) fear of getting one's idea taken 4) unavailability of Intellectual Property (IP) protection 5) time constraint and 6) lack of confidence. This implies that factors that inhibit research-academics from engaging in RKS are more personal and interconnected with the individual's own attitudes and organizational factors. This is akin to the findings reported by Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland (2004) that individuals' attitudes is one of the crucial elements that influence knowledge sharing practice in an organization.

Fear of Losing Power

The results indicated that a number of research-academics decline to engage in RKS due to fear of losing power. This implies that research culture in selected universities, in Amhara Region, Ethiopia, is possibly more competitive and for that reason, academics are competing with one another, they tend not to share or minimize their frequency to share their research-knowledge. T_1, for example, reveals that when he was first involved in research, he did not think about the fear of losing power when sharing his knowledge. However, as he progressed in his career, the fear of losing power has become a barrier to sharing research-knowledge.

> Honestly, I never thought this kind of situation before... But I came to understand it now knowledge is acquired over years and years...this is a competitive advantage for academics... We don't want to lose the competitive advantage. T_1

In a sense, this implies that research-academics who are at the early career phase face less fear of losing power than those at mid and senior career phases. This may be owing to lesser experience in terms of RKS. Some evidences regarding this issue are shown below.

> Obviously, you don't want to share knowledge more than you should as you don't want to lose your expertise. So, it's a question of managing that correctly. T_2

> If you're putting together of what you think as an innovative idea in order to secure research funding then, you're not going to give the game away to people you regard as rivals, in case they get in there before you. T_3

> I know my main competitors... I know the main people who work in the same field as me and I trust them... without trust I might have fear of becoming less competitive within my own department... T_4

Two professors in the selected sample universities T_5 and T_6 both support this issue. They agree that fear of losing power is critical and has caused research-academics not to share their research-knowledge.

> Academics don't want to lose their competitive advantage on that research. T_5

> In my own field, I know there is a large hesitancy for people to share research... many have fear of losing their power... that's human nature! T_6

Lack of Trust

The results also show that lack of trust is another inhibiting factor for RKS practice. As suggested by Nichani and Hung (2002) "trust is the glue that binds the members of a community to act in sharing and adapting manner---without trust, members would hoard their knowledge and experience and would not go through the trouble of sharing with or learning from others". Obviously, trust is a critical factor that makes research-academics feel free to engage in RKS. The following excerpts show evidences pertaining to the issue of lack of trust.

> ...you have to work with people you trust. T_5

> You have to be cautious about who you discuss your ideas with. I have been careful about whom I share my knowledge and insight until now. I don't simply share it with people without trust except with one or two of my closest colleagues. T_6

> I am more comfortable talking about certain ideas with people whom I trust... I mean, I choose who I want to speak to or share my ideas. T_1

An academic in one of the selected universities, T_6 has strongly supported the issue of trust in RKS activity. He explained the importance of trust in RKS by sharing his own experience, working with someone who broke the interpersonal trust.

> I did try to collaborate with a colleague at another university... I share a great deal of my draft work with him... But he used all the information he got from me in order to write papers on his own account and that broke the trust, and so I would not work with the person I can't trust. T_6

Fear of Stealing Ideas

The finding also notifies that some research-academics in the selected sample universities decline to the offer to engage in RKS due to fear of stealing of ideas. T_8 agreed that fear of ideas being stolen is among the key factors that inhibit RKS engagement.

> ...yeah, your colleagues always pick your best ideas. T_5 I always feel scared that somebody else is going to steal my ideas. T_1

> I don't prefer to share research-knowledge if still rough ideas are easily stolen. T_6

This issue has gained attentions from many research-leaders in the selected sample universities. The table below represents the evidences quoted from research-leaders regarding the fear of stealing of ideas.

Table 1.

Research-leaders' Comments on the Issue of Fear of Stealing Ideas in the Selected Sample Universities

Alias	Position	Excerpts
L_1	Research and community service vice president	"A good idea is not easy to come by, so people don't want to lose that, they don't share it until it is published."
L_2	Academic Affairs Vice President	"There is a danger that you give someone an idea and that s/he immediately uses your ideas. If one has something very special, you might be a bit greedy about sharing it." Hence, they have fear that someone might grab their ideas and publish it before them.
L_3	Postgraduate Academic Dean	"...if they have a very good idea, they don't want somebody else to steal it. There's always a danger in academia that there're people who will lose out because they won't have the joy of seeing other people developed".

According to T_6 narration, the performance appraisal system of the university is one of the contributing factors that lead to fear of stealing of ideas.

> ...something like performance appraisal tends to make it quite difficult to escape from, because each individual academic's performance is measured in terms of their output (publication) and so they're reluctant. T_6

Unavailability of Intellectual Property (IP) Protection

The finding also signifies that some research-academics have considered the unavailability of IP as an inhibitor factor for RKS. The result supports the finding reported by Riege (2005) who found that the amount of knowledge shared depends upon the availability and extent of IP protection for knowledge sharing activities. T_2 stresses that, "I wouldn't share information before I probably get it published or protected it in a particular IP". Vice President of Research and community services, L_1 confirms that the IP protection is essential, particularly for commercial research projects. He indicates an example of action taken by the university he works in order to manage the IP issue.

> ...many universities are taking very serious now in their hands how do they actually manage IP in a knowledge sharing environment... that would be an interesting challenge for the university in research where people have started working in more diverse team in areas where the IP actually has value. At the same time, L_1 clarifies that it is important for the university to educate all research-academics concerning the IP protection for risk avoidance purposes. ...certainly one other thing we're doing is making researchers much more conscious of what the IP issues actually are. L_1

In one way or another, the unavailability of IP protection also has been mentioned by research academics. For that reason, they are more concerned about the IP protection of their research work. Without IP protection, they more likely resist engaging in RKS.

Lack of Confidence or Self-efficacy

The results also indicated that lack of confidence is inhibitor factor for RKS. As found by Lin et al. (2009), employees with high competence and confidence in their ability to provide valuable knowledge are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing and tend to have stronger motivation to share knowledge with their colleagues. However, only a very small number of research-academics in the selected sample universities talks about this issue. T_1 for example, expressed her lack of confidence about her research work, which then made her resist engaging in RKS. "I sometimes feel worried that my idea will be devalued by criticisms. I lose my confidence. I am afraid that my study is not going to be looked favorably by my superiors or colleagues". T_1

Research and community service vice president in one of the selected sample universities, L_1, shares his idea concerning this issue. Interestingly, L_1 explains that lack of confidence occurs due to lack of social skills among research-academics. "People, who don't like working with other people or simply lack of social skills, face the problem of sharing research-knowledge to their colleagues. It is not uncommon in academia to find such people around".

L_1's explanation is in line with Riege's (2005) claim that at an individual or employee level, a factor like poor communication skills is one of the barriers of knowledge sharing. Riege argues that "the ability of employees to share knowledge depends primarily on their communication skills". The very low responses gained in the selected sample universities with regard to this inhibiting factor implies that majority research-academics in these universities have more research know-how, in which they are more capable and skillful in terms of research. Still there are some academics that lack confidence in engaging themselves in RKS. Therefore, the lacking of sense of self-efficacy issue may be a factor that somehow inhibits them from engaging in RKS.

When Sharing (or not)

The "when sharing (or not)" issue refers to the research timeline that individual research-academics share or not share their research-knowledge. These emerged largely from the participants' answers to the question: "When do you share and not share your research-knowledge?" The respondents reflected in the subthemes below.

Not sharing research idea and research proposal

The result shows that a number of research-academics in the selected sample universities do not share research-knowledge at the initial stage of the research idea and up to the proposal development. The finding reveals that more than half of research-academics consider that during research idea and proposal phase, their knowledge is not yet well developed and still uncertain.

T_1 for example, indicates that she does not share knowledge at the very basic point, where "my ideas are still immature and not well-developed." T_3, at the same time asserts that, "...if I don't have strong concrete basis for that idea, then I won't be sharing it yet you know because I feel as a junior researcher, I should be very vigilant when sharing my research knowledge with people when my ideas are still undeveloped. In these early phases, I don't prefer to share it because these are still unpolished ideas." T_3

In a sense, this implies that research-academics fear that it is possible that they are sharing something valuable with other people and that idea might get stolen. As stated by Huber (2001) employees "who had valuable knowledge were reluctant, or at least hesitant, to share it, and sometimes successfully avoided sharing it."

Not sharing research design and research methodology

The result showed a small number of research-academics in the selected sample universities don't share their research-knowledge during research design and research methodology phases. It is fascinating to recognize that at these two phases, research-academics chose to seek knowledge from other colleagues but at the same time hoard their own research projects concerning research design and research methodology. "... I think it's the other way around, I think it's more than that I go out and seek for knowledge just to make sure that I use the right method for the right research." T_4.

T_4 asserts that instead of sharing research-knowledge, at these two phases, research-academics decide to seek knowledge from other colleagues who they believe have the appropriate knowledge in order to assist their works. Knowledge seeking is geared toward those who are expected to provide useful information instead of sharing knowledge.

Sharing only research results

The findings indicate that almost all of the research-academics in the selected sample universities rarely share at other phases, except research results. Research results for this study refer to any publication or book.

T_1 for example, clearly mentions that she would not share knowledge before any publication is made. T_3 says, "I don't see myself sharing at other stages than results". Interestingly, he further explains that the reasons research-academics should not be sharing research related idea before getting the results is because there are some knowledge entrepreneurs'.

> I don't share knowledge at any other point than results. For me, academics are kind of individual knowledge entrepreneurs. So, if you have something that you think an innovative idea then, don't give the game away to other people, especially those you regard as rivals in case they get in there before you. T_3

"Knowledge entrepreneur" in this context refers to someone who can generate income for the workplace. In this study, some research-academics, in the selected sample universities can be seen as "knowledge income generators" to the university and owing that they resist sharing the unpublished research as they are targeting to get the ideas published in order to stay competitive.

Sharing across all research phases

Interestingly, the results also indicated a number of research-academics share research-knowledge at all research phases. Interviewees elucidated their ideas with regard to sharing their knowledge across all research phases. For example, T_2, says it is interesting to note that there is one condition for sharing across all research phases, that is, trust.

> I actively share information with anyone at any phase. Sometimes, I suppose at various stages you got more knowledge and more information if you share... But I don't share it outside of that sort of my trusted team of people at that stage. T_2

T_1 also notifies the same thing. He said, "I must have been sharing knowledge at the very beginning phase, but only to the person I trust not to everyone else". T_6 at the same time, points out that he has to be very careful when sharing research-knowledge. In this regard, he said the following: "I share it with people throughout, but always be very careful when sharing because you'll never know. So, it tends to fall between me and people I trust".

This implies that without trust, research-academics are most likely not freely sharing their research-knowledge across all research phases. As suggested by Levin et al. (2002), trust is a condition that links strong ties and knowledge. The results confirm the findings reported by Chen and Hung (2010), who concludes that interpersonal trust is significantly and positively associated with knowledge sharing practice.

Sharing at research result

The results showed that all participants unanimously share research-knowledge at the last research phase, i.e., research result. T_5 for example, explains that,

> I guess when we're still not analyzing the data, we will be a bit more careful because you don't want to go beyond what your data actually says. T_5

This implies that research-academics do not completely feel free sharing their research results as they are not well established and protected, and are unable to reduce the risks of ideas being stolen or plagiarized.

Remarkably, this study has discovered a distinctive finding concerning the RKS process in the selected sample universities. The results indicated that all research-leaders in these universities state that RKS need to be managed carefully. It has been revealed not all research-knowledge can be shared freely in public at all times. Research-leaders suggest that some research-knowledge needs to be hoarded at certain points within the research timeline. The following excerpts contain evidences from professors in these universities concerning this issue.

> Don't think of sharing as being sharing with everybody except when you're getting actually published a paper or a report. Think of it as controlled sharing and take control of the sharing. L_1

> You have to make wise decision about to share or not to share. If you want to share, then you have to think what to share with people and what to keep for yourself. It must be properly managed. L_2

> I believe you want to make sure you fully exploit all the benefits of your research so you may want to hold back on disseminating that work, until you're in a position to fully exploit it. T_5

> You must be thinking very wisely before sharing your work with people. The sharing of research-knowledge needs to be managed properly. L_3

Interestingly, the finding contradicts to Konstantinou's (2010) argument that knowledge hoarding leads to inefficiency, fragmentation or breakdown in an organization. In this study, the result suggests that knowledge hoarding is sometimes critically important in academia, so that research-academics will not lose the benefits of the research they work on.

What to Share

The "what to share" issue refers to the type of knowledge that individual research-academics choose to share. This emerged largely from the participants' answers to two questions: 1) Do you normally share both tacit and explicit knowledge together or separately and why? And 2) What types of knowledge do you normally share with regard to research? The results showed that in the three selected universities, the types of knowledge shared by research-academics can be broken down into three aspects: (1) sharing both tacit and explicit knowledge; (2) sharing mainly

explicit knowledge; and (3) sharing only explicit knowledge. The results showed that no one is sharing only tacit knowledge.

Sharing both tacit and explicit knowledge

The results indicated that majority research-academics prefer to share both tacit and explicit knowledge. They argued that tacit and explicit knowledge are inseparable. This is akin to Polanyi's (1966) idea, who argued that the concept of tacit knowledge was not a separate category of knowledge, and opposes Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) arguments that tacit and explicit knowledge are two separate types of knowledge. The following excerpts evidenced this issue.

> In sharing knowledge, I can't see the dichotomy between tacit and explicit. For me it happens naturally that we don't realize we share knowledge. T_6

> ...it sounds a bit odd because I can't think of any knowledge that I would have that I can't put into some sorts of documented form. Well, I don't simply share documents and hard copy materials with people. I have discussions with them as well. L_3

L_2 who believes that knowledge is tacit and explicit in nature at the same time, explains that he unavoidably shares tacit knowledge while sharing the explicit knowledge, though unconsciously.

> ...research-academics are probably doing both without realizing it. Knowledge is necessarily tacit and explicit at the same time. I don't really make a conscious distinction between the two. I wouldn't say that in my research exchange I really make that kind of distinction but I imagine that both things happen simultaneously. L_2

Interestingly, L_2 conveys that the sharing of his tacit knowledge supports his explicit knowledge sharing.

> ...when you go out and present your paper or idea, so people might ask questions and that's where you share your tacit knowledge, it supports your explicit knowledge. It may not be there written in your paper explicitly. L_3

L_3's comment supports the claim made by Jasimuddin et al. (2005) that explicit knowledge is supported by tacit knowledge. As suggested by Bollinger and Smith (2001), people who have the "know how" (or tacit) knowledge are considered unconsciously skilled. For that reason, they tend to share their tacit knowledge unconsciously.

T_4, on the other hand, indicated that the sharing of tacit and explicit knowledge depends on the kind of person one has communicated with. He explains that his tacit knowledge is often shared with people working on the same area with him, whereas explicit knowledge is used when one talks to people with less knowledge about his/her area of expertise.

> ...it depends on whom you have the conversations with. If it is kind of colleagues or people with similar level to myself or more senior colleagues that would be more

> tacit as we understand each other's area very well. If it's about my work in general, then it would be much more explicit and codified. T_3

L_3 also supports T_4's comment. He said he uses tacit knowledge when talking with people who work in the same area or have more experience, whereas explicit knowledge is used when he communicates with wider group of people.

> It always depends to person you talk to. If someone who is experienced, very senior researcher or within the same area of interest, we don't have to talk about all the tacit knowledge that much because this person most likely knows a lot about it already. L_4

Sharing mainly explicit knowledge

The finding showed that some research-academics in the selected sample universities choose to share more explicit knowledge than tacit. In a sense, this communicates that this group of people are those who believe that tacit and explicit knowledge are separable things. T_1 for example, asserted that explicit knowledge outweighs the sharing of her tacit knowledge.

> We may have some tacit knowledge confirmed by research but not necessarily deliberately. It's just the way things happen. I tend to share things which are explicit that I have found, rather than things I just know. T_1

Interestingly, T_2 has come up with a different view. He explained that he shares different types of knowledge at particular phases of a research project.

> What it bothers you really depends on which stage of the research I am in. Say if I'm at the beginning... some tacit knowledge that I can express, some ideas, or hints, or speculations, I don't share much during this point of time. But the farther the research phases is, it's more completed and knowledge has been consolidating, over few months... that is more of sharing the explicit knowledge... talking to people about what I'm working on in the formal explicit, definite, consolidated way. So, this is where I share most, explicit knowledge. T_2

Similarly, T_3 and T_4 both state that their preferences to share mainly explicit knowledge are also influenced by the research timeline of their research project. Both of them avoid sharing at the very early phases, i.e., research idea and research proposal.

> I believe this is due to my preferences to share ideas when they are stronger, well-developed and not when they are still uncertain or immature. T_3

The findings revealed that for RKS, the type of knowledge shared is influenced by the research timeline of a particular research project.

Sharing only explicit knowledge

It is found that a small number of research-academics in the selected sample universities choose to share only explicit knowledge. The result implies that these groups of research-academics are those who believe that there is a clear dichotomy between tacit and explicit

knowledge. As suggested by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) and Mooradian (2005), tacit knowledge is intrinsically different from explicit knowledge, and making tacit knowledge explicit is to change it following the process of converting tacit into explicit knowledge. The same finding has not been discovered in the selected sample universities. The following two excerpts showed the evidences gained from research-academics in the selected sample universities.

> I only share my results. The only way you can share tacit knowledge is to work together probably through a project or chat with colleagues at the corridor...that is beyond the scope of the presentation. I often talk about the paper that has been published. However, I might be sharing tacit knowledge without I realize it. T_5

> I think I only share the explicit knowledge because tacit knowledge is still rough and at first I need to make myself comfortably get that knowledge. I need to think more and more and get my idea more structured for delivering steps. But maybe, while sharing explicit knowledge, I might be sharing tacit knowledge as well. T_3

However, while these groups of research-academics claim that they only share explicit knowledge, they admit that they might simultaneously be sharing tacit knowledge unconsciously. Again, as stated by Bollinger and Smith (2001) people tend to share their tacit knowledge unconsciously. In this study, although research-academics claim that they share only explicit knowledge, they may possibly share their "know-how" skills or tacit knowledge unconsciously. As noted by Nonaka et al. (2001), tacit knowledge is rooted in action, procedures, routines, commitment, ideals, values, and emotions of an individual

Conclusion and Implications

The major objective of the present study was to investigate the key barriers that influence academics' research-knowledge sharing practices in higher education institutions (universities). The semi-structured and in-depth interviews were employed to collect data from respondents of the research so that their insights can help stakeholders, colleagues and academic leaders to understand their needs in order to improve the culture of research-knowledge sharing, especially research-knowledge sharing. Phenomenological case study was used to analyze collected data to uncover key impediments that affect the lived-experiences of university academics and top academic leaders on their research-knowledge sharing practices.

The findings revealed that knowledge sharing barriers inhibit academic staff to receive and provide knowledge in the context of higher education institutions. In this regard, lack of trust, low sense of research-knowledge self-efficacy, unavailability of well-established and fully functioning Intellectual Property (IP) protocol, lack of support from top academic leaders, strategy, fear of research ideas being stolen, when to share (or not), what to share (or not) and related factors negatively affected the research-knowledge sharing potential among the academic staff within higher education institutions. Besides, this research tried to examine the major challenges university academics face while practicing research-knowledge sharing in the actual working

environment. At the same time, this study made an effort to find out what opportunities university academics have received from the top university academic leaders and the institutions.

The findings from this study provided evidences on key barriers that exist in higher education institutions and their effect on research-knowledge sharing. Thus, universities need to find out the barriers and their relative importance, concentrate their capabilities and resources to eliminate these barriers, and create an environment for research-knowledge sharing to take place and flourish among academics. Attention is needed from the policy and decision makers that different barriers require different approaches and solutions. Organizational structures and culture, people and their relationship need to be considered when research-knowledge sharing barriers are being identified and removed. Some individual and organizational-level interventions need to be initiated to foster research-knowledge sharing practice among university academics.

Generally, this paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge in terms of identifying the types of research-knowledge sharing barriers, their relative importance, and effect on research-knowledge sharing practices among academics in the selected universities in Ethiopia, Amhara Regional State. Universities need to consciously and explicitly manage the research-knowledge sharing activities associated with the creation of their knowledge assets and to recognize the value of their intellectual capital to their continuing role in society and in a wider global marketplace for international competitiveness. In doing so, they need to pay attention to research-knowledge sharing barriers that need to be identified and abolished so that effective research-knowledge sharing related activities and behaviors can flourish among academics in HEIs. Potential future studies may also include factors and mediators that affect research-knowledge sharing behaviors in higher education institutions.

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The Implementation of Co-curricular Activities in Secondary Schools of East Hararghe Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study was intended to explore the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools found in East Hararghe Zone. To achieve this purpose, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using surveys, interviews, and document analysis. 412 participants were selected using available, stratified, and systematic sampling techniques. Mean score and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. The results have shown that co-curricular activities in secondary schools lack a stable structure, a distinct purpose, and an opportunity to include a large number of students. Lack of facilities, financial constraints, organizational and structural problems, lack of recognition and rewards, and absence of awareness-raising training were all seen to have a detrimental influence on the implementation of co-curricular activities. Co-curricular activities were implemented in schools, but it was felt that they did not adequately support students' overall development. In order to improve the quality of co-curricular activities and achieve the intended results, training on the multifaceted issues of co-curricular activities should be provided. Moreover, a system can be established to monitor, regulate, and boost the implementation of co-curricular activities across the education system.

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Introduction

Secondary schools are the ideal settings for preparing teenagers and young adults for active engagement in social, political, and economic domains (Daniyal, Nawaz, Hassan, & Mubeen, 2012). These schools play crucial and challenging roles in educating young people for the labour market (Petnuchová, 2013). Thus, decisions should be made at schools to take co-curricular activities into account. Consequently, students would have more freedom and chances to express themselves outside the confines of the school's curriculum via co-curricular activity planning.

According to Dastyar (2018), co-curricular activities are among the activities recognised by schools that are not directly related to the formal curriculum. They may also be considered as

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extracurricular, i.e., activities carried on outside the regular course of study. Common examples include student newspapers, art shows, mock trials, debate competitions, mathematics, robotics, and engineering teams, and contests. But given the differing interpretations of the term, it is good to determine exactly what type of activity is being used in a particular context (Sari, Idris, & Ariffin, 2019).

Curricular activities are formal while co-curricular activities are informal (Chalageri & Yarriswami, 2018). The curriculum involves classroom teaching, instruction, and examinations. The co-curricular activities such as singing, dancing, gardening, mass drill, community work, and games are expected to play significant roles in reinforcing the overall development of students by fostering in them the necessary qualities and skills that enhance their academic learning capabilities (Rathore, Chaudhry, & Azad, 2018). Briefly, co-curricular activities complement the academic curriculum while adding value to the overall development of students, making them appropriate as co-curricular activities.

Students who are engaged in co-curricular activities achieve a better understanding of acquired knowledge and gain desirable communication skills than those who are not involved in any co-curricular activities. According to Hinds, et al. (2014), students who participate in a variety of extracurricular activities are less likely to commit crimes and to dropout of schools. These students are also able to sharpen their abilities in areas like oral communication, teamwork, and confidence. Co-curricular activities can provide students with direction to engage in meaningful activities. Following this engagement, it is hoped that the skills learned through these activities can cultivate a healthy lifestyle after school years (Nghia, 2017; Baiagee, 2012). It should be noted that co-curricular activities are part of general education and help students learn important life skills (Selamat, Ismail, Ahmad, & Noordin, 2013). They connect the curriculum to the skills students need in real life.

The planning of co-curricular activities is the responsibility of the principals in secondary schools. They are also required to advocate for the proper implementation of educational tasks and act as mentors (Primasatya & Imron, 2020). Similarly, teachers in schools play a key role in the implementation of co-curricular activities. According to Batool and Raiz (2019), teachers should be aware of their role in the implementation of the activities.

Co-curricular activities hold a significant position in Ethiopia, at least from a policy perspective. They are acknowledged as crucial resources in the nation's education system for fulfilling the objectives of several intersecting concerns, including gender, HIV/AIDS, civic and ethical education. The term "co-curricular activity" is more acceptable and preferred than "extracurricular activity" in the country's education and training policy.

In Ethiopia, despite the policy direction, co-curricular activities have not been effective in supporting the formal curriculum that takes place in the classroom. In this regard, Lazaro and Anney (2016) found that student involvement in the co-curricular activities of higher education institutions and second-cycle primary schools was too minimal. Likewise, Siraj (2011) and Temesgen (2018) reported that most secondary schools in Ethiopia were not successful in adequately engaging students in their co-curricular programs. A glimpse by the present investigators of the school situation also shows the same scenario. The researchers identified and

comprehended that there is a scarcity of studies on the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in Ethiopia in general and in the study area in particular. Therefore, by examining the implementation of co-curricular activities in the secondary schools, this study aimed to explore the state of co-curricular activities in Ethiopia as well as in the study area.

In order to examine the problem under investigation, the following research questions were formulated: (1) How were co-curricular activities planned and coordinated in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone? (2) How successful were co-curricular activities in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone? (3) Is there statistically significant mean difference among different groups of respondents with respect to their responses regarding the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools of East Hararghe Zone?

Methods

The researchers used a survey design that included both quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys give researchers the chance to investigate social phenomena using representative samples of the target population. Through the widespread use of questionnaires and interviews, the survey design also enables the collection of quantitative and qualitative data.

Using available sampling techniques, eight supervisors, ten principals, and 14 vice-principals were chosen to participate in the research. Moreover, 259 students out of 459, 109 teachers out of 328, and 20 co-curricular coordinators out of 70 were chosen using systematic random sampling technique. A stratified random sampling technique was also used to choose 10 government secondary schools (out of 46) based on their location.

In this study, a questionnaire and interview were employed to gather the data. A questionnaire was prepared to collect data from students, teachers, and co-curricular activity coordinators. In the instrument, both closed and open-ended questions, with five-point scales that ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), were included.

Prior to the main study, a pilot test was conducted on two principals, 10 teachers, and 20 students. The purpose of the pilot test was to check the reliability and validity of the instrument. Hence, the reliability of the items, which was calculated using the Chrombach alpha, was found to be 0.77. To ensure face validity, the instruments were checked by experts who were authorities in the area of the study.

Similarly, an interview guide was prepared to gather information from eight supervisors and ten school principals (excluding vice principals) on the practises of co-curricular activities, their benefits, and challenges. All of the interviews were conducted by one of the researchers. Besides, to obtain additional data about the activities of co-curricular programs, documents pertaining to extracurricular activities of students in the sample schools were reviewed. Overall, the entire dataset was gathered in three weeks.

The data collected through the methods described above were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and percentages were used in order to describe and understand the features of a specific data set. A one-way ANOVA was also computed to determine whether or not there was a significant difference in findings between

groups of respondent students, teachers, and school leaders. ANOVA was used on the assumption that each group is drawn from a large sample of a normally distributed population. The qualitative data, on the other hand, was analysed qualitatively through narration and interpretation. It was recorded, transcribed, and coded, and the results of the interpretations were discussed.

Results and Discussion

Planning and Organization of Co-curricular Activities

For the purpose of analysis, the grand mean score obtained from the data was taken as the respondents' scores which are considered to be a continuous variable ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (1.00 to 5.00 with two trisection scores of 2.33 and 3.66). Based on the trisecting scores, the range was grouped into three effectiveness levels which included disagreeing mean scores from 1.00 to 2.33, average mean scores from 2.34 to 3.66, and agreeing mean scores from 3.67 to 5.00 (Nora, 2018).

Table 1

Planning and Organization of Co-curricular Activities

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Co-curricular activities are organized according to guidebook.	Students	220	2.30	0.937	13.64	.000
	Teachers	101	2.42	1.185		
	Leaders	44	3.18	1.040		
	Total	365	2.44	1.059		
Clear goals are set for co-curricular activities.	Students	220	2.91	1.208	1.84	.161
	Teachers	101	2.80	0.959		
	Leaders	44	2.57	0.974		
	Total	365	2.84	1.120		
Co-curricular activities are well-planned.	Students	220	2.84	1.090	47.25	.000
	Teachers	101	2.91	1.078		
	Leaders	44	4.48	0.549		
	Total	365	3.05	1.161		
Most co-curricular activities are formed based on directives.	Students	219	3.72	1.010	11.56	.000
	Teachers	101	4.27	0.835		
	Leaders	44	4.00	0.988		
	Total	364	3.90	0.990		
In co-curricular activities, students participate collectively/ together regardless of their grade level	Students	220	3.95	1.132	4.25	.015
	Teachers	101	4.25	0.899		
	Leaders	44	4.32	0.740		
	Total	365	4.08	1.040		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

As indicated in Table 1, the mean values for students, teachers, and leaders in the co-curricular activities being organized according to the guidebook were 2.30, 2.42, and 3.18, respectively. The grand mean (2.44) was more than the average mean, i.e., 2.34–3.66. The result of the one-way ANOVA ($p<0.05$) reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between the respondent groups. Leaders had a higher rating than teachers and students in relation to the issue at hand. Apart from this, the document review revealed that the majority of schools do not have the essential guidebooks for organizing co-curricular activities in their files. However, co-curricular activities such as anti-HIV/AIDS and the student organization (1 to 5 network grouping) have supplementary resources that serve as guides. It can, therefore, be concluded that the co-curricular activities in schools were not properly organized based on the curriculum and guidebooks. This implies that co-curricular activities were not adequately interceded with formal learning endeavours.

In the study carried out by Siddiky (2019), it was found that students were not willing to participate in co-curricular activities. Another study conducted by Rathore, Chaudhry, and Azad (2018) emphasized that co-curricular activities have a positive impact on students' overall performance. They further argued that participation in extracurricular activities improves class attendance, which then plays an important role in achieving high scholastic performance. Thus, proper attention should be given by schools to use all opportunities of co-curricular activity.

The other very important issue regarding the organization of co-curricular activities is setting clear objectives and goals. As presented in Table 1, item 2, students, teachers, and leaders have a mean score of 2.91, 2.80, and 2.57 respectively. The grand mean score, 2.84, falls within the range of the mean average. This shows that the respondents were not confident enough to agree with the statement that each co-curricular activity has clear goal or objectives. The comparison of the means at an ANOVA value of 0.161 shows there were no significant mean differences among the respondents. No matter what their role they have everyone responded unvaryingly about the problem.

The third item in Table 1 presents that the mean scores for students and teachers, 2.84 and 2.91, respectively, was significantly smaller than the mean score for school leaders (4.48) while the grand mean score was 3.05. This means that school leaders had sufficient knowledge that the co-curricular activities were conducted through a well-developed activity plan. In reality, however, the plan should be shared among students and teachers who are actively engaged with the program. Research findings uncover the reality that co-curricular activities should be planned and carried out by a number of parties. These parties include students, teachers, supervisors, parents, and other staff members of the school. They are expected to have a shared vision and/or plan to run activities to organize activities and to take on leadership roles (Wangai, 2012).

The grand mean score of respondents for item 4 in Table 1 is greater than the average mean value indicating that the majority of respondents agree with the item. The one-way ANOVA result indicates that there is a significant mean difference among the respondents. Teachers and leaders, with mean values of 4.27 and 4.0 respectively, adhere to the execution of co-curricular activities with well-recognized directives. In this regard, during an interview one of the principals reported the following:

> …Since last year, more than three directive letters have been written by co-curricular activities on issues like tax and revenue, tourism, cultural heritage, traffic, the command post of peace and security, and technical and vocational co-curricular activities...(P1).

Most of the co-curricular activities in secondary schools are designed to alleviate contemporary issues that are becoming problems in society. However, the organization of co-curricular activities was not based on the schools' needs or the interests of teachers and students. This is contrary to the findings by Kwon, Brint, Curwin, and Cantwell (2020). For these scholars, co-curricular activities should be organized in accordance with the needs of the beneficiaries and circumstances of the school.

On item 5 of Table 1, it was found that the mean value of student, teacher, and leader responses regarding the notion that students participate collectively in co-curricular activities regardless of their class or grade level was 3.95, 4.25, and 4.32, respectively. The comparison of means at an ANOVA value of (0.01) revealed a statistically significant mean difference between respondents at $p<0.05$. Although all three groups agreed that students should participate in co-curricular activities collectively, teachers and leaders believed more than students did. This implies that ninth grade students engage alongside students from grades 10, 11, and 12. This demonstrates that if there are 200 students in an anti-HIV/AIDS club, they are all grouped together in a single room. This obviously entails that the members of the co-curricular activities are not effectively managed as they are not organized according to the students' grade or class levels. Supporting this, one of the principals interviewed had the following to say.

> ... Due to time constraints, we grouped 14 co-curricular activities into 5 clusters, with all students in the school participating in the same way but with different perspectives or missions for the co-curricular activities.…. (P2).

These assertions indicate how co-curricular activities were poorly organized and managed.

Operation of Co-curricular Activities in Secondary Schools

Table 2

Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Students actively select co-curricular activities on the bases of their interest.	Students	220	3.29	1.306	19.421	.000
	Teachers	101	4.20	1.058		
	Leaders	44	3.86	1.322		
	Total	365	3.61	1.306		
School advertises co-curricular activities for more student involvement	Students	217	3.05	1.368	3.762	.024
	Teachers	101	3.38	1.224		
	Leaders	44	3.55	1.337		
	Total	362	3.20	1.336		

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F- value	P- value
Students participate in co-curricular activities anticipating their future occupation.	Students	220	2.96	0.870	18.984	.000
	Teachers	101	2.44	0.953		
	Leaders	44	2.20	1.153		
	Total	365	2.73	0.976		
Co-curricular activities are well implemented to please students who are involved	Students	220	2.00	0.712	1.248	0.288
	Teachers	96	2.10	0.840		
	Leaders	37	2.19	0.845		
	Total	353	2.05	0.763		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

Item 1 of Table 2 shows that the mean scores of students, teachers, and leaders were 3.29, 4.20, and 3.86, respectively. At 99% confidence level, the one-way ANOVA result revealed a significant mean difference between the three groups of respondents. This shows that the responses among the respondents were not similar. In this regard, teachers' responses significantly differ from students' and leaders' responses. This means that teachers were bold enough to claim that students join on the basis of their interest. According to Selamat, Ismail, Ahmad, and Noordin (2013), when students are allowed to join by interest, the co-curricular activities can be taken unequivocally. Accordingly, different personality traits in students such as adaptation, confidence, honesty, sympathetic attitude, social obligation, sense of responsibility, time management, and leadership qualities can be augmented.

With regard to co-curricular activities and the extent of student involvement, the mean score of students (3.05) was less than that of the teachers' (3.38) and leaders' (3.55). A grand mean value of 3.20 was obtained in the range of mean average values. The ANOVA result shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the opinions of the three groups. Leaders agreed more to the existence of active involvement than teachers and students. The difference in the opinion of respondent groups and the mean value at the undecided level may be due to the reason that the advertisement methods for co-curricular activities were not satisfactory enough for students to be aware of co-curricular activities based on their knowledge and interest.

On item 3 of Table 2, the mean score of students, 2.96, is greater than that of teachers' (2.44) and leaders' (2.20). Also, the results of one-way ANOVA show that there is a significant mean difference at 0.05 significance level. The grand mean 2.73 implies that there was no enough rating to support the opinion that participating in co-curricular activities forecast students' future occupations. So, there should be harmony among the groups of respondents regarding the benefits of co-curricular activities and their impact. Unfortunately, this did not happen in this study. Students realize the importance of co-curricular activities for developing overall competences, including their future career. This is a positive step for students. Other parties are expected to react in a similar manner. Positive feeling leads students to participate actively in co-curricular activities, and make them working collaboratively with their peers. This makes them to have a great opportunity to gain hands-on experience (Fung, Lee, & Chow, 2007).

On item 4 of Table 2, the grand mean (2.05) was below the mean average score. And, there was no significant mean difference among the responses of students, teachers, and leaders. The results indicate that all the respondents, irrespective of their role, were not satisfied with the implementation of co-curricular activities. So, we can judge that the co-curricular activities practiced in secondary schools were not implemented well and that both students and teachers were not satisfied with the activities. These results show that co-curricular activities were not espoused into the schools to shape students' competencies and personalities as required.

Factors Affecting the Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities can be affected by internal and external factors within the school. In this study, we focused on the internal problems that affect co-curricular activities.

Table 3

Student, Teacher and School Related Problems

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Annual budget for co-curricular activities is sufficient.	Students	220	1.33	0.614	1.127	.325
	Teachers	101	1.32	0.582		
	Leaders	44	1.18	0.495		
	Total	365	1.31	0.592		
Basic facilities for exercising co-curricular activities are inadequate in the school.	Students	220	4.69	0.700	0.628	.534
	Teachers	101	4.73	0.564		
	Leaders	44	4.59	0.948		
	Total	365	4.69	0.700		
School resources and facilities are not enough for co-curricular activities.	Students	220	3.23	0.883	2.222	.110
	Teachers	101	3.41	0.710		
	Leaders	44	3.14	0.795		
	Total	365	3.27	0.831		
Interest of groups to get involved in co-curricular activities is encouraging.	Students	220	3.71	1.322	5.613	.004
	Teachers	101	4.18	0.953		
	Leaders	44	3.68	1.052		
	Total	365	3.84	1.215		
Teachers' perception for participating and coordinating co- curricular activities as part of their occupation is promising.	Students	220	3.04	0.818	48.463	.000
	Teachers	101	2.62	1.057		
	Leaders	44	4.18	0.691		
	Total	365	3.06	0.986		

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

The grand mean of the group of respondents' opinions on schools' budget allocation was 1.31 which was much lower than the mean average score. The result of one-way ANOVA shows no significant difference between the means of the group of respondents at the 0.05 level. The

group of respondents, irrespective of their difference in opinion, ensured that the annual budget for co-curricular activities was sufficient. In this regard, school leaders were interviewed and one of the principals said:

> Co-curricular activities in our school secure money for their activities from the fund-raising efforts of the members of co-curricular activities. By contributing 2 birr per month, a total of 1300 birr can be collected from students. With this amount of money, they can buy 28 more reference books and related resources for their library club (P3).

Therefore, it can be said that the schools had inadequate budget for co-curricular activities. To alleviate this problem, students contribute money for their activities. All the above data imply that budgets for co-curricular activities were emanating from members' contributions. However, such a trend would not satisfactorily promote co-curricular activities. Besides, students from low-income families could be in trouble in accessing money for contribution.

On item 2 of Table 3, students', teachers', and leaders' views mean values were 4.69, 4.73, and 4.59, respectively which is above the mean average level. The results of one-way ANOVA also show that there was no significant mean difference among the groups of respondents' views at a 0.05 level of significance. This entails that the respondents agreed on the problem of appropriate facilities for sports and other clubs for conducting co-curricular activities. The respondents in this case reacted unvaryingly.

The mean score of students', teachers', and leaders' views is similar to item 3 of Table 3, and the grand mean is 3.27, which falls into a moderate range. It means that respondents had the opinion that schools lacked adequate facilities. Moreover, there is no significant difference between the groups of respondents. It means that the respondents believe that lack of facilities is a problem for the smooth running of co-curricular activities in secondary schools.

As part of their role, respondents' perception towards co-curricular activities was measured. In this regard, the mean scores of students, teachers, and leaders were 3.05, 2.62, and 4.18, respectively. The ANOVA result indicates that there was a significant mean difference among these groups of respondents at the 0.05 level. This means that leaders support this issue more than students and teachers. The grand mean (3.06) is in the mean average range value (2.34-3.66). It means that the perception of all parties involved in co-curricular activities were not adverse.

In the open-ended items, principals and supervisors reported that most teachers consider activities outside the classroom not part of their responsibility. As a result, they give no adequate attention to the activities. The results show that teachers have not been doing what they were expected to do. This implies the need to improve teachers' attitude towards co-curricular activities.

Table 4

Social and Management-related Problems

Items	Mean Value of Respondents			Average	F-value	P-value
	Students	Teachers	Leaders			
High teaching loads of teachers affect teachers' participation of co-curricular activities.	4.21	4.54	4.32	4.32	4.913	.008
Teacher involvement is undermined by students who rarely respect them.	4.09	4.22	4.36	4.16	2.080	.126
There is absence of training on co-curricular activities.	4.71	4.80	4.73	4.74	1.266	.283
There is a weak system of reward and recognition for those involved in co-curricular activities.	4.63	4.62	4.25	4.59	6.927	.263

Note. SD=standard deviation, N= total size of sample in the group, F-value= ANOVA results

Item 1 of Table 4 shows that the mean scores of students', teachers', and leaders' views were 4.21, 4.54, and 4.32, respectively. The respondent agreed that high teaching loads affect teachers' participation in co-curricular activities. The ANOVA results revealed a significant difference in views among the groups of respondents. This means that the respondents reacted differently, with varying magnitudes, to the issue of teaching load. Teachers' average score was higher than students' and leaders'. Briefly, it means that due to a high teaching load, teachers' participation in co-curricular activities was not satisfactory. In this regard, one of the principals who participated in the interviews reported the following:

> Most teachers have a teaching load of more than 25 periods per a week. In addition to this, they have different duties and responsibilities. This includes, providing make up classes, running tutorial programs, participation in various meetings, working in laboratories and pedagogical centres and so on. So, most teachers are not interested to take additional responsibilities on co-curricular activities (P4).

From the above data, it could be inferred that workload in teaching and other activities in the schools had been hindering teachers from actively playing their role vis-à-vis co-curricular activities. This problem could be exacerbated by mismanagement in planning and the unwise use of trained human power in schools. From this, it is implicit that the incorporation of co-curricular activities and their contributions to the full development of students was not deliberated properly.

On item 2 of Table 4, the grand mean (4.16) is above the mean value and there is no significant difference from the ANOVA result at the 0.05 level. So, the idea that teacher initiative and involvement are downhearted by students can be endorsed. This is another issue that makes

teachers uninterested in playing their role in implementing co-curricular activities. The grand mean value of the view of respondents on the issue whether or not participation in co-curricular activities discriminates against some students was 4.09 which is greater than the average mean score.

In the open-ended items, respondents added that the alienation of physically disabled students from the activities of co-curricular activities was a critical problem. In this regard, one interviewee teacher reported the following.

> Co-curricular activities demand basic inputs and facilities, particularly for students with various impairments. Sports fields and facilities should consider all types of students, including physically impaired students. Also, students having visual and communication problems require special attention. In such cases, much is expected of the school, and if not, discrimination may occur (T).

From this data, it is possible to understand that there was discrimination against students in participating in co-curricular activities. It is known that unless disabled students get additional facilities, it will be difficult for them to participate in co-curricular initiatives equally without discrimination. As reported by Temesgen (2018), lack of facility had resulted in more discrimination among disabled students

Creating awareness about co-curricular activities should be the first step to be taken. Regarding this, all of the respondents agreed that there was lack of training in schools about co-curricular activities. Table 4 indicates that the grand mean score (4.74) is by far greater than the mean average value. The ANOVA result too showed that there was no significant difference between the three groups of respondents. Overall, the results indicated that there was no proper training for teachers and students to run co-curricular activities effectively. It is argued that training is an important factor in implementing co-curricular activities. This is because awareness is the most crucial factor to get activities done, including curricular and co-curricular activities (Lazaro & Anney, 2016).

The grand mean score of item 4 is 4.59. This shows that there was a weak co-curricular a reinforcement system in the education sector. The ANOVA result at a $p > 0.05$ level revealed that there was no significant mean difference among the groups. This indicates that all groups of respondents had reacted to the item unvaryingly. In this connection, teachers reported, in the open-ended questions, that the weak management approach and less emphasis provided by the school on co-curricular activities could be debilitating factors for the weak operationalization of co-curricular activities. Overall, the discussions show that there are management problems in the school in relation to institutionalization and implementation of co-curricular activities, as well as weak encouraging approaches in the education system that require immediate attention. Kamau, Rintaugu and Bulinda (2020) claim that strong coordination and a system for reinforcing the education system towards co-curricular activities should be put in place.

Table 5

Problems in relation to the Implementation of Co-curricular Activities

No.	Items	N	Rank
1	Structural and organization problems	365	3
2	Financial problems	365	2
3	Problems with physical and material facilities	365	1
4	High teaching load	365	4
5	Lack of interest and awareness to participate	365	5
6	Problems related to training	365	6
7	Evaluation and recognition problems	365	7

Table 5 shows the results of ranked problems for the implementation of co-curricular activities. The respondents were asked to rank the above seven perceived challenges to the implementation of co-curricular activities. The average score was calculated and ranked based on the mean score. Because the respondents rank themselves based on the power of their influence, the lowest mean value becomes the first ranking, as shown in Table 5.

The mean scores in rating the problems in accordance with their magnitude and urgency were calculated. Accordingly, problems with physical and material facilities and those related to financial problems were rated first and second respectively. This entails that problems related to facility and finance were the most significant problems that affect the implementation of co-curricular activities. Meanwhile, structural and organizational problems were found to be the third problem. High teaching load, less to interest and awareness to participate, shortage of training, as well as evaluation and recognition systems, in co-curricular activities were also found to be factors tin hindering the implementation of co-curricular activities. Supporting this, one of the supervisors said that "Secondary schools are busy in teaching and learning, tutorial programs. Most of them lack basic facilities not only for the co-curricular activities even for the formal curricular itself".

This finding is consistent with the reports of King and Anderson (2004). These researchers pointed out that inadequate budget allocations and the absence of basic facilities were the major problems that hindered the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools in East Hararghie Zone, Ethiopia. Similarly, Amanda (2003) reported that financial problems were the major bottleneck for the implementation of co-curricular activities.

Conclusion and Implications

It goes without saying that planning and organizing co-curricular activities is a key first step before beginning their implementation. However, there was no compelling reason for students to take part in the activities or for teachers to fulfil their duties as facilitators and motivational bodies in East Hararghe's secondary schools. This is due to a lack of orientations, resources, and structures that are in place. Similar to this, there was less commitment from accountable entities to effectively monitor and direct co-curricular activities during the implementation process. The

results of the study generally show that co-curricular activities were poorly organized and implemented in secondary schools. As a result, students lacked the opportunity to experience balanced overall mental, physical, social, and emotional growth.

The outcomes of the study uncover the fact that co-curricular activities were not reflecting the formal curriculum and the learning-teaching process that takes place in the classroom. In the schools studied, the benefits of co-curricular activities were not more than the embellishment of celebrations and festivals in schools. It is also possible to conclude that they missed their purpose of changing the social, mental, physical, and psychological wellbeing of students.

The study also revealed that the implementation of co-curricular activities was engulfed by many challenges. The most influential problems in this regard were lack of physical and material facilities. Finance and structure related problems were found to be impeding factors. High teaching load, low interest and awareness, lack of training, and evaluation and reinforcement mechanisms were also found to be challenging for the proper implementation of co-curricular activities in schools. There was also no proper selection and identification of necessary co-curricular activities in the schools.

As a result, it is advised that the school administration set up a set time schedule for the required co-curricular activities and allow the students to participate in the optional ones during their free time. Co-curricular activity organizers and leaders should orient students on how they can select and forecast their future academic and professional paths and promote a culture of excellence.

A comprehensive structure and operating guidelines should also be developed by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of co-curricular activities in schools. Co-curricular activities need to be set up in a way that makes it simple to plan, carry out, and strengthen future careers. Schools should create context-based guidelines for all of the co-curricular activities and student arrangements are made on this. Co-curricular activities should be planned in accordance with guiding documents that include a code of conduct and specific rules and regulations that control and govern students. Last but not least, further study is required to gather more data about the complex problems surrounding co-curricular activities and to design plans and strategies that can help towards improving the implementation in secondary schools.

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The Relationship between EFL Teachers' Professional Identity, Professional Self-esteem, and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between secondary school English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction in the Sidama National Regional State, Ethiopia. For this purpose, ninety-four (N=94) EFL teachers were selected from 10 government secondary schools. Schools and participants were selected using cluster and availability sampling techniques respectively. Adapted professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction questionnaires were used. The relationship between the variables was examined via the Pearson correlation coefficients. In addition, structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to test the direct and indirect effects of professional self-esteem and job satisfaction on professional identity. The analysis of the goodness of fit indices yielded a good model fit. The results of correlational analysis indicated that professional self-esteem (r= 0.81, *P*= 0.000) and job satisfaction (r= 0.70, *P*= 0.000) are positively and significantly correlated with professional identity. SEM analysis also indicated that professional self-esteem positively predicted professional identity (β= 0.66, $P \leq 0.001$). Congruently, job satisfaction positively predicted professional identity (β= 0.27, $P \leq 0.001$). Moreover, professional self-esteem indirectly mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and professional identity. Thus, it is recommended to pay a close attention to EFL teachers' professional identity and some of the interplaying variables.

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Introduction

One of the determinants of success or failure of the educational system of a given country is its teachers (Cheng, 2021). It is evident that teachers with a strong professional identity would contribute to the success of the educational system and the growth of a country. Thus, teaching, by definition, necessitates a significant investment of the teacher's self. In this sense, English language teaching (ELT) is multifaceted, involving complex social and psychological dimensions. Moreover, teacher identity is truly holistic, encompassing cognitive, emotional, bodily, and creative aspects. Furthermore, learning about theories and pedagogical approaches is insufficient,

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and discussions about professional identities are frequently avoided because people are hesitant to reveal "perceived weaknesses." As a result, ignoring this aspect of the teacher will result in the omission of an important construct of being a teacher (Alsup, 2006, p.14).

In second language teacher education, the development of teacher professional identity (TPI) is also a fairly new and emerging research field (Varghese et al, 2005). Conversely, defining teachers' identity is a challenging endeavor. This challenge might originate from the multiplicity of the meanings of identity. The vague definition of TPI might be due to its complex nature and the multiple perspectives proposed by scholars in the fields of teaching and teacher education (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 176).

Gee (2000) defines identity as "people's ideas about who they are, what kind of people they are, and how they relate to others" (p. 99). According to Derakhshan, Coombe, Arabmofrad, and Taghizadeh (2020), a teacher's identity is a dynamic construct that creates a balance between teachers' understandings of self in their profession and their roles as teachers. They emphasized that teachers' identity is more related to teachers' conception of who they think they are and what other people think them to be. Equally, Beijaard et al. (2000) state that a teacher's professional identity can be expressed in terms of subject matter experts, didactical experts, and pedagogical experts. In brief, a subject matter expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on subject matter knowledge and skills, whereas a didactical expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes. A teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional, and moral development is identified as a pedagogical expert (see Beijaard et al. 2000). Thus, a teacher's professional identity subsumes these three sub constructs.

Currently, a large number of high school teachers, including English teachers in Ethiopia, are studying other fields such as accounting and economics with the aim of changing their careers due to lack of job satisfaction and professional status issues. Similarly, the number of students who choose English as a major field of study is declining year after year. If this problem continues, the profession may lose its identity. As a result, more research is required to determine if job satisfaction significantly mediates TPI.

There are several variables that might mediate the professional identity of EFL teachers. Professional self-esteem and job satisfaction are worth mentioning. In this view, Aral et al. (2009) citing Aricak and Dilmac describe professional self-esteem as "the importance and value one attaches to his/her profession and is related to professional adaptation and satisfaction" (p. 424). Unlike the teaching profession, most of the professions today have strong professional prestige. It is not difficult to know what connotations, images, and expectations are associated with doctors, lawyers, and/or journalists; so is almost the case with teachers (Hussain et al., 2012). Viewed from this perspective, the connotations of teaching English, the respect teachers deserve, and the EFL teachers' professional self-image, i.e., how the teaching profession is viewed by the society in Ethiopia are in decline from time to time.

Consequently, it is evident that high school English teachers in Ethiopia are not enjoying the professional pride and respect associated with the teaching profession. Cristina Neamtu, cited in Voinea and Pălăşan (2014), state:"... teachers with high self-esteem levels, who think of

themselves as competent and meet all the requirements of their profession, act in certain ways, which lead to high levels of self-esteem among their students" (p.362). Conversely, teachers with low self-esteem levels exhibit deviant behaviors when facing failure, which leads to low levels of self-esteem amongst their students (Cristina & Neamtu, cited in Voinea & Pălăşan, 2014). From these research findings, one can deduce that professional self-esteem appears to have a strong association with the professional identity of teachers. Therefore, examining the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and their professional self-esteem is crucial.

Job satisfaction is the most important factor in teachers' reactions to their profession. It is linked to teachers' emotional attachment to their teaching and is viewed as a function of the alleged relationship between what teachers seek from teaching and what they perceive it to offer them (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2004). Teachers who are satisfied with the job are more successful and tend to continue in the profession. The study conducted by Elleni (2017) on job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in selected schools in Addis Ababa in the Ethiopian high school context revealed that teachers are dissatisfied in most aspects of their work. The key question here could be is the kind of relationship between EFL teachers' professional identities and job satisfaction. Zhao and Zhang (2017), citing Moore and Hofman, state that "teachers with lower professional identities easily perceived lower work satisfaction and higher work stress, whereas teachers with higher professional identities were more likely to overcome dissatisfaction with harsh working conditions" (p.2). Thus, the mediating effect of job satisfaction on TPI requires more attention.

Different studies have been conducted on the issues of teachers' professional identity and professional self-esteem (Motallebzade & Kazemi, 2018). For example, in their recent study, Ostad, Ghanizadeh, and Ghanizadeh (2019) found out that EFL teacher professional identity was influenced by their feelings and perceptions about their job. Yet, the study by Motallebzade and Kazemi mainly focused on treating professional identity and self-esteem separately, neglecting the important aspect, i.e., job satisfaction. This calls for a study to examine the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Ethiopia. In general, the researchers are unaware of any previous study that attempted to investigate this issue altogether.

As a result, this study has attempted to answer the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between EFL teachers' professional self-esteem and professional identity? (2) What is the relationship between EFL teachers' job satisfaction and professional identity?

Review of Related Literature

This section highlights the current empirical research findings and literature review along with the theoretical framework of the study.

Relationship between EFL Teachers' Professional Identity and Professional Self-esteem

Mbuva (2016) defines self-esteem as "how we value ourselves, how we perceive our value in the world, and how valuable we think we are to others" (P. 61). Likewise, self-esteem is an important human construct that helps us develop trust, worth, and pride in ourselves and our profession. Further, Tabassum and Ali (2012), citing Tinsely, noted that "professional self-esteem

is an individual's self-esteem in regard to his or her professional position and acceptance in that professional role" (p.207). Across the globe, some studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between professional self-esteem and professional identity. Aral et al. (2009), for example, emphasize that a high level of professional self-esteem on the part of teachers fosters better results both for themselves and the children. Being other things equal, this would imply that strong professional self-esteem might contribute for a strong professional identity and satisfaction in the profession.

A study conducted by Tabassum (2015) on the professional self-esteem of teachers at the secondary level in Pakistan indicated that most secondary school teachers exhibit high professional self-esteem and there is always a positive link between self-esteem and the esteem or prestige of one's profession. This might imply that the greater the self-esteem, the stronger the professional esteem. Hence, there might be a significant effect of professional self-esteem on teachers' professional identity. In the same way, Mbuva (2016) states that teachers with positive self-esteem were optimists, and were able to solve challenges. Mbuva further states, teachers with low self-esteem may have a negative view of life and consistently show blaming behaviour.

A study by Motallebzadeh and Kazemi (2018) indicates there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional identity and professional self-esteem. On the other hand, Moslemi and Habibi's (2019) study shows that EFL teachers' professional identities can predict their self-efficacy and critical thinking skills. Similarly, Sheybani and Miri (2019) discovered a highly positive and significant relationship between professional identity and critical thinking among EFL teachers teaching at various language institutes in several cities in Iran. Based on the empirical review and the literature discussed above, there is a significant gap towards investigating the effects of professional self-esteem on teachers' professional identities in an EFL context in Ethiopia.

Relationship between EFL Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Professional Identity

In general education literature, there are plenty of literatures concerning job satisfaction issue. Yet, there seems a dearth of literature which describes the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and professional identity in an EFL context. In brief, Ho and Au (2006) state that job satisfaction is a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from teaching and what one perceives teaching to offer him/her. Moreover, Lopez (2018) states that job satisfaction is more than just liking or enjoying what one does; it is about determining whether employers and clients are meeting an individual's personal and professional needs. It is also a combination of psychological and emotional workplace experiences.

Moreover, Hong (2010) stressed that understanding teachers' professional identities leads to "gaining insight into key aspects of teachers' professional lives such as career decision making, motivation, job satisfaction, emotion, and commitment"(p.1531). As a result, job satisfaction, according to Hong (2010), is an essential component of teachers' professional lives and identities.

On the other hand, language teaching is a multifaceted process that incorporates both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In this view, Ibnian (2016), citing Davis and Wilson, stresses that intrinsic factors like a sense of accomplishment, self-worth, and personal growth have the greatest

impact on job satisfaction. In the same manner, Ibnian citing Periea and Baker, stresses that "job satisfaction may also be derived from the success of working with students, interactions with colleagues, and the success of daily classroom activities" (p.40).

Gilman (2016) highlighted that " it is possible to see a connection between identity and job satisfaction"(P.17). Correspondingly, Caza and Creary (2016) specified that " high levels of professional identification are associated with more satisfied employees and more extra-role supportive behaviours"(9). Further, the results of the study by Derakhshan, Coombe, Arabmofrad, and Taghizadeh (2020) in Iran indicated that university EFL lecturers' success was predicted positively and significantly by both professional identity and autonomy. Eventually, a study by Butakor, Guo, and Adebanji (2021) revealed that emotional intelligence positively affected professional identity directly and indirectly through job satisfaction.

Above all, in the Ethiopian context, one can sense that the teaching profession and the respect teachers deserve is declining. As a result, the low status given to the profession could have an effect on EFL teachers' professional identities. In sum, investigating this issue is important to fill the existing gap.

Theoretical Framework

Theorizing language teacher identity is difficult and problematic due to its complexity and fluidity. This might imply that the very nature of language instruction involves multiple professional self-involvements of the teachers. Barkhuizen (2016) emphasizes that"... when graduate research students begin to explore the theoretical and empirical literature, things become a bit murky and decisions are difficult to make" (p.1). Hence, in the context of the present study one theory could not underpin the three research variables namely professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction altogether. As a result, this study employed multiple theoretical frameworks, which Varghese et al. (2005) suggested the importance of multiple theories because only in this way we can hope to gain a fuller picture of an immensely complex phenomenon such as teacher identity.

In the current study, EFL teachers' professional identity is examined in relation to their professional self-esteem and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the majority of research works based their theoretical framework on Wenger's (1998) theory of community of practice (henceforth, CoP). According to Wenger (1998), a community of practice is a group of people who share a common enterprise and pursue mutual goals as well as a common skill or profession. The basic assumption of CoP is the social nature of learning, commonly termed as the social theory of learning, since learning and identity formation are inseparable. In this regard, Zhou and Brown (2015) put "social learning theory focuses on what people learn from observing and interacting with other people" (p.19). Thus, EFL teachers' professional identity is a continuous process of negotiating and defining what it means to be a teacher in a given context. Further, teachers' professional identity is expressed in terms of subject-matter field, didactical field, and pedagogical expert field (Beijaard et al., 2000). The combinations of these constructs make up TPI.

In a more comprehensive way, Kelchtermans (1993) identified five interrelated constructs of professional self, such as self-image, self-esteem, job-motivation, task perception, and future

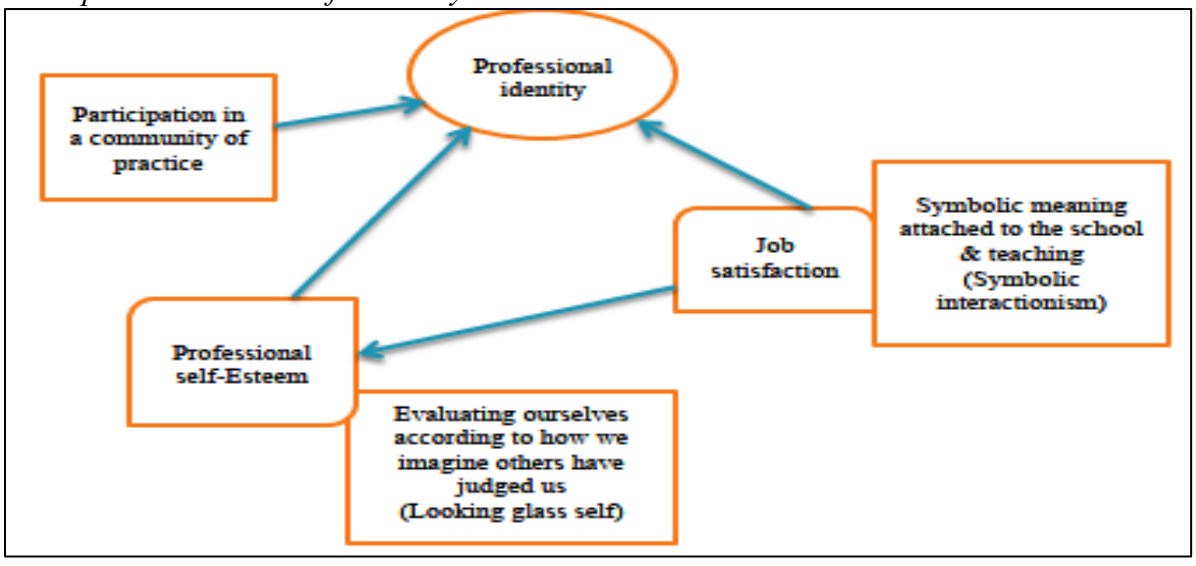
perspective. Among these constructs, self-esteem can be considered as a key construct in the present study since it aims at the evaluation of oneself as a teacher, that is, how good or otherwise as defined by self or others. In a similar sense, professional self-esteem is understood in this study as the value or worth one attaches to his/her profession. Likewise,Cooley (1902) has developed a concept of the "looking glass self" and the "mirror" metaphor drawn from sociology underpin the professional self-esteem of a teacher in this study. This view incorporates teachers' imagination of how to appear to others, and the judgment in which they receive on that appearance.This is pivotal to teachers' professional self-esteem. In breif, the broader society, colleagues, and students could provide feedback on teachers professional apperance and performance. Consequently, the overall judgement EFL teachers receive from the teaching staff and the professional worth they (EFL teachers) give to the English teaching profession have a significant effect on their professional self-esteem.

Furthermore, the connotation associated to the teaching profession in general influences the job satisfaction of teachers. In this sense, the concept of symbolic interactionism theorized by Mead (1934) looks suitable to view teachers' job satisfaction. In symbolic interactionism, humans respond to the environment on the basis of the meanings that elements of the environment have for them as individuals. In this regard, particular school environments, like classroom facilities, the location of the school, and the school administration could depict different meanings to the teacher. If the teaching environment becomes hostile to teachers, teachers would definitely be dissatisfied with their job. The symbolic meaning attached to the school environment or the view the teachers and the society have towards the teaching profession appears to determine the job satisfaction of teachers.

In sum, a single theoretical framework cannot meet the theoretical assumption of this study. Thus, multiple theoretical frameworks such as Cooley's (1902) "*looking glass self," symbolic interactionism by* Mead (1934), and *communities of practice by* Wenger (1998) underpin this study. The following figure shows the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure1

Conceptual Framework of the Study



The above figure indicates that this study employed multiple theories. This is because one theory cannot provide a complete picture of the study. To begin with, EFL teachers' professional identities begin to emerge when they develop the initial motivation to enter the profession, if not before. Then, participating in a community of practice leads to identity formation.

Furthermore, the figure indicates the interplay between the three main variables namely: job satisfaction, professional self-esteem, and professional identity of secondary school EFL teachers. Accordingly, job satisfaction directly interacts with teachers' professional identity. On the other hand, professional self-esteem also interacts with professional identity. In a similar way, professional self-esteem indirectly mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and professional identity. Thus, job satisfaction and professional self-esteem indirectly drawn from different theories predict the professional identity of secondary school EFL teachers.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from high school EFL teachers in the Sidama National Regional State of Ethiopia regarding their professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction.

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in Hawassa city administration and a few selected 'Woreda' or districts of Sidama National Regional State Secondary Schools with a focus on teachers teaching English in grades 9–12. Sidama National Regional State is the newly established regional state in Ethiopia. Hawassa City is the administrative capital of the region, located 275 kilometers south of Addis Ababa. The present study was carried out in the region's selected secondary schools, involving EFL teachers as the participants of the study. This region was chosen because of the geographical proximity and familiarity of the research context to the researchers. This in turn would minimize the financial and time constraints. Furthermore, the region has a large number of high school EFL teachers when compared to the nearby zones of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR).

Sampling

A cluster sampling technique was employed to select high schools. This type of sampling, according to Cohen et al. (2007), is used when the population is large and widely dispersed. In cluster sampling, the population is divided into multiple clusters and these clusters are further divided and grouped into various subgroups based on certain criteria such as geographical location or strata. In this regard, the geographical location or the urban-rural mix was considered to cluster the schools. Further, the schools were clustered as Hawassa and other 'woreda', or district clusters. This was done to incorporate a reasonable sample of teachers and schools from different settings. A total of 10 schools were included into the study, specifically four high schools from the Hawassa

city administration cluster and six high schools from other "woredas," or district clusters, in the region. The schools were randomly selected from each cluster, and the teachers were involved in the study using the availability sampling technique.

In order to determine the sample size, Singh (2006) suggests that "... descriptive research typically uses larger samples; it is sometimes suggested that one should select 10-20 per cent of the accessible population for the sample" (p.94). In this regard, there were 104 high school EFL teachers in Hawassa city administration unlike the remaining districts which constituted 366 EFL teachers in the year 2021/2022. Based on the suggestion forwarded by Singh, out of a total of 470 EFL teachers, 94 teachers (20%) were selected for the study. In brief, 73 male and 21 female teachers participated in the study.

Instruments

In the present study, different instruments have been used. The validity of the instruments was verified by TEFL experts.

Professional Identity Questionnaire

A professional identity questionnaire developed by Beijaard et al. (2000) was adapted. Originally, they developed a total of 14items, 4 subject-matter field items, 6 didactical field items, and 4 pedagogical expert field items. These items were designed to gather data from different disciplines of teachers concerning their current and prior perceptions of their professional identity in terms of the distinct aspects of experts such as subject matter experts, didactical experts, and pedagogical experts in the south-western part of the Netherlands. In order to add more items in the Ethiopian context, eight new items (three subject matter experts, three didactical experts, and two pedagogical experts) were designed. The new items were designed based on the national standards set by the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia (MoE) (2013) for English language teachers. Meanwhile, the teachers were asked to show their agreement or disagreement with the given items. In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient is.83, which would imply good internal consistency.

Professional Self-esteem Questionnaire

Professional self-esteem was assessed using the scale employed in the study conducted by Khezerlou (2017) in Iran. The intent of Khezerlou's study was to measure the perceived professional self-esteem of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. Khezerlou attempted to employ a shortened English version of the professional self-esteem scales (16 items) that were adapted from Aricak (1999). In the present study, the same professional self-esteem scale items were used after certain modifications. In view of this, five items were removed after checking their reliability. Meanwhile, five new professional self-esteem items were designed based on the literature discussed. Thus, the teachers were asked to respond to the questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The items in the current study have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of.75, which is deemed to be satisfactory.

Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Job satisfaction of the teachers was examined using Ibnian's (2016) job satisfaction questionnaire. Primarily, it was designed to study the level of job satisfaction among teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Jordan. In the present study, the questionnaires used by Ibnian (2016) were slightly adapted. Consequently, the teachers were asked to respond to the questionnaire items which are about the teachers' degree of satisfaction. In the end, the item reliability analysis was conducted, and the Cronbach's alpha value was.91, which could show high internal consistency.

Procedures

Data for this study was collected between July 2021 and September 2021. Initially, a letter of cooperation was collected from the department of foreign languages and literature, Addis Ababa University. The researchers then communicated with Sidama region and Hawassa city administration education bureau officers regarding the purposes of the study. After this, the officers directed the researchers to the concerned secondary schools. Hence, the researchers first visited Tabor secondary and preparatory school on July 15, 2021. In this school, the researchers informed the school principal about the purpose of the study and obtained permission to communicate with the head of the English Department. At this stage, the researchers communicated with the head of the English Department about the purpose of the study and the participants to be included. The head of Department then gave a brief overview of the English teachers at the school and facilitated the data collection processes. Consequently, English teachers were requested to fill out different types of questionnaires designed to collect the data. The same procedure was followed in this school and the other schools which were included in the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

Pearson's correlation was used to analyze the relationship between professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction. To interpret the output of a correlation coefficient in the present study, the rules of thumb suggested by Schober, Boer, and Schwarte (2018) were used. The rules of thumb are as follows: 0.00–0.10 negligible correlation; 0.10–0.39 weak correlation; 0.40–0.69 moderate correlation; 0.70–0.89 strong correlation; and 0.90–1.00 very strong correlation. Accordingly, the analysis was conducted using statistical software Stata 15 and analysis of moment structures (AMOS) 23. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed to create model paths and to test the relationship between professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction. In addition, the model helped the researchers to analyze the direct and indirect effects and total effects of the specified variables. Various model fit indices were used to assess how well the model fits the data. Thus, to assess the overall model fit, four tests were used: standardized root mean squared residuals (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness of fit index (GFI), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI). More specifically, SRMR is an absolute fit index as it assesses how far a hypothetical model is from a perfect model. In contrast, CFI, GFI, and TLI are incremental fit indices that compare the fit of a hypothesized model with that of a baseline

model, that is, a model with the worst fit (see Xia & Yang, 2019). Meanwhile, scholars (Xia & Yang, 2019; Quintana & Maxwell, 1999) suggest if CFI, GFI, and TLI values are above 0.90, it is an acceptable model fit. Likewise, if the SRMR value is below 0.08, it means the model fit is acceptable.

Results

Descriptive Statistics of EFL Teachers' Professional Identity

Three subscales were used to assess EFL teachers' professional identities. As a result, the descriptive statistics for these scales, as well as the teachers' professional self-esteem and job satisfaction, are shown below.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' professional identity

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total professional identity	94	22	110	52.67	19.69
Subject matter expert	94	7	35	15.17	6.88
Didactical expert	94	9	45	23.43	7.86
Pedagogical expert	94	6	34	14.13	6.63
Professional self-esteem	94	16	80	38.32	14.04
Job Satisfaction	94	20	100	49.18	19.11

The above table indicates EFL teachers' professional identity scale which includes teachers as subject matter experts (7 items), teachers as didactical experts (9 items), and teachers as pedagogical experts (6 items). The result indicates, professional identity received the highest mean from the didactical expert (M = 23.43, SD = 7.86) and obtained the lowest mean score from the pedagogical expert (M = 14.13, SD = 6.63). This could imply that EFL teachers see themselves as more of a didactical expert and less of a pedagogical expert. A professional self-esteem questionnaire with 16 items was also used to assess teachers' feelings of professional worth. The mean score and standard deviation of professional self-esteem are M = 38.32, SD = 14.04. Similarly, the job satisfaction questionnaire is composed of 20 items, and it was used to assess the job satisfaction of EFL teachers. The mean score and standard deviation of job satisfaction are M = 49.18 and SD = 19.11.

Relationship Between Professional Identity, Professional Self-esteem, and Job Satisfaction of EFL Teachers

Person correlation was run to examine the relationship between professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction among EFL teachers. Hence, Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients of the variables.

Table2

Correlation Coefficients of Professional Identity, Professional Self-esteem and Job Satisfaction

	1	2	3
1. Professional Identity	1.00		
2. Professional self esteem	0.81**	1.00	
3. Job Satisfaction	0.70**	0.70**	1.00

Note. **: $p < 0.001$

The Pearson's correlation analysis shows that professional self-esteem was positively and significantly correlated with professional identity (r = 0.81, *P* = 0.000). This could indicate that there is a strong correlation between the professional values that teachers ascribe to their profession and their professional identity as EFL teachers. In the same vein, teachers' job satisfaction was positively correlated with professional identity (r = 0.70, *P* = 0.000). In addition to Pearson's correlation, structural equation modeling (SEM) was run to see the relationship among three variables. Consequently, Table 3 presents the overall goodness of fit indices.

Table 3

Goodness of Fit of the Model

Measures	Value	Cut-off Point	Decisions
Chi-square statistic	373.255**	p-value >0.05	Significant and good
SRMR	0.02	SRMR<0.08	Very good
CFI	0.992	CFI≥ 0.90	Very good
GFI	0.971	GFI≥ 0.90	Very good
TLI	0.979	CFI≥ 0.90	Very good

Four goodness-of-fit indices were used to test the model. These subsume the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI). As indicated in Table 3, the analysis of the structural equation model yielded a good model fit. The chi-square statistic is 373.3 (10), p =.000. In addition, the overall fit of the model in the present study is high and acceptable: SRMR = 0.02, CFI = 0.992, GFI = 0.971, TLI = 0.979, which surpassed the.90 cut value.

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Results Regarding the Relationship among Professional Identity, Professional Self-esteem, and Job Satisfaction

This section presents the model paths and standardized coefficients on synthesized relationships among professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction in figure2. In addition, table 4 displays the total, direct, and indirect effects of model paths.

Figure 2

Model Paths and Standardized Coefficients on Synthesized Relationship among Professional Identity, Professional Self-esteem and Job Satisfaction

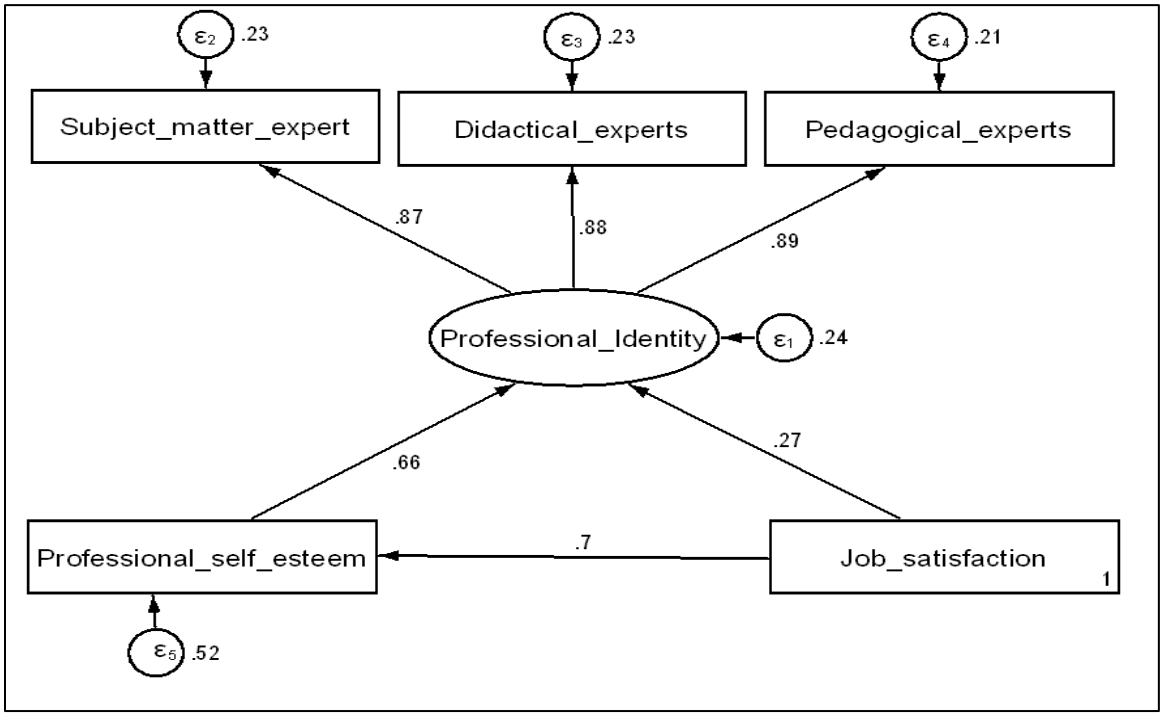


Table 4

Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of Model Paths

Model Path	Total Effect	95% CI	Direct Effects	95% CI	Indirect Effects	95% CI
Job Satisfaction→ Professional self esteem	.70**	(0.60,.78)	.70**	(0.60,.78)	-	
Job Satisfaction→ Professional Identity	.73**	(.55, .83)	.27**	(.10, .43)	.46**	(.29, .71)
Professional self-esteem→ Professional Identity	.66**	(.52, .81)	.66	(.52, .81)	-	
R-square (R^2)	.553					

As shown in figure 2, the relationships between job satisfaction, professional self-esteem, and professional identity were tested using structural equation modeling. The results suggested that professional self-esteem directly predicted professional identity (β = 0.66, $P \leq 0.001$) and job satisfaction positively predicted professional identity (β = 0.27, $P \leq 0.001$). This would imply that professional self-esteem has more power to predict professional identity. Yet, job satisfaction and professional self-esteem could explain 55.3% of the variance in professional identity. Job satisfaction predicted professional self-esteem positively (β = 0.70, $P \leq 0.001$). Moreover, professional self-esteem indirectly mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and professional identity [indirect effect = 0.46, 95% confidence interval (CI): .29, .71]. The standardized indirect (mediated) effect of job satisfaction on teachers' professional identity is .462. That is, when job satisfaction goes up by 1 standard deviation, professional identity goes up by 0.462 standard deviations.

Discussion

This study attempted to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity, professional self-esteem, and job satisfaction in secondary schools. The results of correlational analyses demonstrated that there is a positive (r = 0.81) and significant ($P = 0.000$) relationship between professional self-esteem and professional identity among EFL teachers. This would imply that EFL teacher's professional identity is strongly determined by the value they attach to their profession. Nevertheless, the respect and worth of the teaching profession in general and ELT in particular appear to be declining in Ethiopia. Teachers are not given the expected status and respect in society. This might be due to the low-income teachers earn. In sum, this would lead to burnout, which could endanger the stability of the profession. Further, the value teachers give to their profession significantly predicts their professional identity. In this view, Mbuva (2016) asserts that teachers with positive self-esteem are optimists who can say no to challenges. The findings of the current study are consistent with Motallebzadeh and Kazemi (2018), who concluded that there is a significant association between teachers' professional identity and professional self-esteem. Therefore, professional self-esteem has a strong power to determine the professional identity and effectiveness of EFL teachers. Hence, not paying close consideration to EFL teachers' professional self-esteem might lead to low level of professional identity and ineffectiveness in the profession.

The second objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' job satisfaction and professional identity. The findings indicated that job satisfaction has a positive correlation with professional identity (r = 0.70, $P = 0.000$). This might mean teachers with high levels of job satisfaction tended to have a strong professional identity, which again leads to effective teaching and success in the profession. As it has been stated by Hong (2010), job satisfaction is an indispensable component of teachers' professional lives and identities. Thus, understanding the association between teachers' professional identity and job satisfaction is helpful to gain insight into important aspects of teachers' professional lives such as career decision making, motivation, emotion, and commitment.

In order to examine the direct and indirect effects of job satisfaction and professional self-esteem on professional identity the structural equation modelling analysis was applied. The results suggested that professional self-esteem positively predicted professional identity (β = 0.66, *P* ≤0.001). It has a direct positive effect on professional identity. Similarly, job satisfaction positively predicted professional identity (β= 0.27, *P* ≤0.001). Furthermore, professional self-esteem indirectly mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and professional identity. This would imply job satisfaction mediates professional self-esteem, which in turn predicts professional identity. Therefore, job satisfaction indirectly mediates professional identity through professional self-esteem. In line with this finding, Ostad, Ghanizadeh, and Ghanizadeh (2019) in their study in Iran stated that professional identity is likely influenced by our feelings and perceptions about our job. A recent study by Butakor, Guo, and Adebanji (2021) revealed that emotional intelligence positively affected professional identity directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. These studies did not directly investigate the effects of job satisfaction on professional identity. Yet, from their finding, it can be inferred that job satisfaction brought a direct effect on TPI. Meanwhile, a teacher's success is predicted positively and significantly by both professional identity and autonomy (Derakhshan, Coombe, Arabmofrad & Taghizadeh, 2020). The result of the present study appears to be new in the EFL context of Ethiopia and it can be used to frame second language teacher education and the ELT profession.

Conclusions and Implications

In conclusion, teachers' professional identity can be influenced by different variables. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that both professional self-esteem and job satisfaction have a strong association with EFL teachers' professional identity. Professional identity can be predicted by job satisfaction and professional self-esteem. Nevertheless, professional self-esteem mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and professional identity strongly and significantly. Furthermore, the current study implies that teacher education colleges or universities in Ethiopia should consider EFL teachers' professional identity dynamics as a key element in teacher training program. EFL teachers should be consistently aware of their professional identity and some of the mediating variables. The other implication of the study is that a clear understanding of the impact of job satisfaction and professional self-esteem on professional identity could be helpful in improving the well-being of professionals and the ELT profession. Besides, defining clearly the professional worth and the status of one's profession is important to develop pride and trust in the profession. Furthermore, policymakers and the Ministry of Education (MoE) should consider EFL teachers' professional identity and professional association issues seriously to improve the status and the attractiveness of the profession. In addition, the government of Ethiopia should take action to improve job satisfaction for teachers since this has a strong implication for the professional self-esteem and professional identity of teachers.

Consequently, further investigation is needed involving different constructs or sub-scales of job satisfaction, professional self-esteem, and emotional intelligence. On the other hand, more

studies can be conducted to look into the comparative study of EFL teachers' and other subject teachers' professional identities in a wider context.

Limitations of the study

The study had some limitations. First, some participants were reluctant to fill out the questionnaires in time. Second, the researchers could not include a large number of samples due to financial and time constraints. If the study had included a large number of samples, the findings could have been different.

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Declaration

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

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