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SPECIAL ISSUE

Looking Back with Pride and Moving Forward with Hope: Publication for Honoring the 60th and 50th Anniversaries of Bahir Dar University and its College of Education

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EDITORIAL NOTE

RESEARCH ARTICLES

EDITORIAL NOTE

A Glimpse at the Long Journey of College of Education

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Welcome!

Many of you are beginning to read what we hope will be a fascinating story of the College of Education (here after, CoE): Fascinating because you will be seeing yourself in many of the experiences described in the long journey of the CoE. Presently, Bahir Dar University (BDU) is celebrating its 60th and College of Education's 50th anniversaries. Considering this, Bahir Dar Journal of Education (BJE) published its first special issue in the area of Educational Research on CoE/BDU. The objectives of BJE's special issue are to: (1) add its own flavor to the 50th and 60th anniversaries of CoE and BDU, respectively; (2) contribute its part in our efforts for indexing and abstracting BJE, (3) transform BJE from a bi-annual journal to a tri-annual journal, and (4) fill in at least one identified educational problem (BJE Editorial Office, 2022). To attain these objectives, six research articles focusing on CEBS/BDU are published in this special issue.

Now, we feel significantly great joy when we describe the mesmerizing fifty years journey of the CoE as follows.

The College of Education (CoE) is one of the well-established colleges at Bahir Dar University. It evolved from the former Pedagogical Sciences Department. The Academy of Pedagogy, later Pedagogical Science Department and Faculty/College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, was established in 1972 by the tripartite agreement of the Imperial Government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with UNESCO and UNDP (Bahir Dar University, 2023).

When the Academy of Pedagogy was inaugurated under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts in 1973, the department started to train learners in the field of Pedagogical Sciences which was a major study area. The general purpose was to train multipurpose primary education professionals capable of adopting primary education to rural life and rural development. The major impetus to the inception of the then Academy of Pedagogy was shortage of teacher educators and the need for quality of education and Ethiopianization of the staff of the Teachers Training Institutes (TTIs).

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After that, the department of Pedagogical Sciences has expanded its programs in the course of 50 years, including the training of primary and secondary school teachers, educational leaders, curriculum experts, adult and community development workers, special needs education experts, measurement and evaluation experts, social psychologists, educational psychologists and school psychologists at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to satisfy the massive demand for qualified human resources in the Ethiopian education sector. Consequently, the Pedagogical Science department was upgraded into faculty level and named as Faculty of Education and Behavioral Sciences and later into a college and named College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. Considering the vision of becoming a center of excellence, BDU, has restructured the CEBS in 2022/23. Currently, CEBS is renamed as College of Education (CoE).

Parallel to teaching and training, the college has maintained the culture of conducting various problem-solving educational research and hosting series institutional, national as well as international conferences, thereby disseminating the results to the public for the last 40 years. The popular May Annual International Educational Conference (MAIEC) organized by the college of Education has been playing important roles in disseminating educational research outputs. Currently, the college is upgraded into a Center of Excellence in Teacher Education and Educational Leadership.

Based on the great attention paid by the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the strengthening of higher education, Bahir Dar University was inaugurated in 2000 by merging two sister institutions: Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute (which later transformed itself into Bahir Dar Institute of Technology), founded in 1962, and Bahir Dar Teachers' College launched in 1972. Polytechnic Institute was set about under the auspices of the then Soviet Union; while Bahir Dar Teachers' College, which was the outgrowth of the Academy of Pedagogy, was affiliated with Addis Ababa University (BDU, 2021). Since its inauguration, Bahir Dar University has immensely expanded; and, thus, currently it is among the largest public universities in Ethiopia with the large number of academic units, administrative and support staffs as well as students.

BDU has various commitments in teaching, community service, and research which are the pillars of its mission. The university has maintained the culture of conducting various researches and disseminating the results to the public for many years. Bahir Dar University, according to the 2019 Cambridge University Report, has been ranked in the top 20 Sub-Sahara African Universities in Educational research. BDU has also been ranked first in the higher education differentiation scrutiny (to become a research university) by the Ethiopian Ministry of Science and Higher Education (BDU, 2023). The fact that BDU was one of the top 20 Sub-Saharan Universities in Educational Research in 2019, according to Cambridge University report, is evidence of the CoE's and IPER'S (Institute of Pedagogical and Educational Research) visible contribution (Firew, 2023). As the university is aspiring to become one of the ten leading research-intensive universities in Africa and the first choice in Ethiopia by 2030, the university has taken research seriously and been aggressively involved in rigorous and demand-driven research.

On internalization and partnership front, Bahir Dar University has maintained over 190 partnerships with different higher learning institutions (HEIs), Non-Governmental Organizations

(NGOs), and Governmental Organizations(GOs). Of these, over 100 are international partnerships with different universities in different parts ofthe world (BDU, 2023). Seen from these angles, Bahir Dar University is not simply a place; it is a resource institution.

Currently, Bahir Dar University is celebrating its 60th and College of Education's 50th Anniversary. To add its own flavor to these anniversaries, BJE (a reputable journal of BDU) published its first special issue in the area of educational research focusing on CoE/BDU. A summary of the findings of the research articles are presented as follows.

The first article of the special issue deals with a topic on "Research Productivity of Bahir Dar University: A Bibliometric Overview". The study employs a 22-year dataset of publications from Scopus to analyze research output affiliated with Bahir Dar University as represented in the international domain. The analysis encompasses several dimensions, including overall productivity, collaboration patterns, dominant research areas, primary publication outlets, and languages of publication. The findings reveal a notable increase in research productivity at the university since 2010 in the areas of Medicine, Agriculture, Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences, and Engineering. The authors suggested that by working hard to fulfill international journal requirements, the university's journals, which the Ministry of Education has accredited, be indexed in reputable international journal databases to enhance their visibility.

The second manuscript of the special issue emphasizes on "The Pedagogy of Teacher Education in Ethiopia: Reconstructing Understandings and Practices on Teaching about Teaching and Learning to Teach". This study sufficiently provides data on the existing empirical findings on the pedagogy of Teacher education in Ethiopia signifying that the quality of teacher education depends heavily on the practice of teacher educators and the learning experiences of student teachers. The empirical findings further revealed that the pedagogy of teacher education is conceptualized as teaching about teaching and learning to teach. Based on primary data obtained from teacher educators and student teachers, and secondary data sources and the researcher's professional experiences, the paper examined and reflected on Ethiopian teacher education pedagogy. The findings revealed deep-rooted assumptions that student teachers learn to teach by learning theories and facts of different courses through lectures, discussions, and group work. Teacher educators in the study characterize their typical classroom as a combination of 'reviewing of the previous lesson, explanation, discussion, and lesson summary'. Based on the findings of the study, the author suggested that efforts to improve the quality of education in general and teacher education, in particular, should prioritize the critical examination and reform of teacher educators' preparation, professional development of teacher educators, and pedagogical practices at teacher education colleges and universities.

The third article of the special issue focuses on examining the perceptions of Bahir Dar University teacher educators about the major functions of education in Ethiopia. The study employed the four major philosophies of education as a theoretical framework to examine the perception of teacher educators on the functions of education and their positions concerning the functions of education in Ethiopia. The findings obtained from a qualitative research approach focusing on the case study design revealed the existence of multifarious perceptions among teacher

educators. Specifically, the teacher educators were found to be proponents of the Perenialist, Essentialist, and Progressivist educational purposes. Educational purposes advocated by the Progressive educational philosophy were also found to be important. The Social Reconstructionist function of education, however, was not given an adequate place. Based on the findings, implications are forwarded for the country's teacher education programs and policymaking initiatives.

The fourth article of the special issue, with the title "Becoming a Research University as a Strategic Choice in Bahir Dar University: A Resource Dependency Perspective", explores how the need for research university in Ethiopia is justified, practiced, and could be improved using the strategic tactics of the resource dependency perspective. Bahir Dar University was taken as a case to understand the need for research university and its practices. Document analysis was used as a source of data. Analysis of various institutional and national secondary sources revealed that the existing uncertainties related to the critical resources provoked Bahir Dar University to devise a strategic choice of becoming a research university. The uncertainties are justified in terms of economic, political, and institutional conditions. The authors further argue that although the university envisioned to become a research university by 2025, the existing institutional and national conditions seem to be immature to sustain the necessary resources and conditions that a research university requires. Based on the resource dependency theory, the authors suggested measures that need to be taken so as to realize BDU's strategic choice of becoming a Research University.

Then, in the fifth article of the present issue we find action research report with the title focusing on "Using a Cooperative Learning Strategy to Increase Undergraduate Students' Engagement and Performance: Bahir Dar University Psychology Graduating Students in Focus". Third year psychology students were participated in the study. The outcomes of the preliminary and actual action implementation were compared. The findings revealed that as a result of the intervention, students brought change in their attitudes towards group assignment and they became more engaged in the second assignment as compared to the first. Students' performance in the second test and group project has also increased. Hence, based on the findings, implications for future research and action are suggested.

The last manuscript of this special issue is historical research on the institutional history of Bahir Dar University focusing the then Academy of Pedagogy. Based primarily on archival documents gathered from BDU record office and the UNESCO Head Office in Paris, this study examines the history of the Academy of Pedagogy from its inception to the time it transformed itself into Bahir Dar University. In this study, the author chronicles and analyzes the major historical events of the academy and the ups and downs it travelled in its long journey.

In sum, it is believed that the lessons learned from these research articles may have significant contributions in inspiring policy-makers, researchers and teacher educators to give due attention to various issues of the Ethiopian education system.

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Publication Output of Bahir Dar University: A Scopus-based Bibliometric Overview

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Abstract

Bahir Dar University (BDU) is one of Ethiopia's oldest and leading universities and has recently been granted the status of a research university within the country's system of differentiation of higher education. Despite this, there has been a lack of systematic mapping of the research output of the university. To address this issue, this study takes a 22-year dataset of publications from Scopus to analyze publication output affiliated with the university as represented in the international domain. The analysis encompasses several dimensions, including overall productivity, collaboration patterns, dominant research areas, primary publication outlets, and languages of publication. The findings reveal a notable increase in research productivity at the university since 2010. The top five research areas impacting this productivity include medicine, agriculture, environmental science, social sciences, and engineering. In addition, the majority of publications are found to be published in biomedical science journals, English being the dominant language of publication. Though at the institutional level, the university's collaborators are predominantly other Ethiopian public universities, at the country level, BDU's top collaborators come from the USA, Germany, South Africa, the UK, Japan, and Belgium. Based on the results, we argue that the university still needs a robust research funding and incentivization system, though research productivity has considerably improved over the past two decades. Furthermore, we recommend that the university's journals, which the Ministry of Education has accredited, be indexed in reputable international journal databases to enhance their visibility.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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Research, publications, higher education, Scopus, bibliometrics, Bahir Dar University

Introduction

The Ethiopian higher education system has traditionally focused on training graduates and the country's elite. However, in recent years, a concerted effort has been made to revitalize the research mission of the country's institutions of higher learning. This effort is evidenced by various

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initiatives, such as the development of a differentiated higher education system, the adoption of national open access and journal accreditation policies, and the ratification of national science and higher education internationalization policies (MoSHE, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d). Against this backdrop, the present study endeavors to assess the research output of Bahir Dar University (BDU) as the institution celebrates its 60th anniversary and needs to see its current status in terms of research productivity. It is noteworthy that the university is among the top five most research-productive universities in the country, according to Web of Science and Scopus-indexed bibliometric measurements (Yallew & Dereb, 2021). For this study, publication productivity refers to the research output of Bahir Dar University published in Scopus-indexed databases over the past 22 years, including articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, proceedings, and other publications.

The study aims to address several research questions pertaining to BDU, including: (1) How has Bahir Dar University's research productivity changed in the past 22 years? (2) Which scholarly sources or publication outlets have been most frequently used by Bahir Dar University's researchers? (3) What does the publication landscape look like considering the main research areas? (4) Through analyzing collaboration and funding patterns, what can we learn about the nature and extent of Bahir Dar University's research partnerships and financial support for research?

Additionally, the study aims to infer insights from an assessment of the languages of publication. Though English is the public universities' instructional language, the issue of publishing in other languages is included in this study since an assessment of the language(s) of research publishing has implications for the quality, accessibility, and relevance of research in such multilingual contexts as Ethiopia.

In the following sections, we provide a brief overview of the use of bibliometrics as a tool for research assessment and Bahir Dar University's evolution as a research-aspirational higher education institution. The methodology adopted for the study and the presentation and discussion of the findings are presented in subsequent sections.

Bibliometrics and Research Assessment

A review of the measurement of university productivity reveals that various quality assurance organizations employ various metrics to evaluate the performance of universities. Commonly, these metrics are aligned with the university's teaching-learning, research, and community engagement missions. However, research has consistently demonstrated that measuring university productivity is a complex task (Massy et al., 2013; Sullivan, 2012), particularly in terms of measuring teaching-Learning and community engagement. In contrast, evaluating university productivity through research output is the most prevalent approach and is favored by the majority of researchers (Adams & Griliches, 2000). This is because evaluating a university's performance using research output relies on data-driven techniques rather than subjective judgments (Hicks et al., 2015).

Bibliometric measurement, adopted in this study, is a popular methodology scholars employ to evaluate university productivity (Gingras, 2016). This method provides comprehensive insight into a university's productivity capacity through quantitative and qualitative indicators. For example, Valérie and Pierre (2010) define bibliometrics as "a set of mathematical and statistical methods used to analyze and measure the quantity and quality of books, articles, and other forms of publications" (p. 342). Researchers utilize these metrics to evaluate the productivity levels of institutions in terms of producing research articles, books, conference proceedings, and the like (Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015).

Regarding data sources, various databases are employed to assess an institution's productivity. These include Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), PubMed, and Google Scholar (GS) (Falagas et al., 2008; Harzing & Alakangas, 2016). Although each database has its own unique features, they share common characteristics. Some argue that most scholars use Elsevier's Scopus and Clarivate's Web of Science (WoS) as the primary sources to identify research outputs (Vera-Baceta et al., 2019). However, the Scopus database is considered to offer relatively representative coverage of scientific output (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Therefore, this study focuses on the research productivity of Bahir Dar University as indexed in the Scopus database. It is worth noting that publishing in Scopus-indexed journals, books, proceedings, and the like is highly encouraged by the Federal Ministry of Education's policy documents (MoSHE, 2020b).

Bahir Dar University: A Brief Overview

Bahir Dar University (BDU) was established on May 6, 1999, because of the merger of Bahir Dar Teachers' College and Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute, following Council of Ministers Regulation No. 60/1999 (BDU, 2010, 2015). The origins of Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute, which later became Bahir Dar Technology and Textile Institute, can be traced back to 1963, when it was established through the technical cooperation between the Government of the USSR and the Imperial Government of Ethiopia. The institute was a leading institution in producing engineers and technicians for the country. Ten years later, Bahir Dar Teachers' College, then known as the Academy of Pedagogy, was established in 1972 through a tripartite agreement between the Imperial Government of Ethiopia, UNESCO, and UNDP and began operations the following year under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts. Its primary objective was to train primary school teacher trainers, supervisors, educational leaders, adult education organizers, and community development agents capable of adapting primary education to rural life and development.

BDU currently offers 434 programs, comprising 115 first degrees, 198 second degrees, 99 doctoral degrees, 5 specialty and 11 sub-specialty, and 6 certificates. The university boasts a substantial academic and administrative staff, with 2507 academics and 5,490 administrative staff working across eight campuses located throughout Bahir Dar (BDU, 2023). The university comprises five colleges, four institutes, two faculties, two schools and two academies. These academic units include the College of Science, the College of Agriculture and Environmental

Sciences, the College of Medical and Health Sciences, the College of Business and Economics, the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, the Bahir Dar Institute of Technology, the Ethiopian Institute of Textile and Fashion Technology, the Institute of Land Administration, the Institute of Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Studies, the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the School of Law, School of Earth Sciences, the Sports Academy, and the Maritime Academy. Additionally, the university houses 13 research centers. These are: the Blue Nile Water Institute, the Biotechnology Research Institute, Institute of Pedagogical and Education Research, the Energy Research Center, the Textile and Garment Research Center, the Abay Cultural and Language Development Center, the Geospatial Data and Technology Center, , Washera Radar and Geo-Space Research Center, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Center, Entrepreneurship Development and Incubation Center, Mecha Health Research Center, Information, Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) and Food and Nutrition Research Center.

Despite envisioning to become a research university since a decade ago (BDU, 2010), it was not until recent higher education reforms undertaken by the former Ministry of Science and Higher Education in 2020 that BDU officially became one of the eight research universities in Ethiopia (MoSHE, 2020a).

Methods

To conduct this study, a quantitative approach was employed. The primary data source utilized was the Scopus database, which is widely acknowledged as the most comprehensive database of scholarly literature (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). This database was chosen due to the lack of alternative institutional and national archives that would have enabled a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the research output of Bahir Dar University.

To gather the data, we first searched for documents affiliated with Bahir Dar University over the past 22 years (2000-2022). Institution-based data, including the years of publication, document types, main research areas, names of prominent publishing outlets, collaborating institutions and countries, and funding agencies, were then downloaded into Microsoft Excel for further analysis. In total, 4,025 documents published by 1,877 authors affiliated with the university were analyzed. The last search was conducted on November 23, 2022.

However, it is worth noting that while the Scopus database is widely used and considered comprehensive, it is not exhaustive and has certain limitations. For example, it does not cover all open-access journals, gray literature, or non-English publications, and it may underrepresent certain fields, such as the humanities and the social sciences (Harzing, 2019). While bibliometrics and databases such as Scopus provide valuable insights into university productivity, it is also worth stating that bibliometrics has been criticized for its emphasis on assessing quantity over quality (Bornmann & Leydesdorff, 2015). Additionally, databases such as Scopus and Web of Science have been criticized for their coverage bias, primarily focusing on publications in English and from

Western countries (Vera-Baceta et al., 2019). Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution and in the context of these limitations.

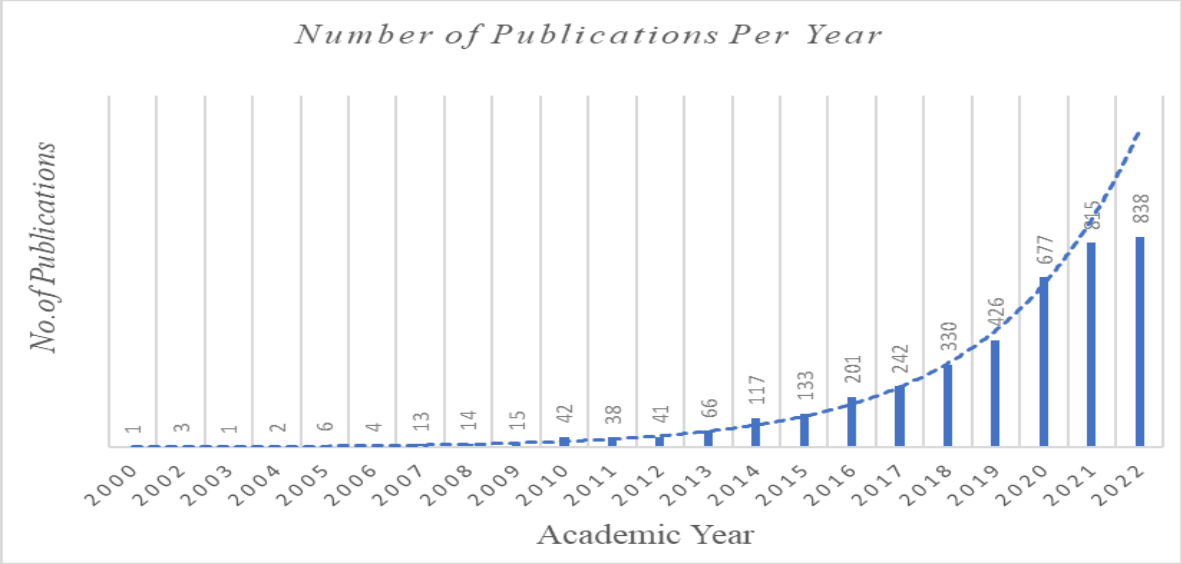
Results and Discussion

In this section, we present and interpret our findings related to the main research variables, i.e., level of productivity, productivity per capita, publication outlet, collaboration, and funding patterns, as well as languages of publication.

Overall Productivity

Figure 1

BDU's Research Productivity over the Past 22 Years



Note. Source Scopus (2022)

As can be observed from Figure 1, the research productivity trends at Bahir Dar University (BDU) demonstrate a marked increase. A closer examination of the data reveals that this growth has been consistent over the past 15 years. Notably, 22 years ago, the university had only published a single paper in the database under analysis. However, by 2022, the staff's publication output had risen to 838 research papers. On average, academic staff productivity at BDU has been increasing by approximately 38% per year. Furthermore, since 2012, the overall productivity capacity of the university has significantly improved.

The study results suggest that research production at BDU is trending upward and aligning with the university's vision and mission (BDU, 2014). However, it is crucial to consider the potential influence of the university's expansion on these findings. Since acquiring the status of a university, BDU has undergone both horizontal and vertical massification, which has led to an increase in the number of academic programs and staff.

Productivity per Capita

Though the publication productivity of BDU has exponentially increased, one may wonder what causes an increase in research productivity. Table 1 shows the per capita research productivity, which gives insights into the productivity per eligible staff member. This can help answer the question of whether the increase in research productivity is due to the expansion of the university in staff number and program diversity or a change in institutional culture concerning publications.

Table 1

Productivity per Capita

Year	No. of Publication	No. of Eligible Staff	Per Capita Output	Remark
2010	42	681	0.06	
2011	38			No data available
2012	41	831	0.02	
2013	66	-	-	No data available
2014	117	836	0.14	
2015	133	-	-	No data available
2016	201	1337	0.15	
2017	242	1126	0.21	
2018	330	-	-	No data available
2019	426	1483	0.29	
2020	677	2065	0.33	
2021	815	2183	0.37	
2022	838	2190	0.38	

As a way to answer the questions, it would be appropriate to calculate the productivity level of staff per publication output. In this case, data from those staff members who are eligible to publish could be taken and calculated according to the university's regulations. The university legislation allows staff whose rank is lecturer or above to publish their research products so as to claim academic promotion (MOSHE, 2020b). Accordingly, in this analysis, we included staff whose academic rank is lecturer or above. Technical assistant and graduate assistant I and II are

not included in this calculation since the legislation does not demand publications as a requirement for any career promotion for staff in these categories.

For instance, in 2010, there were 42 publications and 681 eligible staff, giving a per capita output of 0.06. Similarly, in 2022, there were 838 publications and 2190 eligible staff, giving a per capita output of 0.38. This data revealed that in 2010, the research output was limited to only six staff members per 100, whereas in 2022, this number significantly increased to 38.

Looking at the trend over the years, it is clear that Bahir Dar University's research productivity per capita has been increasing steadily from 2010 to 2022, with the highest values recorded in the last few years. This information suggests that Bahir Dar University is making strides in research and increasing its research productivity, which can have positive implications for the university and the broader research community in Ethiopia. It is, however, worth noting that there are several years with missing data for eligible staff, which can affect the accuracy of the per capita output.

While the increase in research productivity at BDU may be attributed in part to the university's expansion in staff number and program diversity, the increase in per capita output indicates that there has been a change in institutional culture concerning publications. This could be due to factors such as increased support for research activities, more emphasis on research in faculty evaluations, or increased collaboration and networking opportunities. It could also be due to the implementation of incentive packages for researchers who publish in peer-reviewed, reputable journals (BDU, 2019).

Table 2

Document Types (# 4025)

No	Document types	No.	%
1	Article	3378	83.93
2	Review	275	6.83
3	Conference Paper	222	5.52
4	Book Chapter	74	1.84
5	Data Paper	9	0.22
6	Editorial	8	0.2
7	Book	3	0.07
8	Short Survey	1	0.03
9	Other types	55	1.36

The findings presented in Table 2 reveal a significant dominance of journal articles in Bahir Dar University's research productivity, accounting for 83.93% of the total documents published in the Scopus-indexed database. This is a noteworthy observation as it indicates that researchers in the university placed a high emphasis on disseminating research findings through this publication type, which is considered to be a high-impact medium in the academic community. It is also worth noting that the proportion of reviews and conference papers is relatively low, accounting for only 6.83% and 5.52%, respectively. This observation may suggest that the university is less focused on disseminating research findings through these publication types.

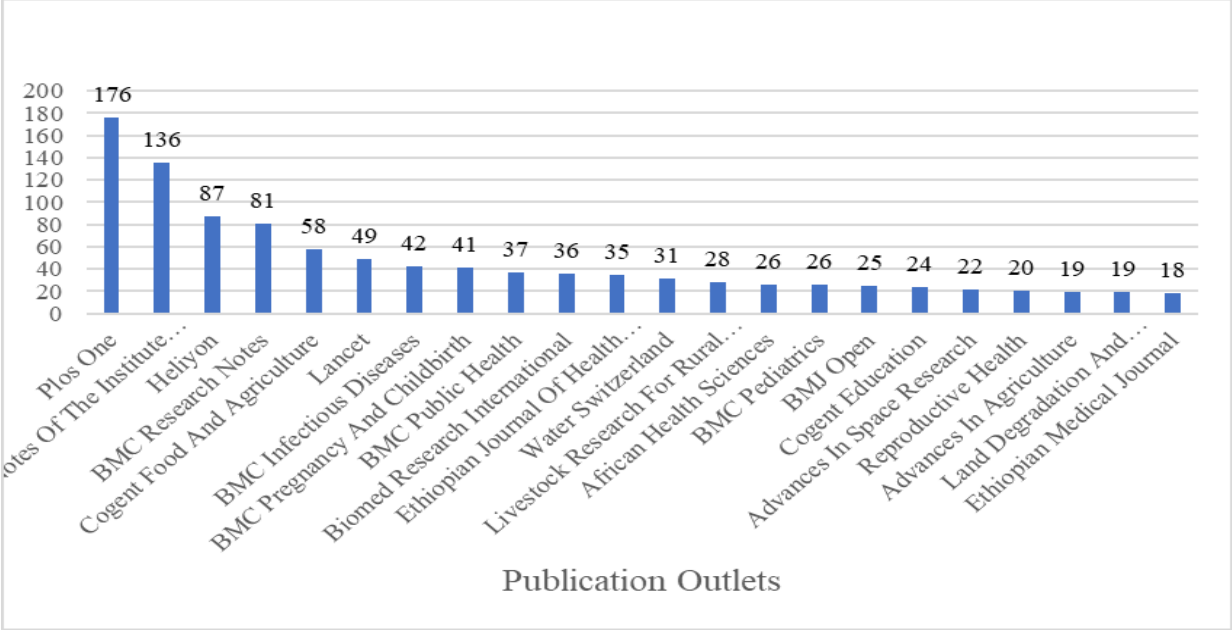
Only 0.07% of the total 4025 documents were also found to be books. This may indicate a lack of emphasis on the publication of monographs and edited volumes within the university's research culture. This is particularly concerning given the fact that books can serve as an important means of disseminating knowledge and establishing scholarly expertise. One possible explanation for this phenomenon could be the lack of financial and logistical support for book publications. Book publications tend to be more time-consuming and expensive than journal articles or conference papers, and the university may not have adequate resources to support such endeavors.

In addition, the pressure to publish in high-impact journals and present at prestigious conferences may discourage researchers from investing time and effort into book projects. It is also worth noting that the Scopus-indexed database is highly involved in publishing articles (Pranckutė, 2021). This could be one factor contributing to the high proportion of journal articles in the university's research productivity.

Publication Outlets

Figure 2

Publication Outlets



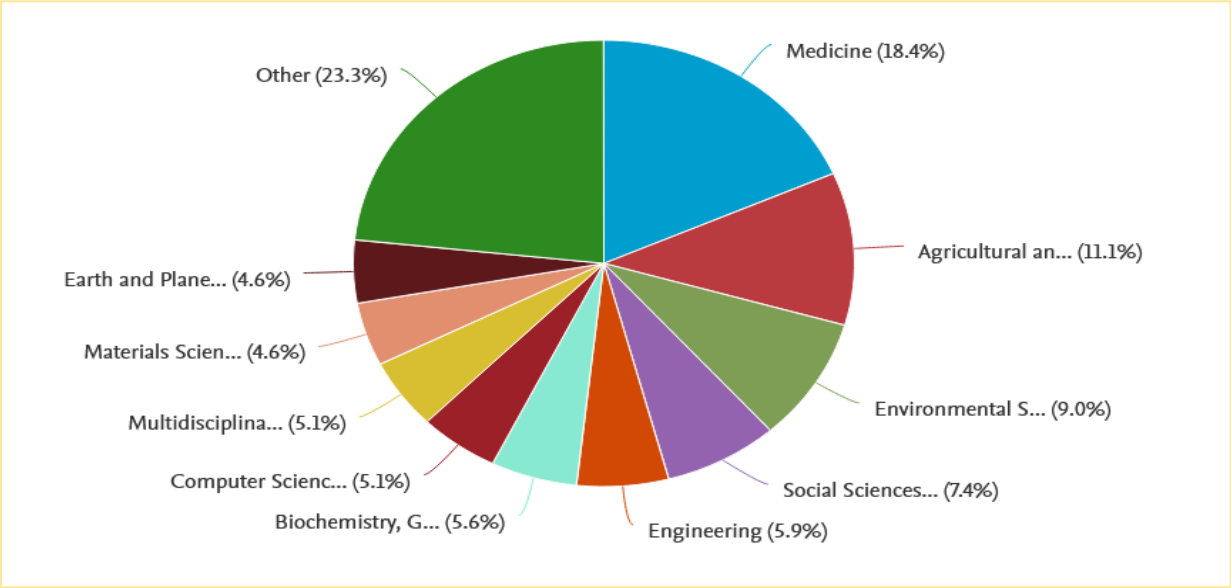
The analysis of the publication outlet data revealed that Bahir Dar University staff publications are predominantly featured in journals within the field of biomedical sciences. Figure 2 above illustrates the diversity of publication outlets used by the staff, with 156 different outlets being utilized. However, a notable finding is the limited representation of journals with roots in the country, with only two journals indexed in the database being of Ethiopian origin: the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development and the Ethiopian Medical Journal. This highlights the potential for greater visibility and international recognition by indexing more national-level journals in such databases.

It is important to acknowledge that the choice of publication outlet is crucial for academic success and the field's potential impact. Academics often strive to publish in prestigious journals, as it is closely correlated with tenure, promotions, and other benefits (Savage & Vickers, 2009; Spector, 2014). In light of this, it is noteworthy that recent higher education publication guidelines stipulate that staff should publish their articles in Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), or PubMed-indexed journals (MoSHE, 2020b).

Research Areas

Figure 3

Dominant Research Areas



Another notable finding is the dominance of the medical field as the most research-productive area at BDU, accounting for 18.4% of total publications. This is followed by agriculture (11.1%), Environmental Science (9.0%), Social Science (7.4%), and Engineering (5.9%). While this suggests that BDU is achieving success in these fields, it also highlights the potential disparity in research productivity among different academic units. For example, the Institute of Technology and the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, which have a long history within the

university, may not be contributing to research productivity at the same level as more recently established units such as the Health, Medical, and Agriculture fields of study.

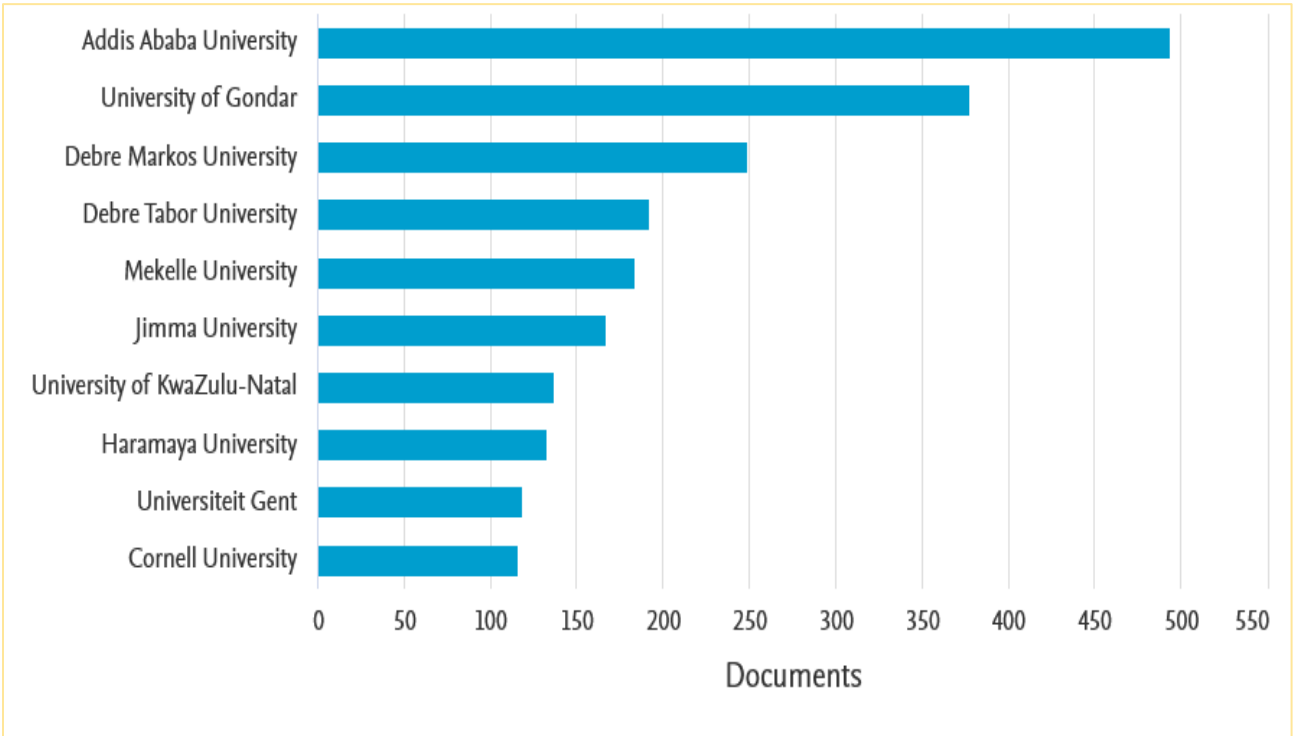
This finding is not unexpected, since fields such as medicine and agriculture tend to have a more direct impact on society, which can also lead to increased funding and support for research in these areas. However, it is important to note that the relative lack of research productivity in certain fields should not be interpreted as a lack of potential for research in those fields, for research productivity is often influenced by a variety of factors, including funding, resources, and societal priorities. Therefore, it is important for the university to continue to invest in and support research in all fields to fully realize the potential for research productivity across the institution.

Collaboration Patterns

The BDU has collaborated with different higher education institutions worldwide for the last 22 years. Figure 3 shows the top ten universities where researchers collaborated to enhance university research capacity and publish. Accordingly, seven of the top 10 collaborators are from other Ethiopian public universities, suggesting stronger links among Ethiopian researchers. This indicates a strong national research network within Ethiopia, which is essential for developing the country's research capacity.

Figure 3.

Collaborating with Higher Education Institutions

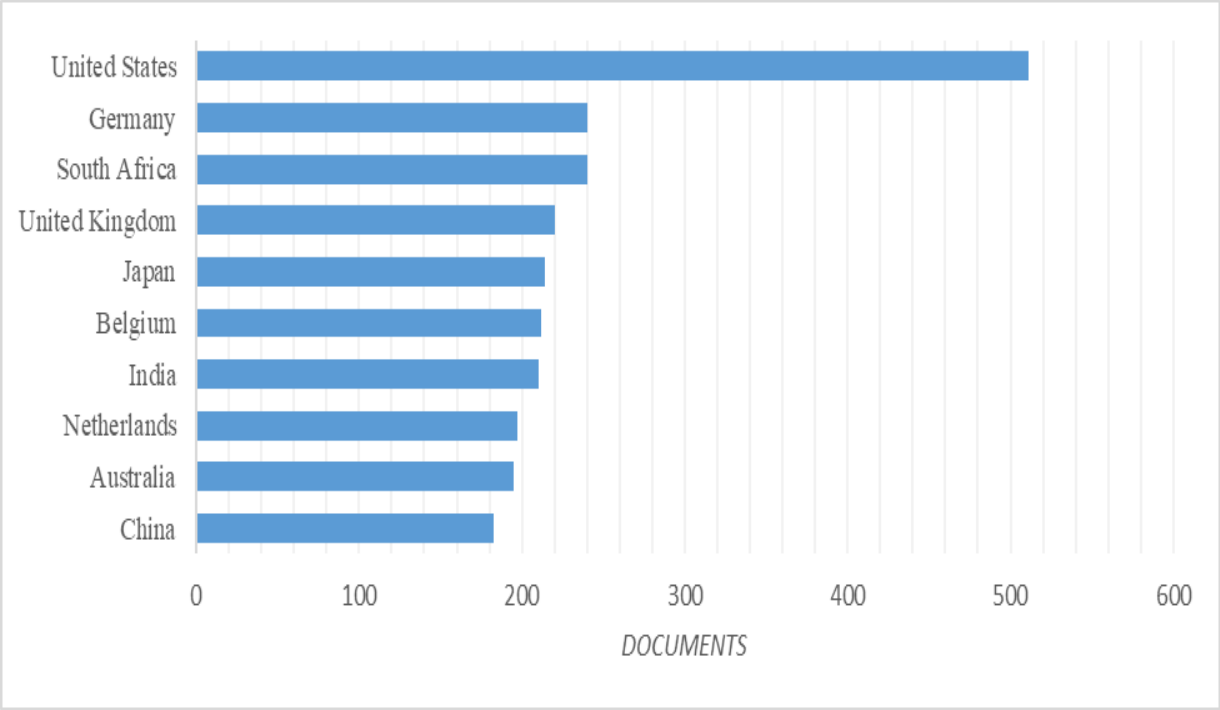


Collaborating Countries

Figure 4 presents the top 10 countries with which Bahir Dar University has collaborated for the past 22 years. The collaboration pattern reveals that university researchers have been working with different countries —accordingly, the USA, Germany, South Africa, the UK, Japan, and Belgium were the top six collaborative countries for the university's researchers. Collaboration with different countries brought academic staff up to a higher standard while simultaneously increasing the university's visibility.

Figure 4.

Top 10 Collaborating Countries



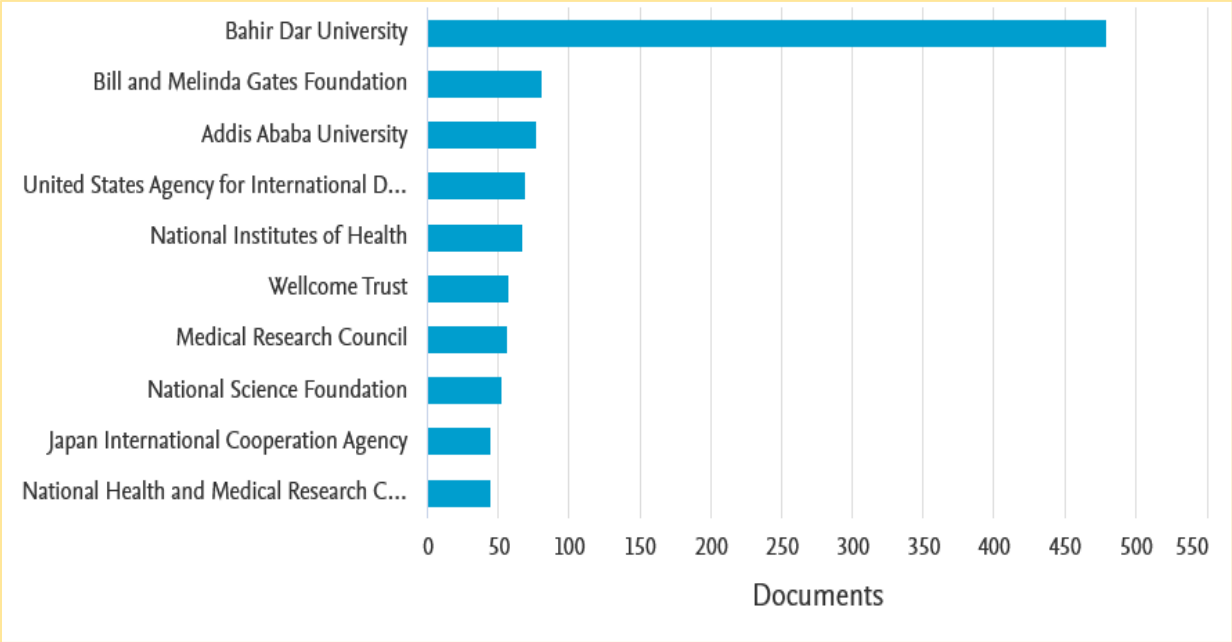
This finding could be an indication of the university's dedication to fostering international collaborations in order to enhance its research capacity and reputation. However, it is also important to note that the majority of these collaborations are with countries located in the global North, which may indicate a lack of engagement with countries in the global South. This could be an area for improvement in the university's international collaboration strategy, as engagement with developing countries could lead to more inclusive and equitable partnerships.

Funding

As depicted in Figure 5, our analysis of funding sources for Bahir Dar University (BDU) over the past 22 years revealed a total of 159 different funding organizations. These funding organizations have played a significant role in the production of research output at the university. Specifically, out of 4025 publications indexed in Scopus, 2955 (73.4%) were sponsored by various organizations, while the remaining 26.6% were either self-funded or had unidentified sponsors. This suggests that the university has been successful in securing external funding to support its research endeavors.

Figure 5

Top Ten Research Funders



A closer examination of the funding organizations reveals that the university itself has played a significant role in funding research, providing 11.9% of the funding for the 2955 sponsored publications. This is a positive indication of the university's commitment to investing in its research capacity. Additionally, the wide range of funding organizations, including international and national organizations highlight the diversity of research opportunities available to BDU researchers.

Languages of Publication

The findings of our research on the language of publication for research output at Bahir Dar University (BDU) reveal a striking dominance of the English language. Specifically, 99.9% (4,021) of the total 4025 documents in the database are published in English, with a mere 0.1%

being published in other languages such as Chinese, French, and Russian. No document is published in Amharic or other official languages of the country in this database. This is a significant finding, as it highlights the dominance of the English language in academic research publishing and its implications for the visibility of research conducted in other languages, particularly in Ethiopia.

Table 4.

Languages of Publication

Language	Number of Documents	Percentage
English	4,021	99.9%
Chinese	2	0.04%
French	2	0.04%
Russian	1	0.02
Unidentified	1	0.02

As Mendisu and Yigezu (2014) argue, the invisibility of Ethiopian languages in research publishing raises critical questions about the accessibility and dissemination of knowledge produced in these languages. They assert that the underrepresentation of Ethiopian languages in research publishing may limit the reach and impact of this knowledge within the Ethiopian academic community and society at large. Furthermore, Yallew and Dereb (2021) have emphasized the need to investigate the reasons behind the underrepresentation of Ethiopian languages in research publishing and devise strategies to overcome this challenge.

It is worth noting that the use of English as the primary language of publication in academic research is a global phenomenon (Vera-Baceta et al., 2019), and it is not unique to Ethiopia. However, it is crucial to investigate the specific factors that contribute to this trend within the Ethiopian context and to consider the implications of this dominance for the dissemination and accessibility of knowledge in the country. One possible reason for the dominance of English in research publishing at BDU may be the pressure to publish in internationally recognized journals. Many prestigious journals are published in English, and thus, researchers may feel compelled to publish in this language to increase the visibility and impact of their work.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study, which sought to assess the research productivity of Bahir Dar University over the past 22 years, demonstrated that productivity had been increasing. The Scopus-based study

also showed that at the institutional level, the university's most robust collaboration is with other Ethiopian public higher education institutions. In contrast, at the country level, researchers affiliated with BDU predominantly collaborate with researchers from all around the world. As also suggested by the dominant publishing outlets, a bulk of the university's publication output comes from fields related to biomedical sciences and agricultural sciences. It is interesting that a university based on engineering and teacher education does not strongly feature output from these areas compared to other recently introduced academic programs. Regarding research funding, the findings demonstrated that much of the funded research comes from international funders, with the university funding close to 12% of it.

Based on our analysis of the findings, we argue that to enhance research productivity at the university level, further measures need to be taken to undertake in-depth qualitative studies to understand the factors behind the findings presented in this paper. The university also needs to strengthen its capacity to strengthen its own publication outlets. Publishing in Ethiopian languages also needs to be encouraged and incentivized to increase the meaningfulness and relevance of research in local contexts and to expand the freedom of researchers to conceptualize and publish their work in languages which they are comfortable with. In addition to improving the culture of research, concrete measures need to be undertaken to improve research funding and incentivization mechanisms.

Limitations of the Study

It is important to note the limitations of this study. Firstly, the research outputs analyzed in this study are limited to those that are exclusively available in the Scopus-indexed database. It is possible that the university has additional research outputs that have been published in other recognized national and international journals, that are not included in this analysis. Therefore, the results of this study may not provide a comprehensive picture of the university's overall publication status. Instead, it provides an understanding of the university's presence in international academic domains. Secondly, this study only focuses on the productivity of the university in terms of the number of research outputs; it does not evaluate the quality of the research itself. It is recommended that future studies take into account both the productivity and the quality of the research by analyzing the impact of the research on its respective field and also taking into consideration the research output from other databases.

Declaration

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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The Pedagogy of Teacher Education in Ethiopia: Reconstructing Understandings and Practices on Teaching about Teaching and Learning to Teach

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Abstract

There is an argument that Marshal McLuhan's 'the medium is the message' adage is more likely to be underpinned in the context of teacher education since pedagogy is not only a means of delivering content in teacher education but also the content (what) in teachers' professional preparation. The quality of teacher education depends heavily on the practice of teacher educators and the learning experiences of student teachers: Pedagogy of teacher education. The pedagogy of teacher education is conceptualized as teaching about teaching and learning to teach. Using primary data from teacher educators and student teachers and secondary data sources (documents and research studies), the paper examined and reflected on Ethiopian teacher education pedagogy. Questionnaire, interview and observation were used to collect primary data. The findings revealed ingrained assumptions that student teachers learn to teach by learning theories and facts of different courses through lectures, discussions, and group work. Teacher educators in the study characterized their typical classroom as a combination of 'reviewing of the previous lesson, explanation, discussion, and lesson summary' which inherently reflects features of a typical classroom in Ethiopian schools. When asked which pedagogies help student teachers to learn to teach, teacher educators mentioned group work, discussion, lecturing, oral questioning and classwork, quiz, and practicum (ordered in terms of frequencies). It is argued that teaching about teaching and learning to teach are customarily reduced to the delivery and learning of course contents rather than the 'how' of teaching through teacher educators' modeling and reflection, student teachers' school experiences, or other pedagogies that develop learning to teach among student teachers. Teacher educators' practices, however, in some cases demonstrated elements of active learning techniques aimed at improving mastery of content and practicing teaching skills. However, their interview responses on preparing teachers largely lack pedagogies relevant to learning to teach. Efforts to improve the quality of education in general and teacher education, in particular, should prioritize the critical examination and reform of teacher educators' preparation, professional developments, and pedagogical practices at teacher education colleges and universities.

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Introduction

Though lauded for its progress in dramatically improving access to general education and higher education, reducing gender and other social disparities at various education levels, Ethiopia's education system has struggled to improve poor learning outcomes, accountability, and

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teacher quality. The general education system has undertaken many large-scale reforms in the areas of curriculum, teacher education, school improvement, inspection, and assessment to improve the quality, equity, and relevance of the general education.

The General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), which aims to improve the quality, efficiency, and equity of the general education sector, has been designed and implemented by the government and development partners to support rolling five-year Education Sector Development Programs (ESDPs). Despite improvements in access to education and educational equity, the efficiency of the education system and the quality of learning have remained key challenges. For example, Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) consistently show that students' fluency and reading comprehension levels in mother tongue are below average and have declined in the most recent 2021 EGRA. Early Grade Reading Assessment 2021 found that 67.9% and 51.1% of sampled Grades 2 and 3 students were defined as zero readers (Educational Assessment and Examinations Service, 2022). Worse still, the proportion of zero readers in the EGRA 2021 (59.5%) is significantly higher than from the previous three EGRA results in 2014 (42.2%), 2016 (32.1%), and 2018 (37.2%). Parents and other concerned entities point the problem squarely at educational leaders, teachers' low competence and motivation, students' learning habits and interests, and the politicization of the education system that is said to be undermining meritocracy, depriving professionalism, and loosening accountability.

Quality of education is conceptualized in many different ways. In Ethiopia, 'student learning outcomes' is one of the criteria used in the education sector development programs and policy documents (see Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP I-VI). A multitude of in-school and out-of-school factors influence student learning. There is a firm consensus among educators and researchers that the quality of an education system depends to some extent on the quality of teachers (Kyriakides et al. 2014). Content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, teacher beliefs and commitment, and experience are typically associated with better student achievement although studies are inconclusive on the effect of these variables on student learning (Harris & Sass, 2011).

Of the quality-related indicators for teachers, certification and possession of a major degree in the subject to be taught appear to improve student achievement significantly (Darling-Hammond, 2006). It should be noted that certification does not mean the mere completion of a course of study at a specific teacher training college or university. Rather, it is a quality assurance process for teacher education that graduates of teacher education have to go through before entering the profession. Attempts to do this in Ethiopia through licensing and re-licensing of teacher education college graduates, teachers, and school leaders showed that only 24% managed to pass paper and pencil exams administered after graduation, indicating that most of the graduates from teacher education colleges do not have the necessary academic competence to teach in schools (Ministry of Education, 2021b).

Efforts to improve teacher quality in Ethiopia have focused on upgrading or raising teacher qualifications from certificate to diploma, diploma to undergraduate, and undergraduate to graduate degree, with the assumption that improving teacher qualifications will result in better

prepared teachers who can improve student learning outcomes (Education Sector Development Programs I to V. Until the recent roadmap-initiated change in the required qualifications for primary, middle and secondary school teachers, it was reported that 92.4% of male and 85.5% of female teachers were adequately qualified to teach grades 1 to 4 (minimum diploma in teaching) (Ministry of Education, 2019). The percentages of male teachers and female teachers with teaching diplomas were 48% and 63% respectively in 2013/14, indicating the massive upgrading that took place in five years. The same document shows that more than 86% of second cycle primary teachers are qualified for grades 5-8. Likewise, 98.8% of male and 80% of female teachers in grades 9 and 10 meet the qualification requirements (undergraduate degree). However, the question remains whether the mass upgrading of teachers to improve teaching and learning practices in schools and student learning has paid off. Notwithstanding the fact that student learning is influenced by many in-school and out-of-school factors, the evidence on student learning at the beginning of this section does not build confidence that simply upgrading teachers with the same modality and process leads to the improvement of the current learning crisis in Ethiopia.

So the question is, what are the reasons that most of the teachers who are prepared in colleges and universities fail the licensing and relicensing quality assurance system? Why isn't EGRA performance improving even though school teachers have been consistently promoted to diploma and undergraduate level for more than a decade? As mentioned earlier, several complex factors explain student learning. However, since teachers are one of the most important factors, teacher educators and teacher education institutions need to examine their practices. Educators and researchers, in most cases, prefer to point the finger at the structure and curriculum of teacher education. As a result, teacher training programs have been the target of many different reforms and have become a soft target for simplified restructuring and reform. What have come under less scrutiny, knowingly or unknowingly, are the practices of teacher education institutions. These institutions are where student teachers and in-service teachers develop their teaching and learning skills. This problem appears to be the case in most parts of Africa, as efforts to improve quality are less focused on the how of teacher education which is a key factor to foster teacher competencies that meet the learning needs of students in real classrooms (Pryor, Akyeampong, Westbrook, & Lussier, 2012).

Studying the practices of teacher educators is fundamental if teacher education is to develop teaching and learning to teach skills to student teachers and teachers. It is equally important that teacher educators review their practices and engage in professional development activities to continuously develop their own practices and in turn support teachers.

Pedagogy of Teacher Education: Why Is It Critical?

The effect of teacher education on the beliefs, skills and knowledge of student teachers or teachers depends on many variables such as teacher education candidates' profiles, teacher educators' practices, teacher education program design, and other institutional conditions. It

appears that teacher education can bring change to student teacher knowledge, beliefs, and skills when teacher education programs deliberately challenge student teachers' beliefs and attitudes about learning and teaching, when program components are coherent, and when teacher educators support student teachers in learning to teach, and teacher educators model effective pedagogies to student teachers (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). Empirical studies also show that the design of teacher education and teacher educators' modeling of pedagogical practices contribute to developing teaching skills and how to learn to teach skills among student teachers (Acquah, Szelei, & Katz, 2020; Baran, Canbazoglu, Albayzrk Sari, & Tondeur, 2019). For this to happen, teacher educators have to develop their own professional identities and roles.

Many teacher education researchers agree with Darling-Hammond that "Teacher educators must worry about not only what to teach but also how to teach so that knowledge for teaching shapes teachers' practice and enables them to become adaptive experts who can continue to learn (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 305)." Korthagen, Loughran, and Lunenberg (2005) noted that teacher educators not only have a role to support student teachers in learning about teaching but also to model the teacher's role through their practices. Loughran and Berry (2005) underscored the repeated call for teacher educators to be mindful of their practices, citing the adage that teacher educators must 'walk the talk' and 'practice what they preach'.

The extension of this argument for some authorities is that teacher education processes are more important than the content of teacher education (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007). In Grossman's terms, in teacher preparation and professional development 'The medium is the message' (Grossman, 2009). Therefore, for a teacher educator teaching subject-specific or general methods or even content area courses, the way a teacher educator designs and teaches the course is at least as important as the content of the course. Cochran-Smith, Grudnoff, Orland-Barak, and Smith (2020, p.20) stated:

> …teacher educators need to have knowledge of the pedagogy of teacher education. This does not emerge naturally from knowing how to teach in P-12 schools, even when teachers have attained the level of expertise that some would label "master teacher." Likewise, knowledge of the pedagogy of teacher education is not an automatic result of scholarly expertise in an area that is relevant to teaching and learning, even when teacher educators have or are in the process of earning PhDs in those areas. Rather the practice of teacher education… requires teacher education pedagogies such as mentoring, coaching, and mediated interactions involving feedback, critical dialogue, and guided self-reflection.

Loughran (2006) postulated that the pedagogy of teacher education is based on two interrelated components of knowledge and practice: teaching about teaching and learning about teaching. According to Loughran (2014, p.275):

> Teaching about teaching encompasses "a serious focus on pedagogy, conceptualizing teaching as being problematic, making the tacit nature of practice explicit (for oneself and others—especially students of teaching), developing a shared language of teaching and

learning, and the ability to articulate principles of practice. Learning about teaching is concerned with the knowledge and practices related to how students of teaching come to learn from, and then develop as a consequence of, their teacher education experience.

Teacher educators should design activities for student teachers to examine teaching and make teaching a subject of research and study so that student teachers and teacher educators reflect on teaching skills and practices. "Such inquiry opens teaching to questioning, probing, reflection and critique that goes way beyond the technical" (Loughran, 2007, p. 2). However, teacher education practice does not always live up to the expectation that teacher educators should not only teach student teachers about teaching, but also teach them how to teach. Despite much evidence that theories learned in teacher education cannot be easily transferred to teacher practice in schools, many teacher education programs still reflect the traditional 'application of the theory model'. Ben-Peretz (1995) shared Grossman's view that the medium is the message in teacher education and also emphasized the need for experimentation, reflection and coherence in the teacher education curriculum. However, "the hidden curriculum of teacher education tends to communicate a fragmented view of knowledge, both in coursework and in field experiences. Moreover, knowledge is ''given'' and unproblematic'' (Ben-Peretz, 1995, p.456).

Another central theme in the pedagogy of teacher education is its similarity and differences with teaching in schools and higher education institutions. Teacher educators have different roles compared to school teachers (Dinkelman, Margolis & Sikkenga, 2006a; Dinkelman, Margolis & Sikkenga, 2006b; Wood & Borg, 2010). One of the challenges for teacher educators is the transition from the role of teacher-to-teacher educator (Murray & Male, 2005). Wood and Borg (2010) characterized this transition 'a rocky road', pointing its difficulty and the lack of organized support for teacher educators in developing pedagogies and roles appropriate to teacher education. Due to lack of support, teacher educators use their experience as school teachers which does not adequately reflect their role as teacher educators. Wood and Borg (2010, p.7) found that "Conflict arises within the teacher educator when they begin to recognize that first order practice [teaching in schools] is not sufficient for teaching students about teaching, and that they now need to include the practices and discourses of both school teaching and teacher education." Murray and Male (2005, p.17) emphasized that pedagogical knowledge gained from schools does not easily transfer to the teacher education preparation and teacher educators should have '…new and different types of professional knowledge and understanding, including extended pedagogical skills from those of school teachers.' Teacher educators who have experience in schools should receive support in the transition from a classroom teacher to a teacher educator (John, as cited in Murray & Male, 2005).

Based on analysis of effective teacher education programs, Darling-Hammond and Bransform (2006) identified pedagogical approaches to teacher preparation that involve both teaching about teaching and learning to teach. One important pedagogy is continuous and developmental clinical experiences. In Ethiopia, there is a tendency to conceptualize clinical or supervised student teaching experiences as a one-off phenomenon that occurs towards the end of

a teacher education program. Clinical experiences should be integrated into various course works and sequenced developmentally so that student teachers can continuously reflect on their experiences. According to Darling-Hammond and Bransform (2006), the success of clinical experiences depends on:

- clarity about the goals of the experience, including the performances and practices to be developed;
- modeling of good practices by more expert teachers in which teachers make their thinking visible;
- frequent opportunities for practice with continuous formative feedback and coaching;
- multiple opportunities to relate classroom work to university coursework;
- gradual responsibility for all aspects of classroom teaching; and
- structured opportunities to reflect.

Another important pedagogy in teacher preparation is performance assessment strategies. Teacher education should support student teachers to develop teaching practices and learning to teach skills through micro-teaching, performance tasks, and teaching portfolios. Assessment in teacher education should allow student teachers to demonstrate skills and attitudes and to reflect on their experiences. Learning to teach requires opportunities to practice and demonstrate instructional activities and reflect on their experiences so that teacher education cultivates the way and culture for continuous professional development of teachers. Student teachers also need opportunities to analyze teaching and learning using student work samples, cases, video tapes of classroom practice, video cases, and curriculum materials. Action research and autobiography are also important pedagogies that prepare student teachers to learn to teach by examining their practices in a systematic and purposeful manner. Attempts to flesh out the core principles and practices of teacher education have been going on for two decades. This is discussed in the next section.

Evolution of Teacher Education Approaches

Teacher education's approach in the preparation of teachers has been characterized by different approaches over the last century. These are: the academic orientation, school-based or practice-based teacher education, the competency-based education, and inquiry-based teacher education. Currently there is a movement towards core teacher education practices. There is a shift from knowledge needed for teaching to the use of that knowledge in practice (Grossman & Dean, 2019). One of the overriding arguments in the design and pedagogy of teacher education program has been the integration of theory and practice (Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). Most teacher education programs are based on the teaching of theories to student teachers who are expected to put these into practice in schools during internships and teaching in schools. This rational theory approach is dominant in teacher education practice although its effectiveness deviates a lot from evidence on learning to teach.

As a result of the limitations associated with the theory-based design and program of teacher education, the focus shifted to the organization of practical experiences of student teachers and school-based or practice-based teacher education (Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). Critics, however, argue that a practice-oriented approach resulted in mentors and school practices being adopted rather than reflecting on them and integrating theory and practice (Cole, 1997).

The Ethiopian teacher education program that came closest to practice-based teacher education program was during the early stages of Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO). One of TESO's five priority areas was "to plan a strategy to involve teacher education institutions in schools." (Ministry of Education, TESO Handbook, 2003). TESO further argues:

> It is important that strong and mutually beneficial links between TEIs [Teacher Education Institutions] and schools should be developed both for the development of teacher educators' knowledge and understanding of the type of school for which the student teachers are being prepared and to provide teacher educators with the opportunity to undertake some school teaching to develop their expertise (p. 10).

In addition to conceptualizing school-based teacher education as a means to enhance the professional development of teacher educators, TESO outlined that tutor teachers 'become part of the program [teacher education], especially on the methods aspects, and develop collaborative studies by teachers and teacher educators.' The practicum, which was intended to offer student teachers with opportunities to observe and reflect on school practices and school teachers, had a dual purpose to learning from mentor teachers and serving as an object of reflection based on learned theories in teacher education colleges. The duration of the practicum and the structure embedded in teacher education colleges and schools are also additional indications that TESO dominantly approached a practice-based teacher education program although it had also elements of reflection which were largely limited to the practicum component of TESO.

The third approach in the design of teacher education program is the competency-based education in which teacher education programs identify specific instructional knowledge, beliefs and skills for student teachers to master (Zeichner, 2013). Proponents of this approach emphasized that teacher education can prepare teachers who meet the specific skills and beliefs required in actual workplace situations while opponents have criticized the approach as reductionist and rigid (Kerka, 1998). In Ethiopia, competency-based education is emphasized in technical and vocational education and has also been an agenda during the revision of higher education curriculum, including teacher education programs. Teacher education programs and the licensing and relicensing directorate in the Ministry of Education had also developed a thorough list of general and subject specific competencies to guide the teacher preparation and certification.

The fourth approach is the inquiry-oriented approach, which aims to develop teachers' capacity to reflect on teaching and learning practices. It also emphasizes the unpredictability and problematic nature of teaching (Zeichner, 2013). Teacher educators and student teachers examine their practices through self-study, action research, and other reflective techniques.

Recently, there is a movement to identify core principles and practices of teacher education (Ball & Forzani, 2009; McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013; Forzani 2014). The focus of the core principles and practices effort is developing "…tasks and activities that are essential for skillful beginning teachers to understand, take responsibility for, and be prepared to carry out to enact their core instructional responsibilities" (Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 504). According to Ball and Forzani (2009, p. 503) teacher education needs to 'shift from knowledge to practice:

> To make practice the core of the curriculum of teacher education requires a shift from a focus on what teachers know and believe to a greater focus on what teachers do. This does not mean that knowledge and beliefs do not matter but, rather, that the knowledge that counts for practice is that entailed by the work.

Grossman, Hammerness, and McDonald (2009) noted that teacher educators are responsible for facilitating the learning of core practices through a pedagogy of practice for teaching. This pedagogy of practice involves a cyclical process to (i) introduce and learn the activity or practice through case studies, videos, and teacher educator modeling, (ii) prepare and rehearse the activity through collaboration and micro-teaching, (iii) enact the activity through the collaboration of teacher educators, student teachers and teachers, and (iv) analyze and reflect on the activity carried out. According to these authors, the selection of practices should take into account the following criteria:

- Practices that occur with high frequency in teaching;
- Practices that novices can enact in classrooms across different curricula or instructional approaches;
- Practices that novices can actually begin to master;
- Practices that allow novices to learn more about students and about teaching;
- Practices that preserve the integrity and complexity of teaching; and
- Practices that are research-based and have the potential to improve student achievement.

Similarly, Kazemi, Franke and Lampert (2009, p.15) identified responsibilities for teacher educators to facilitate the learning of core instructional activities in mathematics. Teacher educators are responsible to:

- exhibit and demonstrate an instructional activity;
- situate the activity in theoretical and empirical evidence that it is likely to result in student learning;
- give student teachers the opportunity to deliberately practice instructional activities with proper coaching;
- structure collaborative work on problems of teaching practice;
- scaffold student teachers' preparation for doing the activity with students;
- rehearse and deliberate the enactment of the plans; and
- assess and reflect on student teachers' practices.

In sum, studies on how student teachers and teachers learn to teach have shifted the focus from learning of theories on teaching and learning to making practice a subject of the knowledge base of teacher education pedagogy.

Teacher Education Pedagogy in Ethiopia: Evidence from Observations and Studies

The scholarship of teacher education in Ethiopia differs considerably from the global professional debate and discourse on teacher education. The political and academic discourse usually neglects teacher education practices and deals excessively with structural issues such as duration of teacher education program, the modality of teacher education, and the inclusion or exclusion of courses deemed essential to teacher preparation. While there is an understanding that teacher education can assume alternative program designs and features, the debate in Ethiopia is reduced to a dualist argument as to whether an integrated or a consecutive model of teacher education program best prepares school teachers. Teacher education program design issues are reduced at times to the identification of teacher education courses and preparation of course breakdown. While current research in teacher education focuses heavily on how theory and practice are integrated in a teacher education program, the discourse in Ethiopia is on how many of the courses should be subject area and how many of the courses should be general pedagogy and specific method courses. In addition, although the practicum in Ethiopian teacher education was designed to be developmental so that students could feed forward their courses and experiences in teacher education with field experiences from schools, most teacher education institutions have decided to have a three-month practicum at the end of the program. There is also a move towards specialization in the preparation of primary school teachers although evidence in many parts of the world shows primary school teachers are prepared to teach at least two subjects. In general, teaching about teaching and learning to teach do not surface as a common agenda in teacher education discourse. The simplistic and reductionist views on changing the duration, structure, and composition of the knowledge bases of teacher education courses are central ideas in policy making and practice debate. This, however, does not mean that these components of teacher education are not important. Rather, it should be emphasized that changing these components of teacher education without changing assumptions and practices of teacher educators and student teachers regarding teaching about teaching and learning to teach would not suffice to change teacher education.

Teacher education also seems to be one of the ‘soft targets’ for policy makers and leaders as they tend to change the structure and program arrangements without giving serious thought to how and why the changes are introduced. Hence, although teacher education is one of the priority areas in Ethiopian educational policy and educational discourse, it is starved of informed, in-depth and impactful academic scholarship and strategic leadership.

With regard to the roles and responsibilities of teacher educators, Ministry of Education Guideline (2017) indicates that teacher educators are required to assume teaching responsibilities, conduct research, offer community services, and bridge partnerships between colleges of teacher

education and schools. All teacher educators are required to be certified in Higher Diploma Program (HDP) which is aimed to develop the pedagogical skills of teacher educators. Teacher educators are also required to participate in English language improvement programs.

Apart from a few articles that examine Ethiopian teacher educators' professional development, little attention has been given to teacher education pedagogy both in the preparation of student teachers and upgrading of in-service teachers. Some of the studies conducted on teacher education reported that despite reform agendas such as 'active learning', 'competence', 'participatory', 'paradigm shift' and 'system overhaul', teacher education in Ethiopia during TESO followed technical rational model (Tessema, 2007). Others pointed to imbalance and lack of coherence among the components of teacher education programs, and permeability of teacher education to underprepared students (Mekonnen, 2008). Negasi (2015) argued for a competence-based teacher education and proposed a strong alignment between the teacher education curriculum and competencies of school curriculum. Semela (2014) criticized that teacher education reform efforts failed to maintain minimum quality standards although they managed to supply teachers in improving access to and equity of education. Areaya (2016) called for a teacher education policy and the establishment of teacher education universities and centers of excellence to inform policy making on teacher education and improve the practice of teacher education.

Some studies also reported that teachers pedagogical content knowledge are not adequately addressed both in the design of teacher education courses, teacher education practices, and practicum supervision (Tesfamichael & Mulugeta, 2018).In relation to teacher educators, Barnes, Zuilkowski, Mekonnen, and Ramos-Mattoussi (2018) examined teacher educators' preparation of local language teachers and concluded that teacher educator professional development programs should be designed to develop teacher education pedagogies and role identification as teachers of teachers. Wamisho (2021) reported that there is clear direction on the recruitment and development of teacher educators and recommended apprenticeship model in the preparation of teacher educators and development of additional capacity building programs for teacher educators. Assefa et al. (2021) used questionnaire and observation to assess the use of behaviorist and constructivist methods and assessment practices in higher education institutions. While it appears too simplistic to categorize teacher education pedagogies along two dichotomies and may not as such capture the teaching specific pedagogical practices such as coaching, reflection, modelling, Assefa et al. (2021) reported that about 81.4% of college instructors used the constructivist approach in the implementation of the teacher education curricula.

Evidence on teacher education casts doubt on the relevance and effectiveness of teacher education programs unless teacher education programs intentionally and continuously provide student teachers with a wide-range of opportunities to examine their beliefs about teaching and learning, to observe, model, and reflect on teaching practices, act and reflect on their own and other educators' practices (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). However, as already mentioned, the design of teacher education and the pedagogy of teacher education in Ethiopia are reduced to some structural matters and do not receive the necessary attention in teacher education reforms or programs. Considering the above reasons, this paper

intends to examine the pedagogy of teacher education in Ethiopia so that teacher educators and researchers can contemplate and reflect on their practices as much as other teacher education challenges such as quality of the candidates, resources, and teaching and learning environments.

At a teacher education reform workshop organized by the Ministry of Education a few years ago, most of our fellow teacher education colleagues argued that teacher educators in Ethiopia have many years of experience in working in colleges of teacher education and are 'senior experienced staffs to prepare teachers effectively if the modality and duration of teacher education was improved.' Such a view that we have everything is the antithesis of the pedagogy of teacher education: hence we should continuously reflect on our practices. In fact, if we mirror our usual practices in teacher education colleges in the form of lectures, power point presentations, group discussion, paper-pencil based testing of trainees' knowledge and our understandings of how teachers change and learn with the evidence on effective teacher education programs and practices, there is too much to bridge.

In sum, teacher education reforms and research in Ethiopia have largely focused on changing structural and curriculum components and paid little attention to changing practices of teacher education institutions with the exception of TESO. TESO attempted to reorient the roles of teacher educators in Ethiopia by outlining teacher educators' competencies, roles and introducing professional development program (Ministry of Education, 2003, Mekonnen, 2008). The global teacher education literature, on the other hand, strongly upholds that the pedagogy of teacher education (teaching about teaching and learning to teach) is a fundamental component in the design and practice of teacher education.

Objectives of the Study

Fifty years ago, the Academy of Pedagogy was founded with the support of UNESCO to prepare primary education teacher educators. Given the sparse current discourse on teacher educators' pedagogy and preparation, the idea to prepare primary teacher educators with the necessary subject matter and pedagogical skills and knowledge was visionary. Except the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) which focuses on developing generic pedagogical skills among teacher educators, there is no organized program or research that centers on teacher education pedagogy. I had taught many teacher education courses such as curriculum, teaching methods, research methods, instructional media, action research, and reflective practitioner to student teachers and in-service teachers. Aside from sporadic efforts to develop some teaching skills using different method courses, I have not consciously and systematically examined teaching about teaching and learning to teach concepts until my readings informed me that most teacher education programs fail to bring the desired change among student teachers. This is probably true for most other teacher educators. Imparting contents (facts, principles, and theories) about method, curriculum, learning theories, and research and testing student teachers' mastery of these contents in mid-exams, assignments, and final exams have been what most teacher educators typically do. Notwithstanding the limitations in how they are organized, lesson plan preparation, practicing

asking and answering oral questions, writing lesson objectives and test items, and practicing some rules of thumb about classroom management are, at best, the commonest opportunities for student teachers to learn how to teach. There are also efforts to develop action research and reflective skills among student teachers. Informed and thorough discussions on how student teachers learn to teach are unusual in Ethiopian teacher education.

In addition, teacher educators and their practices are not studied as extensively as teachers and students although they are one of the decisive elements in the quality of education. Schwille and Dembele (2007) characterize teacher educators as follows:

- They play key role but they are a little-known group.
- They lack a clear conceptual framework of what it means to learn to teach.
- They lack formal preparation for their teacher educator role.
- They lecture while promoting active learning.

In this study I asked my fellow teacher educators in Ethiopia how they teach about teaching. I also observed their practices to understand the pedagogy of teacher education. I also interviewed student teachers about their experiences in teacher education colleges to get their views on how they learn to teach and how teacher educators facilitate their learning. A detailed account of teacher educators' practices helps to learn more about teacher educators' understanding of their roles and pedagogies.

Based on the above reasons, this study intends to:

a) examine the pedagogies (teaching about teaching) used by teacher educators in the preparation of pre-service teachers and upgrading of in-service teachers;
b) identify teacher educators' views or conceptions about which teaching practices they think are effective in helping student teachers learn how to teach and analyze them against the evidence from the literature;
c) assess the voices of selected student teachers on their experiences of teacher education pedagogy;
d) initiate further discussion and research on teacher education pedagogy among teacher educators and researchers; and
e) draw lessons to be considered by teacher educators, teacher education colleges, and teacher education leaders and researchers so as to improve the pedagogy of Ethiopian teacher education.

Methods

Research Method

This study followed dominantly a qualitative approach to provide in-depth evidence on the pedagogy of teacher education in colleges of teacher education. In cases, when quantifying teacher

educators' profiles and generating evidence to supplement the qualitative data, percentages are used.

Data Sources

Forty-seven (47) teacher educators were drawn from 11 colleges of teacher education in Ethiopia. But only 37 of the response were considered for this study. The remaining ten questionnaires were not filled out correctly and completely. The teacher educators teach content area, subject methodology and general pedagogy courses. The teacher educators were selected to prepare primary school textbooks (in 2021) and modules based on certain criteria such as experience in preparing teaching and learning materials, experience in teaching in schools, and experience in supervising student teachers. Forty-seven teacher educators participated in completing open-ended questionnaire.

Eight student teachers who had completed teacher preparation courses were also involved in the study. The student teachers were selected from three teacher education colleges. The student teachers were selected in a targeted manner in order to collect as much comprehensive data as possible about their experiences at teacher education colleges. Therefore, deans of colleges of teacher education and department heads were consulted to identify student teachers who they believe can meaningfully assess and reflect on their teacher education experiences. The selected student teachers had high GPAs and were described as good performers in the practicum.

Table I.

Profile of the Teacher Educators

Teaches Content Area		Teaches Subject Methodology		Teaches General Education		Qualification			Taught in Schools		HDP Completion	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	BSc	MA/Sc	PhD	Yes	No	Yes	No
27	10	29	8	11	26	3	31	3	35	2	37	

As show in Table 1, with the exception of two, all teacher educators have teaching experience in schools. All teacher educators had completed Higher Diploma Training. With the exception of three teacher educators, who teach physical education and music, the rest of the teacher educators have postgraduate degrees. Twenty-nine teacher educators (78.4%) teach subject methodology courses and 27 teacher educators (73%) teach content area courses. In most cases, teacher educators teach both content and subject methodology courses. Almost a third of the teacher educators teach general pedagogy courses. Seen against the qualification requirement to teach at teacher education colleges, 92% meet the requirements as they hold a graduate degree.

The study group also represents teacher educators who teach the three main knowledge bases of teacher education: general pedagogy, subject-specific and content area courses.

Data Collection Instruments

Open-ended Questionnaire

Most often classroom observations are used to examine teaching and learning practices. As a teacher educator and researcher, I observed many teacher education classes for monitoring and mentoring purposes. I have spoken to teacher educators how they feel when they are observed and whether classroom activities would be different without an observer. Many teacher educators have told me the teaching may not be entirely different but an effort is made to meet the observers' expectations. Hence, as someone who has worked closely with the teacher educators as a supervisor on module development and textbook preparation, I preferred to use an open-ended questionnaire as a primary tool to collect as much detailed information and as 'objective' data as possible about the pedagogy of teacher educators. The questionnaire was unstructured and asked teacher educators to:

(i) Describe their typical teacher education class with a detailed overview of the main activities of teacher educators and students,
(ii) Identify and justify the pedagogical approaches that they think are useful for student teachers to learn how to teach,
(iii) Discuss the most useful experiences of student teachers in their courses or college of teacher education,
(iv) Identify one of the courses they taught in the last semester and describe and explain the main assessment types and their weight,
(v) If they taught subject methodology or general pedagogy courses in the last semester, explain the various activities and processes involved in the courses, and
(vi) Identify major challenges affecting the pedagogy of teacher education or their practices in teacher education institutions.

The questionnaire data collection took place in two rounds. The first was carried out when teacher educators participated in module development for teacher education colleges. Teacher educators were given days to complete the questionnaire so that they would get adequate time to organize their responses. The second round of data collection was conducted when teacher educators gathered to develop primary school textbooks and teacher guides. In both cases, the teacher educators were supported in the form of clarifications of items. The questionnaire was prepared in Amharic.

Classroom Observations

Seven teacher educators, who taught either subject methodology or general pedagogy courses, were observed. The purpose of the observation was to triangulate questionnaire data pertaining to classroom practices. Observation was based on consent and no checklist was

employed. The observation was designed to collect data on the pedagogical practices of teacher educators.

Interview with Teacher Educators

In the study, seven teacher educators who had taught subject methods and general method were interviewed in person. The subject methods teachers were chosen because their primary objective is to support student teachers to learn how to teach; hence require teacher educators to model pedagogical practices appropriate to their respective subjects and student teachers to learn to teach. The teacher educators were asked about the pedagogical approaches they use when teaching student teachers in subject-specific methods courses, the most useful experiences student teachers get in these courses and the challenges they face in teaching these courses. The interview helped to capture additional information following actual classroom observations on why the teacher educators and student teachers interacted in the classroom along the observed processes and activities.

Interview with Student Teachers

Interviews were conducted with 8 student teachers. Student teachers were asked to discuss the following items:

- How do you assess the contribution of the general education and specific method courses in supporting you to learn to teach?
- What have you learned from these courses that which you think will be useful when you become a teacher?
- How did you mostly spend your college classes/ time in general? Tell me about your classroom experiences and other learning opportunities such as practicum, project work, and others.
- From your point of view or assessment, what were the most valuable experiences of your stay at the college of education?

Results

Teaching about Teaching and Learning to Teach in Teacher Education Colleges: Pedagogies and Conceptions

Teacher educators were asked to describe the main activities of their teaching. The results showed that teacher educators' teaching is highly structured and follows similar classroom activities, despite differences in the subjects and disciplines taught. The responses of the teacher educators also illustrate the use of active learning techniques with the intention of involving the students in the teaching and learning process.

Virtually Similar Lesson Activities Irrespective of Subject and Course type Differences

Teacher education classes have similar features in that they begin with a review of a previous lesson, followed by an explanation or lecture and a summary and assessment. A chemistry teacher educator who teaches subject methodology and other subject area courses and has 26 years of teaching experience (in schools and a college) summarizes the main activities of a typical class as follows:

> We usually begin a lesson by reviewing previous content and introducing the lesson topic. I give some explanations about the content and ask the students to do different activities like group work or discussions. I end the lesson by summarizing the daily lesson and asking some oral questions or offering a quiz.

An English language teacher educator with 14 years of teaching experience in secondary school and college of education follows a similar pattern of lesson activities in his typical English language classroom:

> Most often, our lessons begin with revision of the previous topic and introduction to the daily lesson. Much of the time is then used to explain the contents of the lesson. I then summarize the lesson and assess the student teachers orally or in the form of a quiz. In some cases, I give student teachers homework.

A mathematics teacher educator with 20 years of experience in secondary schools and teacher education colleges narrates his typical lesson as:

> I usually ask the students to remember the points we learned in the previous lesson and show them the link between the day's lesson and the previous lesson. I explain some of the main important points and assign students to work in peers. A few selected students reflect on the discussion points. Then I ask some students to conclude the lesson. If there are points that are not clear to the student teachers, they will write in their notebook for next class or ask them in class if there is time.

Another mathematics teacher educator characterized his lesson with a list of activities:

- Revision of previous lesson and correction of homework if there is any
- Introducing the daily lesson
- Explaining different contents and assigning them group activities.
- Supporting them in group work and summarizing the lesson.

A local language teacher educator reported the following:

> My lesson somehow depends on the contents. In most cases, I explain the contents and assign them to discuss in groups. I invite some student teachers to present their group discussion. When I use explanation, student teachers understand and learn better. I use that very often.

A geography teacher educator stated:

> I use both participatory and lecture methods in most of my classes. I facilitate students to discuss the contents or activities in groups and pairs. I also assign them individual work to master the contents. Finally, I summarize the lesson by explaining the main points.

The above responses illustrate pedagogical practices in teacher education institutions. Observations of selected classes complement the above practices. A science teacher educator's class surfaced the following processes and practices:

> The teacher educator writes on the black board the topic of the day's lesson: teaching science. The teacher educator asks questions about the characteristics of science. After receiving some answers, the teacher educator explains science and science teaching methods such as demonstration, observation, and laboratory as teaching methods. The student teachers then discuss in groups questions on science teaching. Two student teachers present the groups' discussion and the teacher educator summarizes the lesson.

After the classroom observation, the teacher educator was asked how the course helps student teachers to learn to teach environmental science or science in schools. "I teach them the biology-related teaching methods. They (student teachers) will use them when they become teachers. I use participatory methods so that they understand the methods. They understand the methods better when they learn them through active learning."

An observation of a language teacher educator's class revealed a similar pattern:

> The teacher educator asks the student teachers to sit in groups of five. The teacher educator summarizes the previous lesson and asks the student teachers to read a section from the module and discuss the content and questions in groups. Group representatives then share what they understand about different methods of teaching reading. The teacher educator gives additional explanation on some of the methods. Finally, the teacher educator writes five questions as a quiz. The teacher educator collects the student teachers' answer sheets.

A similar question on the purpose of the lesson and how it helps student teachers learn to teach was asked for the teacher educator. "I think they *know* the reading methods well because we used discussion. I checked their understanding through the quiz. They will use these methods during practicum."

From the above cases, it is clear that teacher educators are more focused on transmitting knowledge on how student teachers should teach during practicum and their actual teaching later. It appears that the focus is more on helping student teachers understand and learn the methods rather than making an intentional and meaningful effort to demonstrate or model the teaching methods. As discussed in the background section, the pedagogy of teacher education requires that

teacher educators teach about teaching by focusing on the pedagogy, and that student teachers get opportunities to learn to teach through teacher educators' modeling and inquiring about the pedagogical practices and learning to teach.

> …it is about teacher educators "doing" in their practice what they expect their students to do in their teaching. This means they must model the use of engaging and innovative teaching practices, rather than deliver information about such practice through traditional approaches. At another level, there is a need to offer student teachers access to the pedagogical reasoning, feelings, thoughts, and actions … in a variety of ways, through think-aloud, journaling, discussions during and after class with groups and individuals, and questioning, probing, and inquiry created through pedagogic interventions during teaching and debriefing of shared teaching and learning experiences (Loughran and Berry, 2003, p.1).

Compared to the pedagogies expected of teacher educators and the opportunities student teachers or in-service teachers should be given to learn how to teach, it is imperative that teacher education pedagogies move away from transmission-based teaching or a mere discussion of teaching methods in the class. Opfer and Pedder (2011, p. 385) summarized the works and findings of many researchers and underlined that student teachers and teachers learn better

> …when activities require them to engage with materials of practice, when activity is school based and integrated into the daily work of teachers, and when the pedagogy of professional development is active and requires teachers to learn in ways that reflect how they should teach pupils. Teachers are *less likely to change practice as a result of learning activities that occur via presentation and the memorizing of new knowledge.* [Emphasis added]

Efforts to Employ 'Active Learning Methods'

While the above teacher educators' responses and practices illustrate typical teacher education classes, there were also responses that indicated the use of active learning and pedagogical practices. Some teacher educators reported they use different active learning methods and specifically mentioned group work, project work, individual assignments, pyramid, and crossover techniques. An environmental science teacher educator with 22 years of experience stated:

> I spend most of my class giving explanations on topics that the student teachers have to deepen through group work, projects, and presentations (microteaching). They read modules and prepare some presentations to help them practice presenting and asking questions, assessing students' progress, classroom management and reflection. I support student teacher to be good teachers.

A physics teacher educator emphasized the use of laboratories in teaching his course and described his classrooms as:

> My class is mainly lecture and group discussion. In lab activities, I use demonstration. I also use projects, classwork, and presentations depending on the nature of the course. Students also present their project work.

Some teacher educators also underlined the use of active learning methods included in Higher Diploma Program. A social studies teacher educator who teaches a subject methodology course reported:

> …I ask my students questions from the previous lesson. After collecting some responses, I introduce the daily lesson and group them in three or four. I will ask them to discuss for some minutes. I use the crossover method and other active learning techniques from the Higher Diploma Program. The students will then share their ideas with the class. They learn my courses through active learning methods.

It appears that active learning method − usually operationalized in Ethiopian schools as the use of discussion, individual and group assignments − is also conceptually ingrained in teacher education institutions. The challenge, however, is that teacher educators use these methods with the intent of helping student teacher to master facts and knowledge in their method courses rather than help them to learn to teach. Although this by itself would not be a problem, it is assumed to be the ultimate goal of teaching about teaching or learning to teach. For example, a teacher educator who taught a subject methodology course for many years reported:

> In training teachers, I use explanation, classwork, homework, and project assignments. I use these methods to develop knowledge and skills of my trainees. I assess student teachers through tests, homework, assignments reports, and final exams.

One challenge in the professional development and practice of teacher educators is transition from a teacher to a teacher educator identity and its associated roles (Dinkelman, Margolis, & Sikkenga, 2006a; Murray & Male, 2005; Ritter, 2007; Wood & Borg, 2010; White, 2014; Zeichner, 2005). Zeichner (2005, p. 118) underscored that the role of teacher educators is not transmitting knowledge about good teaching practices. According to Zeichner (2005), the teaching of young children is also different from preparing adolescents or adults who would assume teaching other young children.

> although some teacher educators (as I once did) see their role primarily as one of passing along knowledge about good teaching practices, the task of teacher education must also include the development of the novice teacher's ability to exercise his or her judgment about when to use particular practices and how to adapt them to the specific circumstances in which they are teaching.

Murray and Male (2005, p. 19) also underlined that teacher education "…demands new and different types of professional knowledge and understanding, including extended pedagogical

skills, from those required of school teachers." The above results clearly show that the conceptualization of 'active learning or teaching' in Ethiopian schools has left its mark on the practice of teacher educators: teaching focuses on revision of previous lessons, question and answer, group work, and review or presentation of discussed ideas which are intended to help student teachers learn the contents of the subjects. Although the above responses demonstrate the efforts of teacher educators to involve student teachers in the teaching and learning process, it is also important to realize that they still focus on transmitting and mastering contents on good teaching rather than helping student teachers learn to teach through modeling of teaching practices, case studies, or reflective practices on offering cases about good teaching practices. This is not to belittle the active involvement of the student teachers in teacher education courses. In-depth content knowledge of the subject matter and other concepts of teacher education is an indispensable part of teacher preparation. But it should be underlined that content mastery through group discussion or presentation should not be seen as the ultimate goal of teacher education courses or practices.

Perhaps teacher educators who served for some years in schools need opportunities to re-conceptualize or redefine their roles as teacher educators and act as teacher educators. There is strong evidence in the literature that the transition from the role of teacher to teacher educator is challenging and requires focused professional support and self-study from teacher educators and institutions (Hamilton, 2018; McKeon & Harrison, 2010; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2016; Richter, Brunner, & Richter, 2021). McKeon and Harrison (2010) reported that teacher educators who used to be teachers in schools developed roles of teacher educators such as 'to plan for student-teacher-led learning and to undertake modeling and more open discussion about their pedagogical practice and principles, following professional support programs and self-reflections.' Such understanding of the roles of teacher educators emanates from teacher educators' professional development and identity (Izadinia, 2014; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2016). These scholars conceptualize professional identity as "a lens through which teachers (educators) look at their job, give meaning to it and act in it" (p. 260). Hence, teacher educators' professional identity shapes their perception of their roles and actions in professional practices.

In Ethiopia, very little is discussed about the professional identity of the teacher educator as separate from a higher education teacher or school teacher. This may have contributed to the absence of teacher education pedagogies such as modeling, case studies, reflection, coaching, and portfolios from teacher educators' responses and practices when they were asked about their typical lessons and useful practices for student teachers (We will see more about this in later sections).

The Saga about Class Size and Content Coverage

The two most frequently mentioned challenges in Ethiopian education discourse in the use of pedagogies that promote student learning are class size and course contents or textbook contents. Educational research also shows that these are major problems in many school contexts (Ball &

Forzani, 2009; Cuseo, 2007; Mansour, 2007). The above results showed that teaching in teacher education institutions is largely designed as the development of knowledge and understanding of the mastery of different pedagogies that student teachers use in schools. As already mentioned, this in itself needs to be reconsidered as teacher education pedagogy differs from pedagogy in schools. It appears worthwhile to reflect if teacher educators' pedagogies vary as a function of differences in class size. In the observed lessons, the maximum class size was 43 and the minimum class size was 24. Although this issue may require another study with representative samples, the following observation extracts reveal two lessons of a teacher educator while teaching two different courses to a group of 24 student teachers and another group with 40 student teachers. The two courses are a language teaching method (general) and the other course was teaching speaking and listening in primary schools.

Language teaching method course lesson (40 student teachers):

> The teacher educator writes topic on the black board. Teacher educator explains the topic for almost 15 minutes and asks few questions. Student teachers take notes. Teacher educator asks students to be in groups and carry out activities in the module. Student teachers discuss the activities. Teacher educator asks two student teachers from two groups to present their answers. The teacher educator informs the student teachers presentation will resume next week and assigns them homework.

Teaching Speaking and Listening Method course lesson (24 student teachers):

> Teacher educator writes the topic on the blackboard and asks student teachers a question to remind what was discussed in the previous class. A student teacher answers and the teacher educator adds some additional points. The teacher educator asks if the other student teachers would like to say more on the previous lesson. Some student teachers raise their hand and the teacher educator invites two student teachers. Following this, the teacher educator begins explaining listening skill and the processes involved in teaching listening. Student teachers take notes. Teacher educator orders student teachers to be in pairs and discuss review questions in the module. Two student teachers from two pairs answer questions and reflect on some of the questions.

The above cases represent only two classes of a single teacher educator and do not represent how teacher educators teach in different class sizes. However, the above cases coupled with the evidence presented in the previous sections indicate that teacher education practices in Ethiopia follow similar orderly processes that vary little as a function of differences in the disciplines or other classroom conditions.

Another major issue raised in relation to teacher education practice is the content coverage of courses and/or modules. Teacher educators mentioned that due to the size of the modules (too much content), they could not cover contents on time and promote interactive learning. The fact that 'too much content' is an issue in general education and subject methodology courses says a

lot about the academic orientation of Ethiopian teacher education. In addition to this, the teacher educators identified other related critical factors affecting teacher education pedagogy. A language teacher educator stated:

> There are two methodology courses I teach. The modules are very big for the allocated credit hours. Hence, we (the teacher educator and student teachers) cannot cover if we do all the module activities. I explain most of the contents and student teachers work selected activities in group or as project assignments. Most student teachers are not motivated to do individual tasks.

Sharing a similar view about content coverage of modules and lack of student teachers' readiness for self-learning, a teacher educator who teaches general pedagogy course mentioned:

> The contents in the psychology course are too much to be covered in a three-credit hour. Most student teachers do not have the skills to learn by themselves. Hence, we use lecture method and group assignments to complete the module during the allotted time. I also teach assessment and evaluation course. The content is very broad. The students also are not interested to be teachers. It is just a last option to them. This also affects how I teach the course.

The responses appear to illustrate that teaching and learning the contents of the courses is a priority in the teacher education practices. In addition, teacher educators' responses focus on content mastery and rarely mention the importance of practicing or modeling specific teaching skills. Lack of interest and readiness to learn to teach repeatedly surfaced in teacher educators' responses. The challenge in Ethiopian teacher education pedagogy or in general teacher professional development is motivating teachers or student teachers to learn to teach when they have low interest to be teachers or work in schools.

There is strong evidence that educational systems, teacher working conditions, motivation, stress, organizational, and cultural factors influence professional learning or professional development and student learning (Avalos, 2011; Dolton and Marcenaro-Gutierrez, 2011; Evers, Van der Heijden, Kreijns, & Vermeulen, 2016; Kwakman, 2003; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Scribner, 1999). The challenge in Ethiopian teacher education pedagogy is then how can teacher education colleges, teacher educators, and schools facilitate meaningful professional learning when student teachers and teachers have low motivation and interest to work as teachers. Much of professional learning requires self-direction (Kwakman, 2003). This requires rethinking the design and implementation of professional learning and prioritization in improving the professional identity and professional learning and development of teachers. In the absence of that, mere enrollment in teacher professional courses or continuous professional development activities may not bring about the desired change in teacher practice and learning outcomes. When student teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators lack the motivation and commitment to learn to teach and teach about teaching, reform efforts to address teacher education or school curriculum may not bring the desired changes.

Teacher Educators' Responses on the most Useful Teacher Preparation Pedagogies and the Teaching of Subject Specific and General Method Courses

Selected teacher educators who have taught subject methodology courses to student teachers or in-service teachers were asked to narrate the most useful pedagogies to learn to teach. Although, there are debates on whether pedagogical content knowledge develops from subject method courses or thorough understanding of the content of disciplines and social contexts of teaching.(Deng, 2018; Berry, Friedrichsen, & Loughran, 2015), subject method courses are one of the components of teacher education program mainly intended to develop teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (Niermann, 2017; Stender, Bruckmann, & Neumann, 2017; Rusznyak & Walton, 2011; Abell, Appleton, & Hanuscin, 2010). In view of this, teacher educators were asked about their intentions and practices on teaching subject specific method courses.

A Chemistry teacher educator who teaches a subject method course in science reported:

> The most beneficial component was the subject method course, where I teach how to develop lesson plans and manage classes. The course provides student teachers to learn techniques to teach the subject and how to manage students in classrooms. When student teachers work individually and share their work in pairs, they develop very good understanding of the subject.

An English language teaching methodology teacher reported that active learning methods such as group work, pair work, and individual work and different assessment methods were the most useful pedagogies employed to help student teachers to learn to teach. A mathematics teaching methods course teacher educator identified the most useful teacher preparation pedagogies employed in his course as 'pair work, group work, brainstorming, pair assessment, and student presentation.' The teacher educator, however, noted that:

> Student teachers are not interested or motivated to carry out those tasks that I think are helpful to improve their knowledge and skills. I design *methods or activities that help students to learn by themselves* but because of lack of motivation or interest, the methods are not successfully implemented. [Emphasis added]

Teacher educators also reported that the subject method courses are designed to teach the following major areas: understanding how the subject is taught, preparation of different lesson plans, assessment methods, and instructional materials. A mathematics teacher educator discussed the focus of the subject method courses and the student teacher activities as:

> The course helps student teachers to learn the historical development of mathematics as a field of study. The historical development of mathematics education is also discussed. They will then learn about different teaching and learning techniques of mathematics. They are assigned individual/group assignment to present a paper on the different methods. The course allows student teachers to develop annual plan in groups and lesson plan individually. They learn then assessment methods in mathematics instruction. Some student teachers present the lessons.

A local language teacher educator reported:

> I teach them first the different methods of language teaching. Then, they prepare lesson plans based on selected contents. Some of these students present in class their lesson. I test through quiz and tests their knowledge of methods. In the peer teaching, students learn from their peer comments.

An environmental science teacher educator stated:

> My subject methodology courses deal with learning theories and teaching methods in the subject matter. We discuss active learning methods in schools. Student teachers learn about the use of demonstrations, laboratories, and discussions. They learn about objectives and lesson plan. Student teachers then prepare annual plan based on one of the primary grade curriculum. Some of them will practice teaching based on the methods we learned in the course.

A physics teacher educator described the teaching of subject methodology course as:

> The course deals with the different teaching techniques and principles in physics. We also teach about planning, classroom management, and instructional material preparation. Then we will allocate some classes for peer teaching. Students then take tests and final examination.

In methodology courses, teacher educators' focus appears to be explaining the different teaching methods in their subjects, lesson plans, and peer teaching in which students are assigned to work in groups. As can be seen from the above response, teacher educators barely discuss about modelling methods for student teachers, coaching of student teachers, use of case studies, use of videos, and other pedagogies that demonstrate their role as teachers of teaching. Student teachers or teachers' professional learning will be effective when it involves reading and discussion of professional knowledge and skills, modelling by teacher educators and experimenting/practice by student teachers on diverse teaching skills and assessment, reflection by student teachers and teacher educators on these practices, and collaboration among teacher educators, student teachers, and school mentors (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Teacher educators were also asked to list the most effective pedagogies which help student teachers to learn to teach.

Table 2.

Teacher Educators' List on Effective Pedagogies to Learn to Teach

Pedagogies	Frequencies
Group work	87%
Discussion	78%
Explanation/lecture	56%
Oral question and classwork	51%
Quiz	44%
Practicum	43%
Project work	35%

Table 2 shows that group work, discussion, lecture, question and answer, and quiz are the most often used methods to prepare student teachers for teaching. While the use of these methods by teacher educators should be the subject of further research, this result suggests that teacher educators focus on using methods for content mastery even when they teach methods courses. There were limited response related to peer-teaching and micro-teaching (21%), presentations (15%), and reading assignments (14%).

Assessment Practices in Teacher Education: Focus on Paper and Pencil and Testing of Cognitive Domain

Teacher educators were asked to list the assessment techniques and the corresponding weighting they used when assessing student teachers.

Table 3.

Assessment Techniques Employed by Teacher Educators

Assessment Type	Reported Weight	Reported Frequency
Final exam (paper and pencil)	30-60%	100%
Mid exam (Paper and pencil)	15-30%	100%
Quiz or tests	5-15%	89%
Group Assignment	5-25%	87%
Class activities	5-10%	63%
Individual assignment	10-15%	55%
Microteaching or peer teaching	15-25%	18%
Presentation	10-25%	12%
Project work	10-25%	8%

As can be seen in Table 3, the most common assessment techniques used by teacher educators are midterm, final, quizzes or tests, group assignments, class activities, and individual assignments. The teacher education literature shows that portfolio, performance assessment, self-study, reflection, and case analysis are effective in facilitating teachers' professional learning

(Kessing-Styles, 2003; Campbell, Melenyzer, Nettles, & Wyman, 1999). Rooted in Schon's concept of 'reflection in action' and Lee-Shulman's concept of 'pedagogical reasoning and action', performance assessment is widely viewed as an assessment process that enhances teacher learning by analyzing student and teacher practices and changes (Chung, 2008). Of the teacher educators' assessment methods described above, microteaching/peer teaching, presentations and possibly project work may contain some elements of performance assessment, although much depends on whether the student teachers and teacher educator are actually involved in the planning, implementation, analysis, reflection, and improvement of teaching practices or other work-related activities when using these assessment techniques. Portfolios as an assessment tool were only reported by two teacher educators.

Although some performance assessment ideas like portfolios have become a component of Ethiopian teacher education discourse after the introduction of some reforms like TESO, Primary Teacher Education Framework in 2013 (MoE, 2013) and Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT), performance assessment is rarely implemented in Ethiopian teacher education practice and not adequately institutionalized in assessment policies or guidelines. It is well documented in the assessment literature that assessment can have a negative washback effect if not aligned with learning and teaching priorities. While paper and pencil testing should remain to be a critical component in subject matter, foundation studies and other courses intended to develop student teachers in-depth understanding of the content knowledge, cognitive skills, and other related outcomes, its unquestioned dominance on the assessment of subject specific, method courses, and foundational courses that require students to demonstrate mastery of psychometric, cognitive skills, and teaching practices needs to be thoroughly revisited.

Student Teachers' Voices

The study sought to capture the voices of student teachers about their teacher education experiences. The student teacher interview did not produce rich information, which may be due to the nature of the interview items or the interview process. Student teachers were asked to describe the contribution of methods courses to learn to teach, what they learned from these courses, how they spend their time in the classroom, and their most valuable experiences in teacher education.

Contribution of Methods Courses

Student teachers emphasized that they learn teaching and assessment techniques from method courses. Commonly mentioned were how to teach, planning, and assessment techniques. A student teacher mentioned "I learn lesson plan format in subject methodology. I learn to motivate students in psychology courses. I also learn table of specification." Another student teacher emphasized learning "how to teach reading and writing and lesson plan preparation." Another student teacher also focused on learning "how to teach, active learning techniques, and continuous assessment." One student teacher mentioned 'learning portfolios and action research and how to

teach in schools.' The responses focus on learning specific teaching skills and content, rather than skills that help to learn how to teach.

Experiences in Teacher Education Courses

Student teachers were asked how they spent their time in teacher education courses and what were the most valuable experiences they had during their stay. A student teacher summarized his class experiences are similar in different courses by stating "We read and discuss modules with my friends (classmates). The teacher asks questions and we work in groups and answer the teachers' questions. We also do assignments from module." Another student teacher described his classes as "…the teachers teach at the beginning using lecture. They give us group discussion in class and we present the discussion to the class. We also do module activities." Another student mentioned that "the teachers teach us through discussion and group work. Teachers give us lecture in simple ways. The modules are not clear… We take short notes from the teacher and do group assignments. We present the group assignments." One of the student teachers mentioned the use of peer teaching in method courses.

The responses illustrate the frequent use of group work and discussion methods in teacher education classes. These activities are similar to the teaching practices reported by teacher educators and from the classroom observations made. As already mentioned, the focus seems to be on mastering of method courses contents. When asked about their valuable experiences at teacher education colleges, student teachers named various academic and non-academic activities. Student teachers emphasized the socializing role that teacher education played in their lives. They stated that they learn to live with other people. They mentioned that they learn to manage challenges. They also mentioned the teacher education helped them to meet different types of people. When probed to focus on academic related experiences, school observation and practicum were mentioned as valuable experiences. Modules and handouts are also mentioned as valuable learning tools. Future research on teacher education pedagogy in Ethiopia may also examine what student teachers and in-service teacher learn from teacher education.

Major Challenges in Teacher Education Pedagogy

Teaching knowledge and Theories rather than Teaching about Teaching

One teacher educator captured the concerns of some of the teacher educators in identifying the focus on teacher education colleges is on teaching theories and knowledge. A physics teacher educator stated that:

> The major problem is how we prepare student teachers. We teach to transmit facts and concepts in our disciplines and subjects. We don't organize activities to support them to learn to teach. The focus is on knowledge acquisition.

Misuse and overuse of group assignments: Grazing on able students and a 'coping mechanism' for teacher educators' burnout

A mathematics teacher educator reported that:

> Except the written assessments which account more than 60% of students grade, the remaining assessment is carried out in the form of quiz, group work or group project. There is a tendency that some of the student teachers carry the group assignments whereas the remaining may not take part in the tasks. Group assignments are mostly designed to minimize the burden on teacher educators as they correct papers rather than to promote collaborative learning.

A teacher educator who teaches assessment and psychology courses also reported:

> Student teachers are assessed on continuous bases through group work. More than half of the assessment is used for group activities. All student teachers do not actively take part in the group work. This has reduced academic standards and challenges student teachers must go through. Student teachers' assessment is carried out indifferently.

A physics teacher educator underlined the unintended harmful practices in using group work and project work:

> Some student teachers appear to prefer to work group assignments or projects in group work. Selected few able student teachers would complete the tasks and present them in class. Some of the student teachers usually have minimal or no involvement in the tasks. Grades are based on the tasks and presentations; hence all group members tend to get a similar score. This happens usually when the teacher educators are tired or fatigued of teaching.

Student teachers at colleges of teacher education are grouped in pairs or in five in order to promote collaborative learning. Although collaboration is one of the proposed pedagogies in teacher professional learning and development, too much collaboration erodes responsibility, creativity, and accountability in teacher learning. Opfer and Pedder (2011, pp. 385-386) characterized collaboration as 'a double-edged sword' and argued that the extent of collaboration determines its usefulness for teacher learning as "too much collaboration and learning are stifling, too little collaboration and teacher isolation inhibit growth, just enough collaboration and receive the stimulation and support from colleagues necessary for change." While there is widespread agreement that collaboration promotes teacher learning through offering opportunities for reflection and creation of communities of practice, revisiting its application in Ethiopian colleges of education is overdue. Teacher educators emphasize that the overuse and misuse of group assignments has created a culture of dependence, unaccountability, and inflation of student teachers scores in assessments.

Group work and Practicum Inflate Student Teachers' Grades

It was repeatedly reported that group work and practicum are used to inflate student teachers' scores. A teacher educator reported that formative assessment is abused to meet one of

the criterion in the teacher educators' efficiency evaluation checklist: 'the teacher educator has enabled all trainees to score 50% and above'.

Student Teachers' Low Readiness and Teacher Educators' Lack of Competence

In relation to this, an English language teacher educator reported that student teachers' poor readiness, teacher educators' lack of competence to train teachers, and poor teacher preparation pedagogies are the major problems in the preparation of teachers. A geography and environmental science teacher educator also reported that most candidates do not have the foundational skills required for college education. "They don't have adequate reading and writing skills, neither they have the minimal numerical skills."

Absence of Internal and External Quality Assurance System: No Exit Exam and Poor Assessment Standards

Teacher educators also repeatedly pointed out that colleges of teacher education do not have a strong institutionalized quality assurance system, with the exception of repeated assessments. The entry requirements are compromised in many cases. Internal quality assessment mainly focuses on teacher educators' practices which are routinely done just for administrative purposes. Institutional self-assessment focuses on meeting quantifiable indicators rather than changing teacher education practices and quality of teacher learning.

Politicization of College Leadership and Administration

The politicization of university management was also discussed as one of the major problems. Although it was not clear how this affects the pedagogy of teacher education, it was mentioned that deans focus more on various non-academic matters than on the teaching and learning process. A teacher educator pointed out that academic standards are not being respected as colleges do not have autonomy in assessing students but follow instructions from the top.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusions

Based on the above results and discussion, the pedagogy of teacher education in Ethiopia can largely be characterized as an academic tradition or rational theory approach, at best. The focus is on helping student teachers learn teaching facts, concepts and skills that will be used during practicum and actual teaching. The discourse of active learning and to some extent its practice has been ingrained in teacher education practices. This is in itself encouraging as it can help student teachers to master course content if properly used in colleges of teacher education. But it appears that this is seen as an ultimate goal of teacher educators' practices, which is why teacher education

and the teacher educators' and student teachers' responses are devoid of professional identities, roles, and practices that are essential to teacher preparation.

Both the practices reported by teacher educators and the responses of student teachers indicate that teacher education courses are often taught and learned in an orderly and very similar manner that includes 'revision of the previous lesson, lesson introduction, explanation, pair or group work, and summary of the lesson.' The practice of teacher education appears to have been programmed along lesson procedures from schools and lectures from universities with very little presence of teacher education pedagogies that support teaching about teaching and learning to teach. Apart from the practicum and some subject specific methods and techniques, teacher education in Ethiopia has not yet developed sufficient discourse and practices that are essential for teacher preparation. Teacher education is entangled by pedagogies and practices borrowed from classroom teaching in schools and higher education. Consequently, assessment in teacher education focuses on paper and pencil and group assignments. Performance assessments are rarely used in teacher education colleges. Group work assignments that nurture dependency among student teachers, inflation of student teachers' scores to meet efficiency criterion, and inflation of practicum components are seen as toxic cultures in teacher education assessment practices.

The above characterization of the pedagogy of teacher education is a result of many interrelated factors. Lack of adequate competence in teacher education pedagogy among teacher educators, burn out of teacher educators, low readiness of student teachers, absence of internal quality assurance system in enrollment, accreditation and exit exams, and the politicization of teacher education leadership are seen as major challenges affecting the pedagogy of teacher education in Ethiopia.

Implications

Bahir Dar University, particularly the College of Education, has a strong culture in teacher preparation and education in general. The then Academy of Pedagogy envisaged the need to prepare and develop teacher educators. However, the preparation and professional development of teacher educators and pedagogy of teacher education in Ethiopia still seem to be underdeveloped, both in terms of understanding the knowledge bases and designing teacher education curriculum and fundamentally in terms of research on teacher learning and teacher educators' practices. Teacher learning and teacher education pedagogy in Ethiopia is one of those areas where common sense still dominates its discourse and practice. Building on the science and mathematics teacher education program and the need to move away from simplistic inclusion of generic education courses (curriculum or research methods) into the preparation of teacher educators and current research on how student teachers learn to teach, the College of Education should fill the critical gap on the pedagogy of teacher education and professional development of teacher educators. This necessitates building institutional capacity on teacher education, reorganizing teacher education departments, developing standards of practice aligned with effective teacher education programs, and staff development on teacher education pedagogy.

In addition, the evidence clearly shows that the pedagogy of teacher education dominantly focuses on the teaching and testing of facts and theories. College classes appear to be engineered to reflect a typical content transmission process of "lesson revision, explanation of the new topic, group or pair discussion, and review of lesson.' It is essential that a teacher education based professional development program is introduced in colleges of teacher education that clearly develops teacher educators' understanding and practice of the pedagogy of teacher education, their professional identities as teacher educators, and their corresponding roles. Teacher educators will need to re-conceptualize their identity as teacher educators which is different from a classroom teacher in that they don't teach about teaching but teach student teachers to learn to teach and that they learn also teaching about teaching. Particular attention should be paid to how their roles must respond to the demands of teacher education pedagogy.

One way to reconstruct teacher educators' roles could be to develop a standard of practice for teacher educators that is aligned with the roles of teacher educators in teacher preparation. The performance appraisal system in teacher education colleges also needs to be revised so that it focuses on pedagogical approaches to teacher education and not just clichés such as continuous assessment, tutorial class, or active learning. This can support the implementation and institutionalization of teacher education pedagogy. This should be complemented with strong teacher educator preparation program and professional development opportunities in which teacher educators can come into light with the knowledge base of teacher education. Hence, it is imperative that teacher education programs grounded on the knowledge of teacher educators' roles and competencies are designed and used to prepare teacher educators. To this end, revising teacher education preparation programs and designing teacher educators' professional development program aligned with teacher educators' roles and identities is imperative. The Higher Diploma Programme (HDP) is a generic teacher education professional development and does not respond to the content and specific discipline needs of teacher educators. It happens to be also a one-shot teacher education program as teacher educators are certified once and for all. Hence, launching a continuous professional development program responsive to the roles and practices of teacher educators is also imperative.

In addition, teacher education colleges and teacher educators should make teacher education pedagogy a subject of their research as part of their role reconstructions. Research on teacher education in Ethiopia mainly focuses on the problem of teacher quality and structural issues of teacher preparation. Even the limited research publications on teacher education are indifferent to practices of teacher educators. Research guidelines of teacher education colleges should stipulate that teacher education practice should be a central theme of teacher educators' research engagements and research conferences.

Although there is no empirical data to reflect on in-service teachers upgrading practices, I would like to use my observations and experiences to bring teacher upgrading practices to the attention of the Ministry of Education, regional education bureaus, and teacher education colleges. Current summer upgrading programs do not offer adequate opportunities, both in teacher education curriculum content and pedagogical practices, to support in-service teachers develop their teaching

skills and content mastery. The teacher education curricula for pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher upgrading are practically the same both in content and pedagogy. In fact, the in-service upgrading is almost lecture based as a course has to be completed usually in less than two months. There is a need to develop a teacher education curriculum grounded on in-service teachers' experiences, professional development needs, and credentials. It is also imperative to put in place appropriate quality assurance mechanisms during the selection of teachers to be upgraded and the certification of teachers after upgrading.

Finally, challenges related to the pedagogy of teacher education such as low motivation of student teachers, problems of competence and burnout among teacher educators and weak institutionalization of teacher education pedagogy show the need to deal with the teacher education system and professionalization of teaching. Piecemeal approaches and other quick fixes will not result in a system level change in teacher education practices and teaching in general. Hence, efforts to improve teacher education should primarily aim at professionalizing teaching and improving the professional status of teachers. These are prerequisites for any subsequent efforts to improve the quality of education in Ethiopia.

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Perceptions of Bahir Dar University Teacher Educators about Functions of Education in Ethiopia

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Abstract

Using the four major philosophies of education (Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, and Social Reconstructionism) as its theoretical framework, this study examined the perceptions of teacher educators about the functions of education in Ethiopia. The study adopted the qualitative research approach and employed the case study as a design. Through a purposeful criterion-based sampling technique, six teacher educators from Bahir Dar University were selected as participants in the study. Data pertinent to the study were collected through semi-structured interviews and document reviews. The data collected through these methods were thematically analyzed. The results of the study revealed the existence of multifarious perceptions among teacher educators. To be specific, the teacher educators were found to be proponents of the perennialist, essentialist, and progressivist educational purposes. As far as the function of education in Ethiopia was concerned, the study revealed that the perennialist and essentialist purposes of education were dominant. Educational purposes advocated by the progressive educational philosophy were also found to be important. The social reconstructionist function of education, however, was not given an adequate place. Finally, the implications of these findings for the country's teacher education programs and policymaking initiatives are indicated.

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Introduction

Although there has been a general consensus on the role that education plays in ameliorating social, economic, and political problems, its major function has remained a contested issue (Rury, 2002; Russell, 2010; White, 2010). The main reason behind this problem, among others, is the emergence of different thoughts on the purposes of education. Due to the presence of contradictory perceptions of education, there has been much debate among different stakeholders. The debate involves philosophers, sociologists, politicians and the public at large

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(Carr, 2003; Ellis, 2004; Labaree, 1997; Schiro, 2013). Because of these intense debates, education, in the words of Rury (2002, p. 17), has now become "a volatile issue".

According to Carr (2003), one of the long-running debates about the purpose of education has been the intrinsic versus extrinsic purpose. In this debate, the proponents of the former purpose view education from a non-instrumentalist perspective. For scholars in this camp, education is a matter of the initiation of human agents into the rational capacities, values, and virtues that warrant their full status as persons. According to these scholars, to be educated means to come to appreciate values, knowledge, understanding and skills for their own sake (Carr, 2003). On the other hand, advocates of the latter purpose emphasize the instrumentalist perspective. For this group of scholars "the main task of education is to prepare young people for adult personal and social functioning" (Carr, 2003, p. 7).

Focusing on the history of American education, Labaree (1997) has observed three major goals of education that have been the subject of heated discussion among various groups. According to him, the debate involves three contending groups. The first group advocates democratic equality, focusing on three specific educational goals: citizenship training, equal treatment, and equal access. According to Labaree (1977), education for social efficiency is an educational goal that the second group strives for. The third group, in contrast, gives much prominence to social mobility as an educational goal.

Although these three contending educational goals have their own specific interests and requirements, Labaree (1997) believes that they could be put into two categories: the public and the private goals of education. This scholar further contends that the first two educational goals, i.e., democratic equality and social efficiency, are pro-public since they prioritize the public or social benefit of education to society over individual benefit. The third educational goal, social mobility, for Labaree, however, is pro-private as its primary concern is the benefit of the individual learner.

The issue of globalization and the expected challenges of the 21st century are also exerting powerful pressure on the debate concerning the purpose of education (Cogan & Derricott, 2000). Due to rapid technological advancements, the world today has become a small village, ushering in global interdependence. A situation that occurs in one particular part of the world does not usually take a long time, as was the case in the past, to impact other parts of the planet either negatively or positively. Because of globalization, national boundaries are becoming open to the international community (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Quisumbing, 2002). Thus, the closed-door policy has now become a futile national policy to be followed.

This emerging international scenario has important implications for education. The issue of national integration or social cohesion, which has long been considered the major function of education, has now come under scrutiny (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Quisumbing, 2002; Russell, 2010). Proponents of this view of education (e.g., Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Quisumbing, 2002) contend that future citizens of the world need to be educated on diverse issues of the planet if they are to confront the challenges of globalization and the threats of the 21st century. For this group of scholars, world cultures, problems, languages, history, and political systems need to be at the

forefront of national educational policies. For them, mere emphasis on national integration and social cohesion focusing on national problems, history, languages, and culture, is not adequate in this rapidly changing international situation (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Russell, 2010). Therefore, they advocate education for international citizenship, global education, education for sustainable development, and so forth.

It should, however, be noted that a new global movement that opposes globalization has been arising. This movement, named "Deglobalization," rejects the fundamental tenants of globalization. Instead, it advocates the need to reduce interdependence and integration among countries, societies and economies around the world (Dadush, 2022; Kornprobst & Wallace, 2022).

Deglobalization has had a negative impact on educational systems. Analysts of contemporary global education (e.g., Weidmann, 2020) noted that deglobalization is bringing such issues as a decline in the number of international students, restrictions on the mobility of academics and researchers, and cuts to funding for programs that support global citizenship in education.

Regardless of the emergence of different contending views on the purposes of education, many educators attempted to show the main functions of education. For instance, according to Taba (1962) and Ellis (2004), the three main purposes of education are to preserve and transmit cultural heritage, develop the individual learner and transform the culture of a society. In a similar vein, some educators (e.g., Brameld, 1971; Cohn, 1999; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Ebert II & Culyer III, 2011) believe that the preservation, transmission, moderation, and transformation of cultural heritage, which emanate from the four major educational philosophies, are the main purposes of education. It seems, therefore, important to conduct an investigation into the major functions of education in Ethiopia in relation to the educational purposes advocated by these philosophies.

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A Glimpse of the Major Educational Philosophies

The present study is based on ideas and theories taken from the four major educational philosophies with regard to the purpose of education. The four major educational philosophies with well-developed ideas of educational goals are Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, and Social Reconstructionism (Taba, 1962; Brameld, 1971; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Ellis, 2004; Schiro, 2013).

According to Perennialism, the principal purpose of education is to preserve society's cultural heritage (Taba, 1962; Brameld, 1971; Cohn, 1999; Ellis, 2004). For the Perennialist philosophers, human beings possess the capacity to know and discover truth by their own nature. This potentiality, according to these philosophers, can be activated if students are taught about the major achievements of mankind. Accordingly, their education aims at developing students understanding of the great ideas of ancient civilizations (Brameld, 1971; Cohn, 1999; Ornstein & Levine, 2008). Irrespective of time and place, the ancient ideas of the Western world are

considered vital to solving all societal problems (Cohn, 1999). In line with this, they advocate for a thorough examination of the classic books of Western civilizations. For Perennialists, classic works with recurring themes are important in improving students' intellectual ability and critical thinking skills (Ornstein & Levine, 2008).

The transmission of cultural heritage is an educational purpose advocated by Essentialism. Essentialist educational thinkers stress the importance of transmitting the great achievements of previous generations to future generations. Proponents of this view urge schools to provide all students with the knowledge that they need to function in society (Ebert II & Culyer III, 2011). For them, all students should be taught the core skills and knowledge that play decisive roles in sustaining modern societies. According to essentialist philosophers, the school's primary responsibility is to preserve the most important aspects of culture by teaching skills and knowledge through a well-organized curriculum (Ornstein & Levine, 2008). Essentialists urge schools and teachers to teach students "core" or "basic" subjects so that they will serve their society effectively and efficiently in the future. In a nutshell, the Essentialist educational philosophy views education as a process of transmitting the essential components of human culture to the next generation.

Educational Progressivism, which was established as a revolt against traditional schools, opposes much of the ideas advocated by Perennialism and Essentialism (Cohn, 1999; Ellis, 2004; Ornstein & Levine, 2008). Educators of Progressivism contend that developing the potential and capabilities of each learner, through a democratic instructional process, is the central purpose of education (Dewey, 1916; Taba, 1962; Ellis, 2004). For these educators, education is not preparation for life, but life itself. Hence, the development of each learner's talent and skill, through problem-solving and participatory approaches, is the major function of education. According to Dewey (1916), schools cannot prepare problem-solving and democratic citizens if they fail to reflect freedom and democracy in their day-to-day activities. Thus, shared decision-making, collaborative planning between teachers and students, and the selection and organization of curriculum contents based on students' interests and participation are considered key educational agendas of the philosophy. In this philosophy, learning is expected to take place based on students' active participation and experience of the world around them (Kilpatrick, 1932; Cohn, 1999). The learner, for educational progressives, is a problem solver and a meaning maker using his or her unique experience.

Advocates of Social Reconstructionism criticize many of the positions of the above groups of scholars (Ellis, 2004; Hill, 2006). Educators subscribing to this philosophy contend that the transformation of society and its cultural heritage needs to be the central purpose of education (Counts, 1932; Brameld, 1971; Quisumbing, 2002; Russell, 2010). For these scholars, education is a social process. Hence, they contend that social change and reform should be its primary concerns. In this philosophy, preserving and transmitting what has already been achieved is not considered an adequate purpose for educational institutions. Its philosophers, therefore, urge schools and educators to give attention to society and societal problems (Counts, 1932; Brameld, 1971; Stanley, 1992; Ellis, 2004; Bussler 2010). To put it briefly, Social Reconstructionist

educators emphasize the social responsibility of education. For these educators, understanding society, societal problems, seeking solutions to societal problems, and ultimately reconstructing and transforming society need to be the major purposes of education (Counts, 1932; Brameld, 1971; Stanley, 1992; Ellis, 2004; Bussler 2010). Seen from this angle, the four major philosophies of education are found to be appropriate to provide a theoretical basis for investigating the major functions of education in Ethiopia.

The Problem

Though the central purpose of education is still controversial, many scholars unanimously agree on education's ability to alleviate various societal problems and ameliorate life in society. The role it plays in bringing about social transformation, social justice, and a better social, economic, and political order is also widely acknowledged.

Despite these facts, many societies today are not benefiting much from the educational programs they are running. Instead, as reported by many scholars (e.g., Counts, 1932; Kilpatrick, 1932; Stanley, 1992; Quisumbing, 2002; Thomas, 2010; Schiro, 2013), they are besieged with unprecedented social crises. According to Counts (1932, p. 1), mankind had been experiencing the following problems since the 1930s: "vice, crime, war, poverty, injustice, racketeering, political corruption, race hatred, class conflict, or just plain original sin". Global warming, ozone depletion, desertification, environmental pollution and drought are also among the challenges that are threatening the survival of mankind today (Quisumbing, 2002; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Desha & Hargroves, 2014). In short, as Desha and Hargroves (2014) concisely put it, citizens of the 21st century are living in pressing and critical times.

The same story is true in Ethiopia. According to many sources, present-day Ethiopian societies are engulfed by perplexing political problems, paradoxical economic crises, and unprecedented social and environmental challenges (Human Rights Watch, 2010; Milkias, 2011; Dawit, 2019). In Ethiopia, it is also common to hear about the inability of the country's education system to prepare citizens who are competent enough to address many of the country's pervasive problems.

This national milieu, particularly the failure of the country's education system to reverse the persistent societal problems of the country, therefore, was the main reason to undertake this study. The dearth of adequate studies on the topic at hand was also another reason to think about this study. To my best knowledge, full-fledged research aimed at understanding Ethiopian educators' perceptions of the major function of education and exploring the principal functions of education in the country has not been adequately conducted.

The present study, therefore, aimed at understanding the perceptions of teacher educators (focusing on Bahir Dar University teacher educators) on the functions of education. Through an understanding of the teacher educators' positions, the study also sought to shed light on the major functions of the Ethiopian education system. In line with these purposes, the study is organized under the following two research questions: (1) How do Bahir Dar University teacher educators

perceive the major functions of education? (2) What are the positions of Bahir Dar University teacher educators on the major functions of the Ethiopian education system?

Methods

Design

This study adopted the qualitative research approach. One of its designs, the case study design, was also used. As Stake (2011) and Yin (2011) explained, a case study is an appropriate research design that aims at acquiring an in-depth understanding of issues in a limited number of cases. In the present study, this design was found appropriate as the purpose of the study was to understand the position of teacher educators on the major functions of education, focusing on the Ethiopian education system.

Sampling

In this study, six teacher educators who were teaching in the college of education and behavioral sciences at Bahir Dar University served as research participants. They were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Two criteria, i.e., willingness and experience of teaching at teacher education institutes, were used to select the participants.

Table1

Research Participants

Participant Pseudonym	Specialization	Academic Rank	Teaching Experience
Tibeb	Psychology	Lecturer	10
Ewuket	Psychology	Assistant Prof.	12
Selam	EDPM	Lecturer	11
Balcha	Curriculum and Instruction	Assistant Prof.	12
Tsenat	Curriculum and Instruction	Lecturer	16
Ali	Curriculum and Instruction	Lecturer	16

As indicated in Table 1, the participants had a teaching experience ranging from 10 to 16 years. Four of the participants were lecturers, whilst the other two were assistant professors with respect to academic rank. As far as the participants' specialization was concerned, three of them were professors of Curriculum and Instruction, while two of them were teaching Psychology and one other professor was teaching Educational Planning and Management.

Data Gathering

To get data pertinent to the study, two methods were used. In this regard, semi-structured interviews served as the major data-gathering method. In the interview schedule, five items focusing on the study's purpose were included. Using these items, the researcher also asked some relevant probes and follow-up questions. During data gathering, each research participant was interviewed for 40 to 60 minutes.

In this study, a document review was also used. The document reviewed was Ethiopia's Education and Training Policy of 1994. The reason behind this task was the need to corroborate the interview data. The review focused on the five general objectives of the policy.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the above methods were analyzed thematically. Two themes that emanated from the study's purposes guided the data analysis. Besides, specific data analysis techniques such as narration, description, and direct citation were used to analyze the data.

Ethical Issues

In this study, unreserved efforts were made to strictly adhere to the major ethical principles that must be observed when doing research. The duty of a researcher to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of research participants, in particular, was given a special attention.

Results

Teacher Educators' Perceptions of the Functions of Education

Understanding teacher educators' perceptions of the major functions of education was one purpose of this study. The data obtained in this regard are summarized in the following paragraphs.

According to Balcha* , the primary function of education must be the establishment of a moral society. In light of this, he said the following: "Many problems in the modern world emanate from issues of morality. In all corners of the world, there is a general decline in moral values. In the media, we are looking at many cruel and inhuman actions".

According to this participant, the kind of education essential for present-day societies is the one that gives much attention to moral and ethical values. He also asserted that the new generation needs to be taught how to become disciplined, moral and ethical. For him, education systems should also give attention to cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge.

Ewuket had a similar opinion regarding the function of education. According to this participant, modern societies are suffering from problems of suicide, crime, theft, corruption,

* All participant names used in this study are pseudonyms.

violence, and the deterioration of moral values. For this participant, education should aim at reversing all these problems.

Some research participants, on the other hand, reflected ideas that are consistent with the Essentialist educational philosophy. The replies of the two participants (Tsenat and Ali) are good examples in this regard.

According to Tsenat, "One of the unresolved issues of many developing countries is the problem of unemployment. Due to the expansion of educational opportunities, each year many students graduate from higher education institutions. However, most of them are not getting employed". This participant described the root cause of this problem as follows: "You know, our curriculum lacks relevance. Most of the programs that universities offer are not demand-driven. Put differently, they are teaching students knowledge and skills that are less relevant to the existing labor market".

Tsenat, therefore, prioritizes an education that is capable of solving this problem. In this regard, he forwarded the following suggestion: "Education should always be concerned with the fate of students. It should prepare students to lead a decent life. Its curriculum, in particular, needs to give attention to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to the world of the job".

Ali too underlined the importance of an education that emphasizes the core skills and knowledge essential for every society. The following words directly taken from his interview strengthens this contention:

> I strongly believe that education should prepare students to be effective and efficient members of society. To prepare this kind of student, education should give attention to the core or most important subjects. For instance, subjects like science, technology, and mathematics need to be prioritized.

This participant tried to justify his position as follows:

> It is science and technology that make a big difference among nations. The history of the Western world shows that the main reason behind its development is its success in advancing science and technology. No nation can achieve sustainable development without these subjects. That is why I insist on an education system that gives much attention to subjects like science and technology.

The ideas of the two research participants (Tsenat and Ali) presented above indicate that these teacher educators had an educational position that supports the Essentialist educational philosophy. These participants preferred an education system that strives for a generation possessing knowledge and skills essential for society.

The remaining two participants forwarded educational purposes that reflect the Progressive educational philosophy. For instance, Selam said the following while explaining his position on educational purposes:

> Education should not aim at the memorization of facts. Instead, it needs to focus on students' problem-solving skills. Students should be given the opportunity to develop the core skills they will need in the future to tackle the various problems

they will encounter. In short, education should prepare citizens who are capable of solving problems.

Tibeb's position on the function of education is not different from that of the above-mentioned participants. For this participant, "The preparation of problem-solving citizens must be the major purpose of education. For him, education should always aim at bringing about a productive generation capable of addressing the economic and political problems of the day".

The two participants' responses mentioned above suggest that they had an inclination toward a progressive view of education. Like many progressive educators, these participants emphasized the need to develop the problem-solving skills of citizens. As they explicitly stated, the preparation of citizens who are capable of solving different problems needs to be the major responsibility of any educational system.

Teacher Educators' Positions Concerning the Major Functions of Education in Ethiopia

The present study also attempted to understand teacher educators' positions concerning the major functions of education in present-day Ethiopia. For this purpose, participants were requested to discuss their observations vis-à-vis Ethiopia's educational system. The positions they reflected are summarized as follows.

Some participants reported that though modern educational concepts were incorporated at a policy level, their practice—particularly in the classroom— was in accordance with knowledge mastery and the preservation view of education. Supporting this idea, Tsenat had the following to say: "On paper, the main emphasis is on the preparation of citizens with strong problem-solving skills. But, in practice, mastery of knowledge is the norm in every classroom". Tsenat further indicated that textbooks used in Ethiopian schools are prepared with too much lengthy content, and they offer few opportunities for experiential learning. This implies the existence of a big gap between theory and practice.

In quite a similar fashion, Ewuket asserted that the major concern of Ethiopia's education is knowledge mastery. For this teacher educator, from curriculum development at the national level to curriculum implementation at the classroom level, knowledge mastery is given due emphasis. This participant also had the following to add: "Assessment strategies and procedures used by teachers, in particular, show the predominance of the knowledge mastery educational idea. The quizzes, tests, mid-exams and final examinations given by teachers all aim at checking students' knowledge mastery".

Selam also expressed a similar position. For this educator, knowledge preservation and transmission are the main features of the Ethiopian educational system. For Selam, the country's educational system preserves and transmits the knowledge of the Western world, not its indigenous knowledge. According to this participant, though Ethiopia has an extensive record of indigenous education, its education system has been disregarding local indigenous knowledge. In its place, he adds, "the Western cultural heritage has been given much importance". Selam

believed that many of the challenges facing the Ethiopian educational system are related to this problem. In this regard, he forwarded the following idea:

> Our educational system does not prepare citizens who possess fundamental moral and ethical values. The new generation is becoming less aware and appreciative of its history and cultural heritage. It is also becoming less concerned with the social values that Ethiopia has been known for.

Some participants, on their part, believed that the educational system in Ethiopia has not focused on solving problems of the society. In this regard, Balcha replied as follows:

> The national education and training policy in Ethiopia is not concerned with the needs and interests of our people. At the outset, the policy was formulated by the ruling party, where opposition parties, intellectuals, parents, teachers, students, and NGOs working in the education sector were prevented from taking active part. As a result, the policy has failed to reflect the realities of contemporary society.

Supporting this, Tibeb responded with the following: "If you take a thorough look at our teacher education curriculum, you can easily understand that it was designed in line with Western educational ideas. Its attention to Ethiopian societies and their problems is inadequate". This participant also had the following to say:

> One major problem of curriculum development in Ethiopia is related to the task of need diagnosis. Usually, curriculum development in Ethiopia does not emanate from needs analysis studies. Due to this problem, our curriculum does not reflect the country's real problems.

Finally, Ali described the function of education in Ethiopia as follows: "Our education system is under the direct influence of the Western world. Since the country is still dependent on the loans and financial assistance of the developed world, its education system is in line with their educational ideas". According to this participant,

> Due to the pressure of Western institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, our education system is overwhelmed with ideas of the Progressive educational philosophy. The predominance of such educational ideas as active learning, collaborative learning, continuous assessment, and cost-sharing epitomizes this contention.

The above responses suggest that Ethiopia's educational system has been under the influence of some Western educational ideas. According to his reflections, no adequate attention has been given to the problems of contemporary Ethiopian societies.

To corroborate the above findings obtained through interviews, a review was made on the Education and Training Policy* of Ethiopia. The review was limited to Part II of the policy. In this part, five general and fifteen specific objectives of education are listed. The review, however,

* Recently, a new education and training policy that substitutes the 1994 ETP has been officially introduced.

focused only on the general objectives. The five general objectives of education, the central concept, and the dominant educational philosophy of each general objective are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

General Objectives of Education, Central Concepts, and Dominant Philosophy

General Objective*	Central Concept**	Dominant Philosophy**
Develop the physical and mental potential and the problem-solving capacity of individuals	The problem-solving capacity of individuals	Progressivism
Bring up citizens who can take care of and utilize resources wisely, who are trained in various skills	Wise utilization of resources	Essentialism
Bring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, as well as for equality, justice, and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline	Human rights, people well-being, equality, justice, peace, democracy	Progressivism and Social Reconstructionism
Bring up citizens who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, who seek and stand for truth, appreciate aesthetics, and show a positive attitude towards the development and dissemination of science and technology in society.	• Useful practice, truth, and aesthetics • Science and technology	Perennialism and Essentialism
Cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive, and appreciative potential of citizens.	Cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potentials	Essentialism and Progressivism

Note. * Source, the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1994, pp. 7-8).
** The researcher's interpretations.

As indicated in Table 2, educational purposes that reflect the various philosophies of education are included in the 1994 education and training policy. However, they were not given equal weight. For example, Progressivism and Essentialism seem dominant, as they are highly visible in at least three of the general objectives. In this regard, one can observe educational purposes advocated by Progressivism in the first, third, and fifth general objectives. Likewise, Essentialist educational ideas are reflected at least in the second, fourth, and fifth general objectives.

From the same table, it is also possible to infer that the Perennialist and Social Reconstructionist educational purposes were not well reflected, as they were visible only in one

general objective. To be specific, the Perennialist view of education was reflected in the fourth general objective, while Social Reconstructionism was included in the third one.

Discussion

The present study attempted to understand Bahir Dar University teacher educators' perceptions of the major functions of education. The results of the study showed the presence of multifarious viewpoints among the participating teacher educators.

To be specific, some teacher educators reflected a position that was consistent with the Perennialist view of education. These teacher educators gave much emphasis to the cultural preservation function of education. On the other hand, some teacher educators reflected ideas that were consistent with the Essentialist educational philosophy. These educators were very interested in an education system that prepares a generation equipped with skills and knowledge essential for the survival of existing societies. They also emphasized the role of such subjects as science, mathematics and technology in achieving national development. Still, some teacher educators were found to be supporters of Progressivism. These educators frequently mentioned the importance of preparing a generation with problem-solving skills.

Overall, the participating teacher educators were found to be supporters of the Perennialist, Essentialist, or Progressivist views of education. No teacher educator, however, had mentioned a Social Reconstructionist educational purpose. From this, it may be possible to infer that the Social Reconstructionist (society-centered) function of education had not been either adequately understood or considered important by the teacher educators. This can be taken as one educational challenge because, as prominent scholars of education (e.g., Brameld, 1971; Stanley, 1992; Ellis, 2004; Bussler, 2010; Schiro, 2013) put it succinctly, education cannot play its role of mitigating societal problems and creating better social orders if it fails to be society-sensitive. Students are more unlikely to understand their society and its problems and, most importantly, to become agents of social change if they fail to get a society-sensitive education. As Social Reconstructionist educators posited, society and societal problems must be at the center of educational discourse if social reconstruction and transformation are to be realized through education.

This study has also examined teacher educators' positions concerning the functions of education in Ethiopia. In this regard, the study's findings were found to be consistent with the above findings. As many of the teacher educators asserted, knowledge mastery, which reflects the Perennialist and Essentialist purpose of education, was found to be dominant in the Ethiopian educational system. Besides, educational purposes advocated by Progressivism were found to be important. The findings obtained from the document review also strengthened the above result. However, in both findings, the Social Reconstructionist function of education was not given adequate place.

These findings are consistent with some local research findings. For instance, the study conducted by Amare (2009) indicated that education in Ethiopia was highly affected by the course coverage syndrome. This researcher further reported that instructional processes were geared towards only one dimension of the educational goal, the knowledge acquisition goal. Derebssa (2006), on his part, indicated that Progressivism was the dominant educational philosophy in Ethiopia at a policy level. This scholar, however, uncovered that the implementation of active learning, one important educational idea of Progressivism, was not common in the country's educational institutions.

Though full-fledged research aimed at understanding the reasons for the above findings is necessary, at this juncture, it appears reasonable to reflect on some of the possible causes. The failure of national educational policy to emphasize society and societal issues, the researcher argues, is one of the major reasons for teacher educators' lack of concern for the social function of education. As reported by some local studies (e.g., Damtew, 2008; Mulugeta, 2017; Mulugeta, Solomon, & Alemayehu, 2018; Mulugeta, 2021), the country's educational system did not give issues of society and societal problems considerable attention.

In the content analysis they conducted on the 1994 Ethiopia's Education and Training Policy, Mulugeta, Solomon, and Alemayehu (2018), in particular, came up with a finding that strengthens the above contention. According to these researchers, terms and phrases that indicate the inclusion of Social Reconstructionist educational purposes were not adequately incorporated in the national Education and Training Policy. To be specific, terms and phrases like social reconstruction, social transformation, better social order, social change, and social amelioration that imply Social Reconstructionist educational purpose were not mentioned in the country's education policy document.

The prominence of Progressivism in the educational system of Ethiopia could also be another reason. Educational Progressivism, which aims to instill key principles of liberal democracy, has received government backing since its inception in the late 19th century (Brameld, 1971; Reese, 2001; Hill, 2006). One of the factors that contributed to the philosophy's growing popularity was the emphasis it placed on the principles of individual freedom and democratic teaching, as well as its opposition to teacher dominance, subject-centered curriculum, and student punishment. Since Ethiopia is one of the poorest sub-Saharan countries and relies heavily on the Western world and its multinational institutions, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), it has very little chance of avoiding the influence of this educational philosophy.

Another possible root cause of the problem is the broad embrace of neo-liberal concepts in Ethiopia's education system. Marketization, managerialism, standards, and privatization, according to Maguire and Dillon (2007), are the four fundamental neo-liberal principles that have a significant impact on national educational systems. These concepts' relevance to society and societal issues is too limited because they mostly focus on individualism. Therefore, the failure to adequately include the Social Reconstructionist purpose of education may have been attributed to the presence of these neo-liberal principles in Ethiopia's educational system.

Conclusions and Implications

This study aimed at examining the perceptions of teacher educators about the major functions of education. It also aimed to shed light on the major function of education in Ethiopia. Consequently, it brought the following findings.

The first finding indicated that teacher educators had multifarious perceptions concerning the major functions of education. In this regard, some teacher educators reflected a perception that was consistent with the Perennialist view of education. On the other hand, some teacher educators were found to be supporters of the Essentialist view of education. Still, some teacher educators were found to be adherents to the Progressivist educational purpose. However, their perceptions did not reflect the Social Reconstructionist educational purpose.

As far as the major function of education in Ethiopia is concerned, the present study came up with a similar story. To be specific, the study confirmed that content mastery, or the Perennialist and Essentialist purpose of education, was dominant. Educational purposes advocated by the Progressive educational thinkers were also found to be important. The study, however, did not adequately indicate the inclusion of a Social Reconstructionist function of education.

The findings of this study have some important implications. First, as the study revealed, teacher educators' perceptions did not reflect society-centered educational purposes. This implies the need for some short-term measures that are aimed at developing teacher educators' conceptual understanding of various educational purposes. To be specific, Ethiopian teacher education institutions need to organize forums and professional discourse opportunities that focus on the multidimensional purposes of education. In doing so, Social Reconstructionist educational purposes need to be given adequate attention.

The second finding of the present study also has policy implications. As the study showed, educational purposes that reflect Social Reconstructionism were scanty in Ethiopia's education system. Therefore, education policymakers and curriculum developers in Ethiopia need to revitalize the importance of society-centered educational purposes. In this regard, they need to deliberate on its relevance for nation-building. This is because, as many educators (e.g., Brameld, 1971; Stanley, 1992; Bussler, 2010; Schiro, 2013) contend, neither knowledge-centered nor learner-centered education alone could realize the social transformation or reconstruction educational agenda of nations. By acknowledging the strengths and limitations of each philosophy of education, policymakers need to strive to create a balanced educational system and develop relevant curricula that meet the diverse needs of students and society at large.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study are based mainly on qualitative data collected from a few teacher educators selected from one higher education institution. The study would have been more generalizable in portraying the whole reality of the function of education in Ethiopia had additional quantitative data been collected from more teacher educators working in other educational institutions. Hence, the conclusions of the study need to be considered cautiously.

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Becoming a Research University as a Strategic Choice in Bahir Dar University: A Resource Dependency Perspective

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Abstract

This paper explored how the need for research universities in Ethiopia is justified, practiced, and could be improved using the strategic tactics of the resource dependency perspective. Bahir Dar University (hereafter referred to as BDU) was taken as a case to understand the need for a research university and its practices. Document analysis was used as a source of data. Consequently, an analysis of various institutional and national secondary sources revealed that the existing uncertainties related to critical resources motivated Bahir Dar University to devise a strategic choice of becoming a research university. The uncertainties are justified in terms of economic, political and institutional conditions. Although the university envisioned becoming a research university by 2025, the existing institutional and national conditions seem to be immature to sustain the necessary resources and conditions that a research university requires. As a result, following the higher education differentiation effort, BDU had to revise its vision and extend the possible time its vision could be realized to 2030. It is concluded that the need for BDU to become a research university seems to be challenging and needs much effort to be realized. Hence, institutional re-arrangements following the strategic tactics of the resource dependency perspective need to be devised to realize the strategic choice of becoming a research university.

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Introduction

Nowadays, a university that considers itself to be a contributor to the society and gives value for research and discovery claims to be a research university (Lacroix & Maheu,2015). Hence, the need for research universities is becoming a global enthusiasm. Almost all higher education institutions are unanimously aspiring to become a research university – a university "committed

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to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in a range of disciplines and fields and featuring the appropriate laboratories, libraries, and other infrastructures that permit teaching and research at the highest possible level" (Altbach, 2007, p. 15).

Studies like Altbach (2007, 2011) revealed that the concern towards research universities has begun around 1980s. The development of knowledge economies that depend on intensive knowledge and innovation along the need for the institutional reputation in science and research has led to the establishment of research universities in most European countries and the United States of America. However, although the majority of the research universities are in the developed world, several higher education institutions in the global south are also aspiring to become research universities. As they do for developed countries, research universities could play crucial roles in uplifting the national and economic development of developing countries and regions (Altbach, 2007).

The primary intention of research universities is to create impact on the social and economic development of countries and regions. In this regard, Lacroix and Maheu (2015) emphasized the direct and central role research universities can play in both scientific advancement and the general economy and the society in which they operate. Lacroix and Maheu (2015) also described the research university as "a distinct form of academic institution" (p. xiii). Nonetheless, while serving such purposes, the establishment of research universities becomes a strategic choice that universities make to avert their dependence on the environment for critical resources such as fund, students, faculty, and other infrastructure. Therefore, becoming a research university is a double-sword strategy used to manage university´s dependency, while benefiting the society through research, teaching and community service. It is taken as a rational adaptation that universities do to cope with environmental pressures and constraints.

Research universities are also considered as world-class universities. Salmi (2009) identified three complementary characteristics of world-class universities: (a) high concentration of talent (faculty and students); (b) abundant resources to offer a rich learning environment and to conduct advanced research, and (c) favorable governance that encourages strategic vision, innovation and flexibility. According to the Carnegie Foundation's methodology, research universities are considered as institutions that emphasize on postgraduate studies in multiple fields of study, particularly of PhD level, committed to research and research grants to their staff (Lacroix, & Maheu, 2015). Similarly, Altbach (2009) characterized research universities as:

> ... a cadre of full-time faculty, academic freedom, a salary structure permitting a local middle-class lifestyle, promotion and salary enhancement based on performance rather than just seniority, reasonable guarantees of long-term appointment, absence of corruption in all the sectors of academic work, and an academic culture of competition and research productivity (p. 26).

Therefore, research universities are institutions with competent staff selected on the basis of their performances and productivity. Besides, they require optimal organizational environments such as academic freedom, performance-based promotion, attractive remunerations and long-term

employment to attract faculty and students. Furthermore, as indicated by Altbach (2013), research universities function in a differentiated academic system and require high-tech physical facilities and laboratories. These characteristics witness that research universities are complex. They operate under dynamic environment and hence are strategically focused. Thus, in one way or the other, research universities need to be active in interacting with their environment (government, research institutes, industries and the like) for financial, human, material and other resources.

Research universities encounter different challenges. Unstable funding and inconsistent relationship with the state, inefficiency and incompatible governance schemes are among the challenges (National Academy of Sciences-NAS, 2017). According to Altbach (2009), lack of commercialization of research outputs, autonomy, and accountability are other challenges that research universities are facing. The challenges mentioned above are linked with resources implying that the success of research universities depends on the sustainability and diversity of resources. Without this it is difficult for research universities to be competitive and survive under intense environmental turbulences.

Higher education institutions in Ethiopia are no exception. Despite the development of higher education which has a history of seventy years, several changes that conform to the current global dynamics in higher education have been observed in the country at various levels: macro, meso and micro levels. One of which, for example, is the aspiration to become a research university. Becoming a research university appears to be in vogue among higher education institutions in Ethiopia. Universities, irrespective of their institutional differences in reputations, research outputs and years of establishment, have been dreaming to become a research university.

Indeed, Ethiopian universities are mandated to execute three major missions, i.e. teaching, research, and community services (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia-FDRE, 2009). However, almost all universities are aspiring to become a research university, and this aspiration attracted further concerns and debates. Parts of these concerns are related to the resources required to become research universities. As Altbach (2007, p.17) noted, "research universities are inevitably expensive to operate and require more funds than other academic institutions. They are also generally more selective in terms of student admissions and faculty hiring and typically stand at the pinnacle of an academic system". Conversely, Ethiopian universities are underfunded, and they have limited authority to select best and brightest students as the research university may require. Students' placement is undertaken by the Federal Ministry of Education. However, recently, following the differentiation of higher education institutions in Ethiopia and the categorization of universities as research universities, applied sciences and comprehensive universities(MOSHE, 2020), there might be a tendency towards granting autonomy to at least research universities.

As far as the researchers' knowledge is concerned, except for few programs at postgraduate levels, the placement of students in different universities is carried out by the Ministry of Education. Similarly, universities do not have adequate right to select the best and brightest faculty members. Most recruitment activities are performed by the civil service code which gives less room for higher education institutions to recruit academic staff through different mechanisms such

as mind hunting, dual employment, etc. Besides, the payment scale is determined by the federal government and academic rank is mostly determined by academic publications. Due to this, Ethiopian universities' aspirations to become a research university and the actual context of the universities seem to oppose each other. In other words, although the universities have been aspiring to become a research university, there were no institutional and environmental conditions that support the aspirations of the universities.

Regardless of the absence of these conditions, BDU has already set its vision and has strived to achieve its mission for the last eight years. At the time of BDU's initiative to become a research university, the aspiration to become a research university was a bone of contention among the academic community. However, in 2020, the then Ethiopian Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MOSHE) conducted a higher education differentiation study and classified universities into three as research universities, universities of applied sciences, and comprehensive universities. As per the results of the differentiation effort, and based on its achievements and challenges faced, in its second strategic plan BDU revised its vision and came up with a new ten-year strategic plan (2020/21- 2029/30). As a result, the previous vision of becoming one of the top ten research universities in Africa by 2025 is now changed to "becoming one of the leading research-intensive universities in Africa and the first choice in Ethiopia by 2030 " (BDU, 2020, p. 5).

Therefore, this study was initiated to draw some recommendations on how the strategic choice to become a research university could be achieved amid institutional and environmental constraints in terms of resources. In doing so, the researchers limited the analysis to BDU which is one of the Ethiopian universities that aspires to become a leading research-intensive university in Africa by 2030. In line with this, the present study attempted to address the following research questions: (1) Why does Bahir Dar University justify its aspiration of becoming a research university? (2) What achievements and challenges did Bahir Dar University encounter while executing its strategic choice of becoming a research university?

Theoretical Framework

Organizations, including higher education institutions, operate under turbulent environment. Consequently, they constantly strive to manage the turbulence and uncertainty through different strategic choices. According to Campling and Michelson (1998, p. 579), "strategic choice explains how organizations acquire resources and manage dependencies". The present study, therefore, is conducted using the Resource Dependence Theory as its analytical framework.

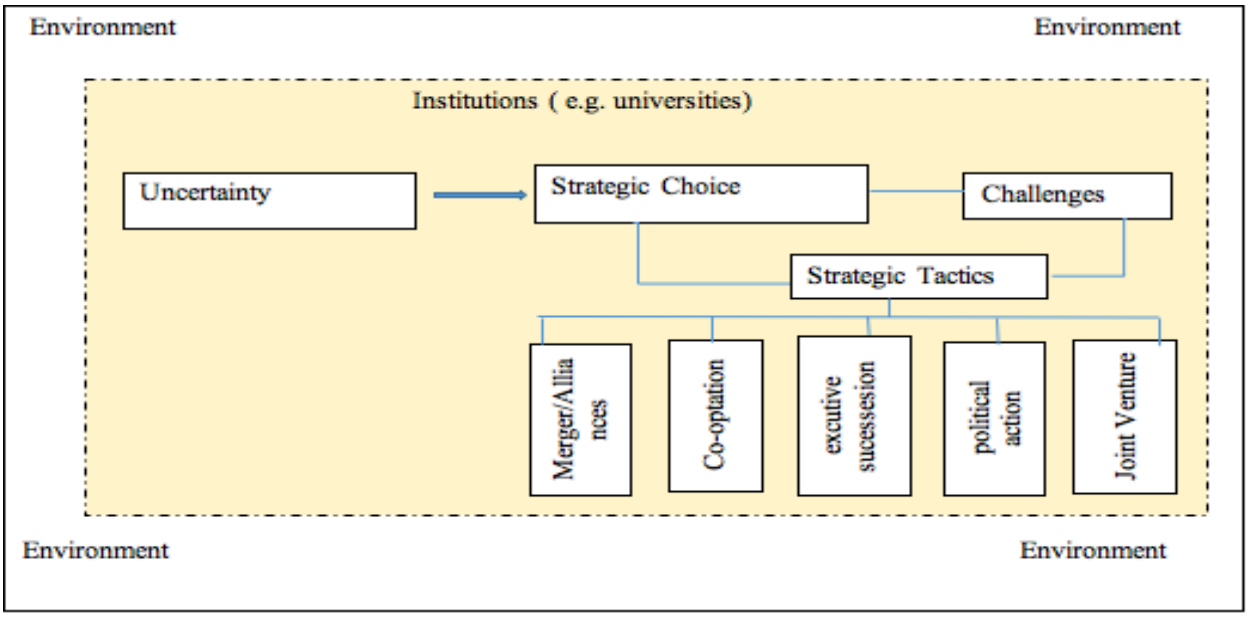
The resource dependence theory claimed that "organizations, as open systems, necessarily transact with other organizations in their environment to obtain the resources necessary for their survival" (Kessler & Tuckman, 2013, p. 659). The theory has three major assumptions: (1) As organizations are embedded in a network of interdependencies and social relationships, the need for resources like financial, human and information makes organizations potentially dependent on their external sources of resources. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (2003), the dependencies

are mutual (reciprocal). (2) Attributed to particularities interdependence such as structure and locations, some organizations have more power than others. In addition, external resource dependence affects the internal power dynamics of organizations like people, groups or departments within the organization that depend on external resources held by more powerful organizations. (3) Although organizations are constrained by their environment, they have opportunities to obtain resources, autonomy, and negotiate with constraints using variety of tactics (Kessler & Tuckman, 2013; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This implies that organizations are not passive entities that sway and are determined by external pressures. Organizations have the capabilities to revert their dependencies through strategic choices. Through the strategic choice, organizations identify strategic areas that help them to manage the uncertainties and dependencies on other organizations (Campling & Michelson, 1998).

Like other organizations, universities are operating under constant external pressures. Hence, being a research university is becoming a common strategic choice for higher education institutions to respond to resource constraints. In so doing, universities may use a variety of tactics to cope with constraints and to ultimately achieve their strategic choices. These tactics may include co-optation, merger, joint venture, political actions, and executive succession (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). On the basis of this understanding, the following conceptual framework was developed to undertake the present study.

Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework



Note: This framework is developed by the researchers based on literature review.

The diagram depicts that universities like any organization are influenced by the external environment composed of different organizations. Accordingly, there is an interdependence of

relationships between higher education institutions and their environment. However, as the environment consists of different competing organizations that compete for critical resources, higher education institutions may operate under constant uncertainties. Hence, higher education institutions need to deal with the environmental uncertainties through strategic choices. One of these strategic choices could be, for example, becoming a research university. While executing the strategic choices, universities may use different tactics such as co-optation (inclusion of diversified external organization groups into university board membership); mergers (combination of two or more universities or institutions); joint ventures (collaborations with different business organizations); political action (development of new rules and regulations to avert environmental dependencies); and executive succession (appointment and retaining of top managers from external companies) (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Methods

This study employed qualitative research approach with case study design. Data were collected using document analysis. Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give meaning to a research topic (Bowen, 2009). As to Bowen (2009), document analysis incorporates coding content into themes in the way focus group or interview transcripts are analyzed. Though the combination of methods in the study of the same phenomenon is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation, document analysis is an important research tool in its own right (Bowen, 2009). Hence in this study, document analysis is used as a primary research tool.

According to O'Leary (2014), there are three types of documents namely public records, personal documents and physical evidence. Among these documents, the present study employed public records and physical evidence types of documents. Public records refer to the official, ongoing records of an organization's activities. In this regard, the study used documents such as mission statements, annual reports, policy manuals, and strategic plans. As far as physical evidence, which refers to objects found within the study setting, is concerned, the study tried to utilize documents such as flyers, posters, agendas, and handbooks.

To be specific, documents of the University such as the university *Blue Book* (BDU, 2014), reports, strategic plans (e.g., BDU, 2015, 2020), and websites of the University and the Federal Ministry of Education were analyzed. In addition, published sources on the topic "research university" were collected and analyzed from different databases such as JSTOR and Google Scholar.

Results

This section presents the results of the study obtained from different secondary sources. Accordingly, data obtained from the university strategic plans, directives, national policies and

strategies are presented and discussed against previously published research outputs. The section is presented in the following two themes that emanate from the research questions.

1. Why did Bahir Dar University Aspire to Become a Research University?

Our examination of different secondary sources revealed that a multitude of external uncertainties led BDU to devise its strategic choice for becoming a research university. Parts of these uncertainties emanated from the competitive economic environment that Ethiopia is aspiring to achieve by 2025 (recently extended to 2030). In this regard, the university´s blue book stated the following:

> As Ethiopia is aspiring to be a middle-income country by 2025, it needs to have a research university that competes with the universities of other middle-income countries. And Bahir Dar University needs to be premier in achieving its competitiveness in the spheres of teaching, research, and technology transfer (BDU, 2014, p. 1).

Ethiopia envisions becoming a middle-income country by 2025. Consequently, considerable activities are underway to achieve its vision. Hence, the current activities and future national targets have seemingly created urgency in the strategic visions of BDU. On one hand, the university needs to situate itself within the higher education strategic direction of the country. On the other hand, the university stood first in the 2020 MOSHE's higher education differentiation study and became under the research university category (MOSHE, 2020). The rank the university earned is the result of its efforts and commitment towards its vision of becoming a research university. Therefore, the strategic choice of becoming a research university is made to build the university´s competitiveness which helps to grapple with future challenges related to competitions and competitiveness.

Besides, the university's desire to become a research university seems to be related to the emerging uncertainties emanating from the existing higher education expansion process in Ethiopia. The number of higher education institutions in Ethiopia is growing and this seems to be an additional reason for BDU to develop a new strategic option. As the number of higher education institutions increased, the competitions for resources such as students, teachers, and government funds are likely to increase. Therefore, the university´s strategic choice of becoming a research university is undertaken to increase the strategic advantage of the university in terms of these critical resources. This idea is well reflected in the university´s blue book as follows: "When the university becomes a research university, it is likely to attract students and teachers. It is also most likely that the University will earn better budget when it became a research university" (BDU, 2014,p.13).

The same source goes on and specifies the following elements as the rationale for the development of its strategic choice of becoming a research university. These are (1) to support students and teachers with the necessary knowledge, skill and attitude so that they could be productive citizens who understand global and national contexts, (2) to develop the knowledge

and skills of intellectuals (i.e., teachers and students) into resources and thus contribute to national economic development, (3) to increase the role of education in social development, and (4) to reduce brain drain and create self-confident citizens (BDU, 2014, pp. 16–17).

All these justifications seem to center on the accumulation, exploitation, and management of resources: both physical and human resources. Yet, the justifications are explained indirectly in terms of the economic, political, and institutional conditions that the country is aspiring.

The economic justifications are explained in terms of the presumed contributions of the university to the society and the economy. These are mainly related to the capabilities of the graduates in influencing the economy and national development. The need to influence the external economic environment is exemplified in the University´s blue book as follows: "Graduates of one university in America (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) come to establish more than 5000 companies that are able to earn 230 billion USD and above… and this is beyond the country´s (Ethiopia's) annual budget" (BDU, 2014, p. 16).

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is among the reputable research universities in the world. It is known for its entrepreneurial capabilities of its graduates and research competence of its faculty. Therefore, like MIT, BDU has aspired to become a research university and influence the economy through its graduates equipped with entrepreneurial capabilities and skills.

The political justifications are those that conform to the political ideology that the country is adhering to. Aligned with the economic justifications, the university seems to justify and contribute to the political commitment advocated by the existing government. In this regard, the university´s blue book illustrates this idea as follows:

> Our country is striving to eradicate poverty and backwardness. It is aspiring to become among the middle-income countries by replicating the experiences of the East Asian Tiger Economics. Thus, our university needs to contribute to the commitment that the country is aspiring to (BDU, 2014, p.1).

In this case, initially BDU attempted to explain its need of becoming a research university following the political philosophy of the existing government: replicating the East Asian economies.

Unlike the economic and political justifications, the institutional justifications are internal. They focus on building the university in terms of teachers and students and other relevant infrastructure that help to attract competent teachers. In this regard the Blue Book insists the need to establish two complex research grade laboratories (one for sciences and the other for technology) and equip other teaching aids and laboratories. It also suggest that internship programs shall be expanded and strengthened by evaluating them regularly and taking appropriate actions" (BDU, 2014). The initial attempt of BDU has been lately supported by the country's Ministry of Science and Higher Education differentiation study of 2020.

Therefore, as evidenced by the justifications presented above, the BDU justified its aspiration of becoming a research university mainly in terms of the existing uncertainties related

to its critical resources though supported by the government's direction of higher education. Nonetheless, these uncertainties are mainly implicit and explained in terms of economic, political and institutional contexts.

2. Achievements and Challenges Encountered by Bahir Dar University

This section presents the achievements and challenges that BDU has faced while executing its strategic choice of becoming a research university. The first sub-section highlights the achievements while the second one outlines the challenges that the university faced during the first (2011-2015) and second strategic (2016-2020) plans implementation periods.

2.1. Achievements Observed

The strategic vision of becoming a research university was crafted in 2010. Consequently, several endeavors have been undertaken to achieve some foundations in the first five years (i.e., 2011 to 2015). The major achievements of BDU observed in the three areas* (staff development, the institutionalization of research, and the enhancement of postgraduate programs) are presented below.

Staff Development

The existence of reputable and established faculty members characterizes research universities. Consequently, universities invest remarkable resources in building or attracting topnotch faculty with commendable skills in research and teaching. Reflecting this idea, BDU makes staff development as one priority area in its endeavors of becoming a research university. In this regard, although meager, some developments have been observed in the university's first strategic plan period (2011-2015).

During that period Ethiopia planned to establish three research universities having 50% of their academic staff with PhDs in the years between 2014/15 and 2019/20 (MoE, 2015). However, considering the existing figures in terms of the number of the academic staff with PhDs, the national plan seems to be ambitious. The national average for academic staff that hold PhDs in Ethiopia stands at 15% (Tamrat, 2018).

The staff development in BDU shares considerable similarities with the national plan. Although the number of PhDs was planned to reach 25% by the year 2015, an increment of 5% was observed in the 2011-2015 strategic period. The ratio among bachelor, master's, and PhD holders of the university stands at 26:63:11 respectively (BDU, 2015). Besides, in the second strategic plan period, the university claimed its achievements in terms of teaching and learning, research and publication, and community service engagements that helped it to be ranked first in MOSHE's 2020 differentiation study (BDU, 2020).

* These three areas are emphasized because they are the ones set as priority areas in the five-year strategic plan of the university (i.e., 2011-2015).

It is, however, important to note that the ratio of staff with different qualifications doesn't guarantee improvements in research profile. The increment in the number of PhDs should be linked with commitment and experience in research and innovations. As Altbach (2011) asserted, professors in research universities need to be committed to the culture of research beyond their level of qualification for teaching and research. Furthermore, commitment to research needs to create some economic benefits to attract research talented staff and improve research facilities and infrastructure (Altbach, 2009).

Institutionalization of Research

Beyond staff development, some activities were performed to institutionalize research in the university's core functions and structures. The following are good examples in this regard.

Establishment of Organizational Structure for Research

Before 2011, BDU had only one office known as "Research and Publication Section". The office was designed to initiate, implement and monitor research activities of the university (BDU, 2015). However, the research and publication section of the university and its responsibilities were not sufficient for the realization of the university's strategic choice. Thus, the University´s research and publication office was restructured later on.

For example, in the first strategic period (2011-2015), the university's organizational structure was redesigned and thus an independent research office was established at a vice-president level with the name "Vice President Office for Research and Community Services" (RCSVP) (BDU, 2015). Under the RCSVP office, three directorates (research, community services and technology transfer) and nine research centers were established. Moreover, research and community services coordinators were assigned at college/faculty levels to facilitate research activities at a department level. However, such institutional structures are still challenged as a result of shortage of human and material logistics.

Identifications of Research Thematic Areas

Altbach (2009) stated that "research universities in developing countries need to select fields of research that are affordable and linked to national needs and priorities". Parts of the experiences in the BDU tend to reflect what Altbach has indicated. Following the introduction of new institutional structures, the research centers and academic units identified research thematic areas. The identification of the research themes was carried out in line with the country's priority area indicated in the first Growth and Transformation Plan-GTP (2015-2020). The strategic plan attested that the establishment of research universities will be implanted based on international standards and their teaching and learning processes will be linked with their mission of knowledge development and technological innovation (FDRE, 2016).

Increment in Research Budget

Research budget is one of the critical elements in the development of research universities (Altbach, 2007). Thus, one of the issues that BDU tried to focus in its first strategic period was the allocation of research fund. In the first strategic period, the public annual research budget of the university increased from one million in 2011 to forty million ETB in 2015 (BDU, 2015). Concomitantly, the number of research projects increased from negligible amount in 2011 to 500 in 2015.

To encourage staff participation in research, incentives were provided for academic staff who publish their works in reputable local and international journals. Besides, to develop the culture of academic discourse and research, weekly seminars, annual international and national research conferences have been organized. With these efforts, the annual scientific research output of BDU's staff has increased from 30 in 2011 to 300 in 2015 (BDU, 2015).The university-based journals also grew from one in 2011 to four in 2015. The publication of conference proceedings also became a trend.

Establishment of New Postgraduate Programs

The establishment of new postgraduate programs is a third priority area of the University in its path towards becoming a research university. In line with this, the university's strategic plan envisions producing 100 PhD graduates annually from 20 different disciplines and increasing postgraduate admissions to 50% (BDU, 2015).

Consequently, during the first five years of the first strategic period (2011-2015), the number of Master's and PhD students graduating from the university was reported to be 98 and 15, respectively (BDU, 2015). Currently, the ratio of Master's and PhD students stands at 13% and 0.2% respectably. Yet, 86.8% of the student population is in undergraduate programs and the remaining 13 percent is in postgraduate programs. This seems to reveal that the postgraduate enrollment in relation to the undergraduate enrollment is quite low and thus achieving the overarching goal by 2025 is somewhat demanding. It seems due to this fact that BDU revised its vision and extended the time from 2025 to 2030.

2.2. Challenges Encountered

The path towards becoming a research university cannot be free of challenges. Studies revealed that research universities may be confronted with various challenges of which some of them are internal while others external to the institutions. These internal and external challenges are inseparable. One may lead to the existence of the other. Likewise, BDU encountered the following internal and external challenges.

Internal Challenges

Limited Capability of Academic Staff

Academic staff capability is a springboard for the development of research universities. Without capable and qualified academic staff, the desire for patents, expanding horizons and innovations remain a dream. Therefore, in pursuit of becoming a research university, BDU identified that the limited capability of faculty members to develop new research proposals in collaboration with local industry was among the major bottlenecks in its first strategic period (BDU, 2015).

This was explained, among other things, in terms of the limited number of professors and academic staff with PhDs in the University. As indicated above, the qualification of the academic staff of BDU is predominantly Master's degree followed by B

achelor's degree holders. The faculty with PhD and professorship positions, besides their limited number, do not have adequate experience in research (BDU, 2015).

Lack of Relevant Infrastructure

Although the development of infrastructure such as the development of ICT and journal subscriptions and/or the establishment of journals were planned to increase significantly, the existing infrastructure development within the University was found to be limited and this, in turn, challenged the University's aspiration to become a research university (BDU, 2015).

Rent Seeking and Corruption

Higher education institutions are the centre of rampant corruption. BDU has also identified that rent-seeking and corruption were among the critical challenges it faced in the implementation period of the first strategic plan (BDU, 2015). In addition to the challenges indicated in the first strategic plan period, BDU identified several challenges it faced in the second strategic plan period under the following categories (BDU, 2020, pp.26-35).

Research practices

Fragmented nature of research, absence of transparent, consistent and efficient system, limited funding opportunities and management issues, lack of well-equipped research facilities and research administration problems.

Community engagement

Lack of conceptual clarity about what community engagement entails, weak teaching-research-community linkage, limited participation of staff and students, lack of reciprocal and mutual relationship with stakeholders, improvised financial and logistic issues, unorganized documentation and dissemination mechanism, and unfair rewarding system.

Human and financial resource development and coordination

Incompetent and outdated human resources management, insufficient allocation and poor financial resources management, weak social cohesion, coordination and collaboration, weak motivation and staff capacity to cope with rapid technological outmodedness, and lack of effective monitoring and performance appraisal system.

Governance and leadership

Instable organizational structure and continuity in change, absence of females in leadership positions, limitation in leadership decision making, staff refraining from participating in leadership, and poor grievance procedure.

Communication and partnership

Limited flow of information within and outside the university's system and limited networking and partnership,

Facilities and working environment

Infrastructure limited in quality, quantity, access and coverage to offer the required services, lack of buildings and offices equipped with relevant resources and equipment necessary for the staff, unfair distribution and utilization of resources and inaccessibility of buildings for people with disabilities.

All of the above-mentioned challenges and weaknesses may need strong and effective strategic leadership to maintain and secure sustainable resources.

External Challenges

Lack of Adequate Attention to the Establishment of Research Universities

Almost all research universities are publicly funded institutions (Altbach, 2007). Although institutional ambitions are important, it is difficult to realize a research university without the attention of the government. The government should create a pleasant working environment for research universities in terms of funds, recruitment of academic staff and research endeavours. Unfortunately, the attention of the Ethiopian government to the establishment of research universities is meagre (Woldegiyorgis, 2018b).

Limited Autonomy

Research universities demand autonomy unlike universities that focus on the training and re-training of students (Altbach, 2009). Nevertheless, the existing condition in Ethiopian higher education seems to reveal that universities, irrespective of their aspirations, do not have the autonomy to recruit academic staff based on their own guidelines; cannot select students that fit

their academic programs, and there is no a special funding scheme devised to distribute the available financial resources to the research and non-research universities.

In a similar manner, Bahir Dar University identified threats that hamper its progress towards the realization of its research university vision. Some of the threats include; instability resulting from inflation and socio-political conditions of the country, rigid government policies, rules, regulations, poor taxation regime, high rate of graduate unemployment, poor education quality, lack of interest and capacity of local businesses for partnership, competition for limited resources and shortage of foreign currency BDU (2020, pp.35-36).

Lessons to be Learned from the Resource Dependence Theory: Researchers' Reflection

Based on the resource dependence perspective, universities may apply different tactics to achieve their strategic choices. Therefore, considering the existing achievements and challenges of BDU, the researchers recommend the following based on the Resource Dependency perspective.

Executive Succession

Executive succession refers to the selection and retaining mechanism of top leaders and managers of the organizations. In the context of the present study, it may refer to the president of the university and the mechanisms within which the university president is recruited. As Bastedo and Bowman (2011, p. 7) indicated "as presidents are expected to manage the crucial strategic contingencies of the organization, both selection procedures and contract provisions often shift to recognize changing environments".

The selection of university presidents in Ethiopia has been a point of contest for the last twenty years. University presidents were recruited through appointment by the Federal Ministry of Education that solely depends on two criteria: membership in the ruling party (the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) and place of birth. Besides, their membership to the political party, university presidents need to be born in the place where the university is established. Consequently, there were claims that university presidents were accountable to the ruling political party rather than to the academic and research community of their universities.

BDU has been experiencing similar situations. Although the university has established ambitious plans and visions like the vision of becoming a research university by 2025 (later extended to 2030), the university´s presidents prior 2017 were directly assigned rather than merit-based competitions. It is only since 2017 that competition-based university presidency was introduced in the country (Woldegiyorgis, 2018a). However, this may not be sufficient to achieve the strategic choice of the university. Becoming a research university requires multifaceted knowledge of global and local conditions. Therefore, university presidents, as they are the captains

of their universities, need to have knowledge and experience in local industry, policy making, and local and international organizations.

Academic knowledge as explained in terms of publications and academic rank are not sufficient to lead a university that aspires to become a research university. For example, the call for recruiting a president announced by BDU contains four major criteria, one of which is experience in serving in higher education, industry, research institute or related institutions with a record of immense contribution and performance (BDU, 2017). The university has to use its rank in the differentiation process and the direction given by MOSHE to work towards a research university as an opportunity to create strong partnerships with different national and international research and financial institutions so as to meet its strong resource demand. Moreover, it is also vital for the University to attract top-notched university staff (Ethiopian or non-Ethiopian) to realize its vision.

Board of Directors of Universities

Composition of board members and the number of its membership contribute to organizational success in managing uncertainties and dependencies (Hillman et al., 2009). As the diversity of the advisory body increases, the capability of the organization to influence its external environment is likely to increase. Cohesion among board members enhances communication, decision making processes and support (Drees & Heugens, 2013).

According to the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation, public universities are supposed to have a board composed of seven voting members (FDRE, 2009). Three of the voting members are selected by the University´s senate and approved by the Federal Ministry of Education and the remaining four voting members including the chairperson of the board are appointed by the Federal Ministry of Education. The Higher Education Proclamation Article 45(5) goes on and states that:

> The members … shall be past or present holders of responsible positions and notable personalities especially in teaching or research and in integrity or be representatives of the customers of the products and services of the institution and whose exceptional knowledge, experience and commitment are such as to enable them to contribute to the attainment of the mission of the institution and the objectives of higher education generally (FDRE, 2009, p. 5011).

However, the criteria used to select members of the university's board are vague (Woldegiyorgis, 2015). Most university boards are composed of government officials with meager work experience in higher education and industry. The board members are either members or supporters of the ruling party (Gebremeskel & Feleke, 2016). Thus, they are more fanatic to inculcate the political ideologies of the ruling party than to serve the academic and research aspirations of the university.

The context of BDU is not different. Previously, all six board members were senior members of the ruling party. Besides, four board members were senior officials and heads of

different offices. Generally the university's board had the following limitations pertaining to the demands of a research university.

First, the compositions of board members are filled with officials from different government offices. This would eventually make the board myopic in its orientations and limited in its scope of influence. As there are no members from the private and industry sector, the possibility of the University to earn additional funds and to establish partnerships with the industry and research institutes could be limited. Hence, the board needs to have members from the industry, research institutes and other civic organizations.

Second, because it is dominated by members affiliated to the ruling political party, the board may have limited space to think new strategic initiatives and activities. Much effort of the board focuses on aligning and popularizing the existing practices of the university with the government´s political ideology (Gebremeskel & Feleke, 2016).

Therefore, it is important to note that the previous board compositions, for reasons stated above, seem to deviate from the overall aspirations of the university, i.e., becoming a research university. A research university is a resource intensive institution and thus the composition of the board needs to be reshaped in a way that enhances the effectiveness of the board. Recently, there are some improvements. Accordingly, the existing board members of BDU consist of members from government offices, higher education institutions, and consultancies. However, still the university needs board members from national and international organizations who could contribute to its resource mobilization through collaborative partnership.

Political Action

Political action implies the creation of an environment that suits the purpose and interest of an organization through rules and regulations or some other political and economic means (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). It also encompasses all processes and endeavors that organizations do to reverse the rules and regulations that constrain the achievement of their aspirations. Applied to higher education context, political rules and regulations are among the major constraints that higher education institutions are facing in their effort to manage their interdependencies and uncertainties (Bastedo & Bowman, 2011).

Attributed to the nature of BDU and the limitations linked with the board composition and successions of executives, BDU seems to be constrained by rules and regulations that in reality constrained the university´s effort towards becoming a research university. For example, students' placements are still carried out by the federal ministry of education, research budget is chronically limited, and the possibility to employ the best and brightest faculty through attractive remunerations is difficult and is limited by the civil service code.

Therefore, the university needs to make concerted political negotiations with the government over the creation of special rules and regulations that help to overcome these challenges. Political action, negotiations with other similar or higher institutions, is applicable in

the context where organizations face unalterable conditions that limit their purposes and interdependencies (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Joint Ventures

Joint ventures refers to the conditions where organizations including higher education institutions create an alliance with other business organizations to realize their strategic choices (Hillman et al., 2009). The present study into the context of BDU revealed that though the university has strategic themes focusing on creating partnerships through offering joint degree programs and research and knowledge exchange with well-recognized universities, the kind and numbers of partnerships that the university created since the commencement of new vision of becoming a research university seems to be limited (BDU, 2015; BDU, 2020). Therefore, it is important to create inter-organizational relationships and partnerships with local and international research universities and research institutes. For example, the development of joint programs, research projects, and even business ventures may contribute to the resource generation that the university requires.

Mergers

Merger implies to the structural and functional combinations of two or more organizations into one entity (organization). It is undertaken to improve efficiency in resource utilization and global competitiveness of higher education institutions (Välimaa et al., 2014). In their review on the resource dependence theory, Hillman et al., (2009) have identified three major purposes of organizational mergers which, in fact, are important to the context of higher education institutions. According to them, institutional mergers are important first, to reduce competition by absorbing an important competitor; second, to manage interdependence with either the sources of input or purchasers of output; and third, to diversify operations and thereby lessen dependence on the present organizations with which it exchanges.

Thinking the context of BDU, merger could be considered as one possible strategy to achieve its aspirations of becoming a research university. As indicated in the previous sections, the numbers of higher education institutions in Ethiopia are increasingly growing. Consequently, the competitions for critical resources are likely to increase. For example, the regional state where the present case university is found had only two universities in 2003. However, seven other public universities were established in fifteen years-time and thus the number of public universities in the region reached to eight in 2018. Accordingly, although mergers are national endeavors Välimaa et al., (2014), merging with other similar universities and research institutes could be taken as a potential strategy to achieve the strategic choices of BDU.

Conclusions and Implications

The present analysis into BDU, one of the Ethiopian universities that aspire to become a research university, revealed that the uncertainty in relation to the critical resources is among the justifications underpinned to the aspiration of becoming a research university. The justifications are elicited in terms of economic, institutional, and political justifications that the country aspired to achieve by 2030.

Attributed to the strategic choice of becoming a research university, BDU is staggering to achieve some strategic issues in relation to staff development, institutionalization of research, and development of new postgraduate programs. However, considering the characteristics of the research universities, the university needs to sustain and revitalize some of its strategic activities. The analysis into the existing achievements of the university in line with the nature and characteristics of the research universities revealed that additional endeavors need to be undertaken to capacitate the university in the spheres that a research university need to have. The major challenges particularly in the area of research, community engagement, communication and partnership, governance and leadership, staff motivation and capacity, also need special attention. Without addressing these challenges, the dream to become a research university will remain a ′muse′ than a ′reality′.

The question laid then on how the university could achieve its strategic choice of becoming a research university. The researcher proposed that working in executive successions, board compositions, mergers, political action and development of joint ventures could help the university in achieving its strategic choice. Some of these strategic recommendations could be performed by the university itself while others need the government′s interventions. For example, the university could be involved in the development of joint ventures and joint negotiations to influence the government to bring changes in the executive successes, co-optation, and mergers. However, the remaining others such as board compositions and executive succession are stubbornly embodied with the roles of the federal government. Therefore, a two-way discussion between the Federal government and the university needs to be perused to realize the visions of becoming a research university. Without the intervention and commitment of the federal government, the strategic choice of becoming a research university would remain rhetoric.

Limitations of the Study

The present study relied on secondary sources and some personal experiences of the researchers. Besides, the study applied the resource dependence perspective to analyze the justification, achievements and hitherto solicit strategic tactics to realize the vision of becoming a research university. Therefore, although the study chronicled some critical findings related the aspirations of becoming a research university, the results seem to have limitations. The main limitation is its dependence on document analysis only. Therefore, further research that integrates primary sources of data (e.g., in-depth interview and questionnaire) is important to enhance the

scope and breadth of the finding regarding the needs for research universities in Ethiopia in general and BDU in particular.

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Using a Cooperative Learning Strategy to Increase Undergraduate Students' Engagement and Performance: Bahir Dar University Psychology Graduating Students in Focus

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Abstract

In the 21st century, preparing university students for real work and lifelong learning requires instructors to serve as facilitators of learning rather than as providers of information. Instruction needs to be learner-centered, active, enjoyable and engaging. As one form of active learning strategy, cooperative learning (e.g. group assignment) helps students to collaborate in the task actively and this in turn improves their learning engagement and performance. However, in my undergraduate course, when I encourage students to do assignments in groups, many of them do not take it seriously and are not committed, the final product being poor in terms of quality and participation. The objective of this action research was to improve the educational value of group assignment as one form of cooperative learning strategy by way of designing the task thoughtfully, following up and motivating students, providing constructive and timely feedback and ensuring greater engagement of students in the task. Third year psychology students volunteered to participate in the project. Phase I and Phase II (preliminary and actual action implementation make up the action research project). The outcomes of the preliminary and actual action implementation were then compared. The findings revealed that as a result of the intervention, students developed positive attitudes towards group assignment and they were more engaged in the second assignment as compared to the first (t= 6.51, p= 0.05). Students' performances in the second test and group project was also improved (t= 2.80, p=0.05 and t=7.67, p=0.05 respectively). Based on the findings, implications for further research and action are suggested.

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Introduction

Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2002; Slavin, 2014). Despite the limitations in implementation, this approach is practiced as one form of active learning strategy in tertiary education of Ethiopia (Tefera & Robyn, 2015).

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Meta-analysis studies of the cooperative learning literature reveals that this approach has positive effects on students' learning and performance as well as on their social skills. Analysis of 164 studies comparing cooperative learning to competitive and individualistic learning among college students showed that cooperative learning led to an increase in students' academic achievement and the approach also brought improvements in both attitude and self-esteem (Johnson et al., 2006). Another review of 39 studies comparing STEM classrooms that used small-group activities indicated that students who participated in group activities had greater academic achievement and increased persistence through STEM courses (Springer et al., 1999).

Group assignment/project is one of the cooperative learning strategies advocated by university management across the world. It is believed that this method improves students' social skills and learning. Group assignment helps students develop skills such as organization, delegation, cooperation and leadership. The fundamental assumption in group assignment is that students' collaboration substantially enhances their learning. Group assignment fosters greater understanding of the task or content given by the instructor (Fall, Webb & Chudowski, 2000). Students involved in effective group assignments develop higher order thinking skills (Cohen, 1994) and better communication and conflict management skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). Group assignment also helps to develop skills transferable to the work environment such as teamwork, time management and interpersonal skills (Clarke, Pearce & Gannaway, 2004).

Stahl (2006) notes that while students work in groups, collaboration brings them many benefits to the knowledge building process. Joint efforts to complete a learning task encourages them to discuss the issue in hand from various viewpoints, to activate and share relevant knowledge about the issue, to generate ideas on how to solve the problem, and to search for and negotiate the use of information sources. Through constant discussion and interaction, students gain insights that would be difficult for them to achieve on their own.

Consistent with prior evidence on the effectiveness of cooperative learning (e.g. group assignment), recent studies (Gillies, 2016; Johnson, Johnson, Roseth & Shin, 2014; Slavin, 2014; Sormunen, Tanni , Alamettälä & Heinström, 2014; Tsay, & Brady, 2010) support the view that a well-structured cooperative learning strategy produces more positive outcomes among students. Learners treat each other as resources and they go beyond superficial engagement with learning materials. Cooperative learning provides the social context for students to actively learn and make deeper connections among facts, concepts and ideas.

Although there is adequate theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the advantages of cooperative learning in the teaching and learning process, the same evidence shows that if it is not properly implemented, this method has also been judged as problematic by both teachers and students. Challenges identified in relation to cooperative learning include: "free riders," leaving all or most of the work to others; conflict between group members (Brokaw & Rudd, 2002); time management and organizational challenges (Morris & Hayes, 1997), a mechanism used by teachers to reduce their workload and awarding equal grades to all members of the group regardless of contribution (Ford & Morice, 2003).

As a pedagogical approach, although cooperative learning has been practiced at Bahir Dar University for long, the formal peer-led group has been recommended for undergraduate students in the university recently (Chalachew & Andargachew, 2007; Tefera & Robyn, 2015). In the peer-led group formation at Bahir Dar University, five to eight students of different abilities are assigned to work together and the academically better student is assigned to be the leader of the group. Mentors are assigned to each cohort of students so as to facilitate their engagement in the cooperative learning tasks which are given by course instructors.

Despite the multidimensional benefits of group assignment to students' learning, many instructors and students in the university often complain about cooperative learning. An instructor, for instance, expressed his dissatisfaction with group assignment saying: "It is really painful and discouraging to grade assignment papers done in 'groups' when one knows that the written assignments are not the students' own work" (Personal Journal, December 23, 2018). Conflict between group members, the problem of free riders and unfair grading are also some of the challenges mentioned by students in connection with group assignment (Chalachew & Andargachew, 2007).

This being the case, except the project by Chalachew and Andargachew (2007), the researcher could not find intervention studies at BDU which attempted to minimize problems related to group assignment. In this action research, I present my experience of designing group assignment as one form of cooperative learning strategy with the aim of improving its educational value. It is argued that by ensuring student ownership, proper task design and careful follow and monitoring, the efficacy of group assignment can be improved (Gillies, 2016).

Methods

Research Design

This study is predicated on an action research model. As an action research project, the study emphasized identifying the problem, planning a solution/action, implementing the action, monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness and reflection (McNiff, 2002). It is argued that by utilizing action research, teachers not only learn about how to improve their students' learning, but they also learn about themselves as they seek ways to continually improve (Chuaprapaisilp, 1997; Johnson & Button, 2000; O'Connor, Greene & Anderson, 2006; Tripp, 2005). In Johnson and Button's (2000) study, for instance, teachers noticed the links between their own learning and the learning of their students, affirming that the principles of good learning that they used applied to their own classrooms. In the present action research project, the author acted as a facilitator of the intervention. Students were active partners by involving in the intervention who, in turn, engaged in the group tasks to improve their own learning. Reflection was made before, during and after the action implementation. Before the intervention, I held discussion with my students about group assignment. From the discussion, I learned that problems related to the effectiveness of group assignment were a shared concern.

Following the preliminary reflection, students were given the first group assignment and I used the conventional approach of monitoring the project. This phase served as a baseline data. Based on the data obtained from the first reflection and the preliminary action, the actual intervention was then planned and implemented. Evidence for the project was gathered using a mixed methods approach (QUAN + qual) which is a concurrent type of data collection (Creswell, 2014). Much of the data collected were quantitative. After the actual intervention, changes as a result of the actual action implementation were documented.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Undergraduate psychology students, who were prospective graduates at Bahir Dar University in 2019, were the participants of the action research. There were 38 students in this cohort and they took the course 'Introduction to Guidance and Counseling' in the first semester of the academic year (i.e., in 2018). Census technique was employed and all students voluntarily participated in the project. The institutionalized group formation (peer-led group) was used. Students were assigned into five peer-led groups, each having eight members except one which had six.

Instruments of Data Collection

Observation

Observation was used to collect data about students' readiness and confidence in presenting their group's work. This was done both in the first and second phases of the action research project. Criteria to observe students included readiness, confidence, understanding of content and coherence of idea while presenting.

Focus group interview

Focus group interview was held with each peer-led group after the first and second phases of action implementation. This was undertaken to understand students' reflection on the extent of their engagement in the group assignment. In the second phase, students were requested to reflect their experience by comparing with the first phase.

Interview

Interview was held with the randomly selected presenters of each group. This was designed to know how they felt when they were asked to present the group's work, their readiness, confidence, understanding of content and also to what extent they were involved in the group task. This was carried out both in the first and second phases of the project.

Test

Restricted essay questions (six questions) were prepared from the group assignment both in Phases I and II and all students took the test. The test in both phases was scored out of 10%. Weight of each item was determined by depth and broadness of the content.

Checklist

A checklist having five items of involvement or engagement and which measures the level of engagement in the assignment (adopted from Chalachew & Andargachew, 2007) was presented to each student. Students were asked to rate their extent of involvement during the first and second assignments on a rating scale ranging from high to low.

Whole Class Discussion

At the end of Phase II action implementation, whole class discussion was held with the students. This was scheduled to understand their experiences and reflections about Phases I and II group assignments. It was an important event which gave students the chance to reflect on their overall perception on the intervention.

Data Collection Procedure

In this action research project, two phase actions were carried out so as to examine the effectiveness of group assignment in improving students' engagement and performance. Before the first or preliminary action implementation, I introduced the course. The course 'Introduction to Guidance and Counseling' was delivered in a block modality and eight weeks were allocated for it. In the first two weeks, I distributed the course handbook and discussed the objectives, content, essential concepts, importance and functions of guidance and counseling. Following the two weeks' discussion, as it is conventionally done, assignments were distributed to each peer-led group without carrying out a thorough discussion on why and how they needed to do the assignment. Deadline for submission was communicated. After two weeks, students submitted their assignments. On the same day, one student was randomly nominated from each peer- led group and these selected students were asked to present their group's work. After the presentation, interviews were held with each peer-led group about the problems and experiences they had while doing the assignments. Some of the issues for interview were problems related to group assignment, each student's involvement in the group assignment, each member's readiness to present the group's work and personal problems experienced while doing the assignments. The randomly nominated students were also interviewed about their reediness and confidence in presenting their group's work. After the interviews (the same day), questions were prepared from the group assignments and a written test was administered.

The second phase action was implemented based on the lessons learned from the first phase, my personal experience as an action researcher and instructor, interview with other groups

of students and discussion with selected instructors. Factors associated with student engagement and performance in group assignment were numerous. Among other things, these included instructor's commitments, the nature of the task set for group work, students' conception of the purpose and benefit of doing the task, the content to be learnt, ease of allocation of the task into sub-themes, achievability of the task, and the free rider problem. In general, the limitations while employing group assignment were given special attention.

As part of the second (actual) intervention, I made a thorough discussion with my students regarding group assignment. Students' assessment directive of BDU stipulates that group assignment should be a compulsory part of learning and assessment (Bahir Dar University, 2020). As a compulsory pedagogical strategy, students need to benefit out of it. We discussed exhaustively the relevance of working collaboratively. Students noted that one of the reasons why they did not take ownership of group assignments was because instructors were not serious about it. Further, instructors were not committed to monitoring the assignments and as a result students in turn did not take the task seriously.

Synthesizing the lessons from reflection and experience, students were convinced to be active partners in the action research project. I gave feedback to each peer-led group on the first assignment. The benefit of group assignment to the students was further stressed. The discussion included the importance of group assignment, the need for each member's active engagement and rotating roles while doing the tasks. Individual student's responsibility for the task given which would be considered in role allocation and the importance of self- and group assessment while doing the task were discussed. The importance of submitting a progress report to the instructor while doing the assignment, how they could effectively handle their group tasks within the given time, and how their participation in the group work would be assessed and given value were also addressed and agreed upon.

The in-depth discussion with students regarding cooperative learning, in particular group assignments, and their role as active partners in the action research project were emphasized to create a positive attitude and motivation so that they could actively participate in the group assignments. After the discussion, the second assignment tasks were distributed and agreement was reached with each peer-led group to report their progress every four days. Continuous feedback was given by the author to each group while they presented their progress report. Finally, after two weeks, students submitted their completed assignments. A similar procedure was used as in Phase I to check students' engagement in the second assignment. On the submission date, the students who presented in Phase I from each peer-led group were again encouraged to present their group's work. A test was also administered. After students' presentation and administering the test, interviews were held with the presenters from each peer-led group about their experiences in doing the assignment in Phase II. A whole class discussion was finally held at the end of the project.

Data Analysis

Data collected from observation, focus group, in-depth interview and the instructor's and students' reflections were analyzed qualitatively. Quantitative data gathered through checklist and tests were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Means, percentages and t-test were used for the purpose.

Ethical Considerations

As the aim of this study was to improve students' engagement and performance in group assignment, the target group joined the research project as partners not as passive participants. The purpose of the study was discussed in detail and they were informed that participation was voluntary and that if they were not comfortable, they could withdraw from the project at any point in the intervention process. After the discussion, oral consent of the class was obtained.

Results

The aim of this action research was to improve the educational value of group assignments as one form of cooperative learning strategy. The participants were active partners in the action research project being committed to their assigned tasks with the facilitation and active support of the instructor. Two phases were used to complete the action research project.

In the first phase, as it is conventionally done, the group assignments were given to the students without proper task design, follow up and support. Students were not active partners and did not take ownership of the task. The importance of group assignments, the need for each member's active involvement and rotating roles while doing the tasks were not discussed. Individual student's responsibility for the task given and the importance of self- and group assessment while doing the task were not focused. The importance of submitting a progress report to the instructor while doing the assignment was not given attention and how students could effectively handle their group tasks within the given time was not discussed. Students were not also informed how their participation in the group work would be assessed and graded. The first phase served as a baseline data representing the conventional approach of implementing group assignments.

In the second phase, as illustrated in the method section, all problems observed and lessons learned while using group assignments were taken into account and beginning from effective task design, students were encouraged to be active partners in the action research project. The author facilitated the project by supporting them with proper follow up. Before communicating the task to each cooperative learning group, we had discussion about group assignment. Among other issues, the discussion focused on specific cognitive and metacognitive strategies to facilitate discussion, thinking and learning. They were motivated to actively engage in the task. Students were then informed about the tasks and an agreement was reached with each peer-led group to report their progress every four days. Continuous feedback was given to each group by the author

while they presented their progress reports. Students were also coached continuously and they were encouraged to raise any concern while doing their tasks. Finally, after two weeks, they submitted their final group assignments. A similar procedure was used as in Phase I to examine students' engagement and performance in the second group project. The changes as a result of the actual action implementation were then documented.

1. Improvements in Students' Engagement in the Group Task

Data obtained from observation and interview indicated that during Phase I a number of problems were observed among students. The randomly selected presenters were timid, less confident and presented written reports that were incoherent and of poor quality, and in some cases the recruited presenters were unable to speak at all. When students were asked to present, they said they were not prepared. In the interview, they were asked to explain why they were not able to present their own work. The students explained that they had already pre-selected group presenters. Further probing interviews indicated that most members had very low involvement in the group assignment partly because the purposes of doing the assignments were not clear enough to them, and they thought that the assignments would not be taken seriously on the part of the instructor.

During the actual action implementation, lots of improvements were noted. For the purpose of minimizing the impact of other intervening factors that could come as a result of changing the presenters, the group tasks in the second phase were presented by the same students who made the first presentation. Partly, this was done because of the need to assess the extent of free-riding problem. The previous presenters did not expect that they would also present the second group assignment. However, even so, they were less timid, were confident, had coherence in their presentation and presented high quality of work with regard to content. Moreover, the students had more to say when they were asked to finalize their presentation.

Interview with each peer-led group indicated that the discussion made about group assignment, the nature of the second assignment, the instructor's follow-up, encouragement and feedback had a positive influence and they had clear idea about why group assignment was given and how they were expected to do it. They explained that they had better engagement in the second assignment than in the first. Students were also asked to provide evidence of each individual's involvement. Some detailed questions even went to the extent of asking the title of a material/book a student had read, its author, size of material, location (library), pages and the like. The specific activity or role a student had taken in the assignment was also probed. Most students were very much comfortable and were able to defend themselves persuasively by answering well the questions posed by the author. Some groups gave a written list of what each student in the group had read, searched and found and also what specific activity they performed in their roles.

To triangulate the data obtained from observation and interview, students were also presented with a checklist with five indicators of involvement or engagement. They were asked to rate their involvement during their first and second assignment. The results revealed that the

students showed improvements in their involvement in the second group assignment as compared to the first (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Students' Degree of Involvement in the Second Assignment as Compared to the First

No.	Indicators of Involvement	N	Ratings of Involvement					
			Min	Max	Assignment I		Assignment II	
					Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	In my group, I was given a clear role to perform	38	1	3	2.18	.691	2.25	.514
2	I have searched for, found, and/or read materials or books that were used as reference for doing the assignment	38	1	3	1.97	.716	2.06	.442
3	In my group, I have successfully accomplished the role given to me	38	1	3	2.13	.704	2.83	3.58
4	During the group work, I have contributed by forwarding useful ideas and accepting others' ideas	38	1	3	2.39	.718	2.72	.616
5	I have adequate preparation to present the work if I am asked to do so	38	1	3	1.92	.673	2.19	.542
Average Engagement					2.11		2.41	

As presented in Table 1, students' self-reported data indicate that they have brought improvement in their involvement in the second group assignment as compared to the first (t= 6.51, p= 0.05). Despite a significant statistical difference between the two means, the mean score of students' degree of involvement in assignment II is not remarkably far from the first phase. This may be because even though they are motivated to engage in the group task, time pressure (only two weeks) and course load (other tasks given for the semester courses) may have impacted their engagement.

2. Improvements in Students' Test Performance

As presented in Table 2 below, students scored better results in the second test as compared to the first. Students' understanding of the main theme of the assignment was poor in Test I implying their low engagement in the group assignment. Thirty-five students (92.2%) had scores of 5 and above in the second test, whereas 30 students (78.9%) scored 5 and above in the first test. To check whether students' mean scores in Tests I and II had significant difference, t-test was computed. As presented in Table 3, students' scores in Test I and Test II had significant differences (t=2.80, p= 0.05), Test II results being significantly higher than Test I.

Table 2.

Comparison of Students' Scores in Tests I and II

Test I			Test II		
Score (10%)	Frequency	Percent	Score (10%)	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.6	4.00	2	5.3
1.50	1	2.6	4.50	1	2.6
3.50	2	5.3	5.00	5	13.2
4.00	2	5.3	5.50	5	13.2
4.50	2	5.3	6.00	7	18.4
5.00	5	13.2	6.50	5	13.2
5.50	11	28.9	7.00	8	21.1
6.00	6	15.8	7.50	4	10.5
6.50	6	15.8	8.50	1	2.6
7.00	1	2.6			
8.00	1	2.6			
Total	38	100	Total	38	100

Table 3.

Mean Difference of Students' Scores in Tests I and II

Tests	N	df	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Test I	38	37	5.31	1.34	2.80	0.05
Test II	38	37	6.15	1.04		

In addition to their test scores, students' group projects (Assignment I and II) were reviewed and corrected. Students' results in the second group assignment/project were found to be better as compared to the first. As presented in Table 4, all the peer-led groups' scores were higher in the second assignment as compared to the first.

Table 4.

Comparison of Students' Assignment Scores in Phases I and II

Peer-led Group	Score in the assignment designed in the conventional modality Assignment I (12%)	Score in Assignment II designed for intervention (12%)	Difference in Scores of Assignments (baseline and intervention)
1	7.5	10.5	+
2	5	7	+
3	6.5	8.5	+
4	7	10	+
5	5.5	7	+

To check whether students' mean scores in Assignments I and II had significant difference, t-test was computed. As presented in Table 5, their scores in Assignment II had a significant increase as compared to Assignment I (t= 7.67, p= 0.05).

Table 5.

Mean Difference of Peer Groups' Assignment Scores in Assignments I and II

Assignments	N	df	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Assignment I	5	4	6.3	1.04	7.67	0.05
Assignment II	5	4	8.6	1.64		

3. Changes in Students' Attitudes to Group Assignments

One important observation in the present action research project is students' motivation towards the project. The thorough discussion with students about the benefits of group assignment and their role as partners in the action research project brought about a positive perception. One student explained the change in attitude as follows.

> I did not have a favorable attitude to group assignment before. Most instructors did not tell us the importance of working in groups to our academic and social life. They simply distribute tasks among our peer-led groups and use it as one assessment mechanism since the university requires them to give at least one task to be done in groups. The scores they give to group members are not also fair as it did not take into account the contribution of each member. After I was involved in this project, I learned that engaging in such tasks contributes many things to my future academic and professional life. I am now happy to contribute my own share to my peer-led group. (Daniel)

4. Reflection by Students

Whole class discussion was held with students at the end of the action research project and students were given the chance to reflect their overall feeling and opinion about their involvements in the group assignments during the preliminary and final action implementation and on group assignment in general. Such discussions with students strengthened the inferences made from presentations, interviews, observation, test and assignment results and checklists. One student explained her views during the whole class discussion as follows:

> We learned that if the teacher is committed to support students in group assignment, we will not experience the challenges that we are facing in different courses concerning group assignment. I do not know why course instructors do not take group assignment seriously. If the instructors do not take it seriously, we similarly take it as something that is not serious. Why do you share your experience with each other if you do not know the value? (Rahel)

As explained by the student, if group assignment is well designed, it increases students' motivation and time on task. It is an important factor affecting their learning and achievement. Motivation enhances cognitive processing and directs students' behavior towards particular goals.

5. Reflection by the Instructor

Cooperation is a social capital enshrined in our culture. However, this capital is not thoughtfully tapped and integrated in the formal educational system of the nation. As Paulo Freire noted the chalk and talk, i.e., the lecture method, has dominated the formal education for decades. In response to the limitations of the lecture method, active learning methods, in particular, cooperative learning is encouraged as a pedagogical approach in universities. However, this method is not universally accepted by both instructors and students. While serving as an instructor for more than a decade, I have been interested in cooperative learning and in action research very lately while I was facilitating cooperative learning and conducing action research as part of the requirement for Higher Diploma Program and my PhD study.

Cooperative learning, in particular group project/assignment, is stipulated as one form of learning and assessment strategy in the students' assessment directive of Bahir Dar University. Nevertheless, most instructors seem not to come out of the so called 'comfort zone' of lecturing. They justify that students are not interested in working on tasks cooperatively. We should not assume that our students lack the willingness to engage in cooperative projects. Theory and practice show that cooperative learning strategy benefits our students both socially and academically. It also helps them to prepare for real life. As instructors, we must always strive to improve our students' engagement in their learning. This action research project can be a showcase that if cooperative learning projects are appropriately planned, designed, monitored and managed, and active engagement of the learners is ensured, students can benefit a lot from such learning tasks.

However, since most instructors do not take cooperative learning projects seriously, students have no commitment to actively engage in such tasks. In most cases they do not go beyond superficial engagement with the learning tasks. Based on my experience as an instructor and action researcher, if students are encouraged to make commitments, they can make a difference. They can change the existing passive learning environment. Such initiatives of course require time and effort as well as experience of both the instructor and students.

Discussion

The results of the action research project indicate that with the transformed role of the instructor as facilitator and energizer of student engagement and learning and by recognizing our students as partners, cooperative learning tasks (e.g., group assignment) can be made to have invaluable educational value. This section corroborates the findings with relevant literature.

Group Assignment Improves Students' Engagement in the Learning Task

In this study, comparison of students' engagement in the first and second group assignments showed that if well planned and properly managed, group assignments enable students to have significant improvement in their active involvement in collaborative tasks. In the second action implementation, while peer groups were asked to report their progress every four days, almost all members of the peer group were comfortable to explain what they did in relation to the group task. They also clearly reported their role in the group. Unlike the preliminary action implementation, in the second phase students reflected that they have made adequate preparation for presenting their group project if they were to be nominated as presenters.

Several studies support the present finding attesting that if properly implemented, cooperative learning (e.g. group assignment) benefits students both socially and academically (Aldosari, 2016; Gillies, 2016; Johnson, Johnson, Roseth & Shin, 2014; Liao, 2006; Mello, 1993; Slavin, 2014; Sormunen, Tanni, Alamettälä & Heinström, 2014). Mello (1993), for instance, identified five benefits of group assignment: students gain insight into group dynamics; they can tackle more comprehensive assignments; interpersonal skills can be developed; students are more exposed to others' points of view, and they will be more prepared for the commercial world. In these studies it is noted that the interaction of members engaging in group assignments would develop generic skills such as communication and critical thinking skills. Group assignments also offer teachers an effective way to increase the complexity and challenge of the tasks that can help students gain different experiences, engage students and offer them the opportunity for collaborative working.

Group assignment as one form of cooperative learning is becoming a common feature in institutions of higher education. It benefits students who engage in it. Not only does it assist them in acquiring knowledge, but it also helps them to develop cognitive and social skills. However, if it is not properly designed and managed cooperative learning can have different limitations. One of such limitations is using the groups' products as part of course assessment and awarding of equal grades to all members of the group regardless of contribution. Participation of students in cooperative work varies in terms of effort exerted by the participants (Divaharan & Atputhasamy, 2002).

Group Assignment Improves Students' Performance

Students' results of the group project and the test administered to evaluate their understanding of the contents of the task showed that they had significant improvement in their scores in the second assignment. This was assumed to be the result of thoughtful design of the group task, a thorough discussion with the students on the importance of group assignment as one form of cooperative learning and proper follow-up of each group's progress and encouraging students to take ownership of their own learning.

Meta-analysis studies on cooperative learning revealed that proper implementation of cooperative learning tasks have positive impact. For example, an analysis of 164 studies comparing

cooperative learning to competitive and individualistic learning among college students showed that cooperative learning led to a relative increase in student academic performance and students also showed improvements in both attitude and self-esteem (Johnson et al., 2006). Another review of 39 studies comparing STEM classrooms that used small-group activities with those that did not reveal that students who participated in group activities had greater academic achievement and increased persistence through STEM courses than those who did not (Springer et al., 1999).

Overall, effective student participation in group work is an important learning strategy for higher education courses (Elgort, Smith & Toland, 2008). Although some students feel as though they can accomplish assignments better by themselves rather than in a group, empirical evidence shows that group work helps students apply their knowledge and social skills to real world experiences (Elgort, Smith & Toland, 2008). However, merely assigning a group and giving a task without designing it thoughtfully does not itself create critical thinking outcomes. Instructors need to be cognizant of how best to facilitate effective collaborative learning environments (Burke, 2011).

Group Assignment Improves Students' Attitudes towards Cooperative Learning

During the whole class discussion at the end of the action research project, students explained that if group tasks have serious follow up by the instructor, it contributes a lot to their social and academic competence. Some students reported that they enjoyed their participation in the second group learning projects. They noted that it helped them to understand difficult concepts in the course.

A number of researchers support the view that when students are exposed to cooperative learning like group assignment, their attitudes gets improved. Johnson and colleagues' review of the cooperative learning literature indicated that in addition to a relative increase in student academic performance, improvements were noted among students in both their attitudes and self-esteem. Johnson & Johnson (2002) also noted that when students are exposed to a variety of thoughts, perspectives, and thinking styles, interacting with others and working in groups also increases student motivation and has a positive effect on their attitudes. Vaughan (2002) similarly noted that students show improvements in their attitudes when exposed to cooperative learning tasks.

Conclusion and Implications

Implementing group assignment/project as one form of cooperative learning strategy requires the commitment of the instructor and students. If cooperative learning is executed thoughtfully and systematically, it provides students with an opportunity to improve their social skills, attitudes and achievement. Planning and designing the task, however, takes time and priority. The instructor also needs to prepare clear guidelines. A monitoring and evaluation scheme also needs to be in place. Moreover, peer groups need timely feedback.

One of the conclusions drawn from the present action research project is that by encouraging students to take ownership of their learning, proper planning, thorough discussion about the value of group assignment, and continual guidance and follow-up, it is possible to increase students' engagement in group assignment and improve their performance. On the part of students, it is important to plan their group project before directly engaging in the task. The leader should assign roles to each of the group members. Every student in the group needs to be encouraged to actively take part in bringing the required outcome of the project. Every student in the group has to know that he/she is accountable for his/ her own and the group's performance.

Instructors at Bahir Dar University as well as in other public universities are using group assignment as one form of learning and assessment strategy. However, the design and follow-up is poor. The finding of this study suggests that to benefit the most out of group assignments, it is important for instructors to give due attention to students' engagement in the given activity. The present action research project raises practical issues that instructors need to consider in designing and carrying out group assignment. Proper planning, follow-up, guidance and support and having thorough discussion with students on the why and how of doing group assignment overcomes the drawbacks while amplifying the benefits. Students ownership of their learning is also a key issue in designing effective cooperative learning (e.g. group assignment).

As revealed in the study, a change in students' engagement and performance in group assignment was noted following the implementation of Phase II. However, the impact of the action of individual students in the group was not examined. The outcome could have been more comprehensive if analysis was made on which type of action (e.g., discussion with students, follow-up and support or testing) contributed a lot to the improvement. Further, the present action research project focused on individual level issues such as the free rider problem as factors influencing individual student involvement. However, team level issues such as intra-group trust, group formation, team member satisfaction, workload sharing, group cooperation and communication, shared leadership and interpersonal work group processes were not considered. Time constraint was another pressure in the present action research project. These issues need to be considered by future research. This action research is implemented on a class of 38 students. This is not the reality in most other classes at Bahir Dar University and other public universities, too. As a result, large scale action research project should be planned with adequate time and greater number of students.

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The Academy of Pedagogy: From a Teacher Training College to a Vibrant University

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Abstract

Based mainly on archival documents gathered from Bahir Dar University (BDU) record office and the UNESCO Head Office in Paris, this qualitative study chronicles and analyzes the history of the Academy of Pedagogy from its inception until it transformed itself to Bahir Dar University. The establishment of the Academy of Pedagogy was the result of a meticulous but ambitious feasibility study conducted by two education experts from the University of London employed by UNESCO as consultants. The consultants recommended the establishment of a college specializing in training teacher educators in a four-year program in Bahir Dar. The study also recommended the construction of a primary school and a teacher training institute to enable teacher trainers to undertake teaching practice, curriculum revision and action research. Other recommendations included the installation of an educational broadcasting service and the commencement of in-service training for primary school teachers. The study was so ambitious that it suggested the establishment of a Child Development Research Unit, an Ethiopian Arts Center, a Textbook and Journal Publishing Unit, a Comparative African Studies Institute, Rural Sociology Research Unit, a Health Education Unit, an Evaluation and Archives Unit and a Model Community. However, the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution in 1974, forced the academy to follow a different path. Since then, a lot of changes including curriculum revision took place. In 1980, the Academy was renamed Bahir Dar Teachers College (BDTC). Finally, in 2000, BDTC joined the Polytechnic Institute to form Bahir Dar University.

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Introduction

The 1950s and 1960s witnessed the beginning and expansion of higher education in Ethiopia. In 1950, the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA) came into existence. Following the signing of the Point Four Agreement between Ethiopia and the United States in 1952, the Alemaya College of Agriculture and the Gondar Public Health College were established in 1954[1]

[1] Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855 – 1974* (London: James Currey, 1991), pp. 221-222.

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Similarly, the 1959 agreement signed between the Imperial Government of Ethiopia and the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) gave rise to the birth of the Polytechnic Institute in Bahir Dar in 1963. A decade later, the Academy of Pedagogy was established in Bahir Dar because of the support provided by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Inception and Establishment of the Academy

In the late 1960s, the imperial government of Ethiopia secured financial support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to establish an academy specializing in teacher education.[11] Accordingly, UNESCO assigned Professor Leonard John Lewis and Mrs Helen Coppen, education experts from the University of London, as consultants to study the possibility of establishing a higher education institute for training teacher educators in Ethiopia. The two experts paid a study visit to Ethiopia in 1968 and produced and submitted a report to UNESCO in January 1969. It came to be known as the Lewis-Coppen Report or sometimes called the "Blue Book" because of the blue cover of the report. Bahir Dar, by then a small but growing town was selected to be an ideal site for the new college.[12]

The consultants recommended the establishment of a college specializing in training teacher educators who would graduate with Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) after a four year program. According to the study, students would be in campus in the first, third and fourth year taking courses on a residential basis and the second year would be devoted to practical attachment. The study also recommended the construction of a primary school and a teacher training institute in the same campus to enable teacher trainers to undertake teaching practice, curriculum revision and action research. Other recommendations included the installation of an educational broadcasting service and the commencement of in-service training for primary school teachers soon after the beginning of the regular program. The core concept in the study was to connect primary school curriculum with rural development.[13]

With regard to the realization of the project, the consultants divided the implementation period into three broad phases. preliminary, initiation and Ethiopianization. The preliminary phase would be implemented between April 1969 and September 1970, and it was supposed to include the selection of Ethiopian staff to be trained overseas, appointment of UNESCO experts, and the preparation of the curricula. During the initiation phase, an external evaluation of the training program would be carried out following the development of courses and the graduation of the first

[11] Ye Bahir Dar Memhran College Tarikawi Edget (Historical Development of Bahir Dar Teachers College) 1963-1979 E.C. Memio. pp. 1-2; UNDP/UNESCO, Ethiopia: Academy of Pedagogy, Project Findings and Recommendations. Serial No. FMR/ED/OPS/77/247, Paris, 1977, p. 1.
[12] Barrington Kaye, Academy of Pedagogy, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia: Recommendations on Phasing, Staffing and Special Relationships. 1972, p.5.
[13] *Ibid*., pp. 6-7.

batch. In the third phase, Ethiopianization of the institution would be realized through the systematic replacement of expatriates by Ethiopian professionals. The final phase was supposed to last three years.[14]

In 1970, Professor Lewis and Mrs Coppen were requested to come back to Ethiopia to refine and revise their study. According to their revised report, the number of expatriate staff originally suggested should be substantially reduced in favour of an increase in the national staff. Since September 1972 was suggested as the date for admitting the first intake, students were to be sheltered in the Polytechnic Institute buildings until the completion of the construction of dormitories.[15] The cost of construction and equipment was covered by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Ethiopian government. While the UNDP pledged to allocate a total of $1, 689, 200 for the Academy and the Ethiopian government earmarked $2, 785,000, a loan obtained from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). In the final analysis, UNDP's actual support reached $3, 873, 369 while the Ethiopian government's contribution increased to $7,799,518. Out of this, the government spent $3, 545,000 on the buildings. A further budget amounting to $171,500 USD was allocated for equipment including CCTV, language, and science laboratory instruments. On its part, UNESCO promised to provide books worth $471,900.[16]

In addition, UNESCO paid for four consultants and 19 experts. Among the 19 UNESCO experts, five were from the United States, five from the United Kingdom, and the rest from Denmark, Egypt, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Sudan, Sweden, and Uganda. Likewise, the consultants were three from the United States and one from the United Kingdom.[17]

UNESCO also took the responsibility of assigning a chief technical adviser for the Academy. Accordingly, in January 1972, it appointed Barrington Kaye, head of the Department of Education at Redland College, Southwest England as Chief Technical Adviser for the Academy of Pedagogy. After having discussion with Professor Lewis in London and UNESCO experts in Paris, Kaye came to Ethiopia in February 1972. Before moving to Bahir Dar, he held discussion with Seifu Mahteme Sellase, Minister of Education and Fine Arts, Million Neknik, State Minister, Paulos Asrat and Mery Tadesse, both vice ministers, as well as Getachew Mekuria, Director General of Teacher Training and Kassa Gebre, Chief Engineer at the Ministry. Shortly afterwards, he arrived in Bahir Dar accompanied by Eric Armerding, UNESCO Resident Representative in Ethiopia and Getachew Mekuria. He visited the Polytechnic Institute and discussed with the director, Beyene Bekele if there was a possibility of using some of the buildings as offices for the UNESCO experts and dormitories for students. He also visited hotels that can be used by the UNESCO staff for temporary residence.[18]

[14] *Ibid*., pp. 7-8.
[15] *Ibid*., pp. 8-9.
[16] UNDP/UNESCO, Ethiopia: Academy of Pedagogy … p. 2.
[17] *Ibid*., p. 10.
[18] Kaye, pp. 10-12.

The Chief Technical Adviser further elaborated and divided the three stages of realizing the Academy (suggested in Lewis-Coppen Report) into eight phases. The eight phases are briefly summarized as follows.

Phase I: Preliminary Phase

The appointment of the Chief Technical Adviser and the establishment of the temporary project headquarters in England would be the primary duty at this stage. Then, in consultation with UNESCO experts and officials of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, the Chief Technical Advisor and the National Director of the Academy would plan the operation from their headquarters in the United Kingdom.

Phase II: Simulation and Research Phase

At this stage, the UNESCO experts and the national staff would prepare the curricula and teaching materials, conduct field research in selected rural areas and design a viable academic and administrative structure.

Phase III: Student Intake Phase

After making all the necessary preparations and accommodation arrangements, the first and the second intake of students would be admitted.

Phase IV: Course Development Phase

Assuming September 1973 to be the date for admitting the first intake, this stage would take place when the first batch of students reached third year after completing the practical attachment in the previous year.

Phase V: Associated Development Phase

The study ambitiously suggested that projects like, Child Development Research Unit, an Ethiopian Arts Center, a Textbook and Journal Publishing Unit, a Comparative African Studies Institute, Rural Sociology Research Unit, a Health Education Unit, an Evaluation and Archives Unit and a Model Community would be established during this stage.

Phase VI: Ethiopian Open University Phase

It was supposed that the Academy would run an in-service and distance training programs like that of the Open University in the United Kingdom. That kind of setting was supposed to help those Ethiopians who could not join universities on a conventional basis to get their degrees.

Phase VII: Evaluation Phase

At this stage the whole training program of the Academy would be evaluated to make the necessary readjustments.

Phase VIII: Ethiopianization Phase

At this last stage, qualified Ethiopians would replace the expatriate staff. Phasing out foreign experts and replacing them by nationals should not wait until the last phase. The process may begin during earlier phases.[19]

The study was so ambitious that it recommended the establishment of an Ethiopian Arts Center that would work towards the development of Ethiopian literature, drama, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, ceramics, and other crafts. The study also called for not only the establishment of workshops and studios but also the appointment of a consultant for creative arts. In addition, the study also recommended the assignment of a librarian as well as curriculum and CCTV experts.[20]

The project documents also suggested that some of the rooms on the first floor of the Polytechnic building would be used as offices for the Chief Technical Adviser, the National Director and their secretaries as well as seminar and lecture rooms. It was also arranged that the UNESCO experts would stay at the Mammo Drug Store Apartment and Ras Hotel (later renamed Ghion Hotel). These experts were expected to conduct pilot research in selected rural areas, organize seminars, experiment courses, advise the chief engineer on construction activities and order the necessary equipment for the training.[21]

The Academy was supposed to have a Board of Governors that should include Haile Sellase I University. Although it was not implemented, the Chief Technical Adviser suggested that the National Director should be given the title of provost and his assistant vice provost.[22] However, until the Academy became Bahir Dar Teachers College, the heads of the Academy were interchangeably called director or principal. In terms of administration, the Academy was placed under the then Ministry of Education and Fine Arts. In 1972, the ministry appointed Ato Matewos Gessese, as the first national director of the Academy of Pedagogy whose title was soon changed to principal.[23]

The first structures included five blocks of classrooms, a spacious library, an administration block, a clinic, an auditorium (with a capacity of accommodating 1,000 people), a dining hall (large enough to accommodate 500 students at a time), two laundries, four staff residential blocks, 11 blocks of student dormitories for 900 students and a student lounge. Later, two storied staff apartments, a new library, a garage, guard rooms, storerooms for food stuff, a maintenance

[19] *Ibid*., pp. 22-24.
[20] *Ibid*., p. 44.
[21] *Ibid*., p. 28.
[22] *Ibid*., p. 66
[23] BDU Archives, Folder No. 1/4/1, A letter from Matewos Gesese, Principal of the Academy to Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, 25/12/73.

workshop, a warehouse, a cattle house, a petrol tanker, a transport office, a staff lounge, and a bakery were added.[24]

The Academy was expected to have close partnership with the Institute of Education, University of London, Redland College, Bristol, during the project years. Initially, the project was expected to last three years with a possibility of extension for several years. The first phase was subsequently extended for five years. When the first phase ended in July 1977, both UNDP and UNESCO made no further commitments to support the Academy. Following the phasing out of the project period, the Academy was left to its own devices. As a result, the planned exchange of students and staff with Redland College never materialized.[25]

One may wonder why all the ambitious projects of the Academy remained on paper. That was mainly because of the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution and the subsequent declaration of Socialism as the country's ideology. The new military government established relations with the Eastern Bloc countries that negatively affected Ethiopia's former ties with the western world. As a result, experts from the western countries left Ethiopia.

Admission and Training Programs

The Academy of Pedagogy was supposed to admit the first intake in September 1972. The Academy was supposed to produce teacher-educators, supervisors of teachers, organizers of in-service education, community development officers, and organizers of adult education.[26]

As outlined in the original study a Teacher Training Institute (TTI) and a model primary school should be established in the same campus. According to the project document, the TTI would train primary school teachers and at the same time it would be used for demonstration purposes for teacher educators. Though not materialized, the Academy was supposed to be equipped with closed circuit television and broadcasting facilities.[27]

The Academy's training program was divided into two parts: in-campus training, and community attachment. Students were supposed to take courses in campus in their first, third and fourth years. But the second year was to be devoted to community attachment. The attachment program required students to study the history and geography of the local community, examine agro-industrial activities, public health and environmental issues. The whole purpose of the community attachment program was to prepare new curricula based on Ethiopia's rural economy.[28]

In early 1972, the Academy was ready for admitting students. The admission criteria required trainees to have a teaching experience of three years. They were also required to sit for an entrance examination and show up for interviews.[29]

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[24] Ye Bahir Dar Memhran College Tarikawi Edget … p. 2
[25] UNDP/UNESCO, Ethiopia: Academy of Pedagogy …p. 1.
[26] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Dr. Demisse Manahlot to Dr. Taye Gulelat, 08.03/1976 E.C.
[27] Academy of Pedagogy, Bahir Dar," a paper prepared for the African Teachers Education Association Conference, Addis Ababa, March 25-April 1, 1972, pp.17-19.
[28] *Ibid*.
[29] *Ibid*., p. 22; BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, Matewos Gessese to Ministry of Education and Fine Arts (MOEFA), 29/11/72.

Initially, there was a plan to recruit 100 trainees each year from all the 14 provinces of Ethiopia. Accordingly, the Academy screened 100 applicants through entrance exam and interview as a first intake. The first entry included 98 trainees but two applicants were rejected because of their failure to apply for a study leave in advance.[30]

During the selection process, priority was given to primary school teachers. Both married and unmarried trainees were entitled to get a modest stipend during their study. With regard to such benefits, the Academy had the following regulations:

> While at the Academy, unmarried students, in addition to food, lodging and tuition, will receive a stipend of $15.00 [birr] per month to cover the costs of stationery and other incidental living expenses. A married student living on the campus will receive in addition, $25.00 for his wife and $12,50 for each dependent child up to five children. A married student who lives off campus will receive $50.00 for himself and in addition $25.00 for his wife and $12.00 for each dependent child up to five children. A married woman …will receive equivalent allowance for herself and her dependents up to five children.[31]

All screening should be done by a committee (consisting of the *Awrajja* supervisor, a *qebele* chairperson, and a member of mass association) presided by head of the *Awrajja* Education Office. Once it ensured the fairness of the screening process, the Academy would announce through the national radio the names of selected applicants. Finally, selected applicants were required to produce a medical certificate showing their fitness to pursue their studies. To that effect, the Academy was supposed to write a letter to Felege Hiwot Hospital to give successful applicants a medical certificate.[32]

In October 1973, the Academy commenced the training of the first intake. Although 98 trainees were selected for the first entry, only 94 students got registered for the first year courses. Sadly enough, among the 94 registered trainees, there were only two female students. By the time the training of the first entry commenced, the construction of dormitories was still underway. As a result students had to stay at the Polytechnic Institute in the 1973/74 academic year.

A year after the admission of the first batch, (i.e., in October 1974), 100 new trainees were selected and admitted as the second intake. In the meantime, the Teacher Training Institute (TTI) was ready to admit the first trainees. Accordingly, 177 students were admitted to the TTI. By the time the Academy's second entry and the TTI's first entry began their training, the first batch of students had already been assigned to different parts of Ethiopia for community attachment. Nevertheless, all training programs were suspended due to the Development through Cooperation Campaign known in Amharic as *Edget Behebret Zemecha*. In December 1974, the military government (Derg) issued a proclamation that required students and instructors to take part in the *Zemecha*. In January 1975, therefore, high school and university students as well as their teachers

[30] BDU Archives, Ministry of Education and Fine Arts to Academy of Pedagogy, 28/09/66 E.C.
[31] BDU Archives, Academy of Pedagogy Information Sheet, ND, p. 2.
[32] *Ibid*.

stayed in their assigned places for 18 months. The *Zemecha* disrupted not only the training of students, but it also forced the UNESCO experts to move to Addis Ababa and leave Ethiopia. Among them, six remained in Addis Ababa while the other six left Ethiopia. By September 1976, only three UNESCO experts remained in Ethiopia.[33]

Student Activism

Following the end of the *Zemecha* in mid-1976, the Academy invited those trainees who had already started training before the *Zemecha*. Before the readmission of students, all instructors were told to report on duty beginning from 12 June 1976. The Academy had to make sure that all dormitories were ready to accommodate students.[34]

However, there was a decline in the number of students who wanted to resume their training. In September 1976, only 67 first and 18 second year students came back to campus to out of the original 83 and 94 first and second year students respectively. To make matters worse, soon after the resumption of classes, the number of first year students further declined to 58. The college's administration was very much worried by the disappearance of students and reported the problem to concerned officials.[35]

The college administration later found out that the disappearance and drop out of students had something to do with the agitation of the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party (EPRP), one of the civilian opposition groups that was opposing the establishment of the military government. The EPRP had already recruited a great number of young people as members and it was advising its members to quit their education. The other reason for the disappearance of students was the reign of terror. When the Derg launched the "Red Terror" against the EPRP, its members had to go into hiding to avoid imprisonment and execution. At the same time, because of Ethiopia's alignment with the Easter Bloc Communist states, scholarship opportunities were available for Ethiopian students. That was a golden opportunity for those students who wanted to stay away from the turbulent revolutionary atmosphere at home.[36]

In contrast, the 18 second year students expressed their firm decision to resume their training despite the violent revolutionary period. They even organized themselves as cadres and opened their office in campus. They acted as full-time cadres of the military government. They went to the extent of turning the auditorium's basement into detention room for imprisoning EPRP members and forcing the college community to attend their meetings that had the objective of exposing EPRP members.[37]

They were so powerful that they obliged instructors of the Academy and the TTI to give their bicycles to student cadres for revolutionary activities. To add insult to injury, they forced some instructors to give A's to all students. In short, the student cadres had almost taken the

[33] *Ibid*., p. 3.
[34] BDU Archives, A Letter from Ministry of Education to Major Kiros Alemayehu, 07/10/68 E.C.
[35] BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, Academy of Pedagogy to Gojjam Public Security, 22/08/69 E.C; Academy of Pedagogy to the Ministry of Education, 29/01/69 E.C.
[36] BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, To Whom it May Concern, 08/06/1969 E.C.
[37] Belete Tekele and Menan Kemal interviewed by author, 03/04/13.

college's administration into their hands. Eventually, however, Ato Ayele Meshesha (later Dr), the then principal of the Academy managed to put an end to student anarchy.[38]

A Change in Admission Policy

Some years later, the Academy changed its admission policy. In the 1976/77 academic year, the Academy began to admit high school graduates with a GPA of 2.00 in the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination (ESLCE). at least in five subjects. Teachers with 10 + 2, 11 + 1 and 12 + 1 certificates and a teaching experience of two years were also admitted. The Academy made it clear that applicants' ESLCE results should not be older than ten years and their age should be between 18 and 30.[39] The Academy continued to admit students from all the 14 provinces as well as from Addis Ababa. The table below shows the first three batches of students selected from all the administrative regions between 1973/74 and 1976/77 academic years.[40]

Table 1.

Number of Selected Trainees

No.	Administrative Region	1966 E.C (1973/74)	1967 E.C (1974/75)	1968 E.C (1975/76)	1969 E.C (1976/77)	Total
1.	Addis Ababa	5	5	-	6	16
2.	Arsi	1	2	-	5	8
3.	Bale	1	4	-	5	10
4.	Begemidir & Semen	6	8	-	8	22
5.	Eritrea	4	6	-	5	15
6.	Gamo Gofa	2	2	-	4	8
7.	Gojjam	7	5	-	6	18
8.	Hararge	3	7	-	12	22
9.	Illibabor	-	1	-	2	3
10.	Kafa	11	8	-	6	25
11.	Shewa	20	17	-	12	49
12.	Sidamo	6	4	-	6	16
13.	Tigray	15	14	-	4	33
14.	Wollega	8	7	-	10	25
15.	Wollo	9	10	-	10	29
	Total	98	100	-	103	301

Source. BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, Principal of Academy of Pedagogy to all administrative regions, 04/01/1966 E.C.

[38] *Ibid*.
[39] BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, A Letter from the Ministry of Education to the Academy of Pedagogy, 29/01/69 E.C.
[40] BDU Archives, File No. 1/4/1, A Letter from the Principal of the Academy to all Administrative Regions, 04/01/66 E.C.

However, the Academy began to encounter problems with regard to the qualification of the academic staff. Most of the instructors had only bachelor's degree. The critical shortage of instructors with second and third degrees, the Academy as forced to bachelors to teach courses from second to fourth year.[41]

Anticipating this serious problem, UNESCO had already embarked on a staff development program during the project's five-year period. Accordingly, it offered fellowships to the Academy's teaching staff for one to two years to enable them to get a minimum of a master's degree. Although a budget was allocated for 38 fellowships, only 29 staff members got fellowship and completed their training abroad. Because of UNESCO fellowship arrangements, the University of London and Redland College in England offered two scholarships each to the national staff of the Academy. In addition, the universities of Bath (U.K), Texas, Indiana, Iowa (U.S.A), Toronto (Canada), Victoria (New Zealand) granted fellowships to the national staff. However, only 16 staff who completed their fellowship returned to the Academy.[42]

Still worse, the expatriates who came from Communist states like Cuba and the German Democratic Republic had no experience of teaching at the university level and had serious language problems. For instance, of the nine Cuban instructors, only three could teach in English. The other six instructors were teaching in Spanish and the whole lecture had to be translated into English.[43]

Later in the 1980s, UNESCO brought five expatriates to support the Academy's training programs. These were an expert from France, two experts from Afghanistan and two volunteers from Nepal. The French expert came for evaluation and research, but he did nothing. The Academy had no idea why he was assigned in the first place. Likewise, the two volunteers from Nepal came at a wrong time and did not do any meaningful activities. Only the two experts from Afghanistan were very much helpful. One of them was a curriculum expert and the other had specialization in the production of teaching aids.[44]

A shortage of qualified staff was not the only problem. The absence of a charter or legislation had its own impact on staff promotion. Even students were aware of the problem and they complained in 1974/75 that the Academy had lost its sense of direction.[45] On their part, instructors expressed their dissatisfaction to the college's administration in a letter they wrote to the vice principal in July 1976.[46]

The Academy also faced another administrative problem. In 1978, a science college was established in the same campus. That raised the number of institutions to three in the same campus.

[41] BDU Archives, File No. 1/26/1, Ye Memhran Temhert Academy … pp. 4-7.
[42] UNDP/UNESCO, Ethiopia: Academy of Pedagogy … P. 7.
[43] BDU Archives, File No. 1/26/1, Ye Memhran Temhert Academy Ametawi Zegeba (Annual Report of the Academy of Pedagogy), 1972 E.C., pp. 4-7.
[44] *Ibid*., p. 7.
[45] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Academy of Pedagogy to Ministry of Education, 05/11/1967 E.C.
[46] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, A letter from Instructors to the Vice Principal of the Academy, 15/11/68 E.C.

In order to solve the administrative problems, Ato Abraham Hussen (later Dr), the then dean of the Academy, brought the three separate institutions under his administration in January 1979.[47]

Until the end of 1979, the Academy of Pedagogy and the Science College had been under the Higher Education Commission. In January 1980, however, they were placed under Addis Ababa University (AAU) together with the TTI.[48]

Subsequently, the AAU administration made some changes with regard to the Academy. In accordance with the decision made in April 1980, Academy of Pedagogy and the TTI were brought under a single administration. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education agreed to transfer the TTI's budget to AAU. The other change was the renaming of the Academy. Accordingly, in November 1980, the Academy was renamed Bahir Dar Teachers College (BTC).[49] Meanwhile a new administrative structure was put in place. Accordingly, the college's administration would include a dean, a vice dean and an administrator. The college came to include four academic units: Pedagogical Science, Mathematics, Physics, Languages and Social Sciences.

Following this restructuring, Dr. Demisse Manahlot, Dean of Bahir Dar Teachers College, wrote several letters to Dr. Duri Mohammed, President of AAU regarding the training programs. Among other things, informed the president about the inability of the College to respond to the requests of Bahir Dar civil servants who wanted to enroll in the evening program. He thus asked the president to give immediate directives.[50] Finally, in September 1981, the College launched evening training programs. The main beneficiaries of the evening program were the administrative staff members who enjoyed the privilege of enrollment free of charge. Civil servants and high school graduates who were residing in Bahir Dar and in the nearby towns also got the chance to enroll in the evening programs.[51]

Curriculum Revision

The pressure for curriculum revision primarily came from graduates. According to the first curriculum revision made in 1976, trainees would take Pedagogy as their major and choose one of the four fields of study (i.e., Amharic English, Geography and Mathematics) as their minor. However, that did not solve the problem of unemployment among graduates. It was found out that only a limited number of graduates were employed in their major area of specialization. Most of the graduates were had to teach in their minor areas. According to archival evidence, only 51 were working in their major areas of training out of the 347 graduates. In order to solve the problem, the college's administration introduced what it called "composite major." The new curriculum required trainees to specialize in two major areas. That enabled gradates to teach in one of the two

[47] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Abraham Hussen to Higher Education Commission, 28/04/1971 E.C.
[48] BDU Archives, File No. 1/26/1, Ye Memhran Temhert Academy … pp. 10-11.
[49] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Minutes of a Meeting, 02/08/72 E.C. pp. 1-2.
[50] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, A letter from Dr. Demisse Manahlot to Dr. Duri Mohammed, 15/03/73 E.C.
[51] Conversation with Yaregal Geremew, who was one of the first batch of students to join the evening program.

major areas.[52] However, it was not until 2000 that students began to graduate with B.Ed. in composite major.

As the number of trainees continued to grow, the college began to face the shortage of dormitories. Originally, there was a plan to admit 550 TTI students. But the accommodation capacity of the college was only 950 students. If the college was to admit the same number of TTI trainees every year, they would claim more than 50 percent of all the dormitories and other facilities. In other words, the college could admit only 400 students for other diploma and degree programs. Mainly because of Dr. Demisse's, the TTI students were transferred to Gondar and Nazareth in 1984.[53]

Dr. Demisse also managed to solve the chronic shortage of textbooks and reference materials. His persistent efforts bore fruit. The college received a donation of 2,160 books worth $75,000 USD from UNDP. In addition, various embassies and private agencies have also donated a great number of books to the college.[54]

It is now 50 years since the establishment of the Academy of Pedagogy. In the last thirty years, the college produced renowned scholars who had been serving as president of universities, tenured professors, research directors and in other capacities.

Table 2.

Academic Staff Profile

Academic Year	Diploma	BA/BSc	MA/MSc	PhD	Total	Expatriates	Total
1966 (1973/74)	4	10	7	-	21	11	32
1967 (1974/75)	4	10	7	-	21	13	34
1968 (1975/76)	4	10	9	-	23	-	23
1969 (1976/77)	4	7	11	-	22	4	26
1970 (1977/78)	2	13	11	-	26	-	26
1971 (1978/79	3	25	10	1	39	-	39
1972 (1979/80)	3	25	11	1	40	16	56
1973 (1980/81)	2	31	9	1	43	10	53
1974 (1981/82)	1	25	6	1	33	1	34
1975 (1982/83)	2	24	5	1	32	7	39
1976 (1983/84)	2	38	8	1	49	11	60
1977 (1984/85)	10	43	9	1	63	8	71

Source. BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Bahir Dar Teachers College Annual Reports, 1977 E.C.

[52] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, A Letter from Minister of Education to Higher Education Commission, 19/09/1978 E.C.
[53] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Dr. Demisse Manahlot to Dr. Duri Mohammed, 24/03/1974 E.C.
[54] BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Ye Bahir Dar Mamhran College Ametawi Zegeba 1974 E.C, p.7.

Table 3.

Student Enrollment (Excluding the TTI)

Academic Year	Diploma			Degree					Grand Total
	1st Year	2nd Year	Total	1st Year	2nd year	3rd Year	4th Year	Total	
1966 (1973/74)	-	-	-	94	-	-	-	94	94
1967 (1974/75)	-	-	-	83	94	-	-	177	177
1968 (1975/76)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1969 (1976/77)	-	-	-	58	18	-	-	76	
1970 (1977/78)	120	-	120	94	47	-	18	159	279
1971 (1978/79	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	301	301
1972 (1979/80)	67	252	319	91	130	89	47	357	676
1973 (1980/81)	72	58	130	44	80	125	NA	249	379
1974 (1981/82)	87	55	142	40	40	70	124	274	416
1975 (1982/83)	93	76	169	70	35	31	71	207	376
1976 (1983/84)	131	83	214	32	62	33	33	160	374
1977 (1984/85)	319	234	753	82	33	56	34	205	958

Source. BDU Archives, File No. 1/7/2, Bahir Dar Teachers College Annual Reports, 1977 E.C.

Conclusion

The Academy of Pedagogy commenced the training of teacher educators in 1973 in accordance with the recommendations of two education experts from the University of London. Originally, there was a plan to build a primary school, a teacher training institute, and an educational broadcasting service for practical training purposes. In addition, the study called for the establishment of a Child Development Research Unit, an Ethiopian Arts Center, a Textbook and Journal Publishing Unit, a Comparative African Studies Institute, Rural Sociology Research

Unit, a Health Education Unit, an Evaluation and Archives Unit and a Model Community. Unfortunately, however, except for the Teacher Training Institute, other projects were not implemented mainly because of the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution in 1974. In the early years of the revolution, student activism and the reign of terror had affected the training program of the Academy. Later in 1980, the Academy was renamed Bahir Dar Teachers College and it remained under Addis Ababa University for many years. In the meantime, curriculum revision was undertaken several times. Among other things, composite major was introduced, and the diploma programs were upgraded to a degree level. Eventually, Bahir Dar Teachers College merged itself with the Polytechnic Institute to form Bahir Dar University in 2000.

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