Continuous Professional Learning in North Shoa Zone Secondary Schools: Enhancing Teacher Agency and Student Achievement

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to assess the practice of continuous professional learning for teachers. Concurrent mixed research design is employed, and both quantitative and qualitative research methods are used. Convenience sampling technique is used to select three secondary schools in the zone. Data are collected through questionnaires, semi structured interview guides and document analysis. The collected data are analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, frequencies, mean and standard deviation). Moreover, data collected through interview guides and document analysis are qualitatively analyzed and described through narrations. The major findings indicate that the majority of teachers believed initial training (pre-service training) is sufficient to make one a professional teacher. Furthermore, it is disclosed that the majority of teachers do not have a positive attitude towards the teaching profession. They tend to consider CPD as a useless activity that does not have any financial return, and it is a deliberate imposition on teachers. Moreover, absence of well-planned and organized CPD activities both at the institutional and individual teachers' level as well as the lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation, and timely and appropriate feedback are among the main challenges that hindered the effective implementation of CPD in the secondary schools. Based on the major findings, it is concluded that the practice of CPD in the secondary schools is ineffective with regard to the development of teacher agency as well as students' academic performance. Finally, it is recommended that CPD has to be properly institutionalized as part of the schools' responsibility; monitoring and feedback provision mechanisms need to be established, and teachers CPD performance need to be featured into their career structure.*

Keywords: Continuous Professional Learning, Teacher Agency, Academic Performance.

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Introduction
Background of the study

The world is in a state of constant change in all aspects: - technological, social, political, and economic. This demands (Lowden, 2005) a nation's school system to be responsive to the changing environment, and it should continuously update the capacity of its staff (Tynjälä, 2015) to cope with the apparent changes. In recent years, national, state, and local policymakers and educators launched efforts to improve education by creating a fundamental shift in what children learn and how they are taught. If children are to achieve high performance levels demanded by the high standards that states and districts adopt, teachers will have to help them do so (Garet, 2001). Teachers are necessarily at the center of a designed reform for they should carry out classroom performance as the demands of high standards. The success of education reform initiatives hinges, in large part, on the qualifications and effectiveness of teachers.

To respond to the demands of education reform, teachers should have an appreciable level of knowledge of the subjects they teach, and they should have the ability both to communicate basic knowledge and to develop advanced thinking and problem-solving skills among their students. Such high standards, curriculum framework, and new approaches to assessment aligned to those standards - generate new expectations for teachers' classroom behaviors, as well as for student performance. As a result, continuous teachers' professional learning and development is a major focus of systemic reform initiatives (Garet, 2001). Regarding the role teachers can play in implementing educational reform and curriculum innovation, Stredwic (2000) contends that faced with rapid change and demand for high standard of education provision, educational institutions call for continuous in-service professional learning for teachers and school leaders which, in other words, is known as continuous professional development (CPD) for improving quality education by updating and improving professional

skills and knowledge of school leaders, teachers and supervisors through professional development activities on a continuous basis (Stredwic, 2000).

Professionally competent teachers are expected to enhance instructional quality, meet students' needs, promote positive educational trajectories, enhance school development, and introduce effective pedagogical innovations (Tom, et al, 2021). The authors argue that although competence has become a prominent part of educational policy discourse on teachers and their professional development, the necessary attention is not paid on issues such as how, when, and why teachers learn these competencies, how they are related to the core of teacher work, and what is needed in order to attain such competencies. More recently teacher agency has been highlighted, particularly in the literature on school development, *with teacher learning as a key* to enhance teacher commitment to continue professional development and school development**.**

This means various studies give emphasis to the importance of teachers' agency in school improvement program, and this teacher agency is developed by and large through effective professional learning activities on a continuous basis. In other words, supporting teachers to participate in continuous professional learning activities is vital to develop their agency which, in turn, contributes to school improvement program in general and raising students' academic performance in particular.

Research on teacher agency typically highlights the importance of a teacher's autonomy and active role in decision-making in regard to different aspects of their work, and teachers' own learning and development. Research on a teacher's professional agency also recognizes the professional interactions and contexts as integral and genuine elements for a teacher's agency and encourages investigating them. Professional agency embodies a capacity that allows teachers

to learn actively and skillfully, regulate their own learning, enhance learning competencies needed in their work, develop professionally, promote students' and colleagues' learning, as well as innovate and promote change in schools (Toom, et al, 2021).

Although they generally support high standards for teaching and learning, many teachers are not prepared to implement teaching practices based on high standards. Many teachers learned to teach using a model of teaching and learning that focuses heavily on memorizing facts without emphasizing a deeper understanding of the subject knowledge; shifting to a more balanced approach to teaching which places more emphasis on understanding subject matter; that is, teachers must learn more about the subjects they teach, and how students learn these subjects (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin,1995). The continual deepening of knowledge and skills is an integral part of any profession. And teaching is no exception (Garet et al, 2001).

To this end, professional development programs for teachers are seen to play a vital role, as they provide opportunities for teachers to learn and grow within the profession. This in turn is expected to have an impact on student learning.

Continuous professional learning of teachers is of growing interest globally and it is considered vital to cope effectively with ongoing educational policy changes and to improve the quality of education by updating teachers' competence, as they are one of the crucial vehicles in realizing the goal of education at all levels.

It is increasingly recognized that professional expertise is not simply learned at the outset of a career or through initial training but needs to be constantly refined and updated. Professional learning should not be restricted to management or supervision but should be provided to all employees/teachers who wish to go up the ladder to one or other professional qualification on continual bases (Stredwic, 2000). Thus,

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is the continuous updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competence throughout a person's working life. CPD means learning from actual experience at work, learning through working life by occasional injection of 'training' (Anderson, 2000).

Training and professional development are closely related and interlinked concepts which one (development) involves the other (training) for meeting its goal. And yet, they are not exactly the same in their working definition. Training endeavors to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to perform job related tasks at work place. It aims at improving job performance in a direct way. It is the process to change employees' behavior at work through the application of learning principles. According to Anderson (2000), training is work or task-oriented and it deals with a short time frame geared to the mastery of specific tasks whereas professional development is a process whereby individuals learn through experience to be more effective throughout his/her working life. It helps people utilize the skills and knowledge that education and training provide them with, not only in their current jobs, but also in future jobs. Moreover, development embodies concepts such as psychological growth, greater maturity and increased confidence (Truelove, 1998)

All types of professional learning undertaken by teachers beyond initial training is considered to be continuous professional development. Bolam (1993) cited in Truelove, 1998) on his part defines CPD in the way described above, as follows: *it is any professional activities engaged in by teachers which enhance their knowledge and skills and enable them to consider their attitudes and approaches to the education of children, with a view to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process* (Truelove,1998). It involves reflective activities designed to improve an individual characteristic, knowledge, understanding and skills in his/her career development and their job performance at individual and institutional levels. In this sense, CPD is

seen as a means by which teachers can extend their level of personal education, develop their professional competence and improve their understanding of educational principles, methods and techniques.

Thus professional learning or development, in this survey, includes activities undertaken individually and/or collectively by teachers that aim at developing their skills, knowledge, expertise and other personal characteristics so as to enable them improve their teaching practices and students' learning outcomes on one hand and to improve the whole school performance on the other.

However, many studies identify that teacher development efforts have failed in many countries despite the consensus among researchers that professional development is a central component in any school reform. Research reports have also indicated the ineffectiveness of professional development programs that form, according to Kleinhenz & Fleming (2007), many factors such as fragmentation, overload, and incoherence resulting from the uncritical acceptance of too many different innovations. Tynjala (2015) argues that undermining the complexity of the teaching knowledge base, teachers' professional development is seen as something to be 'planned' or 'managed' without proper consideration being given to what is to be developed, beyond 'implementing' a particular program or centrally developed initiative; they call such approaches short-sighted and self-defeating.

Researchers have also identified the one-shot approach as one of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of some professional development programs. In a typical one-shot approach, an expert delivers knowledge on a particular topic to a large audience within a limited time period. Here teachers' attitudes toward the topic are not deemed relevant. This approach makes the professional development of teachers' intellectually superficial, disconnected from deep issues pertaining to the curriculum and learning, and causes it to be fragmented and noncumulative.

Acknowledging the importance of the school context, Mohamed (2006) remarked that teacher development programs should not be of a one-size-fits-all nature, but rather the design and content of the program must take into account the context in which the program is to take place. Similarly, Richards (1991) and Schmoker (2006) further argue that teacher education must adopt a bottom-up approach, where the starting point is an internal view (arising from the teachers themselves) of teaching rather than an external one (imposed on them by an outsider). A top-down approach would leave the teachers feeling that they have no real personal investment in the program and they may therefore be less committed to it.

The Ethiopian government has embarked on a massive expansion of the national education system with the intention to transform the country. The increasing access to education was also fueled by the government's promise to meet its official educational goals such as achieving universal primary education in 2015 and secondary education in 2020. The studies by (Fekede & Fiorucci, 2012; Lemlem, 2010; National Agency for Examinations (NAE), 2011; Oulai et al., 2011; Tessema, 2006) indicate that though tremendous achievement has been made in terms of quantitative expansion, the quality of education has been deteriorating and student achievement declining. The professional development of teachers is considered to be one of the essential component and strategies in efforts aimed at improving the quality of the schools (Tynjälä, 2015).

To this end, a centrally designed professional development program has been disseminated in a top-down fashion and implemented prescriptively across the country. The overall aim of the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program is to improve teacher effectiveness and raise the achievement levels of students in Ethiopian schools (MOE, 2003; 2009) cited in (Tynjälä, 2015).

The guidelines of the CPD program were developed in 2003 and introduced to the schools by central reform planners in a top-down approach. As stated in the CPD guide produced by the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2003), the overall objectives of the CPD program are to help teachers to understand the concept of CPD, to engage in high quality CPD and to develop their knowledge and skills continuously, thereby bringing about improvements in student learning and achievement. The CPD guide also intends to promote active learning, problem solving, and student centered teaching methods that are lacking in the system. Acknowledging that CPD is the most effective process and system of learning, experiencing and sharing throughout a teacher's career, the CPD guide articulates that all serving teachers and head teachers should have the right of access to high-quality and relevant CPD opportunities. The newly employed teachers are also expected to work through a two-year induction program, produced at the national level and supported by mentors. These mentors are selected from experienced members of staff in the schools (MoE, 2009).

Based on this background, this study is intended to assess the existing status of professional development practice in schools and find out some of its effects on teachers' attitude and practices and factors that hinder the successful implementation, with the intention to draw implications to improve future teachers' professional learning.

Statement of the problem

Quality of education can be influenced by multitudes of factors. Some are attributed to the quality of the practitioners (teachers, managers and supervisors) which is the function of their training at both levels – initial (pre-job) and in-service or on-the-job training. Especially, CPD is vital for its effectiveness as it encompasses both individual professional development and institutional improvement programs in the school

context and for its orientation towards performance problem and development of professionalism on continual basis.

In connection with this, the Ethiopian Government has taken series of measures to improve quality of teachers training in TTIs. Moreover, various kinds of on-job training opportunities, provided through formal and informal programs, have been given for teachers so as to help them develop their professional knowledge and skills, and improve their teaching practices. In order to improve teachers' teaching performance, strengthening professional development through on-job training programs at different times in their career life is crucial, and can be carried out using different approaches or strategies.

Professional development strategies are of two types, traditional and recent models. The traditional approach of professional development or course-led model and one-shot workshop and/or seminar has several weaknesses. It is dominated by off-site course, outside the working place (schools) of the teachers. It is general to individual and group of staff, and it is not linked to the needs of school or department. It is undertaken purely on voluntary basis (not provided for those with the greater needs); it has a limited impact on practices with little or no follow up and dissemination work (Awasa Teachers College,2010). The approach used can affect the successes of professional development. And due to many weaknesses of traditional model, the recent approach that emphasizes within or school-based initiatives and on continuity (throughout one's career life) known as continuous professional development (CPD). This is currently used in different profession worldwide and in the teaching profession.

In the recent trend of professional development (CPD) a number of strategies have been developed to increase its impact and to encourage greater varieties of approaches to CPD. This recent development in CPD gives greater emphasis to careful needs analysis linked to evidences of existing practice and thus targeted training; it

moves towards a broader view of what in-service and professional development are and it is concerned with the goal of ensuring school and individual development activities to attain parallel development (individual and institutional) by integrating their needs. Moreover, current school improvement plan (SIP) considers CPD as one of the major elements that target improving teachers' classroom performance and students' academic achievement. So it serves as an input for planning and appraisal of school improvement program. (Awasa Teachers' College, 2010)

In this respect, in order to implement CPD program in an effective manner possible, the content of CPD training need to involve not only current gaps of professional knowledge and skills of teachers, but also national and international issues, modern science and technology development (ICT for instance). Above all, teachers CPD should be planned based on teachers' development needs, which entails assessment of teachers professional growth needs and particular contexts in which teachers are enacting. Moreover, collaboration with professional association is very important in both planning and implementation of teachers' CPD program.

Training programs including CPD plans may fail to be implemented as intended because of lack of motivation on the part of workers or teachers, lack of the necessary expertise on the part of trainers themselves, improper planning caused by failing to conduct training needs assessment and lack of necessary support as much as required, lack of evaluation and timely feedback, etc. In relation to this Truelove (1998) said that training programs may not be effective due to factors like absence of motivation on the part of employees; some employees do not want to take risk of undertaking some changes. They do not want to be constantly tackling new task created as a result of reforms made including education sectors. Some feel overburdened by many duties and some of them perceive it as boring business.

Generally, it is understandable that conducting training or carrying out CPD activities *per se* is not an end; it is the means of realizing improved learning and student achievements. Hence, assessing the status of its practicality and effects of those CPD activities against its main purpose seem to be essential, and the findings may help to inform policy makers and administrators at different levels to look for a variety of different options, effective approaches by understanding the very purpose of CPD that help them make feasible decision as to what necessary revision and adjustment need to be made for future plan based on drawbacks identified through different monitoring mechanisms.

The Ethiopian educational system has encountered serious quality problems due to many factors (MOE, 1994). One of these is the low quality of teachers almost at every level (pre-primary, primary, secondary and even at tertiary levels). In the effort to improve this, focusing on teachers' quality seems to be imperative because teachers are the most important in the improvement of quality of education. With regard to importance of teachers, Ko (2014) states

> *much of the research evidence to date on educational effectiveness suggests that: while schools can make a difference to student achievement, the most substantial portion of that difference may be attributed to teachers* (Ko, 2014, p.34).

The Ministry of Education has designed and implemented a series of policy guides to address the multifaceted problems in the education sector. These documents include: Continuous Professional Development Guideline (MoE, 2003); Teacher Education System Overhaul (MoE, 2003); and General Education Quality Improvement Program (MoE, 2007). All of these initiatives place substantial emphasis on professional development of teachers.

The guidelines of the CPD program were developed in 2003 and introduced to the schools by central reform planners in a top-down approach. As stated in the CPD guide produced by the Ministry of Education, the overall objectives of the CPD program are aimed at helping teachers to understand the concept of CPD, to engage in high quality CPD and to develop their knowledge and skills continuously, thereby bringing about improvements in student learning and achievement (MOE, 2003). However, according to Tyndale and F.T(2015), though the CPD guide is largely aimed at improving the performance of teachers in the classroom in order to raise student achievement and learning, the evidence shows that so far the program has not been successful in fulfilling its promise (Tynjälä, 2015).

Moreover, local studies on CPD, Ashebir (2014), Ewnetu and Firdisa (2010), and (Tynjälä, 2015) identified CPD activities teachers were expected to engage in, and reasons for failing to participate in CPD. Challenges identified by these studies include lack of necessary support from school leaders and external experts, lack of necessary resources like CPD guidelines, and lack of trained CPD facilitators in school. However, the studies did not touch on problems related to teachers' attitudes and interest towards CPD, deficiencies in contents of CPD training materials, problems in understanding the very purpose of teachers CPD on the part of leaders, teachers and CPD facilitators, absence of assessing teachers' development needs (knowledge and skills gap) in different disciplines and problems related to monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms, so these issues and gaps form a base for this study.

The researcher selected North Shoa Zone as a study site for three reasons. First, the researcher is familiar with the *woredas* in the zone, and it is convenient to collect data. Second, from his practical experience, the researcher came to know that continuous professional learning was not given due attention. Third, to the knowledge of the researcher, there isn't any study on the perceptions of teachers on

continuous professional learning in secondary schools of North Shoa Zone. Hence, the researcher wanted to investigate the perceptions of teachers towards continuous professional learning and fill contribute to closing the existing research gap and improving the situation through research.

Objectives of the study

This study has both general and specific objectives. The overall objective of the study is to analyze the practice of continuous professional learning of teachers in secondary schools in North Shoa Zone and to investigate its implication for the development of teacher agency and students' academic performance.

The specific objectives are to:

- Examine the understanding teachers have on the purpose of CPD and their attitudes.
- Identify types of CPD activities school teachers have been practicing.
- Examine improvements in behavior and practice, as teachers participate in CPD activities.
- Identify major obstacles of CPD activities and to recommend for the way forward

Research Questions

This research was guided by the following four basic research questions:

- How do teachers in schools perceive continuous professional learning /development?
- What types of CPD activities have school teachers been involved in?

- What challenges have schools and teachers experienced in carrying out CPD activities?
- What improvements as perceived by teachers have been made due to their participation in CPD activities?

Significance of the study

This study may help Oromia Education Bureau and the concerned bodies (Zonal Education Office, Woreda Education Office and the Secondary Schools) to design better ways of implementing continuous professional learning of teachers. It may also help concerned bodies to conduct training needs assessment supported by research findings so as to plan CPD based on identified performance problems and deficiencies that help improve qualities of content materials for training. Moreover, the findings of this study help supervisors, school directors and district education officials in improving the actual practice of CPD. Finally, this study may help other researchers as a stepping stone to undertake further research in similar and related areas.

Scope of the study

The study was carried out in North Shoa zone in three secondary schools. The schools were selected purposely because they are convenient for the researcher. Abdisa Aga secondary school is found in Fiche town which is also the working place of the researcher. Wabari and Muke Turi secondary schools are schools familiar to the researcher because he was once assigned by OREB as Lead Trainer (LT) of school leaders in the National School Leaders (NSL) Scale-up Training Program. Moreover, the study is conceptually delimited to perception of teachers about CPD, CPD activities and challenges encountered.

Operational definitions of key terms

Continuous professional development: It refers to diverse forms of on-the-job training that secondary school teachers receive to elevate their knowledge and skills.

Continuous professional learning: It pertains to engagement of secondary school teachers in both formal and informal learning activities to improve their professional knowledge and skills.

Teacher agency: It refers to the competencies and independence secondary school teachers have to perform diverse activities to enhance student learning.

Achievement: It pertains to academic performance of students in secondary schools

Limitation of the study

The fact that only 10 secondary school teachers involved in filling out the questionnaire for a pilot study might not be adequate even though the overall practice in the area of continuous professional development in secondary school of North Shoa Zone tend to remain similar.

Review of Related Literature

Concepts of Teachers' CPD

The term continuous professional development (CPD) is said to have been coined in the mid-1970's and its notion is rooted in the constructivist philosophy which claims that a person's constructions of knowledge and views of the world are not fixed and stable, but are in continuous change (Gray, 2005) as cited in (MoE, 2013). Accordingly, it is presumed that teachers, like any other professionals, have to

engage in planning and executing their professional development on a continuous basis if they have to cope with the continuous change in the world and in their workplace (MoE,2013).

Continuing professional development (CPD) in education however is often ill-defined, with the separate notions of formal training on one hand and on-the-job learning on the other, serving to confuse the concept further. However, Day's (1999) definition of CPD encompasses all behaviors which are intended to effect change in the teaching profession in general and in the classroom in particular (MoE, 2013). He defined CPD as;

> *Any processes consisting of unconscious natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in general and the practice in classroom in particular (P. 2).*

Some of the CPD activities include professional development meetings and professional development items in staff and team meetings, attending external conferences and courses, attending internal conferences, courses and professional development events, coaching and mentoring, shadowing and peer support, participating in networks or projects that provide opportunities for professional development lesson observations, discussions with colleagues or pupils to reflect on working practices, and research and investigation.

The need for Teachers CPD

Continuous professional development (CPD) is a term employed to explain all the interventions in which teachers involve themselves during the course of their careers. CPD includes all practices which are needed to impact the classroom. The purpose of CPD is to enhance

the work performance of educators in the classroom and increase learners' academic achievement. Effective professional development programs engage teachers in learning events which are comparable to those they may employ with their pupils, and inspire them to create teachers' learning forums. There is a rising trend in considering schools as learning organizations which help teachers share their academic skills and practices in an organized fashion (Dilshad, 2019).

Moreover, according to Darling-Hammond et al (2017), teacher professional learning has received an increasing focus and interest in the world as it is a critical way to support the increasingly complex skills students need to learn in order to succeed in the 21st century. Sophisticated forms of teaching are needed to develop student competencies such as deep mastery of challenging content, critical thinking, complex problem solving, effective communication and collaboration, and self-direction. In turn, effective professional development (PD) is needed to help teachers learn and refine the instructional strategies required to teach these skills.. However, research has noted that many professional development initiatives appear ineffective in supporting changes in teachers' practices and student learning. (Darling-Hammond, 2017)

Throughout the world, teacher education programs are designed to provide educators with the certification and competencies required in their professional careers (Rao, 2004). In-service training opportunities deliberately created by the management of institutions ensure quality instruction and retention of high-quality faculty (Ali, 2008). Underlining the significance of professional development, Guskey (2002, p. 381) observes: *high-quality professional development is a central component in nearly every modern proposal for improving education* (Dilshad, 2019). Similarly, Wilson & Berne (1999), as cited in Dilash et al. (2019) hold that the goal of educational reforms can only be achieved by ensuring that *teachers are equipped with subject matter knowledge and an evidence-and-standards-based repertoire of*

pedagogical skills (p.381). Given the key importance of professional development programs for the successful realization of any educational transformation, the quality of learning activities for school staff is a major issue in both policy discussion and educational research.

According to Ferguson (1991),while the end result of all education reform should be *students' learning* improvement, every reform initiative such as CPD, if it is to succeed, must begin with recognition of the importance of *teachers* in improving student performance (Ferguson 1991). Thus, the question is how can we get teachers to develop professionally and ultimately improve students' achievement? The answer is via high-quality teacher professional development. When teachers are given the opportunity, through high-quality professional development, to learn new strategies so as to teach to rigorous standards, they report changing their teaching in the classroom (Alexander, Heaviside, & Farris, 1998). However, since there are different forms of delivering CPD one has to judge the appropriateness of different forms of CPD based on the need of the teachers and the context (Ferguson, 1991).

Generally, the need for professional development for all teachers is indisputable as the vitality of the teaching profession dependent upon continuous professional learning which should be *planned, systematic, regular and relevant*. However, teacher professional learning is very fragmented and diverse, with outcomes dependent on the particular circumstances in which it is undertaken (Yates, 2007). The most effective forms of teachers' professional learning (OECD, 2005:128) seem to be those that focus on clearly articulated priorities, providing on-going school based support to classroom teachers, dealing with subject matter content as well as suitable instructional strategies and classroom management techniques and creating opportunities for teachers to observe, experience and try out new teaching methods (MoE, 2009).

Teachers CPD activities are carried out in both formal and informal ways. When CPD initiated as one of the reform agenda in education system, it is likely to be legitimatized and officially planned by education authorities at different levels and in education institutions (schools) where teachers are the main focus, and are expected to plan their CPD accordingly based on the need analysis undertaken during policy formulation. In this case CPD is formal, whereas when teachers carry out activities either individually or collectively taking their own initiative to discuss, read or write issues related to their teaching task, they are involved in the informal type of CPD.

Challenges in Carrying out Teachers' Professional Learning Activities

As stated by Linda-Hammond et, al. 2017)**,** even the best-designed professional development may fail to produce desired outcomes if it is poorly implemented due to barriers such as inadequate resources, including necessary curriculum materials; lack of a shared vision about what high-quality instruction entails; lack of time for implementing new instructional approaches during the school day or year; failure to align state and local policies toward a coherent set of instructional practices; dysfunctional school cultures; and inability to track and assess the quality of professional development (Friedman, 2023).

In the Ethiopian context, teacher CPD is classified broadly in two (MOE, 2009b). These are (a) keeping abreast with a frequent change: this requires a continuous learning process in which every professional teacher participates during their career as a teacher. It focuses on subject knowledge and pedagogy to improve classroom practice. (b) Upgrading: this is the process by which teachers choose/ are given the opportunity to participate in additional study outside their regular work as teachers at appropriate times in their career, e.g., upgrading a diploma level to a first degree or first degree to master's degree. This is relatively a long term program.

Research Method and Design

This part of the research study explains the research framework, population and sample of the study, sampling method and procedure, instruments of the study, pilot study, variables of the study, method of data analysis and ethical considerations.

Philosophical view (research paradigm)

The philosophical world view this study employed is pragmatism - the assumption which views the world (reality) as both subjective and objective in terms of ontological and epistemological elements. This approach believes that reality exists both objectively external to the researcher as can be measured through scientific methods and subjectively experienced differently by different peoples depending on their personal perceptions including the researcher's beliefs and the on unique context they are in. In this approach both quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analyzed and interpreted sequentially in which the findings of the descriptive survey is complemented by qualitative data. Thus, the researcher preferred the mixed method to others in which data are collected and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques rather than subscribing to only one way (Creswell, 2014).

Research Design

The study employed a mixed design, pragmatic approach. The approach is selected for its appropriateness to the nature of the study because this study deals with the 'practice of teachers' continuous professional learning and its implication for quality education and students' academic achievement. Hence, **QUAN + qual** research strategy was employed, where quantitative data is dominant over qualitative data in which the researcher triangulated quantitative and qualitative data in such a way qualitative data complement information gathered through

quantitative means in order to provide a comprehensive information on the research problem under study. The advantages of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data prove advantageous to best understand a research problem by triangulating information gathered through quantitative and qualitative tools (Creswell,2009).

Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques *

In the three secondary schools there are 187 teachers (104 male and 83 female). From these 127 (71 male and 56 female) teachers were randomly selected via simple random sampling method. Accordingly questionnaires were distributed. Out of the total questionnaire 111(87.4%) was returned. Moreover, 6 school leaders (principals and vice principals) and 6 teachers (2 from each school) and 1 expert (teacher development expert) from *woreda* education office (WEO) totally 13 persons purposely selected as key informants for interview. As a whole 124 participated in the study.

Regarding the sample size, the researchers employed Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling formula. That is $s = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$ to decide the number of samples of the study. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling formula is indicated as follows:

$s = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$, where: S = required sample, $X^2 =$ the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841=1.96$\times$1.96,

N = population size. P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 since this would provide the maximum sample size, and d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05).

Sources of Data

Primary data were collected from peoples who have a direct involvement and responsibility in CPD activities: teachers, school principals, supervisors and *Woreda* education office expert. Moreover, different documents were used as sources of information (example, School Improvement plan (SIP), Teachers' CPD Portfolio, CPD Framework, ESDP V) have been consulted to obtain necessary information pertinent to this study.

Data Collecting Instruments

Questionnaire: quantitative data collected through closed and open ended questionnaires. Questionnaires were used to collect data from large number of teachers on their practices and status of continuous professional learning activities, their attitudes toward professional learning, its perceived effect on teachers' behavior and practices and challenges encountered in upper primary schools in Fiche town. The instrument consists of 4 point likert scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The instrument has three parts, the first part consists of demographic characteristic of respondents, the second part expresses teachers' perception on CPD, obstacles of teachers and schools on working CPD and need of teachers training and the third one deals with open ended items which gives opportunities for teachers to explain in detail about types of training/workshop took by the teachers in supporting CPD activities

Interview: Qualitative data were also gathered through semi-structured interview guides. The interview guides were prepared to gather necessary information from key informant (school principals, teachers who relatively long experience in teaching, supervisors and *woreda* education office experts.

Document Analysis: One of the qualitative data collecting tools is document analysis. In this study, National CPD framework and Education Sector Development (ESUP V) were reviewed to have clear understanding of the very purpose of CPD for teachers, principals and supervisors, and strategies designed for implementation and monitoring CPD activities at school level and the extent attention given by government and education authorities at different levels in general. Moreover, the study seriously considered teachers' CPD portfolios. Teachers' CPD portfolios should contain all evidences/information on professional learning of the teachers (personal history, CPD plans, activities accomplished and teachers' reflection that provide evidence on teachers' CPD performance. In addition, School Improvement plans (SIP) were also reviewed to see how teachers CPD program get attention in the overall school improvement program as it is one of the elements; *School Improvement is not an isolated process administered by higher level administrators. Rather teachers are crucial to school improvement and are pivotal in promoting high levels of achievement in all their students* (Simpkins, 2009). Furthermore, Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap was also reviewed by the researcher. Because the Education Road Map as overall policy document prepared based on evaluation result of previous Education and Training Policy(1994), which also used in this study as source of information to understand attention given to teacher education and development in general and on the challenges identified in implementing the CPD framework and ,gaps in the document itself   in particular where the researcher's interest lies.

Pilot study

With regard to data collecting instrument an important issue that need consideration is about validity and reliability of the tools that has to be tested before the administration of the instrument to sample study. Therefore, the questionnaires were distributed to 10 teachers teaching in non-sample secondary school (Fiche secondary school), and the

reliability of the tools was calculated by using Cronbach alpha that yield 0.86. Therefore the Cronbach alpha value for reliability was very good and the instrument was accepted for the next procedure. For its validity, the questionnaires were given to two experts to be evaluated (one teacher from education department in Fiche Teacher Education College (FTEC) and one instructor from the field curriculum and instruction in Selale University. Accordingly, the raters average agreement level was calculated and it was 78.6, which is an acceptable point that shows the tool is valid to be used.

Ethical Considerations

Before the actual data collection took place, the researcher secured permission from school administrators involved in the study. The participants' involvement was based on their willingness and consensus that has been established with every respondent who participated in the study. The objective of the study was properly communicated to the participants. Furthermore, participants were informed that the study was not associated with any political, religious and any personal motives but only for academic purpose.

Methods of Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques were employed depending on the objectives of the study and to answer the basic research questions as well as the variables to be measured. Regarding the quantitative data, the data were coded, organized and entered into the computer for analysis using SPSS program version 25. This is after the instrument was verified for its reliability. Then, descriptive statistics was used for analyzing the response of the sample in general. Specifically, in order to describe demographic characteristics of the respondents and to describe the teacher's perception regarding CPD and schools and teachers challenges in doing CPD frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation was used. To explain

training/workshop attended by teachers and types of training needed by teacher's narrative analysis was applied as qualitative method. Additionally to check the difference between primary and secondary schools inferential statistics of t-test was applied.

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

Under this section, data collected on respondents' demography and data collected based on research questions are presented, analyzed and interpreted.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: The Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

Item		Total	
		No	**%**
Sex	Male	60	54.1
	Female	51	45.9
	Total	111	100.0
	1-5	1	.9
	6-10	20	18.0
	11-15	24	21.6
Experience	16-20	34	30.6
	21-25	14	12.6
	Above 26	18	16.2
	Total	111	100.0
	Diploma	32	28.8
Educational Level	Degree	66	59.5
	Masters	13	11.7
	Total	111	100.0

As indicated in Table 1, about 54% of the respondents were male and the rest 45.9% were female. More than (30.6%) of the teachers served between 16 to 20 years and less than 1% of the teachers have the

experience between 1 and 5 years. This result indicated that more teachers in target area have the experience in teaching and learning profession which is above 16 years. Lastly about 59.5% of the teachers were qualified with first degree and 32 (28.8%) of them were qualified with diploma and 13 (11.7%) of them have second degree. This finding shows that more of the respondents in the study area have the necessary qualification.

Teachers Perception of Continuous Professional Learning /Development

Table 2: Respondents Teachers' Perception of CPD Activities

Item	Responses								Total			
	SDA		DA		A		SA		No	%	M	SD
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%				
Initial training (Pre-service) is sufficient to be professional teacher	14	12.6	22	19.8	53	47.7	22	19.8	111	100	2.74	2.89
CPD helps to be effective classroom teacher	32	28.8	15	13.5	35	31.5	29	26.1	111	100	2.53	2.79
Workshops and seminars provided by Woreda/ or zonal or MOE education experts are the best means for teachers professional dev't	10	9.0	18	16.4	44	40	39	35.5	111	100	3.00	2.74
CPD improve teachers' professional knowledge and skills	43	39.1	38	34.5	9	8.1	21	19.1	111	100	2.07	2.42
CPD activities are time consuming; so it has to be arranged out of school by experts	16	14.4	31	28.2	44	40	20	18.2	111	100	2.61	2.77

Key: SDA= strongly disagree; DA= Disagree; A= Agree; SA= strongly agree

Table 2 above shows that majority of the respondents 81(73.6) do not believe that CPD activities develop teachers' professional knowledge and skills, and 78 (67.5%) of the teachers also perceive initial training

(pre-service training) as sufficient in making one a professional teacher. In item two of Table 2, on the other hand, 64(57.6%) of teachers perceive CPD activities are helpful for teachers to be effective classroom teachers, Item 3 of the above Table 83 (75.5%) of teachers take workshops and seminars provided by experts outside of the school as a means of good CPD. This finding indicated that the majority of the teachers take workshops and seminars provided by external experts for granted as the only means through which teachers improve their professional knowledge and competence. Such perception may emanate from lack of understanding the very concept and purpose of CPD on one hand and there are proclivities on the part of teachers to externalize the responsibility to other parties outside of the school. In item four the majority of the teachers 81(74.4%) do not sense CPD as teachers' activity that serve for professional knowledge and skills development. And a significant number of the teachers 64(58.2%) tend to believe CPD as time consuming activities.

Overall, it can be understood that teachers have lack of understanding of the purpose, importance and the process CPD activities are carried out. Lack of awareness on CPD may force them develop wrong attitude towards professional learning.

Types of CPD Activities School Teachers have been Engaged in

Table 3: Teachers' CPD Participation in School

Item	Response								Total			
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Always		No	%	M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%				
I have been participating on different workshops and seminars	50	48.1	22	21.2	27	29.9	12	11.5	111	100	2.01	2.27
I have been participating on discussion with members of my colleagues in my department on classroom teaching issues	10	9.6	27	26.0	47	52.2	27	29.9	111	100	2.81	2.95
I regularly participate in peer coaching teachers teaching the same subject.	46	44.2	21	20.2	15	12.5	29	27.9	111	100	2.24	2.56
I participate in peer classroom observation.	58	64.4	31	23.8	23	22.8	9	5.9	111	100	2.29	2.39
I read books and other materials related with teaching and teacher profession.	6	5.8	14	13.5	36	39.9	55	52.9	111	100	3.26	3.37

According to Table 3, 50 (48.1%) teachers have never participated in workshops at all but only few 12(11.5%) teachers participated in workshop. This item shows that almost the trend of workshop as CPD activity in schools is weak. Under item two of the above table, teachers were asked the extent to which they participated in discussion related with classroom teaching practices to solve problems they encountered such as students misbehavior, teaching materials and issues assessment at department level and with peers who teach the same subject. According to their responses 43(41.3%) of the teachers participated sometimes in such kind of discussion, but a significant number of teachers 37 (35.5%) had almost no participation and only 24 (23.1%) of the teachers participated in regular discussion regarding

what they needed to improve in their classroom teaching practices at department level.

This finding indicates that teachers discuss almost always at department level although they do not plan for it. In item three teachers 46 (44.2%) replied that they never participated in peer teaching or coaching. Furthermore 58 (47.5%) teachers responded that they did not participate in peer classroom observation, only an insignificant number of them, 6(5.9%) participated in observing other teacher teaching. This result indicated that while peer observation in classroom teaching is an important aspect professional learning teachers are not familiar with and not ready to learn from each other as a part of CPD activities. Finally the majority of the teachers 55(52.9%) have good practice and attitude in reading books and other materials related to their teaching profession.

Table 4: Teachers' CPD Participation in School (continued)

Variables	Response								Total			
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Always		No	%	M	SD
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%				
I conduct action research with my colleagues.	44	39.6	34	30.6	26	23.4	7	6.3	111	100	1.69	2.17
I make self-assessment on my classroom teaching practices.	36	32.4	44	39.6	15	13.6	16	14.4	111	100	2.09	1.44
I prepared additional reading material for students	27	24.5	19	17.3	46	41.8	19	16.4	111	100	2.51	2.71

According to Table 4, 39(37.9%) of the teachers responded that the trend of conducting action research as a part of CPD did not take place but 7 (6.8%) of teachers were always conducting action research. Therefore this result indicated that teachers did not participate in investigating research specifically, action research. However the majority, 36 (35.3%) of the teachers sometimes made self-assessment

for their improvement of classroom teaching practice. Additionally about 46(44.7%) of teachers sometimes prepared reference teaching-learning material for students but 12 (11.7%) of them prepared teaching learning material as a reference rarely. This finding indicated that teachers were familiar with preparing teaching learning material for their students. Finally, mentors sometimes assisted teachers on the CPD activities.

Challenges Schools and Teachers Encountered in the Implementation of CPD

Table 5: Respondent Teachers' Views Concerning Challenges faced in Practicing CPD

Item	Response								Total			
	SDA		DA		A		SA		No	%	M	SD
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%				
Lack of awareness about the importance of CPD for teachers	17	15.7	15	13.6	47	42.7	32	28.8	111	100	2.85	3.01
Lack of interest on part of teachers	36	32.4	29	26.1	18	16.2	28	25.2	111	100	2.34	2.61
Lack of time because of high teaching load	26	23.4	42	37.8	28	25.2	15	13.5	111	100	2.28	2.48
Lack of knowledge and skills. interest in coordinating CPD on the part of school administrators	12	10.8	45	40.5	40	36.0	14	12.6	111	100	2.50	2.64
Absence of clear guideline how to conduct CPD activities	18	16.2	13	11.9	22	20.2	57	52.3	111	100	3..04	3.26
CPD activities are not based on teachers' needs and problems	14	12.8	34	31.2	28	25.2	34	31.2	111	100	2.72	2.91

Key: SDA= strongly disagree, DA= Disagree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

According to Table 5, almost 76 (70.4%) teachers argue that lack of awareness about the importance of CPD may hinder the implementation, and majority of the teachers 68(63.6%) agree that lack of time because of work load is not the cause for dysfunction of the CPD activities. This finding indicated that the problems that hinder the implementation of teachers' CPD is not mentioned above. As shown on the above table, 54 (48.6%) teachers believe the challenge for the implementation of teachers' CPD is lack of knowledge and skills, and

interest and in coordinating CPD activities on the part of school leaders. Additionally, majority of the teachers 79 (73.5%) reflected that the other challenge that hinders the teacher to implement CPD is the absence of sufficient CPD material and clear guidelines. Finally, more teachers 62 (56.4%) responded that CPD activities in school do not depend on the teachers need and problems.

Improvements Achieved Through CPD as Perceived by Teachers

This research question was answered using opinion gathered from respondents through interview guide. With regard to this question, school principals, teachers and supervisors interviewed have the same idea that according to their opinion, at the beginning, especially in 2000 to 2002 all teachers attempted to plan their CPD activities. However, as there was no clear awareness at all levels on what to plan, and lack of understanding on CPD Framework, guideline and strategies etc), the program has not been implemented by schools in the manner required to develop teachers knowledge and skills; and these problems have continued even to date. Therefore, as opinioned by one supervisor, since CPD in school remained at planning stage, it is difficult to talk about its effect. Such problems may relate with the idea of Fullan (1991). According to him, undermining the complexity of the teaching knowledge base, teachers' professional development is seen as something to be 'planned' or 'managed' without proper consideration being given to what is to be developed, beyond 'implementing' a particular program or centrally developed initiative (Tynjala and F.T, 2015)

This indicates that attempting to implement teachers CPD plans prepared at national level without proper identification of knowledge gap and other professional deficiencies at individual and institutional level, through rigorous learning and growth need assessment, is likely to fail.

Most of the teachers who attempted to plan their CPD; they planned it wrongly because it seems that teachers and administrators have conceptualized CPD activities and its purpose in a wrong way. As observed from teachers' portfolio, they were planning activities that had nothing to do with the teachers' own learning and development. For instance, in their plan statements it was stated - I *will reduce students drop-outs by 70%, I will use active learning methods in my classroom, I will produce extra learning materials for my students*, etc rather than planning learning activities to develop their own knowledge and skills through self-teaching and support given by external bodies, depending on knowledge gap they have identified during self-evaluation, during self-assessment stage of CPD cycle.

This shows providing CPD guideline *per se* is not adequate, the procedures and tasks teachers are expected to perform at each stage of CPD cycle needs to be properly communicated to teachers before rushing to force teachers to plan their CPD in top-down fashion.

Both at individual and institutional level, CPD begins from self-review or self-assessment in which a teacher asks himself a series of questions during analysis stage in the CPD cycle to identify gaps or learning needs of the teachers:

- What I need to learn to improve my classroom teaching;
- What problem/s I frequently encounter while conducting class;
- Do I know how students learn; and
- What knowledge and skill I have to develop etc. to effectively plan my own professional development needs...

Referring to Hawley and Valli (1999), Tynjala and F.T. (2015) argue that one of the principles in professional development is involving teachers in the identification of what they need to learn in the development of the learning experiences in which they will be involved. In other words, identification of gaps (knowledge and skills) through

teacher self-assessment is indicative of learning needs, which should be accompanied by choosing the valuable learning experiences teachers have to deal with in order to address the need of the diverse learners. After knowledge gaps are identified, it needs to be followed by planning, action and reflection with appropriate and timely feedback for all individual teachers.

Result and Discussion

Many countries are investing resources in renewing the capacity of their teaching force on a continuous basis and thereby improving schools. Likewise, the Ethiopian government initiated and implemented a nationwide school reform since 2003, and teachers' CPD is one of the reform elements which intended to improve teachers' capacity and subsequently raise student achievement.

Based on the purpose of this study, concurrent mixed research design was used and data was analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results were then categorized and discussed under the following four themes:

Teachers' Attitude towards Their CPD

As clearly understood from analysis of data, teachers consider CPD activities as imposition of extra activities to the teaching duty, instead of owning CPD as one's professional and civic responsibility that aimed at making difference on students' academic achievement through teachers' continuous learning. On the other hand, some teachers who were interviewed clearly expressed their idea that the only reason that makes them stay in the teaching profession is the absence of other option, not because he/she is interested in the teaching profession. And still if any chance comes to him, one of the respondents admitted he will leave the profession. Thus, from the teachers' opinion one can understand that some teachers or at least those who have been

interviewed have negative attitude towards the teaching profession, the behavior that demotivate and prevent them to exercise their agency, use their potential for future development in general. Thus, attitudinal problem seems one of the serious obstacles that hamper teachers from responding to CPD initiatives at school level,

Types of CPD Activities Teachers are engaged in

As can be observed from the analysis regarding types of CPD activities teachers are involved in the data shows that teachers have relatively better participation in discussions related to classroom teaching issues such as classroom management, teaching material development, assessment process and teaching strategies as a group at department level. In addition, most teachers read materials that they think important in the development of their knowledge and skills.

Analysis of data also reveal that teachers have relatively better participation in preparing additional reading materials for students they are teaching. This activity, to my understanding, can be considered important as part of curriculum improvement and implementation effort through which learning contents are modified in ways that facilitate students learning. However, while carrying out such an activities is essential and encouraging in teachers' professional development, interview response reveal that teachers are involved in these activities as usual when they come across with certain problems individually or as a group, and especially when such activities are demanded by school administration for performance evaluation purpose. They are not based on self- motivation, purposely initiated and planned professional development efforts

Generally, teachers participation, in activities which in most literature (MOE,2013, 2012, Dilshan, 2019) accounts as CPD include (but not limited to) peer classroom observation, peer coaching (or mentoring), action research, professional dialogue or discussions, attending on

different workshops and seminars(prepared by schools) is very minimal and ineffective in the schools involved in this study.

In the absence self-initiated, self-guide professional activities that based on self-assessment, proper planning and monitoring it seems that the teachers are not only failing to exercise their agency, but also they cannot contribute for the quality of classroom teaching-learning and students achievement.

Perceived Effects of CPD on Teachers Behavior and Attitude

Analysis of interview responses gathered from school principals, supervisors and woreda education expert and observation of teachers' CPD portfolio indicate that except the attempts of few teachers, CPD activities have not been based on proper planning at individual teachers and school level as well. In other words, the activities have not been carried out according to the requirements of national CPD framework and practical CPD kit. Moreover, as there was no necessary support given to teachers, absence of evaluation and feedback, the practice of professional learning of teachers in school is very poor. In addition, lack of awareness on the CPD documents itself, procedure of its' implementation and lack of follow ups by concerned stakeholders at all levels (School administrators, woreda education experts and Zonal and teachers) combined with absence of motivation, interest and lack of positive attitude towards the teaching profession (teachers perception CPD activities as imposition on the part of teachers) altogether make implementation of CPD activities ineffective in schools involved in this study.

Thus, in the presence of these many odds in the present situation teachers' CPD cannot have positive effects on teachers' behavior and attitude.

Major Challenges Faced in the Process of Implementing National CPD Framework

With regard major challenges faced in the process implementing CPD framework at school level, one of the major challenges as can be understood from the analysis is generally teachers' resistance. This resistance emanate not simply from teachers' desire to refuse the current CPD initiative, but the " how" of the CPD framework implementation seems the source of resistance, because first, there is proclivity to urge schools and teachers to implement CPD framework without properly convincing teacher through effective awareness raising bout the its purpose and benefits for individual teachers and schools; which resulted in lack of clear understanding on the objectives of CPD and implementation CPD practical tool kit; second, absence of close follow up, evaluation and support and feedback; lack of featuring teachers' CPD activities with some kind of reward or benefits combined with absence of positive attitude and interest towards the teaching profession on the part of some teachers potentially hurt the implementation of CPD framework at school level.;   the final but important issue is the lack of commitment and common vision of education authorities at different levels (woreda, zonal and regional) are found to be critical problems account for the ineffectiveness of CPD activities in schools involved in this study.

The other challenge is teachers' lack of clear understanding on the vey objectives of teachers CPD program. The inconsistency in responses of the teachers is evident. For instance, majority of teachers 70 (66%) of teachers perceive that initial training as sufficient to make one professional teachers on one hand and on the other hand significant number of teachers 61(56.5) believe CPD helps one to be effective classroom teacher..

Other inconsistency was also observed between teacher responses on survey questionnaire and opinion gathered from school principals and

selected teachers. As described above, the majority of teachers hold a belief that CPD can help one to develop knowledge and skills that improve his/her classroom performance, students learning and achievements. Whereas the opinions gathered from selected teachers revealed that teachers perceive CPD as imposition.

One of the interviewed Teachers (T-1) said,

> *CPD did not get any acceptance by majority of teachers including myself"*, when asked the reasons, he went on saying, *"because first it has no any economic benefit for teachers as it is not related to some kind reward, career development or salary increment, and secondly, there is no responsible body at all levels that provide support and feedback for effort made by few teacher. So I just became to consider it simply as additional burden imposed on teachers, it is meaningless whether you participate in CPD activities or ignore it.*

In addition, school principals were also asked about CPD activities and problems encountered in implementing CPD program in their schools. One of the school principals said:

> *The only thing we have is CPD guideline, there is no attempt by woreda, zonal, regional education bureau to improve teachers awareness, no monitoring system on individual as well as institutional (schools' CPD performance irrespective of its expected material benefits; Hence, teachers loose interest to participate in CPD activities So I do not want my teachers worry about CPD"* (Feb 18, 2022). Almost all school principals hold the same opinion regarding CPD plan implementation.

Here the possible explanation for the inconsistencies of information is teachers lack of awareness/clarity on the very purposed of CPD activities, importance and the process through which CPD activities are

carried out on one hand and on the other hand teachers are uncritical, lack confidence to genuinely provide real information on their CPD, even if they have been told that the information they provide would be protected and they would be kept anonymous. Because of uncritical nature of teachers responses (as can be understood from inconsistencies of information), opinions gathered from school principals, few confident and authentic teachers through interview guides about teachers' attitude towards CPD would deems to be real.

> *CPD did not get any acceptance by majority of teachers including myself",* when asked the reasons, he went on saying, *"because first it has no any economic benefit for teachers as it is not related to some kind reward, career development or salary increment, and secondly, there is no responsible body at all levels that provide support and feedback for effort made by few teacher. So I just became to consider it simply as additional burden imposed on teachers, it is meaningless whether you participate in CPD activities or ignore it.*

One may generalize that the idea of considering CPD activities as imposition emanate from lack of understanding its purpose, importance and the extent to which one is responsible(ownership) for hi/her CPD, and the tendency to relate CPD with material benefit (especially financial) or career growth However, as stated in the national CPD framework teachers professional learning (CPD) activities are an integral part of teaching task, they are not "add on" or extra burden imposed on teacher (MoE,2009). It is the responsibility of each teacher and school to carry out CPD activities for his/her own development.as individual teachers and for school improvement in general, which the ultimate goal is improvement of students' academic achievement. In the framework it also stated "CPD is a compulsory requirement for those who teach in all Ethiopian educational establishments. It is the civic and professional duty of all educators to engage in continuous professional development (MoE, 2009, P. 12).

So, the purpose and role of teachers' CPD including their responsibilities need to be properly communicated to teachers through structured and monitored awareness raising programs so as to convince them that teachers are the owner of their own CPD

Furthermore, teachers were asked what makes them stay in the in the teaching profession and satisfaction they have in the teaching tasks in order to understand their feeling and attitude towards the teaching profession. Accordingly, one of the interviewed teachers (T-2) reported:

> *Life force me to stay in the teaching profession, I have to earn something to lead life., because I was not successful in other option, and still if chance appear I do not hesitate to leave the teaching profession (Feb 19,2022)*

Almost all teachers who were interviewed, four out of six, are of same idea. So it is not surprising if they neglect and fail to consider CPD activities as responsibility of teachers. This indicates that teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession in general is problematic, and CPD.is not different. Thus, it can be inferred that teaching profession was not the best choice for many teachers, they could not develop positive attitude gradually even after relatively long years of experience.

Document analysis: The researcher carried out document analysis in two secondary schools, Wabari and Muke-Turi secondary schools (Feb, 18 and19,2022). One of the documents reviewed by the researcher was teachers' CPD portfolios. In all schools understudy, some teachers prepare their CPD plan every year, and the plans are submitted to vice principal and all are collected in one file. Some CPD activities attempted by few teachers, as evidence, are tied in personal file of teachers, not in his/her portfolio. There are no personal CPD portfolios found at hands of individual teachers; no evidence of teachers CPD activities accomplished, reflected and evaluated even in

teachers' personal files. This shows again the very concept of CPD portfolio is not understood by teachers as well as by school leaders, which in general shows the ineffective CPD performance in schools understudy.

The other document analyzed in this study was the School Improvement Plan (SIP). School improvement plan (SIP) prepared to be implemented in the time of three years. Schools are expected to carry out annual SIP implementation outcomes during school review programs at the end of each year, and produce a report to be submitted to the relevant authorities (Woreda, Zone, education offices). The researcher observed the schools' annual SIP implementation review report (evaluation reports) as he knows from his personal experience teachers' CPD is one of the elements of school improvement program. All schools involved in this study have CPD program in their SIP to involve all teachers in CPD activities; in which all respective departments are required to render necessary support and evaluate teacher teachers' CPD performance. However, in the schools' SIP review report (two school out of four), it was observed that teachers CPD activities were not successful. The causes for its failure, as described in the report documents include teachers reluctance, lack of time (large load on teachers, lack of necessary CPD materials and resources and lack of support from school administrators have been identified as the major obstacles that hamper CPD activities in the schools. However, teachers' reluctance   and school leaders' loose attention were underscored as a serious challenges contributed for ineffectiveness of CPD activities.

In general the study shows that lack of awareness on purposes, importance and process of CPD; absence of support, feedback, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, identifying learning need of teachers based on their field specialization found to be the factors that seriously affect implementation of CPD in schools.. In addition, lack of knowledge and skills, and interest in coordinating CPD activities on the

part of school leaders is another constraint in implementing CPD. Research finding by Tynjala and F.T (2015) is onsistent with this idea that lack of support, follow-up and feedback from school leaders regarding the CPD program left teachers confused. School leaders themselves have no adequate understanding of the current CPD program leave alone guiding teacher development.

However, findings of this study show that teachers' motivation, interest and attitude toward CPD seems problematic. Even though few teachers participate in some kind of activities related to their teaching task, they are not intentionally planned activities targeted at their development. This implies that teachers who involved in this study, are not benefiting from current CPD initiative and they could not also exercise their agency (power, capacity, autonomy) of making decision to direct and have control over their own professional development, which in turn may affect students learning and their academic achievement directly or otherwise

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

Summary of major findings

The major findings of the study are summarized hereunder:

- Analyses of quantitative data show that teachers lack understanding on the very objectives of continuous professional learning. Teachers tend perceive CPD activities as something unnecessarily imposed on teachers because they take initial training for granted in making one professional.

- Regarding the types of CPD activities in which teachers are involved, it was found out that teachers have relatively better participation in discussions related to classroom teaching issues such as classroom management, teaching material

development, assessment process and teaching strategies as a group at department level. In addition, it was disclosed that most teachers read materials that they think important in the development of their knowledge and skills.

▪ Analysis of data also reveal that teachers have relatively better participation in preparing additional reading materials for students they are teaching. This activity, to my understanding, can be considered important as part of curriculum improvement and implementation effort through which learning contents are modified in ways that facilitate students learning.

▪ The study revealed that teachers' participation in CPD activities were not based on self- motivation, purposely initiated and planned professional development efforts. Analysis of qualitative data (interview and observation of teachers' CPD portfolio and schools SIP annual review report) indicate that except attempts of few teachers, CPD activities have not been based on proper planning at individual teachers and school level as well.

▪ Finally, the study revealed that teachers' continuous professional learning in the secondary schools was generally obstructed by teachers' reluctance or resistance to accept CPD as the civic and professional responsibility of teachers, lack of commitment and common vision among education authorities at different levels (woreda, zonal and regional) and lack self-efficacy, inability to accept oneself as a professional teacher and negative attitude towards the teaching profession.

Conclusion

Based on the major findings, it was concluded that the practice of continuous professional learning in the secondary schools was ineffective. The practice hasn't helped teachers of the secondary

schools achieve professional agency, which in turn affect students' learning and their performances. Even though many factors caused the ineffectiveness of CPD in the schools, the most serious obstacle pertains to the existence of negative attitude towards the teaching profession.

Recommendations

By taking into account the data analysis, the major findings, and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- Raising teachers' awareness on the very purpose of CPD, familiarizing teachers to CPD Framework, strategies (practical tool kit) through focused plan and program need to be the first task of all concerned bodies.

- The secondary schools in collaboration with Woreda Education Office and the local communities are advised to institutionalize CPD as part of schools' responsibility;

- The secondary schools in collaboration with Woreda Education Office and the local communities are advised to put in place proper and functional monitoring and evaluation system so to strengthen CPD activities in the school.

- School leaders, woreda education experts, and education authorities at all levels (regional, zone, woreda and schools) in collaboration with other stakeholders like Teacher Association (TA) and teacher education college and universities need to raise the awareness of teachers concerning the significance of common vision, targeted action plan, and proper monitoring and evaluation schemes for the effective implementation of CPD in schools.

- Woreda education supervisors and school-based supervisors need to provide timely feedback and support to teachers to keep teachers on the right track.

- Teachers' CPD performance needs to be featured in to their career development so as to motivate teachers and to engage them more in enhancing student learning.

- Finally, it is necessary to undertake further study on the impact of teachers CPD activities on teachers' behavior, attitudes and practices, and on students' academic performance in Ethiopia context.

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