Standards for the Preparation and Development of Teacher Educators in Ethiopia: Policy versus Practice

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Abstract:

The article reports results of part of a study assessing the characteristics, roles, and competencies of teacher educators in Ethiopia. It specifically focuses on assessing the standards of teacher educators in Ethiopian colleges of teacher education. The study used a mixed method design and drew data from analysis of key global and local documents and a questionnaire administered to 106 teacher educators from 10 teacher education colleges. The information gathered through a review of documents was analyzed by sorting it into categories. The categories used for the analysis and subsequent discussion were standards; experience and professional development of teacher educators. The questionnaire was used to gather data on the profile of teacher educators and their views on how to improve the preparation and development of teacher educators in Ethiopia. Results indicate that some of the key policy documents duly recognize the need for setting standards for teacher educators as part of the strategy to improve the quality of education in Ethiopia. Some of the important elements of the standards for teacher educators (e.g. collaboration) have been given due attention whereas others (e.g. engagement in digital literacy) have been overlooked. Besides, the study shows that a significant proportion of teacher educators had no exposure to formal pedagogical preparation. This is the case mainly among teacher educators in the social science and natural science streams. Policy and practical recommendations have been forwarded.

Keywords: Policy, Practice, Professional development, Teacher educators, Standard

Introduction

Any discussion on standards of teacher educators needs to start by identifying what they are. Teacher educators are often regarded as a 'heterogeneous group' including professionals from different backgrounds and working in different settings (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.5). Likewise, Murray and Male (2005, p.140) consider teacher educators as a particular type of academic with a double focus on teaching and learning in Initial Teacher Education, where they "teach intending teachers about education through the medium of their personal pedagogy". There are also school-based teacher educators co-operating with those who are university or college-based and with their students (Czerniawski, et al., 2024; O'Dwyer and Atlı, 2015). With regard to specific tasks, teacher educators are often engaged in a variety of activities including service as teachers of subject or pedagogy; supporting student teachers during field work; developing and carrying out courses for experienced teachers; and participation in research.

Locating teacher educators within the broader teacher education system

Prominent scholars in the area identify four critical components of an effective teacher education program: the institutional context; program level attributes (program organization and goals); people involved (teacher educators and teacher candidates); content/substance (nuances of coursework, field experiences, the ways in which candidates are taught, and the data that informs how they are taught) (Zeichner and Conklin, 2008).

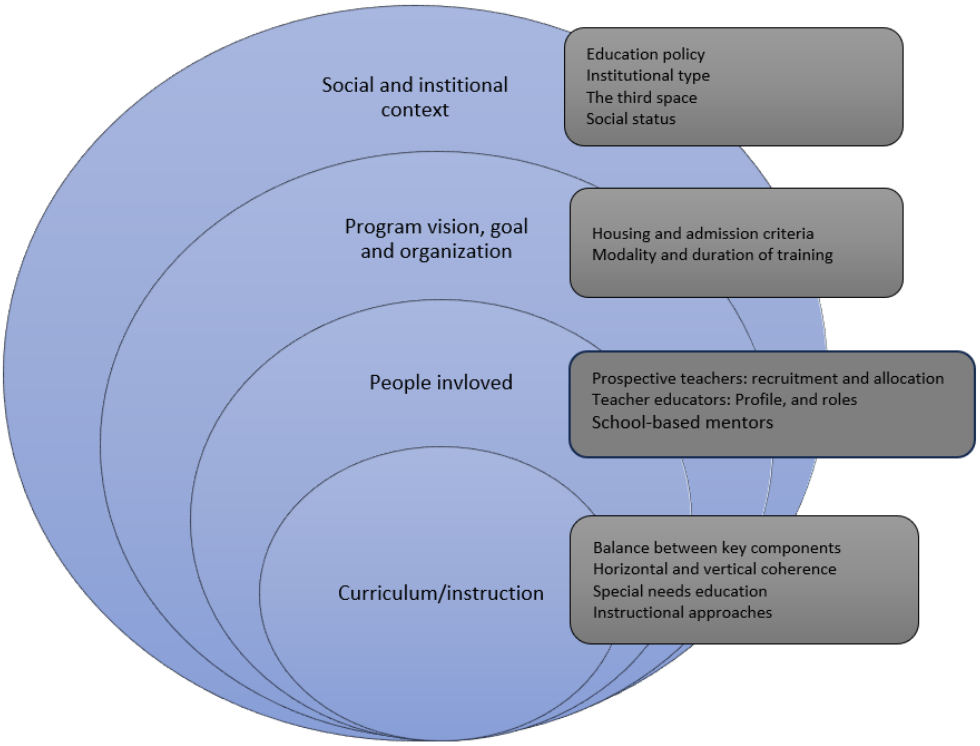

Figure 1. Locating teacher educators within the broader teacher education system (***Source:*** *Based on Zeichner and Conklin (2008, p.276)*)

The context: social and institutional

The major argument here is that in order for teacher education programs to have the potential to thrive and produce exemplary teachers, they must have strong institutional support in terms of physical and budgetary resources and ideological support needed to prepare future teachers well. Equally important is whether or not a teacher education faculty has comparable standing, workloads and other rewards to other faculty within an institution. The study by Goodlad, (1990 cited in Zeichner and Conklin, 2008, p.272) indicates that generally "teacher educators lacked the infrastructure support and advocacy in their institutions needed to enable exemplary teacher education programs to exist".

Increasing collaboration is highly desirable in what is often referred to as the 'Third Space' or boundary space. With regard to this, Williams (2014, p.325) suggests that current policy directions requiring greater cooperation and collaboration between universities and schools will

necessitate ever-increasing professional interactions between teachers and teacher educators in this evolving third space. Similarly, O'Dwyer and Atlı (2015) suggest that the operational sphere of teacher educators could fall under one of the following three places: institutions of teacher education; in schools; or both in institutions of teacher education and schools. The roles of teacher educators markedly differ in these three conditions. There are also countries which give equal credit to college-based and school-based work of teacher educators. In Israel, for instance, school-based mentors are considered "almost as integral to the teacher education system as higher education-based educators" (Murray et al., 2009, p.36).

Interestingly, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education seems to give due attention to and has creative ideas regarding effective management of the third space, i.e., effective strategies to improve collaboration between the various types of teacher educators. It was emphasized that a strong and mutually beneficial link should be established between Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) and schools. This is essential for developing teacher educators' knowledge and understanding of the schools for which student teachers are being prepared. Furthermore, it provides teacher educators with opportunities to engage in school teaching, thereby enhancing their expertise (MOE, 2003).

The program: Vision, goal and organization

Exemplary programs are found to be those which 'emphasize the value of connectedness' i.e., a close connection between coursework and fieldwork and a strong relationship between people who work in different parts of a program, including teacher educators (Zeichner. and Conklin, 2008). Historically, teacher education programs are housed under general universities or in specialized universities/colleges of teacher education. Both options have their own advantages and shortcomings. For instance, schools of education at elite universities are said to have "opted for rigor over relevance, with boutique teacher education programs that provide academically credible preparation for a small and highly selective group of students" (Labaree, 2008, p.293). Schools of education at regional state universities, on the other hand, opted for programs that mass produce teachers to fill the continuing demand in schools. Some countries are known to be more polarized than others in terms of the rigor-relevance gap.

More recently, and mainly in the US, other modalities of teacher preparation (called alternative routes to teaching) have been introduced. This route is different in many ways from the two modalities discussed above. A study describing the nature of such programs confirms how short the duration could be and the timing of the training: "Once a candidate is accepted into the program, we enroll him or her in a six to eight weeks intensive pre-service training" (Rhee and Oakley, 2008, p.374). One cannot help but wonder what the role of a teacher educator would be under such a situation!

The people: Teacher educators, mentors and prospective teachers

The key people involved in a teacher education program are teacher educators, prospective teachers and school-based mentors. In all cases, recruitment and admission are believed to be the decisive factors determining the quality of the system. After reiterating the now famous

motto that 'No school can be better than its teachers', Haberman and Post (1998, p.102) add that the "surest and best way to improve the schooling for children and youth in poverty is to provide them with better teachers". Training, according to them, is "useful only for those with appropriate predispositions" (Haberman and Post, 1998, p.103). Exemplary systems are the ones which give due care for selection of prospective teachers; and provide preparation and ongoing support to the teacher educators who work with teacher candidates. In relation to this, Loughran and Berry (2005) suggest that a desirable professional competency of teacher educators is the ability to explicitly model for their students, the thoughts and actions that underpin one's pedagogical approach.

As noted in relation to the first element, exemplary systems facilitate a collaboration between and among the professionals involved in teacher preparation. Such a collaboration has the potential to create learning opportunities not only for teacher educators but for teachers in schools as well (Williams, 2014). Similarly, a policy document by Ethiopian Ministry of Education underscores that, with a deeper understanding of the organization and functioning of schools and of the nature of school teaching, the courses delivered in the TEIs will become more relevant to the work for which the student teachers are being prepared (MOE, 2003, p.11). The personal relationships between the individuals involved could, for instance, lead to a more ready exchange of ideas and expertise, both informally and formally. Teachers could, for instance, be invited into the TEI to talk to the student teachers and practicums could be organized to fit more easily into the schools' arrangements to the advantage of all parties involved. The schoolteachers will also gain knowledge, skills and understanding from working with the teacher educators. Eventually, the TEI could provide education for the clusters of schools that is tailored to each cluster's individual needs. What is more, the schools could be given access to the TEIs educational resources and TEIs and schools could undertake joint projects.

There is also a growing call to reconceptualize the work of teachers and teacher educators. Teacher educators need to have a firsthand experience of reality in schools. This requires teacher educators to integrate themselves into the school setting "not as detached researchers, but as authentic practitioners" (Intrator and Kunyman, 2009, p.517). The writers observe that such a grounded practice for teacher educators could take a multitude of shapes including the following:

- Teaching in a K-12 school: teaching or co-teaching a class with a full-time K-12 educator.
- Teaching K-12 students at the university: developing a course or a program offered in the university setting to K-12 students.
- Teaching in an extracurricular program: working with K-12 students in an educational context outside of formal schooling.
- Back-to-school immersion: using a sabbatical to teach full-time in a K-12 setting.
- Developing summer school or inter-term programs: These could also be cotaught by teacher educators and their students.

Hussein (2011, p.351) argues that teacher educators (associate teachers and university supervisors in this case) need awareness that mentoring or supervision is an activity of high accountability; and are expected to strike a balance between two important virtues, namely, developing "intellectual humility and open-mindedness when they assess teacher candidates' thoughts and actions" and, at the same time, avoiding "unwarranted lightheartedness in a situation where they have observed problems that cause danger to the intellectual and moral standards of the profession". In an effective mentoring relationship, according to Jaylan, associate teachers in the partner schools are expected to support student teachers as professional co-learners and scaffolders "instead of passing authoritarian judgments on the performance of teacher candidates". The writer adds, effective mentoring of teacher candidates requires the associate teachers (school-based teacher educators) to "integrate competence, experience, skills of communication, enthusiasm, commitment and ethical accountability".

The curriculum and instructional strategies

Good teacher education programs offer extensive course work in child and adolescent development, learning theory, and theories about cognition and motivation and subject matter pedagogy that is taught in the context of practice. The implication of this to the preparation and professional development of teacher educators should be clear: both the content of their preparation and in-service support schemes will have to include all the major dimensions of the curriculum. With regard to instructional approaches, Shulman (2005 cited in Zeichner and Conklin, 2008, p.278-80) criticized the great variety of instructional approaches that exist in different teacher education programs and calls for a consensus on a small set of 'signature pedagogies' that would characterize all teacher education programs. A signature pedagogy "should enable students to move along the continuum from being disciplinary novices to disciplinary experts" (Komoto, 2009, p.133).

Towards standards for teacher educators

Compared to the relatively short history of teacher education in Ethiopia (Gershberg et al., 2023), the notion of standards seems to have a very long existence in the global educational landscape. It has been argued, for instance, that educational standards evolved over the past century to become a major force in determining and judging the quality of education. Standards for teacher educators "have roots and practices going back 300 years in France" (De Landsheere, 1987 cited in Houston, 2009, p.45). The purpose of what were often referred to as 'normal' schools was to establish teaching standards or norms; hence its name, 'normal' school, after which all other schools and teaching practices would be modeled. The normal school provided "model" classrooms in which prospective teachers could observe and practice teaching children under the direction of faculty members who themselves had demonstrated their own competence as teachers, thus establishing the criterion measures for the standard. In the United States, one of the first 'normal' schools was organized in 1839 in Lexington, Massachusetts. Like its French counterpart, it was aimed at modeling effective educational practice and in the process it became a harbinger of teacher educator standards (Houston, 2009, pp.45-6). It is also important to note

here that 'normal' schools evolved into teachers colleges and then into universities with much broader missions and curricula.

Recent efforts in preparing standards for teacher educators

The [American] Association of Teacher Educators[1] (ATE) makes a compelling argument that the foundation of the professional work of teacher educators lies in development and maintenance of quality programs that prepare beginning teachers and provide for teachers' on-going professional development during and after induction into the profession" (ATE, 2008). It

Table 1*: Standards for a teacher educator*

S/n	Standard	Description
1	Commitment to teaching	Modeling teaching that demonstrates content and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions reflecting research, proficiency with technology and assessment, and accepted best practices.
2	Cultural competence	Applying cultural competence and promote social justice in teacher education. Cultural competence is the ability to meet the academic and developmental needs of students of different genders, races, ethnic backgrounds, learning styles and abilities, and values.
3	Engagement in research	Engaging in inquiry and contribute to scholarship that expands the knowledge base related to teacher education.
4	Commitment to continuous professional development	Inquiring systematically into, reflect on, and improving own practice and demonstrate commitment to continuous professional development.
5	Competence in leadership	Providing leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating teacher education programs.
6	Willingness to collaborate	Collaborate regularly and in significant ways with relevant stakeholders to improve teaching, research, and student learning.
7	Advocacy for high quality Education for All	Serving as informed, constructive advocates for high quality education for all students by enlightening and pressuring those in decision-making positions.
8	Commitment to improve the teaching profession	Contributing to improving the teacher education profession.
9	Creating a vision for teaching, learning, and teacher education	Contributing to creating visions for teaching, learning, and teacher education that take into account such issues as technology, systemic thinking, and worldviews.
10	Digital competence	Demonstrating willingness for and ability to access, manage, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies.

Adapted from: *Arisman, 2009; Harris, 2009; Houston, 2009; Kessinger, 2009; Klecka, 2009; Manner, 2009; McBee and Houston, 2009; Short, 2009; and Venditti, 2009*.

characterizes 'accomplished teacher educators' as those who make regular contributions to and lead the development, refinement, and revision of programs and portions of programs focused on initial teacher preparation and on-going teacher professional development. The ATE started

[1] The [American] Association of Teacher Educators was founded on February 26, 1920 as the National Association of Directors of Supervised Student Teaching with 22 charter members (https://ate1.org/history).

exploring standards for teacher educators and their use in certification in the 1990s with the appointment of a national task force on the certification of master teacher educators, and continued through 2000 with the publication of a set of standards for teacher educators. As teacher educators "have an obligation to be precise about what is entailed in being a teacher educator", the standards prepared so far and to be prepared in the future are supposed to foment a continuing dialogue and sharpen understanding of "the multiple roles of teacher educators and the qualities that make them effective (Houston, 2009, p.61). Table 1 shows standards for accomplished teacher educators (Arisman, 2009; Harris, 2009; Houston, 2009; Kessinger, 2009; Klecka, 2009; Manner, 2009; McBee and Houston, 2009; Short, 2009; Venditti, 2009).

Table 2: *Summary of the Dutch standards for teacher educators*

Fundamentals of the work of teacher educators
A teacher educator works simultaneously on the following three levels: 1. understanding the development of pupils 2. facilitating and supervising the student teacher's development 3. Steering his or her own professional development
Focuses on the development of participants:
A teacher educator stimulates participants to take responsibility for their own development and values the contribution of the participants. S/he a role model for (prospective) teachers
Interpersonal and pedagogical:
A teacher educator creates a safe (working) atmosphere and supports the development of the professional identity of the participants. S/he also stimulates the development of values of the participants and is conscious of his or her own values
Pedagogy of teacher education:
A teacher educator creates an inspiring and stimulating learning environment; acknowledges differences between participants and, if necessary, acts upon them.
Working in an organization:
A teacher educator organizes his or her work and private time well. S/he improvises when necessary.
Working with colleagues:
A teacher educator articulates their educational views and concepts clearly, relates them to the perspectives of colleagues and the institution, and engages in discussions about them.
Working in a broader context:
A teacher educator has a relevant (inter)national network.
Working on one's own development:
A teacher educator reflects systematically on his or her own pedagogical approach and behavior towards students, colleagues and others.

Source: *The Dutch Association of Teacher Educators (VELON, 2007, cited in Murray, Swennen and Shagrir, 2009, p.32)*

It is also important to note here that The Netherlands is one of the few countries in the world that have prepared professional standards for teacher educators (Table 2). A study aimed at analyzing the experiences with the country's standard for teacher educators and an

accompanying procedure for self-assessment, professional development and registration (SPR) clearly indicates that standard is not imposed on teacher educators, but has been developed and reviewed intra-professionally (Koster and Dengerink, 2008). It has also been noted that teacher educators own the standard, not least because it is combined with a formative self-assessment procedure. What is more, the authors assert that "the Dutch standard is, in combination with the designated procedure of SPR, not only helpful for individual accountability, but that it is well used and esteemed as a strong instrument for individual professional development" (Koster and Dengerink, 2008, p.145-6).

Standards for teacher educators have also been expected to address several issues that remained grey areas in teacher education. Among such issues is the identity of teacher educators. Fisher (2009, p.29) suggests, for instance, that the concept of teacher educator is not widely accepted, is under continual rethinking, and is impacted by changes in teacher education programs. It has rightly been suggested that, in the Ethiopian context, "most college teacher educators have an identity confusion of whether they are teacher educators and subject specialists in their field" (Barnes et al., 2018, p.10). Teacher educators who teach subject-area courses "often do not identify themselves as teacher educators and pay minimal attention to how they teach their courses". What follows is a brief discussion on problems related to preparation and implementation of standards for teacher educators, globally and locally.

The Problem

Though there is "much literature about the need to develop the quality of teachers to improve learning in the P–12 schools", one finds scanty "literature on improving the quality of teacher educators as a way to improve learning by teacher candidates and in-service teachers" (Fisher, 2009, p.38). Similarly, Knight, et al., 2014, p.268) argue that the study of teacher educators had long been neglected despite progress made in building specialized knowledge base for teacher preparation and professional development. Teachers of teachers "are typically overlooked in studies of teacher education (Lanier and Little, 1986, cited in Powell, 2023, p.3). Cochran-Smith et al. (2019, p.1) argue that despite high expectations, "historically there has been little attention to the education of teacher educators or to local and larger policies that would support the development of teacher educators who are prepared to meet the complex demands of teaching teachers for the twenty-first century".

It was also underscored that the field of teacher education has given "minimal attention to what teacher educators should know and be able to do, on how they should be deliberately prepared to know it, and how they must be supported, mentored and appropriately induced into the profession as scholar-practitioners" (Goodwin et al, 2014, p.299). In some instances, the need for getting trained as a teacher educator doesn't seem to be recognized at all. Over the past few decades, Fisher argues, "it has been common for an experienced faculty member in a content department to be given the assignment to provide the teacher preparation programs in that field" (Fisher, 2009, p.40). In the same way, in schools, "it is common for an inexperienced classroom teacher to be promoted to a staff development position in the school or central office". Further still, when teacher education was primarily associated with higher education, "it was common

to equate receiving a doctoral degree in education with preparation to be a teacher educator". Such a situation is still prevalent in many systems of education including that of Ethiopia.

Regional and country experiences show that most teacher educators, whether in higher or school-based education, enter the profession partially prepared or totally unprepared (European Commission, 2013, p.22). A study that assessed the status of education of teacher educators in four countries (New Zealand, Israel, Norway, and the US) concludes that "in none of these countries is there a comprehensive and deliberate approach to the education of teacher educators that simultaneously acknowledges the full range of teacher educators" (Cochran-Smith et al, 2019, p.14). A study conducted in China makes a similar assertion (Yuan, 2015). Yuan suggests that, while there has been an increasing number of graduate students who enter teacher education after obtaining a higher research degree (e.g., PhD or EdD), little attention has been paid to their professional learning as prospective teacher educators in higher education (Yuan, 2015, p.94). This gap could also be related to the widespread lack of professional standards on competence of teacher educators (except in a few countries like the Netherlands) (European Commission, 2013, p.11).

The other problem is related to the experience of teacher educators, i.e. most teacher educators' being far away from reality in schools. There are teacher educators who had never had an authentic relation with schools. Even those who have a good background as a schoolteacher quickly detach themselves from that relation once they assume their role as a teacher educator. With regard to this particular problem, Intrator and Kunyman (2009) suggest that as university-based teacher educators, "there are times when we look out at our student teachers and we feel like outsiders, pretenders—like former athletes relegated to the broadcast booth to provide commentary on a game that we used to play". They further argue that the "ache is complex and replete with bygone images of teacher educators far removed from the world of K-12 practice or consultants who would visit our schools armed with the latest innovations but too often clueless of our local context" (Intrator & Kunyman, 2009, p.512). The situation in Ethiopia is not any better as briefly described hereunder.

In Ethiopia, most of the teacher educators working in colleges of teacher education lack pedagogical preparation (Mekonnen, 2008; Joshi and Verspoor, 2012; Gebremeskel et al, 2017)). A study published in 1994 pointed out, for instance, that "very few Ethiopian teacher educators and directors have professional teacher training education" (Honiq, 1994, p.7). A similar finding was reported by Negash (1996), based on his study targeting teacher educators serving in the then Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs). The major constraints identified by this study include lack of motivation at the time of recruitment; theoretical approach to pedagogy; deployment of unqualified TTI teachers; deteriorated physical plant; and poor living conditions (Negash, 1996, p.67). Some two decades later, the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2015, p.20) admits that there still remain weaknesses in the practical experience of teacher educators due to poor link with schools (in addition to the lack of pedagogical preparation). The newly issued

education and training policy (FDRE, 2022/2015 E.C) addresses some of these issues though the effects of the backlog are expected to keep on haunting the system for years to come.

The other problem is related to the limited opportunities and poor conceptualization of CPD. One of the problems encountered by teacher educators serving in the former TTIs was lack of training adapted to the special needs of these teachers (Negash, 1996). The same problem was reported by a study conducted by the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2003). One of the strategies suggested in the TESO document to increase professionalism of teacher educators was therefore introducing a Higher Diploma Program (HDP) targeting teacher educators, among others (MOE, 2003). It had been offered to teacher educators on-the-job. The course design and operational principles are criticized to be short-sighted with everything boiling down to the principles of technical rationality and managerial efficiency. What is more, the compulsory nature of the program is said to have made it "an imposition on practitioners" following "a top-down approach concerning the preparation of the course packages and selection of educators who run the course". As a result, argues Assefa (2006, p389), "HDP has not been able to make a difference, and, rather, teacher-centered and undemocratic practices are still dominant in the classrooms and its milieus".

A study by Atnafu (2007, pp.26-31), after acknowledging that HDP enlightened graduates about active learning methods in the classroom, lists a series of issues related to the inception and management of the Program. The study argues that HDP faced a strong resistance owing to the poor quality modules and incompetent facilitators/tutors. Participants of the Program had no incentive like academic promotion. What is more, the concepts addressed by the modules were felt to be too elementary by most participants. In particular the Program was perceived as "useless" for lecturers who had education background.

The study attempts to assess the extent to which some of the key issues related to standards for teacher educators in Ethiopia (e.g. preparation, experience and professional development) have been addressed over the past two decades or so.

Objectives of the Study

In Ethiopia, little is known about the characteristics, roles, and standards for teacher educators as a distinct professional group. Previous research seems to have neglected this aspect of the educational system (Mekonnen, 2023). The current study aims to shed some light on this area by assessing characteristics, roles, and competencies of teacher educators. It also discusses the implications of these to enhance the quality of education.

Methods

The study used a mixed methods design and drew information from analysis of key documents and reports including professional standards for teachers and teacher educators across the globe, and, in the case of Ethiopia, such documents as Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO) Handbook, the Education and Training Policies (1994 and 2023 versions), education sector development programs, teachers' and educational leaders' preparation and development blueprint; and a Legislation that governs teacher education colleges. A questionnaire was

developed and sent out to teacher educators to gather information on their views about the roles expected of teacher educators, what roles they were actually playing more frequently (as teacher educators themselves), and problems encountered by teacher educators in Ethiopia. The questionnaire was also used to gather information on the profile of teacher educators currently serving in selected teacher education colleges and their views as to how to improve the preparation and development of teacher educators in Ethiopia.

A total of 106 teacher educators took part in the study from ten different institutions of teacher education. Both regional and university-based colleges of teacher education participated from the older as well as relatively new institutions of teacher education. The universities are Addis Ababa University (32 participants); Bahr Dar University (3); Hawassa University (13); Jimma University (7); and Mekelle University (4). The colleges of teacher education include Arbaminch CTE (37 participants); Bonga CTE (1); Dilla CTE (5); Hawassa CTE (10) and Hossana CTE (6).

Data was collected using opportunities like national or regional workshops and using the internet to circulate the questionnaire. No claim of representation (and, by implication, generalization) could be made though teacher educators from most of the big universities have been involved in the study. With regards to CTEs, only one of the then regional states has been included in the study. Though participants from one region could not represent the other regions, the overall situation related to the standards and profile of teacher educators is not that different across regions. This article reports findings specifically related to standards, if any, related to teacher educators as a professional sub-group.

Results

Efforts to introduce standards for teacher educators

Analysis of official documents and past studies (though there were not many) shows that there was a degree of recognition in Ethiopia about the need for setting standards for teacher educators particularly for those teaching in former teacher training institutes (TTIs). For instance, a document prepared by the Federal Ministry of Education (MOE, 2003) called for having a quality assurance scheme, accreditation of academic institutions, generic competences for graduates and licensing for all (MOE, 2003). This was hoped to advance the move towards professionalization of teacher educators. Some concrete steps have also been made (both at regional and federal levels) to introduce standards for teacher educators. A case in point is a profile for TTI instructors recommended by Oromia Regional State at its Third Regional [Oromia] TTI Instructors' Seminar, held on May 17, 1997 (Box 1).

Box 1 indicates that some of the important elements of standards for teacher educators presented in the foregoing sections (see literature review) have been duly stressed in the five points, directly or indirectly. These include commitment to teaching (point one), willingness to cooperate/collaborate points one and five); cultural competence (point two); competence in curriculum/program development (points three and four); and a commitment to improve the

teaching profession (point five). On the other hand, no direct mention has been made regarding engagement in research and effort to participate in continuous professional development.

Another effort made at regional level seems to provide even more elaborate provision to set standards for teacher educators (Box 2). The legislation for teacher education colleges in the then SNNPRS (South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State) specified duties of academic staff which relate to most of the standards for teacher educators presented earlier in the paper. The points which are related to the standards are shown in Box 2.

Box 1: *Expected Profile of TTI Instructors in Oromia Regional State*

1. He/she shall have ***a positive attitude toward innovative teaching*** in general and integration of subjects in particular. The instructors shall be willing to contribute to the relevance of the training through ***in-staff cooperation*** at the TTI level.
2. He/she shall keep sustained ***contact to school realities*** and shall be able to ***understand*** the day-to-day requirements of ***school practice and community life***.
3. Instructors shall have the ability to ***understand and use a specific environment*** as a source for relevant training and to transfer this into the training practice.
4. The educators shall be able to ***develop local curriculum*** and to teach accordingly together with the student-teachers at school inside and outside the classroom.
5. The trainers shall have the competence to ***fill trainees with enthusiasm*** regarding a first-cycle teachers' importance and role and to ***enable them to cooperate*** with the staff as well as with the community in general.

Source: *Abebe, T. The congruence between the teacher training program and the new education policy for the first cycle of primary schooling in the Oromia region, 1998, p.417*

One can see that point one could be related directly to standard one (see Table 1); point two related to standards four and eight; point three to standard two; point four to standards one and four; point six to standard six; point seven to standard eight; point eight to standard three; point nine to standards two, six and eight; point ten to standards eight and nine; and point eleven to standards eight and nine. On the other hand no mention has been made in relation to digital competence (i.e. standard ten).

This study also has tried to assess the extent to which teacher educators who have been serving currently in colleges of teacher education meet some of the key standards. These standards include preparation as teacher educators, participation in professional development, and engagement in research related to teacher education. As indicated in the methodology section of the paper, 106 teacher educators took part in the study from both regional colleges of education and university-based colleges of teacher education. Both old and relatively new institutions have been represented in the study. What follows is a brief presentation of results related to three features, namely, preparation as teacher educators, experience in teaching, and participation in professional development activities.

Box 2: *Duties of an Academic Staff*

A member of the academic staff shall undertake to:

1. conduct classes recognizing that ***true learning is a four-way interaction*** between the learning style of the student, the learning style of the teacher, the type of instructional method, and the demands of the subject area.
2. ***possess a teacher educator license*** from the HDP and ELIC. No instructor is allowed to teach without producing such a certificate of license from a recognized institution and college ELIC respectively.
3. ***refrain from promotion of ethno-centrism, discrimination*** against any individual or group, preaching of religion, impositions of one's belief and views on students.
4. ***endeavor to stay abreast of the latest thinking*** in his area of specialization and shall ***periodically update his teaching material***, within the resources available.
5. ***encourage, guide and permit students*** to freely and rationally question and examine issues and various lines of thoughts in the course of their study.
6. ***develop relationship*** of mutual respect with the College Community.
7. ***observe the code of ethics*** relevant to his profession.
8. ***conduct research and publish*** for the advancement of knowledge, having regard to the development and democratization needs of the region/country.
9. ***maintain a democratic and civil outlook*** by demonstrating a willingness to work with others and respecting the ideas of fellow academic staff members and students.
10. ***evaluate his/her own work and plan*** for improvement in consultation with the proper authority.
11. *carry out research activities,* ***give talk at seminars, conferences***.

Source: *SNNPRS, Teacher Education Colleges Legislation, 2018, p.77-9*

Preparation of teacher educators

The literature in the area indicates that teacher educators are expected, at least, to have a good academic preparation themselves in the subject they teach and how to teach it. Teacher educators who took part in the study are found to have qualifications ranging from one year training in so called TTIs[2] (Teacher Training Institutes) to a PhD in areas related to education in general or teacher education in particular. Close to one third of the respondents had certificates and diplomas which are directly related to teaching at school level. Accordingly, 15 (14.2%) of the respondents had a certificate from six TTIs, namely, Addis Ababa, Arbaminch, Debreberhan, Hawassa, Nazareth, and Robe. Twenty respondents (17.9%) had a diploma in teaching one of the school subjects. The two year Diploma was acquired mainly from Bahrdar, Kotebe and Hawssa Colleges of Teacher Education.

The participants received their first degrees in a range of subjects with a major-minor arrangement (Table 3). It can be seen that, except Educational Planning and Management (EDPM), all the subjects in which teacher educators majored during their education for a

[2] TTIs were institutes that used to prepare teachers for primary schools (grades 1-6) following an integrated modality.

bachelor degree are directly related to the secondary school subjects. It is also important to note here that 13 respondents had their first degrees in pedagogical science or psychology as their major. One can also see that nearly all the school subjects have been represented in the background of the teacher educators participated in this study though the participants were not selected systematically. This could make the recommendations as to how to improve the standards and quality of teacher educators in Ethiopia reflect the various areas of specialization.

Table 3: *Specialization of teacher educators at bachelor level*

s/n	Areas of specialization	Major	Minor	Total
1	Geography	16	8	24
2	Mathematics	9	12	21
3	Physics	8	7	15
4	English	8	6	14
5	History	3	10	13
6	Pedagogical science	9	0	9
7	Amharic	5	3	8
8	Biology	7	1	8
9	Chemistry	5	2	7
10	Psychology	4	1	5
11	EDPM	4	0	4
12	Civics and Ethical Education	2	1	3
13	Demography	0	3	3
14	Special Needs Education	2	0	2
15	Statistics	0	2	2
16	Physical Education	1	0	1

Masters level preparation

Fourteen participants received their master's degree in areas related to language teaching (Table 3). All the topics chosen for theses are directly related to language pedagogy no matter what the level is (only three of the topics have clear indication as to the level, one at higher education and the others at lower levels). The issue of integrating subject matter with pedagogy appears to be well taken care of in language education as evidenced both in the degree nomenclature and the topics chosen for fulfillment of the requirements of the degree. This is indeed encouraging in light of the critics that there is a lack of alignment between the training of teacher educators and what they teach in colleges.

Most of the teacher educators who hold degrees in psychology specialize in educational psychology with focus on testing and measurement which is pertinent to the preparation of teachers (Table 5). The topics chosen for theses are equally pertinent. All, except two or three, topics are directly related to students learning. So, the degree nomenclature and thesis topics clearly indicate that the teacher educators process a background highly desirable for work in teacher education institutions.

Table 4: *Area of specialization of teacher educators at master level:* ***Language***

Degree Nomenclature	**Frequency**	**Thesis Titles**	**Frequency[3]**
MA in Educational Technology and TEFL	1	Use of Technology in Higher Education	1
MA in English	1	Assessing Teacher's Practice in Reading	1
MA in TEFL	9	English Speaking Skills Assessing the Practice of Teaching Listening in Secondary Schools Determinants of Learning Comprehension Communication Skills Classroom Continuous Assessment	5
MA in TeAM (and Linguistics)	2	Language Teaching Methodology Teaching Amharic	2
MA in Amharic	1	Correlation between Achievement and Learning Motivation	1
Total	**14**		**10**

Table 5: *Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level:* ***Psychology***

Degree *Nomenclature*	***Frequency***	**Thesis Title**	***Frequency[4]***
MA in Psychology (Measurement and Evaluation)	1	Approaches to Studying, Time Management Skill and Academic Achievement of Higher Education Students	1
MA in Educational Psychology (Measurement and Evaluation)	1	College Students Causal Attributions of Their Academic Achievement	1
MA in Educational Psychology (Measurement & Testing)	1	Young Women in HEIs in Ethiopia	1
MA in Measurement and Evaluation	1	Effect of Preschool Education on Students' Performance	1
MA in Educational Psychology	4	Academic Achievement of Students (Secondary Schools) Gender Differences in Mathematics Performance Parenting Style and Assertiveness	4

[3] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

[4] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

Degree *Nomenclature*	***Frequency***	**Thesis Title**	***Frequency*[4]**
		Effects of Abduction on Girls Education	
MA in Counseling Psychology	1	Self-perception and Self-efficacy	*1*
MA in Psychology	2	Counseling Psychology	*1*
	11		**10**

In the case of curriculum and instruction, three of the theses topics are related directly to 'teacher education' (Table 6). The others too are pertinent to teaching and learning at schools except two which appear to be quite general (population education) or deal with challenges facing adult learners. In short, graduates of curriculum and instruction seem to have carried out research potentially helpful to improve the quality of teaching and learning in teacher education colleges.

Table 6: *Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level:* ***Curriculum and Instruction***

Degree Nomenclature	***Frequency***	*Thesis* ***Titles***	***Frequency*[5]**
MA in Curriculum and Instruction	9	Teacher Education	3
		Ability Grouping and Instruction in Secondary Schools	1
		Implementation of Evaluation	1
		Active Learning	1
		Population Education	*1*
		Participation and Performance of Female Students in Science and Mathematics	*1*
		The Place of Child Right in Primary Schools	*1*
MA in Curriculum and Quality Assurance	1	The Role of Cluster Supervision to Improve Teaching and Learning	1
MA in Adult Education and Community Development	1	Enrollment Challenges of Adult Learners	1
	11		**11**

Once again, it can be seen that all the topics picked by graduates of special needs education and those of educational planning and management, for their master theses, are relevant to the work at colleges of teacher education (Table 7).

Appendix A and B (see at the end) show that, unlike teacher educators who specialize in professional disciplines (curriculum and instruction, psychology, educational planning and management and special needs education), those with social and natural science background

[5] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

hold degrees in areas that are very diverse, and in some cases, only tangentially related to teaching in primary and secondary schools. If we take Geography, for instance, most of the participants (thirteen out of twenty-one) reported that they hold a masters degree in 'Geography'

Table 7: Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level: ***Special Needs Education and EDPM***

Degree Nomenclature	Frequency	Thesis Titles	Frequency[6]
MA in Special Needs Education	3	Inclusive Education	1
		Community-based Rehabilitation	1
		Students with Disabilities	1
MPhil in Special Needs Education	1	Education of Hearing Impaired Children	1
MA in Educational Leadership	1	Human Performance Appraisal System in Educational Institutions	*1*
MA in Educational Planning and Management	1	Teachers' Performance Appraisal	*1*
	6		**6**

or "Geography and Environmental Studies" (Appendix A). Others have their degrees in one or the other aspect of geography (e.g. GIS and Remote Sensing (3); Natural Resources Evaluation (1); and Environment and Development (1)). One of the respondents had a degree related to the teaching profession: "MEd in Geography and Environmental Education". A similar trend is observed among history teacher educators though the number of participants is quite small. The two teacher educators reported that they hold a degree in "History".

The analysis of the degree nomenclature therefore seems to confirm the longstanding suspicion that teacher educators have academic preparation which is not aligned with the work they are supposed to do (Appendix A). The titles of the master's theses make this point even more vivid. None of the topics has a dimension related to teaching in schools or at any level for that matter. The topics of theses conducted by geography teacher educators are almost all related to geographical issues which are, of course, important to teach geography in schools, but apparently not studied from that perspective. Judged from the topics, one cannot tell how these studies contribute to pedagogical content knowledge of prospective teachers or the teacher educators themselves. The topics seem to be more generic, could be selected by any geographer (e.g. migration; factors affecting the success of micro-enterprise; urban environmental management; resource distribution and management; hydroclimate variability; impacts of climate change and vegetation on crops; investigating the physical land resources; land suitability analysis; forest degradation; etc.). The two history teacher educators who participated

[6] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

in the study also conducted their theses on issues which are equally generic: historical survey and urban history (Appendix A).

Similarly, Appendix B shows that teacher educators with a natural science background hold degrees which are not explicitly related to the teaching profession. Most of the respondents have degrees in "Mathematics", "Physics", "Biology" or Chemistry". A few teacher educators have degrees in more specialized areas (e.g. microbiology; biotechnology, botanical sciences and inorganic chemistry). Only one of the respondents has a degree in an area related to PCK (MEd in Mathematics Education and; MA in Psychology).

The analysis of the theses topics shows that natural science teacher educators, like their colleagues in the social science stream, chose generic topics that have little to do with teaching and learning specific subjects. As already suggested in relation to social science teacher educators, both the degree nomenclature and theses topics clearly indicate that the background of teacher educators is only partially related to the requirements of their job as 'teachers of teachers'. It is interesting to see that none of the theses topics mentions about schools or teaching.

Table 8: *Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level:* ***Not directly related to teaching/education***

Degree Nomenclature	Frequency	Thesis Titles	Frequency[7]
MA in Mass Communication	1	Literacy	1
MA in African Studies	1	African Politics (Somalia)	1
MA in Political Science and International Relations	1	Hydro-politics	1
MA in Development Studies	1	Socio-economic impact assessment	1
MA in Social work (community Development)	1	Socio-cultural integration of different social groups	1
	5		**5**

One of the findings of this Study is that five of the teacher educators hold master's degree which is not at all related to teacher education, unless one argues that 'all education is teacher education' (Table 8). The degree nomenclature ranges from 'Mass Communication' all the way to 'African Studies'. Similarly, the theses titles include such issues as "Literacy" and "Hydro-politics". This could hence be seen as an extreme form of misalignment between academic preparation of teacher educators and what they teach in their respective colleges.

Doctoral level preparation

A number of the respondents (mainly from Addis Ababa University) hold their doctoral degrees. The trend as to the relevance of their degree to the work in colleges of teacher education is quite

[7] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

similar to the one presented earlier in relation to master's degrees (see details in Appendix C). Those who specialize in professional fields (pedagogy and psychology) hold doctoral degrees in fields related to teacher education. More importantly, the doctoral research was conducted on issues that are very helpful for their work as teacher educators. The topics covered include, among others, quality education, teacher education, curriculum studies and curriculum implementation. Similarly, the terminal degrees acquired by teacher educators in the language stream are related to their work. Among the topics of their dissertation are 'technology enhanced language learning', and 'The inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the lower primary Tigrigna texts' (Appendix C).

Doctoral degrees and the topics chosen for dissertation in the social science stream are found to be only marginally related to the work in colleges of teacher education (e.g. PhD in Policy and Development Studies') (Appendix C). None of the degrees in this stream is related directly to teaching. On the contrary, two of the three cases in the natural science stream are related directly to science teaching and teacher education.

Work experience

Most of the teacher educators currently serving in colleges of teacher education have a teaching experience as primary and secondary school teachers (Table 9). Close to one-third (30.2%) taught in primary schools. The proportion of teacher educators who had a secondary school teaching experience is much higher (75.5%). It should also be noted that close to one-fourth of the teacher educators lack teaching experience at school level. On the other hand, 28.3% of the teacher educators had experience in diverse areas other than teaching (though most of these experiences are related to the teaching profession).

Table 9: *Work experience of teacher educators*

	Duration (years)										
Experience as	**5 or less**	**6-10**	**11-15**	**16-20**	**21-25**	**26-30**	**31-35**	**36-40**	**More than 40**	**Total**	**%**
A primary school teacher	18	8	2	1	1					32	30.2
A secondary school teacher	42	24	6	4	4					80	75.5
A teacher education institute/college teacher	37	21	15	5	3					81	76.4
A university teacher	4	7	17	11	6	1	1	1	1	49	46.2
Service in another profession	19	7	3		1					30	28.3

The diversity of experience teacher educators gained before they joined the colleges/universities is found to be quite amazing. What is even more remarkable is that most of the activities they were engaged in have direct relevance to their job as teacher educators (e.g. curriculum designing and development, supervision, coordination of pedagogical centers, etc.).

Participation in professional development programs

A study carried out in 1998 to assess the training needs of TTI instructors indicated that almost all (96.9%) of those who participated in the study needed a professional development program in a range of issues including subject area methodology; pupil-centered instructional approach; organization and management of a self-contained class; knowledge of subject matter and teaching skills related to the primary school curriculum; curriculum integration; practice teaching; educational research methodology with particular focus on action research; computer literacy; guidance and counseling; child development; the education of children with special needs; student learning assessment techniques; team teaching techniques; utilization of audio-visual teaching aids; curriculum development and evaluation for teacher training; models of teacher training; in-service training of teachers; teaching methods for integrated primary science and social studies; communication skills related to mother tongue (medium of instruction); and preparation of local instructional materials (Gebretsadik, 1998, pp.380-381).

Analysis of policy documents also indicates that the issue of continuous professional development (CPD) for teacher educators has received due attention. For instance, a study conducted in 2002 indicates that almost all teacher educators consulted had an extensive need for professional development (MOE, 2003). It was therefore urged that additional and varied forms of CPD had to be provided. To this end, a higher diploma program (HDP) had been initiated as an essential part of the professionalization of all existing teacher educators. The program was also meant to serve as a precondition for licensing as a teacher educator. Ultimately, possession of it would be a prerequisite for recruitment as a teacher educator. The HDP is now being carried out "largely on-the-job and emphasises the key elements of the role of the teacher educator as well as ensuring competence in the learning and teaching methods and assessment modes required in the TEIs" (MOE, 2003, p.8).

Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Education proposed important options for teacher educators' CPD. These include: courses formally delivered over a number of weeks and requiring regular attendance; supported self-study at TEI level with centrally developed materials; TEIs 'cluster' to provide components of the programme; TEIs arrange linked ('cluster') action research activities; TEIs adopt and develop specific areas of expertise and become identified as national providers; teacher tutors become part of the programme, especially on the methods aspects, and develop cooperative studies by teachers and teacher educators. Additional sources of support suggested by the Ministry include capacity-building links with foreign institutions; a programme of capacity-building workshops initially facilitated by national/foreign experts; developing a national resource centre for teacher education that could become largely a virtual centre via the Internet (MOE, 2003).

A relatively more recent document prepared by the Federal Ministry of Education, a guideline prepared for the preparation and professional development of teachers, school directors, and supervisors, considers the HDP as a source of inputs for teacher educators as they endeavor to link theory with practice (MOE, 2017). Teacher educators without prior teaching experience as

primary or secondary school teachers are required to have a one-year teaching experience after completing their HDP Program. This was meant to help them relate their theoretical exposure to reality in the schools for which they are supposed to prepare teachers. More importantly, it is clearly indicated in the guideline that participation in HDP and series of other CPD programs is mandatory for teacher educators to stay in the profession (see in Appendix D). Those who meet all these requirements for being a teacher educator would eventually be provided with a license by the office in charge of quality assurance.

Participants of the present study were asked to indicate the five most important professional development programs (PDPs) (in case they participated in more than five as a teacher educator**).** Annex VI shows the details. The list of the professional development programs attended by teacher educators is long and the issues addressed is quite diverse. Higher Diploma Program (HDP) leads the list with 77 (70.6%) of the respondents havening participated. This is not at all surprising as HDP is a mandatory program. What is surprising is that close to one third of the teacher educators had not participated in it for one reason or the other.

Training aimed at improving the English language skills, and assessment and evaluation occupy the second and third positions each attended by 21 respondents (Appendix E). Thirteen respondents said they participated in CPD covering a wide area, organized by educational bureaus at different levels whereas eleven received a training on preparation of educational materials (distance education materials, course modules, textbooks, etc.). Teacher educators also had a training related to research/action research (including writing techniques, action research and field-based learning, etc.) and digital skills (E-learning, ICT, and basic and advanced computer skills). Active teaching and learning methods and inclusive education (including sign language training) were the other areas of professional development attended by some teacher educators though the number of participants was quite small (Appendix E). The other topics attended by even much smaller number of respondents (two to five) include gender (e.g. female students' involvement in learning and school-based tutorials); improving language skills (e.g. early grade reading and writing, in general); environmental education and protection; pedagogical skills training; lesson study; supervision and mentorship training; training on HIV/AIDS; and SBEM (School based English Langue Mentors) Training.

The list of providers of the professional development programs is equally diverse. The major providers are the federal MOE; Regional Bureaus of Education, and respective colleges and universities, as expected. There are also other national and international organizations that made a significant contribution to building the capacity of teacher educators in diverse areas. These include the British Council, UNESCO and UNICEF.

Another aspect of the findings in relation to PDP, which can be considered as somehow interesting, is the multiplicity of topics covered during the process but attended by a single respondent. Appendix F shows the diverse professional development programs mentioned by a single respondent. Besides listing topics, some respondents provided personal remarks on the

nature of the training which is worth presenting here. One of the most senior participants noted: "I have been participating in all developments of teacher education for high schools which I do not recall the specifics as such. TESO is one, the recent change after TESO, meaning the In-Out-In mode of training is another one". Another participant indicated a similar experience: "…. I have been involved as teacher educator for over seven years and have taken many teacher education courses". Contrary to this, one respondent indicated that he couldn't "remember any participation in a professional development program". The other comment by a teacher educator who attended only HDP but feels that it is not worth the time spent stated:

> "I don't remember participating in any other program. I don't consider even this one [HDP] as a serious program which had contributions to our development as teacher educators. For one thing, it was a requirement forced on us from the top. Second and more important, I cannot see it as a well thought of, well planned or well-organized program".

Part of this research published earlier confirms this, i.e. many teacher educators are not satisfied by the manner in which HDP is structured and administered (Dalelo, 2021).

Discussion and Conclusion

> *The teacher educators should form the vanguard or spearhead of educational initiatives and innovation, but at present that is far from being the case. Action to professionalize the teacher educators is therefore vital (MOE, 2003, p.7).*

It has been argued that the "quality of teacher education depends heavily on the practice of teacher educators and the learning experiences of student teachers" and hence 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" (Mekonnen, 2023, p.22). Shulman (2005, p.52) writes about three fundamental dimensions of a professional work, namely, "to *think*, to *perform*, and to *act with integrity*" (*italics in the original*). He adds that professional education is not education for understanding alone; it is a preparation for accomplished and responsible practice in the service of others. It is preparation for 'good work.' Professionals, Shulman adds, must learn abundant amounts of theory and cast bodies of knowledge; they must come to understand in order to act, and they must act in order to serve (Shulman, 2005, p.53).

Underscoring the implication of these dimensions to pedagogy, he argues that "a sound professional pedagogy must seek balance, giving adequate attention to all the dimensions of practice – the intellectual, the technical and the moral" (Shulman, 2005, p.58). Pedagogy is compromised, he observes, "whenever anyone of these dimensions is unduly subordinated to the others – even when an adequate intellectual preparation is subordinated to an ethical perspective (which rarely happens outside the preparation of teachers and clergy)". This view of a profession and professional is quite telling. The question is therefore "to what extent does the profession of teacher educators strike a balance between the intellectual, technical and moral

dimensions of the teaching profession?" This was one of the questions the study, the results of which is partly reported here, tried to address.

With regard to what defines the profession of teacher educators, Fisher (2009, p.31-2) makes an interesting note that teacher educators be defined by the work they do, i.e, the term teacher educator can be applied to individuals who provide instruction for teacher candidates or practicing teachers; demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for becoming effective teachers and share those with novices; provide instruction for teacher candidates or practicing teachers that applies cultural competence and promotes social justice; engage in systematic inquiry about the effective education of teachers; engage in activities that increase their own professional development leading toward more effective education of teachers; contribute to the development and implementation of programs for effective preparation of teachers and their continued professional growth; work with others to improve teaching, research, and student learning; advocate for improved learning through more effective teaching; and participate in professional organizations that lead to improved teachers. The present study, therefore, aims at assessing the extent to which teacher educators currently serving in Ethiopian colleges of teacher education meet these expectations.

The paper started by showing the multiple benefits of having standards for teacher educators. Countries which have introduced standards and effectively implemented them have experiences to share with those that do not have such standards at all or have certain aspects of them but poorly implemented. Ethiopia seems to fall under the second category. The experience from the Netherlands shows, for instance, that the national standards developed for teacher educators have influenced teacher educators in several ways (Murray et al., 2009, p.40). Firstly, the professional group has benefited from the fact that it has standards that were developed within their own profession. Secondly, the standards articulate the complexity of the pedagogy of teacher education, stressing the inter-weaving of its cognitive, professional and inter-personal aspects in good quality teaching. What is more, teacher educators who have followed the trajectory and registered as teacher educators have worked on their own development, not just as subject specialists or schoolteachers, but as teacher educators.

The results of this study indicate that there is both the desire to professionalize teacher educators and a noticeable effort to introduce standards for teacher educators. For instance, the report entitled 'The Quality and Effectiveness of Teacher Education in Ethiopia', which formed the basis for the preparation of one of the most famous documents called 'Teacher Education System Overhaul' (TESO) shows some very important features related to standards of teacher educators (MOE, 2003, p.7). It was reported that teacher educators, at the time, were predominantly male (97%); former secondary school teachers who had little or no experience of primary schools; some lacking the experience as a teacher; and some having no staff development opportunities. The results of the current study show that, two decades later, no major improvement is to be seen in most of these areas outlined in the TESO document.

This study confirmed that a significant proportion of teacher educators had no exposure to formal pedagogical preparation. This is the case mainly among teacher educators in the social science and natural science streams. This segment of teacher educators are often "unfamiliar with student-centered teaching strategies; few practice interactive methods or are capable of modeling instructional approaches that develop metacognitive skills (Joshi and Verspoor, 2013, p.99; Assefa et al, 2021). Besides, there are teacher educators who lack the appropriate experience to teach in colleges of teacher education (e.g. one-third of the respondents had no school-level teaching experience at all!). With respect to participation in professional development program, the study shows a marked improvement when compared to the situation two decades ago. The contribution of the HDP, which was designed as a key strategy to ensure professionalism of teacher educators, seems significant though there are still glaring limitations associated with its structure and manner of implementation. The study also has revealed that one-third of the respondents never had exposure to HDP.

Recommendations

Consolidating and strictly implementing standards for teacher educators

In Ethiopia, there are aspects of what is referred to as a teacher educators' standard. This has to be further consolidated and formalized. It would be helpful to learn from international experiences in this regard. In Portugal, for instance, teacher educator competences are defined by the government and specified in law whereas in the Netherlands, a set of professional standards for teacher educators is in place, developed by the relevant professional body through dialogue with stakeholders (European Commission, 2013). Hence, teacher educators must themselves have the conviction that formal preparation is needed to become a teacher educator. In relation to this, Goodwin et al, (2014, p.299) stress that "…. change can only happen if we first agree as a field that teacher educators do actually need formal preparation".

Strengthening collaboration of teacher educators working in colleges and schools

The documents prepared by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education call for a strong partnership between teacher education colleges and the schools they serve. However, the school-college partnership should go far beyond mere rhetoric. One way to achieve this is establishing a formal and strong collaboration between teacher educators positioned in schools and colleges of teacher education and enabling them to serve in both venues. This proposal has to be put on the table, again, for a renewed discussion and eventual implementation.

Conduct a need-based continuous professional learning

The results of the study show that there is no sufficient opportunity for teacher educators for building their capacity regularly. The existing efforts to offer CPD for teacher educators in Ethiopia must therefore be strengthened and institutionalized. Policy measures to support the professional learning of teacher educators can include setting formal requirements and regulations about continuing development, stimulating self-directed activities, creating incentives or arranging favourable conditions for their learning (European Commission, 2013). It is important to attach some kind of incentives to CPD in Ethiopia. One possibility is linking it to the contractual agreement of teacher educators.

This study also shows that a significant proportion of teacher educators had no exposure to formal pedagogical preparation. One way of rectifying this is "encouraging university staff to take sabbatical leave for teaching assignments in schools (Joshi and Verspoor, 2013, p.99). Of course, materialization of such a school-based sabbatical requires a great deal of consultation with the teacher educators and getting their unfettered consent. One can also hope that this would not be such a great issue if teacher educators care about their own professional future.

Introduce a standard-based scheme of recognition

Use standards to give awards to teacher education institutions and teacher educators who made significant contributions to the advancement of the teaching profession. The award could bear such a name as "Distinguished Teacher Education Institution of the Year", "Distinguished Teacher Educator of the Year" or something similar.

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Appendix A:

Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level: Social Science

Degree Nomenclature	***Frequency***	***Thesis Titles***	***Frequency[8]***
MA in Geography	9	Migration Geoecology Assessing Factors Affecting the Success of Micro-enterprise Urban Environmental Management Resource Distribute and Management Rural Development Hydroclimate Variability Demography The Contribution of Ethiopian Orthodox Church to Conservation and Protection of Indigenous Forests	9
MA in Geography and Environmental Studies	3	Impacts of Climate Change and Vegetation on Crops No topic indicated	**1** **2**
MA in Natural Resources Evaluation	1	Investigating the Physical Land Resources	**1**
MSc in GIS and Remote Sensing	4	Climate Change Land Suitability Analysis Flood Risk **No topic indicated**	**3** **1**
MEd in Geography and Environmental Education	1	Farmers Awareness and Attitude towards Land degradation	**1**
MA in Environment and Development	1	Forest Degradation	**1**
MA in History MA in History	2	Historical survey Urban History: Yirgalem	**2**
	21		**21**

[8] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

Appendix B:

Area of specialization of teacher educators at master's level: Natural Science

Degree Nomenclature	***Frequency***	***Thesis Titles***	***Frequency[9]***
MSc in Mathematics	6	Functional Analysis Mathematical Modeling Cosmology Optimization Optimal Control	5
MEd in Mathematics Education & MA in Psychology	1	Computer Programming & Assessment, respectively	*1*
MSc in Physics	3	Solid State Physics Superconductivity Semiconductor Physics	*3*
MSc in Biology	2	Malaria Epidemiology and Transmission Ethno-botanical Study of Wild Edible Plants	1 1
MSc in Microbiology	1		
MSc in Biotechnology	1	Pesticides	1
MSc in Applied Microbiology	1	Bacteriological Quality	1
MSc in Botanical Sciences	1	Florestic Composition, Vegetation Structure and Regeneration Status	1
MSc in Genetics	1	Applied Genetics	1
MSC in Chemistry	1		
MSc in Inorganic Chemistry	1	Catalysis	1
	19		**16**

[9] Number of teacher educators who provided the focus of the Master's Theses

Appendix C:

Area of specialization of teacher educators at doctoral level

Discipline/Areas of Focus	Degree nomenclature	Thesis Title
Pedagogy and Psychology		
	Education	Teacher Education
	Education	Community-Rehabilitation of Persons with Disability
	Education	Policy Formulation and Curriculum Implementation
	Education	Curriculum Studies
	Higher Education	Academic Freedom and Autonomy
	Comparative Education	Adult Education
	Curriculum	No information
	Curriculum Design and Development	No information
	Curriculum Design and Development	Adult Education
	Curriculum Design and Development	Quality of Education in Ethiopia as Measured by Early Grade Mathematics Competence
	Educational Planning and Management (in progress)	Quality of Pre-service Teacher Training
	Physics Education	No information
	Psychology	Adolescence and Youth Development
	Applied Developmental Psychology	Instrument Development Parental Involvement in Education of Children
	Applied Developmental Psychology	Parental Involvement in Education of Children
	Educational Psychology & Sociology of Education (Post-doc)	Teachers' Working Conditions in Southern Ethiopia
	Special Needs Education	Education of Children with Disabilities
	Special Needs Education	Psychosocial Development of Hearing Impairment
	Special Needs Education	Reading Difficulties
	Special Needs Education	Learning Disabilities
Language		

Discipline/Areas of Focus	Degree nomenclature	Thesis Title
	TEFL	Technology-enhanced Language Learning
	TEFL	Teacher Professional Development
	Linguistics	Descriptive Linguistics
	Applied Linguistics	Teaching Ethiopian Languages
	Applied Linguistics and Communication	Language Maintenance and Language Shift
	Applied Linguistics in Ethiopian Languages Teaching	The Inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in the Lower Primary Tigrigna Texts
	Applied Linguistics and Communication	Male Involvement in Reproductive Health Communication
Social Science		
	Geography	Climate Change and Variability
	Geography	Natural Resource Management
	Physical Geography	Ecology
	Geography and Environmental Studies	No information
	Natural Resources Assessment and Management	Restoration of Degraded Landscape
	Policy and Development Studies	Climate Change Adaptation in Drought Prone Environment
Natural Science		
	Mathematics Education	Teacher Education
	Mathematics Education	Psychology of Mathematics Education
	Soil Chemistry	No information

Appendix D:

Box 3: የከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ መርሀ ግብር ምንነትና ዓላማ

የከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ መርሀ ግብር በመምህር አሠልጣኝነት ተመድበው የሚያገለግሉ መምህራን ንድፈ ሀሳብን ከእውነታ ጋር ማዋሀድ ለሚያስችል ስልጠና የሚሆኑ ግብአቶችን የሚያሰባስቡበት ፕሮግራም ነው፡፡ ፕሮግራሙ በመምህራን ትምህርት ተቋማት ውስጥ በአሰልጣኝነት የሚያገለግሉ መምህራን የከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ መርሀ ግብር የአሰልጣኝነት ምስክር ወረቀት ከማስገኘት በተጨማሪ ስለጠናውን ከእውነታ ጋር የሚያዋህዱበት መሳሪያቸው ነው። የከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ መርሀ ግብር ተከታታይ ሙያ ማሻሻያ እንዲኖረው በማድረግ አሰልጣኝ መምህራን በቀጣይነት ብቃታቸውን የሚያሻሽሉበት ይሆናል፡፡ በከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ ቀጥሎም በተከታታይ የሙያ ማሻሻያ መርሀ ግብሮች በመሳተፍና ብቃታቸውንና ሙያቸውን ማሳደግ የአሰልጣኝ መምህራን ግዴታ ነው፡፡

የአሰልጣኞችና የመምህራንና የትምህርት ቤት አመራሮች ስልጠና ተቋማት ልምድ ባካበቱ አሰልጣኞች ስልጠናውን መምራት እንዲቻል ከአንደኛ ደረጃ መምህርነት ጀምሮ ወደላይ ባለው እርከን እየወጡ ወደአሰልጣኝነት የሚመጡት ቅድሚያ ይኖራቸዋል፡፡ መሰል ልምድ የሌላቸዉና በላቀ ችሎታ የሚመደቡ አሰልጣኞች ደግሞ የከፍተኛ ዲፕሎማ ፕሮግራምን ጨርሰው በአካባቢያቸው ባለ የመጀመሪያ፣ ሁለተኛ ደረጃና በመሰናዶ ትምህርት ቤቶች ቢያንስ የአንድ አመት ከአሰልጣኝነት ስራቸዉ ጎን ለጎን የማስተማር ልምምድ እንዲያደርጉ በማድረግ ስልጠናውን ከትምህርት ቤት ተጨባጭ ሁኔታ ጋር በማገናዘብ የሚያቀርቡ እንዲሆኑ ይደረጋል።

አሰልጣኝ መምህራን ሁለገብ ሙያዊ ብቃት መስፈርቶች ተዘጋጅተውላቸው እየተገመገሙ የአሰልጣኝነት እውቅና የሚያገኙበት ስርአት ይፈጠራል፡፡ መምህራኑ ከተመረጡበት ደረጃ በአካዲሚክ እውቀት በሙያዊ ክህሎት፣ በስነምግባር፣ የአገሪቱን የትምህርት ስርአት እውቀትና ልምድን መሰረት ያደረገ ብቃት አሟልተው መገኘት ይኖርባቸዋል፡፡ ስለሆነም በጥራት ማረጋገጫ በኩል እየተገመገሙ የአሰልጣኝነት ምስክር ወረቀት ይሰጣቸዋል፡፡ የብቃት መስፈርቶችን ያላሟለ በአሰልጣኝ መምህርነት መቀጠል አይችለም፡፡

ምንጭ፤ (MOE, 2017, p.29፤ 34-5፤ 42)

Appendix E

Participation in a professional development program (PDP)

S/n	Focus of the PDP	Duration in number of days				Name of organizer
		Two week or less	Two to four weeks	Longer than four weeks	Total	
1	HDP (C4)			77	77	Universities and Colleges
2	English Language Improvement/Competence			21	21	Universities; support from the British Council
3	Training on assessment and evaluation	19	1	1 (2 years)	21	Universities and colleges, support from MOE, UNICEF and UNESCO
4	CPD on diverse issues	11	1	1 (a year)	13	Universities, Educational Bureaus schools; support from Leeds University and the British Council
5	Development of materials (distance education materials; teaching module; textbooks, etc.)	11			11	MoE, AAU
6	Action/Research methodology	8		1	9	Universities, CTEs and schools; support from UNESCO, OSREA, SACMEC, University of Dar es Salaam, OHIO State University
7	E-learning, ICT, and computer skills	7		1 (6 months)	8	Self, Education Bureau; support from UNESCO IICBA
8	Active teaching and learning method	7			7	Universities and CTE; support from UESD
9	Inclusive education; Sign language training	5		1 (a year)	6	CTEs, support from Handicap International and UNICEF
10	Gender perspectives	5			5	Universities, CTEs, IER, Schools and Education Bureaus; support from UNESCO
11	Improve students' language skills , (in general)	3	1		4	MOE and Education Bureaus
12	Environmental education and protection	3			3	Universities; support from EGST

S/n	Focus of the PDP	Duration in number of days				Name of organizer
		Two week or less	Two to four weeks	Longer than four weeks	Total	
13	Pedagogical skill training	2			2	Universities
14	Lesson study (7)	2			2	Universities, IER
15	Supervision and mentorship in PGDT	2			2	
16	HIV/AIDS Training	2			2	Universities
17	SBEM (School based English Language Mentors) Training		2		2	MOE

Appendix F:

Professional development programs mentioned by one respondent

• Democratization of classroom teaching (US teachers Association); • Experience sharing visit (by Sweden and AAU); • Training In teaching Methodology; (Bahir Dar university); • Development of teachers' competency test; • Project development and management (by HERCA); • Early Intervention (by APA); • A Superintendent's Perspective on The Journey to Future-Ready Schools (by OFRI International Center, ISRAEL); • "A dialogue on Learning & Teaching Strategies in the 21st Century" (by OFRI International Center, ISRAEL); • Current teachers for tomorrow teaching (workshop); • Training workshop for tutor on advanced diploma for teacher educator; • Higher education and the effective teacher (by AAU); • Test construction (by Arba Minch CTE); • Anti-corruption (by Hosanna CTE); • Preschool teaching (by SNNPR educa. Bureau); • Induction course (by Bedessa High school); • Continuous Medical Education (by AAU); • Regional development planning (by Planning Office); • Training of Trainers Workshop (by Ethiopian Management Institute).	• Leadership in Higher Education Institutions; • Monitoring the quality and relevance of teacher education (by Kotebe CTE); • Trainee as well as trainer of teachers with the support of USAID and MOE; • Geographic Information System; (ECA); • Statistical Analysis using SPPS; (ELRI); • Teaching STEM with Robotics (by OFRI International Center, ISRAEL); • "School Collaborative Learning" program with Israeli schools (by OFRI International Center, ISRAEL); • Ethiopian education strategies (by MOE); Instructional skill (by Jimma University); • How to implement active learning in language classes (by Wereda Education Office); • Enhancing teaching profession; • Management of Teacher Education Institutions and Faculties of Education (by IICBA and MOE); • Mechanics of Academic Writing (by NMBU, Norway); • Media and Communication (by USAID); • Basic Management Skill (by Debrezeit Management Institute); • Modularization (by AAU); • Relief and Rehabilitation Operation (by CRDA, EOC-DICAC); • HDP Tutor (orgnaised by a federal Ministry of Education);