The Implementation of Teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programme in Dire-Dawa Regional Administration, Ethiopia

Yonas Amdemeskel[1] and Koye Kassa[2,*]

[1]Department of Adult Education and Community Development, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Haramaya University, P O Box 217, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.

[2]Department of Psychology, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Haramaya University P O Box 217, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the practice of teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme in Dire-Dawa Administrative Region, Ethiopia. The specific objectives of the research were to explore the status of schools' CPD implementation as per the national framework, identify the success areas of the schools in implementing the CPD, identify the gaps of schools in implementing the CPD, explore the challenges the schools face in implementing CPD and to suggest some possible solutions/strategies for effective implementation of the programme. The study design used was descriptive survey. A total of 20 schools (18 primary and 2secondary) and 213 teachers (144 urban and 99 rural) were taken as participants of the study using questionnaire. For observation three schools which are serving as cluster resource centers were used. Regional education bureau CPD focal person was used as interviewees. The data were analyzed using number, percentage, and mean for quantitative ones and narration for qualitative ones. The data witness that many efforts have been made by the different stakeholders of teachers' CPD such as Ministry of Education, Regional Education Bureaus, School principals and teachers themselves. On the other hand, the efforts made were not consistent, specific CPD budget was not there. Cluster Resource Centers were not functional, CPD practices were tried in both primary and secondary schools but the practice by the secondary school teachers is very minimal, principals and supervisors were not practicing their own CPD. The major challenges or gaps identified include low commitment of teachers to perform CPD activities, lack of commitment of mentors to support teachers, failure of Cluster Resource Centers to function, lack of commitment of supervisors and principals to do their CPD and become models for their teachers, lack of ownership of CPD to follow up regularly and assess its status. finally, to implement teachers' CPD as per Ministry of Education (MoE) guideline, there should be ownership at the different level of the Education system, the Regional Education Bureaus should organize the Cluster Resource Centers and make them functional and should have regular communication and support for the schools, supervisors and principals shall be models to their teachers in doing their own CPD were recommended.

Introduction
Background of the study

Changes in the educational system of a nation and global requirements demand staff development activities. In a major initiative to address problems related to access, equity, and quality of educational provision, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) introduced the Education and Training Policy in 1994. The ETP, supported by articles in the Ethiopian constitution, sought to decentralize educational authority to the 11 states and called for new Paradigms of education based on relevant, active, and student-centered teaching and learning.

The ETP established the foundation for all subsequent strategies, guidelines and programs. The education sector programs were Education Sector Development Programs I, II and III which were developed in 1997, 2002 and 2005 respectively. In line with the goals of creating "trained and skilled human power at all levels who will be driving forces in the promotion of democracy and [economic] development in the country" (MoE, 2005, p. 5), the programs have focused on the expansion of the system, increased access for marginalized children and girls, and reduction of attrition. With rapid quantitative expansion, attention has increasingly been directed toward the issue of quality. Improving curricula, providing textbooks, increasing community participation, and augmenting financing for education are among the strategies pursued to address the perceived decline in the quality of education. Moreover, while all policy documents stress the importance of teachers for promoting learning, the emphasis on improving teacher quality is most prominent in the 2005 Education Sector Development Programme (MoE, 2005).

The Ministry of Education has given priority for continuous professional development CPD believing that it is the right of teachers as well as of a great value for national development (Barrow, et al., 2006). The school staff must have the necessary subject professional support to bring about changes in the classroom. At school level professional development programmes should include school principals/directors, teachers and technical and administrative personnel. The ETP set standards for teachers and described a new approach to education. The new approach promotes active learning, problem

solving, and student-cent red teaching methods. With the expansion of education and large class size teachers still rely on the teacher centered methods with limited opportunities for (CPD). In Ethiopia, CPD focuses on improving the teaching-learning process, with the priorities of introducing active learning, practicing Continuous assessment and managing large classes.

Statement of the problem

The aim of Continuous Professional Development is to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom and raise student achievement. It is a career-long process of improving knowledge, skills and attitudes - centered on the local context and, particularly, classroom practice. According to MOE (2009b), all teachers must be actively engaged in: (a) their own learning process, (b) working with their colleagues, (c) identifying their own and (d) the wide range of activities, formal and informal, that will bring about improvement of their own practice and the practice of others.

According to the MoE (2009) National CPD framework, there were six major challenges identified; failure to synchronize the career structure and the CPD values and activities, CPD facilitators' high turnover, time constraints on teachers as well as their school leaders, CPD program's lagging behind its time and the tendency of rushing to cover the course, total absence or inadequacy of the minimum resources required to run CPD, and lack of systematic collaboration and coordination between Education Bureaus, TEIs and NGOs.

Unless the above challenges are solved, the vision to produce professionally well informed and motivated teachers capable of transforming the quality of educational delivery will not be fulfilled. Therefore, the intention of this research is to contribute some strategies to the solution of the above mentioned problems of school CPD program implementation in Dire-Dawa Administrative Region Primary and Secondary Schools. To this end, the following research questions were proposed.

1. To what extent the schools are implanting CPD according to the national framework?
2. What are the success areas of the schools in implementing the CPD?
3. What are the major gaps of schools in implementing the CPD?
4. What are the major challenges that hinder schools to implement CPD?
5. What should be done to implement CPD effectively?

Specific objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore the status of schools' CPD implementation as per the national framework.
2. Identify the success areas of the schools in implementing the CPD.
3. Identify the gaps of schools in implementing the CPD.
4. Explore the challenges the schools face in implementing the CPD.
5. To suggest some possible solutions/strategies for the effective implementation of CPD.

Methodology

Research design

The research design used was descriptive case study. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), case study methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts. When the approach is applied correctly, it becomes a valuable method for research to develop theory, evaluate programs, and develop interventions. As Continuous Professional Development implementation is somewhat contextual and many factors affect it, applying case study research method is of paramount importance.

Sources of data

In this study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary sources were teachers, and school Cluster Resource Centers and Regional Education Bureau CPD focal persons. The secondary data for the study were collected from CPD practice reports from schools, teachers' portfolios, schools monitoring and evaluation result, minutes of supervisors and schools on CPD. In addition, the CPD Plan of the schools and the MoE National CPD framework were assessed.

Sample and sampling techniques

Stratified random sampling technique was used for selecting schools, Simple random sampling was used for primary and secondary school teachers as well as Cluster Resource Center focal persons whereas purposive sampling techniques were used for Regional Education Bureau CPD focal persons. The total population, the sample schools and sampling techniques are presented below.

Table 1. Sample and sampling techniques

No.	Data sources	Setting	Total population	Sample	Sampling technique
1.	Primary Schools	Rural	40	11	Stratified Random
		Urban	20	7	
2.	Secondary Schools	Rural	1	0	Stratified Random and available
		Urban	8	2	
	Total		**69**	**20**	
3.	Primary School Teachers	Rural	344	99	Simple Random
		Urban	1331	94	
4.	Secondary School Teachers	Rural	0	0	Simple Random
		Urban	455	20	
	Total		**2130**	**213**	

Source Dire-Dawa Administration Regional Education Bureau

As can be seen from the above table, a total of 213 teachers from 20 schools were taken as respondents of the research through questionnaire. Of them, 106 were males and 107 were females. From the total respondents, 114 were from urban schools and the rest 99 were from rural setting s**chools,**

Data collection instruments

In order to collect the data the following data collection instruments were employed. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers of the sample schools. The questionnaire was adapted from the MoE (2009) CPD frame work and translated into three local languages; Amharic, Somaligna and Afan Oromo to make easy for administration particularly for primary school teachers. The questions were translated by the language experts and evaluated by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences staff. Interviews were conducted with Regional Education Bureau CPD focal Person and Cluster Resource Center focal persons. To substantiate the data researchers' personal observation of Cluster Resource Centers setting and how portfolios and school CPD plans are documented.

Methods of data analysis

Data collected with questionnaires were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively whereas data from interview and observation were analyzed qualitatively. To analyze the quantitative data, frequency, percentages, weighted mean and t-test were used to see the whether there is significant difference across urban and rural settings in implementing CPD.

Result and Discussion

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data collected on the perception of teachers towards the relevance of CPD, the process of CPD needs analysis of schools and how much the different stakeholders are playing their roles in the implementation of Teachers' Continuous Professional Development, the major hindering factors of CPD implementation and the perception of stakeholders about the effectiveness of CPD implementation in their schools.

Perception of Respondents towards importance of CPD

Teachers were requested to give their perceptions towards the importance of CPD to the different areas of their teaching learning activities. Accordingly, their responses are summarized as follows.

As can be seen in table 2 above, teachers perceived that CPD is contributing to their teaching activities. The average result of respondents to each item is almost high (grand mean=4). Meaning that, teachers believe that he contribution of CPD in improving their classroom management, their skill of lesson preparation and delivery, understanding the new Education and Training, applying different Active Learning Methods (ALMs) in their teaching, cooperating with colleagues, forming partnerships with students', improving their skill of record and report of students' results, reflecting on own practice, using continuous assessment and in improving their skill of curriculum and other program development is almost high.

In addition, in open ended items, teachers were requested the specific professional advantages they get from their CPD works, accordingly they responded as follows:

a. It enables me develop effective methods of teaching and use of various active learning methods,

b. It builds and advances my previous understanding and skills,

c. It enables me how to prepare lesson plan and handle students' results obtained through continuous assessment,

d. It enables me to build my teaching skills and develop my communication skills with others,

e. It enables me to discuss about the problems prevalent in the schools with the colleagues and solve them cooperatively

f. It enables me to learn and share new information and good experiences from others (colleagues).

Table 2. Teachers' response towards the importance of CPD

No.	Item	Responses 1 2 3 4 5 Total	Mean
1.	The contribution of CPD in improving my classroom management is	4 8 46 78 77 213	4
2.	The contribution of CPD in improving my skill of lesson preparation and delivery	4 13 31 82 83 213	4.1
3.	The contribution of CPD in understanding the new Education and Training Policy is	7 12 40 92 62 213	3.9
4.	The contribution of CPD in applying different Active Learning Methods ALM in my teaching is	2 10 27 84 90 213	4.2
5.	The contribution of CPD in cooperating with colleagues is	1 11 50 66 85 213	4
6.	The contribution of CPD in forming partnerships with students' parents is	5 21 71 65 51 213	3.6
7.	The contribution of CPD in improving my skill of record and report of students' results is	5 7 40 87 74 213	4
8.	The contribution of CPD in reflecting on own practice is	2 15 38 77 81 213	4
9.	The contribution of CPD in using continuous assessment is	2 10 37 78 86 213	4.1
10.	The contribution of CPD in improving my skill of curriculum and other program development is	8 13 49 78 65 213	3.8
Grand mean			**4**

1= poor, 2= to some extent 3= Moderate, 4= High and 5=Very High

Table 3. T-test value of importance of CPD across urban and rural schools teachers

Item	Setting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
	rural	99	4.2	0.96	3.2	211	0.2	0.66
	urban	114	3.8	0.9				
	rural	99	4.2	1	2.5	211	0.1	0.59
	urban	114	3.9	0.93				
	rural	99	3.9	1.01	0.5	211	-0.2	0.34
	urban	114	3.9	0.99				
	rural	99	4.4	0.83	3.4	211	0.2	0.65
	urban	114	4	0.9				
	rural	99	4.2	0.89	2.6	211	0.1	0.58
	urban	114	3.9	0.96				
	rural	99	3.7	1.08	1.3	211	-0.1	0.46
	urban	114	3.6	0.97				
	rural	99	4.1	1.06	0.8	211	-0.1	0.36
	urban	114	4	0.83				
	rural	99	4.2	0.96	2.1	211	0	0.54
	urban	114	3.9	0.95				
	rural	99	4.3	0.96	2.2	211	0	0.52
	urban	114	4	0.86				
	rural	99	4.1	0.93	2.9	211	0.1	0.69
	urban	114	3.6	1.1				

Thus, regardless of the difference in rural and urban setting schools, teachers believe that their CPD is important/ relevant for the improvement of their classroom and school practices. This is almost consistent with the work of Huebner (2009) and Bransford (1999) where as this result contradicts with Ewnetu and Firdisa (2010) which indicates that, School Based Continuous Professional Development is conceived as a means to career development, re-license and as a means to improve immediate problem solving skills in the school. Moreover, Table 3 below reveals that, the calculated 't' value for 211 degree of freedom was significant at 0.05 level for rural and urban school teachers perception. Meaning that, rural school teachers perceive CPD as important better than urban school teachers in most of the items.

Implementation of CPD

The practice of school needs analysis priorities identification

The following are the summaries of the information about the way the CPD needs of the school analysis is done, the CPD planning process of school and individual teachers are done and the attempts of awareness creation trainings and the resources allocated for CPD process. The description is presented below. (For further detail please refer to table 4 in the appendix)

Teachers were requested whether their schools conducted CPD Needs analysis or not. Accordingly, majority 202(94.8%) of them affirmed that CPD needs analyses and their schools school identify the priorities of the year. Moreover, the majority 173 (93%) of the teachers responded that they have agreed on their school priorities of the year. Besides, their responsibilities as individual teachers were meeting with mentors, they made self reflection in their classroom and they were preparing for new responsibility.

Most respondents reported that, the sources of data for school CPD needs analysis were teachers and department heads but the participations of supervisors, students and students' parents were almost none. The major tools of data gathering used in school CPD needs analysis were Focus Group Discussion, Questionnaire and Interview. About the effectiveness of the needs analysis processes in participating stakeholders, majority 135(63.4%) of teachers believed that the needs analysis processes was effective in participating stakeholders. This is because of the facts that, many questionnaires were not completed correctly and returned, students, and their parents were not actively involved.

Most 187(87%) of the respondents affirmed that they had have meetings, reviewing of previous and introduction of new initiatives of CPD at their school level. Of these 56.1% of respondents had more than three meetings, 17.6% of them had only two times, 17.1% of them had once only and the rest 9.09% of them had three meetings.

Majority 114 (53.5%) of the teachers replied that they have not got the CPD materials (national, regional or school based) in time and majority122(57.3%) of the respondents responded that they have not got any resources that can serve them as a bench mark/ best practices for your CPD from their school, CPD cluster centre or REB. Moreover, the result of the interviews held with REB CPD focal persons and Woreda TDP team affirmed this fact. The explained that they provided teachers with the necessary guidelines but there are no sample best practices displayed for teachers.

Majority 162(76.1%) of the respondents believed that the clusters centre coordinators/supervisors or Regional Education Bureau (REB) experts are not supporting them in working on their CPD. The researchers' actual observation of CRCs and some schools as well as interview with REB CPD focal persons witness that the support from REBs had been relatively good (previously at the beginning) but the CRCs are not well organized, do not have any plan and they do not perform their roles especially in 2012/13 and 2013/2014 academic years.

Majority 149(70%) of the respondents replied that there is no reduction of load for teachers because of their CPD work but most 127 (59.6%) of them believe they do have enough time to work on their CPD besides their regular teaching task. This might be because of the reasons that they work only for half days and their average weekly teaching load is optimum (19.24). Moreover, most 141(66.2% of the teachers replied that they do not have additional school responsibility beyond teaching.

Most 92(43.2%) of the respondent teachers replied that their school principal/s identify and empower the expert teacher (mentors) sometimes. Most 160(76.1%) of teachers responded that there are senior teachers in their schools who can play coaching/mentoring role. But the majority 107 (50.2%) of them believe that the mentors support their mentees sometimes only. Moreover, the result of the interview conducted with the REB CPD focal persons show that there are teachers who can serve as mentors. But their willingness to be mentors and commitment to support teachers is very limited. This might be because of no reduction of teaching load and absence of incentive mechanisms (packages).

Majority 147(69%) of the respondent teachers replied that they have taken trainings on the **what, why and how** of CPD program. Majority (68%) of them confirmed that the trainings were given by schools, some (14%) by REBs, 4.8% by CRCs, 1.4% by MoE and about 8.8% by all of the mentioned stakeholders.

From the above data we can infer that the REBs and schools provided trainings on CPD, distributed the necessary national and local documents but still REBs and CRCs and principals are not supporting teachers by providing sample works that can serve as bench marks, principals are not empowering and identifying potential mentors and the mentors are not committed enough to support their mentees. These gaps may affect the effective implementation of the CPD programme. This gap is against the expectations mentioned in the national framework of (MoE, 2009).

The practice of stakeholders on teachers CPD

The major stakeholders considered in this research were teachers themselves, school principals, Cluster Resource Centres and Regional Education Bureau. The response of teachers on their practice, their principals', Cluster Resource Centers and Regional education Bureau contribution on Teachers' CPD is summarized (Refer to table 4 in the appendix).

Teachers were asked to rate how much the different stakeholders were practicing their roles as per the Framework of Ministry of Education. Accordingly, as can be seen in table 4 of the appendix, the average value of teachers' response about their own practices and the school principals' practices were almost "Agree" (mean=4 and 3.8) respectively whereas teachers' response about the Cluster Resource Centers' and Regional Education Bureau's practice was almost "undecided" (mean=2.6 and 3.3)respectively. This indicates that, the teachers and principals are playing their roles but the contribution of the REB is not as expected and the CRCs are not playing their roles. Though the teachers and principals are better in contributing for teachers' CPD, the principals are not able to do their own CPD beyond facilitating and supplying resources to teachers. The secondary schools practice is very limited almost not practiced.

The practice of teachers CPD is being implemented by the primary school teachers but not by secondary school teachers.

In addition, the personal observation of the researchers' on CRCs, the result of interviews held with REB, CPD focal persons indicate that the practice of CPD is more of owned by the teachers with supervision of principals and follow up of REBs (with report).

The REBs allocated the basic guidelines and organize trainings for both teachers and mentors. Moreover, the REB has been organized annual CPD conference and awarded certificate for those teachers who have completed their 6o hours CPD works.

Appendix B: Table 4. Stakeholders' practice on teachers' CPD

No.	Items	Responses					Weighted mean
	I. Items about teachers' practices	**SD**	**DA**	**UD**	**A**	**SA**	
1.	I am convinced and engaged in my CPD throughout my career.	5	11	33	94	70	4
2.	I have identified my personal CPD needs in line with my school's annual CPD plan.	4	10	29	89	81	4.1
3.	I have identified my personal CPD needs in collaboration with mentors/supervisors/senior colleagues.	6	17	36	84	69	3.9
4.	I usually work collaboratively with my colleagues to improve learning and teaching.	5	14	22	61	109	4.2
5.	I am putting CPD into practice in the classroom.	5	8	22	89	89	4.2
6.	I am committed in supporting the CPD needs of my school.	4	11	28	76	94	4.2
7.	I am maintaining a professional portfolio and recording all my CPD activities.	6	5	74	68	58	3.8
					Grand Mean		**4**
	II. Items about principals' practices	**SD**	**DA**	**UD**	**A**	**SA**	
1.	My principal created a CPD management strategy within the school.	10	15	45	69	74	3.9
2.	My principal is ensuring effective CPD needs analysis process every year.	6	13	42	73	79	4
3.	My principal together with colleagues identified issues for consideration as CPD priorities.	5	14	48	80	66	3.9
4.	My principal is ensuring that each department produces an annual CPD plan and manages the budget.	16	20	68	64	45	3.5
5.	My principal is monitoring the effectiveness of the changes to teaching and learning.	6	11	41	77	78	4
6.	My principal is monitoring and assessing the content of individual professional portfolios and giving constructive feedback.	3	14	51	88	57	3.9
7.	My principal is collaborating with REB professionals to ensure that the national CPD priorities are addressed in school CPD plan	8	14	55	87	49	3.7
8.	My principal is participating in regional and national CPD activities which ensure that their knowledge and experiences are up-to- date.	6	19	67	60	61	3.7
					Grand Mean		**3.8**
	III. Items about Cluster Resource Centers' practices	**SD**	**DA**	**UD**	**A**	**SA**	
1.	Our cluster centre established and supports the cluster committee.	14	104	40	29	26	2.8
2.	Our cluster manages and coordinates CPD activities in the cluster centre effectively.	11	127	36	24	15	2.6
3.	Our cluster collects and shares individual school CPD plans regularly.	15	121	37	21	19	2.6
4.	Our cluster supports teachers' professional portfolio development.	10	120	36	28	19	2.7
5.	Our cluster provides opportunities for collaboration and sharing of good practices within the cluster.	9	124	37	20	23	2.6
6.	Our cluster makes available resources for cluster schools to use in classrooms.	14	121	42	28	8	2.5
7.	Our cluster provides trainings for teachers as appropriate.	13	112	37	32	19	2.7
8.	Our cluster support s the delivery of the induction program for newly deployed teachers.	12	118	37	26	20	2.6
9.	Our cluster supports inclusive education.	13	102	43	36	18	2.7
					Grand Mean		**2.6**
	IV. Items about Regional Education Bureau practices	**SD**	**DA**	**UD**	**A**	**SA**	
1.	The REB analyzed and identified regional priorities, produced materials and delivered training to implement them.	27	30	61	55	40	3.2
2.	The REB shares information with all stakeholders.	15	33	71	62	32	3.3
3.	The REB annually produces and circulates regional CPD plans.	12	30	52	58	61	3.6
4.	The REB allocates resources needed to implement the regional CPD programme.	22	30	62	61	38	3.3
5.	The REB ensures that CPD materials are written in the language that teachers will understand best.	19	33	71	49	41	3.3
6.	The REB monitors and evaluates the CPD programme regionally and produces annual report.	24	18	68	62	41	3.4
7.	The REB is raising awareness of and promoting inclusive education throughout the region through CPD.	19	29	70	63	32	3.3
					Grand Mean		3.3

1=strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree

On the other hand, they admitted that there is limitation from the REB side in organizing CRCs and supporting secondary school teachers.

The researchers' personal observation of some CRC schools indicated that the REB does not have as such strong follow up and encouragement particular to CPD activities. The school annual CPD plans are documented, teachers portfolios are compiled though the quality and consistency is declining in the 2012/13 academic years. There were no attempts on action research, team/peer classroom observation, and other community practices.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Acknowledgements