

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Evaluative research of the mentoring process of the PGDT, with particular reference to Cluster Centers under Jimma University facilitation**

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**The objective of the study is to evaluate the mentoring process of the PGDT program which was under the supervision of Jimma University in the regional states of Oromia and SNNP, Ethiopia. The overall intention was to see whether the program was being underway as expected. Because, there was uncertainty regarding the proper running of it as it was a new program in the history of the country. The dimensions of the research were mentees school environment, mentors, and supervisors. To see whether school environments were conducive to mentees; whether mentors assigned had the attributes expected in different respects: their commitment, knowledge of the program, the necessary inputs they deliver to the mentees, etc. In relation to supervisors, it was to see their commitment to their roles and knowledge of the program under implementation. The other area was if the supervisors involved were cognizant of the program objectives and committed. The research methods used were both quantitative and qualitative in which questionnaires and interview were used to collect data. In the research what was found out is that there were mentees under apprenticeship who were over-loaded, had no mentors, assigned at a level they were not supposed to, and who had mentors from other very far schools. Not only this, there were mentors assigned irrespective of their education level, experience, subjects they were teaching and field of specialization. And of course, important stakeholders with whom the university runs the program did not know the program very well including its objectives. As a result, the conclusion arrived at were: the mentoring process has not been consistent to the plan; the problems that faced the program include stake-holders' limited orientation of the program, inappropriate assignment of mentors and mentees (assigning mentor who did not qualify to be and assigning mentees at the level where they were not supposed to; misunderstanding of the roles of mentors by mentees, mentors themselves and educational officials; lack of commitment from concerned stakeholders including mentors and education officials at various levels.**

**Key words:** PGDT, evaluation, mentoring.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The education system in Ethiopia has been in problem for years. According to the Education and Training Policy of 1994 in Kedir (2006:1) the system has suffered problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity. The objectives are not the ones that take the society's needs

into account nor do adequately indicate future direction. Besides, the contents and mode of presentation of the curricula are not in such a way that they develop students' knowledge, cognitive abilities and behavioral change by level, to adequately enrich problem-solving

ability and attitude (Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia, 1994:2 in Kedir, 2006:1).

The Teacher Education programme in the system is expected to shoulder missions that are far-reaching in scope through the promotion of social, economic, and political changes in schools. The preparation of teachers who can promote students' learning in schools should be a priority agendum of its programmes (MoE, 2009). However, this programme has not been immune from the aforementioned problems. It has experienced long standing problems. It has failed to produce teachers with the expected knowledge, skills and attitude. According to the Draft Curriculum Framework for Secondary School Teacher Education Programme in Ethiopia (2009:3) by MoE, till recently, it has not had strong policy. Even after having the needed policy, according to the Document, the programme has been in trouble. The same document further explains that the teacher education in the country still staggers to produce teachers who are competent in subject areas and can effectively promote the learning of students in schools.

This might be ascribed to the structure of the programme. The experiences of other countries show that failing to put the appropriate structures in place has a bearing on the outcome and effectiveness of a programme. The document by MoE (2009) confirms this. The pedagogical content knowledge of teachers has been taken lightly. Researches on teacher education show that teachers' professional knowledge base must address how they teach a specific content in their subject areas (MoE, 2009). So, voluminous content on learning theories, teaching methodologies, and assessment would be of little help unless candidates are assisted to see how these issues can be made meaningful in the subject they teach (ibid). Noting this, the teacher education programs have undergone structural changes as the result of the 1994 Education and Training Policy. For instance, pre-service secondary teacher education has been reduced from four years to three. Other aspects of changes have apparently been made to conform to the change in the duration of time. As a result, example, the National Framework for Teacher Education System Overhaul that outlines the rationales for reforms, missions, vision, and the objectives of teacher education in Ethiopia was issued in 2002. It also outlines a set of reform tasks needed to improve the teacher education system. There has been much endeavor of making lessons student-centered, truly-engaging, and real-life-like since then. Example, a professional development course called

Higher Diploma has been running to effect student-centered and 'active learning' methodologies. Besides, as indicated before, the preparation of modules along student-centered approaches has been in practice. Apparently, all these efforts are to prepare student teachers to be effective teachers. And student teachers have been made to experience schooling reality through the programme practicum. Besides, nowadays, a new post graduate programme has been put in place where the pre-service teachers are taking professional courses plus experiencing actual schooling experience.

In the past, the training and recruitment of teachers, in general and secondary school teachers in particular, had no the emphasis it required. Those who have first degree in the fields would be chosen and assigned without due consideration of their academic profile, interest toward the profession and professional ethics. Coupled with others, these problems have had tremendous repercussions on the quality of education. To address these and other problems, a task force that was duly engaged in activities for developing a sound teacher education program and the needs of the country had been identified through analysis of national policy documents and strategies (MoE, 2009). Furthermore, teacher educators had been allowed to reflect on the TESO program and suggest possible direction for improvement. Empirical evidences on teacher education program and theoretical bases of teacher education had been examined: experiences of various countries taken through different means. As a result, the conclusions reached were: the misalignment of program mission and practice, the prevalence of structural problems in the system and the incompetence of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge.

Therefore, taking into account all the problems and the shared experiences, the MoE introduced new pre-service teachers training program with a duration of twelve months in which the pre-service teachers take professional courses, go to apprenticeship/practice teaching and back to taking additional courses. In the practice teaching, mentoring is one of the most important components. And the mentors are expected to be experienced, well-qualified and with better professional and ethical standards who teach at mentees respective schools. Besides, they are expected to know the program very well: program objectives, the roles different stakeholders play, etc. To support the mentee-mentor relationship, in particular, and the mentoring process in general, supervisors (teachers of the college/university) are to

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**Abbreviations/acronyms:** **SNRP:** Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (in Ethiopia); **PGDT:** Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching; **MoE:** Ministry of Education (Ethiopia).

make scheduled visits. To this end, woreda and zone education offices have responsibilities of coordination between the mentees, the mentors, the supervisors and their offices.

However, the program is a new one to these stakeholders, the education system of the country. Their picture of the program might not be clear. They might not have a clear understanding of the roles they play and they might not have the necessary documents in relation to the program, etc. So much so that the researcher ponders on how the mentoring process is executed.

In order to achieve the objective, the following basic questions need to be answered.

1. Is the mentoring practice consistent with the plan?
2. What are the limitations experienced?
3. What are the problems faced?
4. Are the supervisors and the mentors giving the necessary inputs in the process?

### **Ethical consideration**

After identifying the research problem and developing the proposal, communicating the objective of the research to the organization where the author works and others who involved in the process, a letter of recommendation was asked for. After securing the recommendation letter that explains the researcher is a staff of the organization and asks all those concerned to collaborate when and where necessary, thanking them in advance for their collaboration. The researcher identified the individuals who involved in the research. And then set a schedule of instrument administration. Following, the researcher contacted the category of respondents in person and explained what he wanted to do and asked them if they were willing to involve in the process. Granting confidentiality of the information they give and understanding the significance of the research outcome, with the respondents' consent, data were collected.

### **METHODS AND MATERIALS**

The research methods used were both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative questionnaires were used to evaluate or assess the program underway by administering them to mentees and mentors; while the qualitative interview was used to collect data from supervisors that complemented the data collected through questionnaires to evaluate the mentoring process of the program. The necessary data were collected from the mentees assigned at the schools in the cluster centers under the supervision of Jimma University, Institute of Education and Professional Development Studies (now College of Education and Behavioral Science) and their respective mentors and the staff assigned supervisors.

The regional states where the mentees, under the facilitation of Jimma University, were assigned are Oromia, SNNP and Gambela. However, due to constraints of resources, only Oromia and SNNP are considered. Of the six cluster centers in the states mentioned only three are taken. The cluster centers chosen in these states are

Jimma and Woliso in Oromia and Bonga in SNNP respectively. These cluster centers were chosen taking into account different factors. As Woliso and Jimma are the nearest centers to Jimma where the researchers reside in , they were chosen to minimize the cost for data collection and traveling, while the researchers' acquaintance to the mentees, mentors and the zone education officials in SNNP made Bonga to be considered. This was helpful in accessing and obtaining the necessary data required. All schools in all centers where there were mentees are included. All subjects' mentees were included because the number was manageable. This is thought to be important that the mentors, the mentees as well as supervisors are of different background that might be important to the research. As to the supervisors; they were all included in the study.

#### **Mentees**

The number of the mentees in Jimma, Woliso and Bonga was 4, 8 and 60 respectively. All of them were included in the study.

#### **Mentors**

The number of mentors is equal to that of the mentees, as expected. Therefore, the number of the sample mentors is 72.

#### **Supervisors**

The number of the staff that involves in supervision may vary from time to time due to different reasons. Nonetheless, all those involved in the supervisory process in the mean time were 18, so regardless of the center they are assigned; all were included in the research.

#### **Instruments of data collection**

The necessary data from respondents were collected through questionnaire (from mentees and mentors), semi-structured interview (supervisors). With all the categories of respondents, questionnaire and interview were the instruments to assess the mentoring process in general through which respondents' understanding of mentoring, their experiences in the mean time and the limitation and strength in the process they observe were looked at. Besides, supervisors were interviewed on their understanding of mentoring and the consistency of the actual practice with the intention. This was done in such a way that some items are prepared and from them some other elicited as the interviewing process goes on.

The sampling technique employed to choose representative samples is non-probability.

#### **Schools**

The list of the schools in each center was received from the concerned education office and those with mentees identified and included.

#### **Selection of the mentees**

All the mentees assigned in the three cluster centers are included.

#### **Mentors and supervisors selection**

The mentors of all the mentees were considered. And all the

supervisors who involved in the program were also respondents.

### **Method of data presentation and analysis**

The data collected from the respondents were organized involving editing, classifying, coding and ingoing in computer in a way that they show relationship, give meaning and readying for computation of different statistical values. Finally, the processed data were analyzed through the application of SPSS Version 20.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

To achieve the research objective, the collected and processed data are presented in tables on the basis of the juxtaposed variables looked at to assessing the whole mentoring process.

### **Mentors' attributes and their knowledge of the program**

Of all the variables under the general heading, according to respondents, it is "mentors' knowledge of the program goals/objectives", "mentors' belief in the program goals/objectives" and "the appropriateness of tasks mentors are giving" are found to be satisfactory, meet standards or good with average mean of 3.72, 3.72 & 3.54 respectively (Table 1).

### **School environments of mentee**

Of all the variables under the general heading, according to respondents, with reference to working climate of mentees, it is the provision of responsibility to mentees by the management and the prevalence of sharing of experience to others believed to be to the standard or good with the average means of 3.54 and 3.36 respectively (Table 2).

### **Mentors' professional attributes**

Of all the variables under the general heading, according to respondents, in relation to the professional attributes of the mentors, the respondents agree that mentors are integral members of the school community; share information, expertise and resources with mentees; are receptive of feedback and seek opportunities for personal growth; adhere to professional and ethical standards and are advocates of the profession with average means of 3.54 and 3.45 respectively (Table 3).

### **Competence of mentors**

Of all the variables under the general heading, as to

respondents, in connection to mentors' competence, mentors' knowledge of effective teaching practice stands out or very good with average mean of 4.0 each (Table 4).

From the data collected, analyzed and interpreted, what is found out is that:

1. There are mentees who have no mentors.
2. There are mentees assigned at primary schools where they are to be assigned at secondary schools.
3. There are mentees who have mentors from different schools very far.
4. Assigning of mentors, to a significant degree, disregard subject specialization, experience, merit, education level, etc.
5. Mentors and education personnel at woreda and zonal offices do not have enough knowledge of the program and are not committed either.
6. Teaching load of some mentees is unbearable.

### **Discussion and interpretation**

#### **School environments of mentees/working climate of mentees**

This refers to the professional atmosphere at schools. It includes availability of resources to discharge responsibilities, climate of courtesy and respect in the schools, staff willingness to share experiences with the mentees and among themselves, the show of respect towards the mentees, etc. In this regard, though, the quantitative data processed showed that it is conducive while the qualitative data processed show otherwise. The different field trips and observations by the researcher confirmed the latter. The working environment is not conducive; some of the real experiences of mentors are far from ideal. A case in point is load. Though the mentees' load is not determined in a clear cut manner, as apprentices, their load needs to be reasonable so that they will have time to communicate with their mentors for experience sharing, professional support, discussion of areas for improvement and do their course works (action research, school and community and practicum) to meet the requirements of the training program they are in. But many mentees' load is far from being fair. There were mentees with weekly load of twenty –seven and above hours. In such condition, it is difficult to think of mentees having a good time as an apprentice and as a student who has course work obligations. There have been times mentees have not been sent to tutorials and trainings given by the university. Either they are not allowed to go by education officials at woreda level thinking that is a destruction of the teaching learning process, or intentionally do not inform them to go for their own different reasons. As a result, not only they miss trainings, they fail to do projects and come to their universities, at the end of June, empty handed.

**Table 1.** Mentors' knowledge of the program.

| Items  | Descriptive statistics |         |         |        |                |
|--|------------------------|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
|  | N                      | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
| mentors know the program goals/objectives  | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.7273 | 1.61808        |
| mentors believe in program goals and objectives  | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.7273 | 1.48936        |
| mentors have documents on the program  | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.0000 | 1.54919        |
| mentor establishes professional objective each year  | 3                      | 1.00    | 4.00    | 2.6667 | 1.52753        |
| mentors participate in mentoring workshops for professional reasons                            | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.0909 | 1.57826        |
| tasks mentors giving are appropriate   | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.5455 | 1.43970        |
| mentors give timely feedback to mentees  | 10                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.2000 | 1.61933        |
| mentors engage mentees in learning by enabling them to participate through multiple modalities | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.0000 | 1.54919        |
| mentee's performance is continuously assessed to guide the process                             | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.1818 | 1.53741        |
| mentees are encouraged and reinforced through daily assessment                                 | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.0909 | 1.57826        |
| multiple assessment strategies and tools are used to monitor mentee's development              | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.9091 | 1.51357        |
| evidence collection of mentees' independent learning outside class is part of mentoring        | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.9091 | 1.51357        |
| mentees' progress is documented in a record-keeping system                                     | 10                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.5000 | 1.50923        |
| Valid N (listwise)   |                        |         |         |        |                |

Aggregate mean: 3.11

**Table 2.** Working climate of mentees.

|   | Descriptive Statistics |         |         |        |                |
|---|------------------------|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
|   | N                      | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
| a professional atmosphere is promoted                                       | 10                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.9000 | .99443         |
| there is a working environment that promotes self-expression                | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.1818 | 1.25045        |
| resources to discharge professional activities are there in enough quantity | 11                     | 1.00    | 4.00    | 2.2727 | 1.10371        |
| climate of courtesy and respect is established                              | 11                     | 1.00    | 4.00    | 2.8182 | 1.07872        |
| the staff demonstrate respect to individual mentee                          | 10                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.8000 | 1.68655        |
| the management gives responsibility to mentees                              | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.5455 | 1.57249        |
| the staff supports the sharing of experiences to others                     | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.3636 | 1.36182        |
| mentees are recognized and praised for efforts and positive contributions   | 11                     | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.1818 | 1.40130        |
| Valid N (listwise)  |                        |         |         |        |                |

Aggregate mean = 2.67.

The other aspect of working environment is the need of prevalence of professional atmosphere promotion in the schools, which is characterized by readiness of experience sharing, undertaking academic debate, conducting staff research collaboratively that tries to alleviate problems at classroom and school levels. Equally important is the respect and courtesy shown by staff toward the staff and the mentees as well. But, according to the research, these elements are in scare in

the school environments.

### Mentors' professional attributes and competence

As the objective of the program is designed to produce well-equipped secondary school teachers, and mentoring is the most important component of it, mentors' role is huge. Their professional attributes, knowledge of the

**Table 3.** Professional attributes of mentors.

| <b>Descriptive Statistics</b>  |          |                |                |             |                       |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|  | <b>N</b> | <b>Minimum</b> | <b>Maximum</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
| mentor is a life-long learner  | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.8182      | 1.47093               |
| mentor is an advocate of the profession  | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.36848               |
| mentor adheres to professional and ethical standards                           | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.5455      | 1.29334               |
| mentor is receptive of feedback and seeks opportunities for personal growth    | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.43970               |
| mentor participates in professional organizations                              | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.22103               |
| A mentor reflects and incorporates new learning into practice                  | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.37510               |
| mentor shares information, resources and expertise with peers                  | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.21356               |
| mentor is collegial and interacts appropriately with mentee, staff and parents | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.1818      | 1.53741               |
| mentor is an integral member of the school community                           | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.5455      | 1.29334               |
| Valid N (listwise)   | 11       |                |                |             |                       |

Aggregate mean: 2.78.

**Table 4.** Competence of mentors.

| <b>Descriptive Statistics</b>  |          |                |                |             |                       |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|  | <b>N</b> | <b>Minimum</b> | <b>Maximum</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
| mentor dedicates regular time to mentee                                      | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.64040               |
| mentor assists mentee despite obstacles                                      | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 2.9091      | 1.51357               |
| mentor models self-reflection and self-assessment                            | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.2727      | 1.48936               |
| mentor understands the common problems of beginning teachers                 | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.30035               |
| mentor applies theories of adult learning                                    | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.13618               |
| mentor anticipates the needs of the mentee                                   | 10       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.2000      | 1.61933               |
| mentor reflects on how ,when, what, and where to communicate with the mentee | 10       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0000      | 1.33333               |
| mentor reflects confidentiality of the relationship                          | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.44600               |
| mentor adjusts communication style to needs of mentees                       | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 2.6364      | 1.43337               |
| mentor discusses professional challenges                                     | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 2.9091      | 1.44600               |
| mentor models effective helping relationship skills                          | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.57826               |
| mentor engages the mentee in team planning and teaching whenever possible    | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.57249               |
| mentor has enough knowledge of effective teaching practice                   | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 4.0000      | 1.18322               |
| mentor models openness to new ideas and instructional practices              | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.8182      | 1.25045               |
| mentor lives a life of a learner   | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.5455      | 1.12815               |
| mentor sees the mentee as a fellow student of teaching and learning          | 10       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.6000      | 1.07497               |
| mentor pursues professional growth opportunities                             | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.5455      | 1.12815               |
| mentor advises the mentee on professional growth opportunities               | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.0909      | 1.44600               |
| mentor models personal and professional self-efficacy                        | 10       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4000      | 1.26491               |
| mentor leads curriculum/program improvement                                  | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.36848               |
| mentor facilitates professional development opportunities                    | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.4545      | 1.21356               |
| mentor is change agent   | 11       | 1.00           | 5.00           | 3.5455      | 1.29334               |
| Valid N (list wise)  | 8        |                |                |             |                       |

Aggregate mean = 3.31.

program, competence, commitment to their roles, education level and experience are crucial.

When mentors' knowledge of the program considered separately in the process, more than anything else, it is very important. Whatever the mentor is capable in what he does, whatever committed he is, whatever conducive working environment the mentee has, it is difficult to imagine a mentor contributes much for the thorough practice of the mentee if he does not know what the program is about. That is why acquainting mentors, woreda and zonal education officials and supervisors, who have stake in the program implementation, is both a necessity and an obligation by the university running the program. They should know its objectives and their responsibility as stake-holders. From this point of view, since the inception of the program, the Institute (now College of Education and Behavioral Sciences), has given trainings every year. Unfortunately, from experience, those sent to participate in the trainings are either who have no stake in the program implementation process or might be individuals who are not committed to the program's cause. A challenge, the College is aware of, but unable to rectify for different reasons. In this respect, the research showed the knowledge of mentors of the program is limited. The mentees' relationship with their mentors and the professional support they get show the mentors' knowledge of the program is limited. Education officials at different levels seem to have no or little acquaintance of the program. This is not only what the research showed, but also at the different times of supervisory field trips, the researcher had the opportunities to discuss with these individuals on different matters in connection to PGDT (post graduate diploma in teaching) in general and mentoring practices in particular. During those discussions, what the researcher understood is that the individual experts who lead the program with the woreda and zone education offices might know about the word PGDT. Beyond this, what the program is all about, why it is designed for, its goals, and the important stake-holders who have stake in the program, and their offices' roles in implementing the program, etc is beyond their knowledge. When it comes to officials of these offices and other personnel, the situation is far more serious. What the interviewed supervisors corroborated is this. In such environment, expecting mentors to be better acquainted and execute their responsibilities could be illogical.

Not only this. Mentors' competence, their education level, experience, the subject they are teaching and mentoring and their field of study, too, come into play in mentoring. As the mentees are would be secondary school teachers, the mentors assigned to support them need to have first degree, teach the subjects their respective mentees are teaching, have the same field of study with their respective mentees apart from the vast experiences and superior professional and ethical

standards expected of them. In this respect, the research showed the level of mentors is satisfactory. But when we see the general picture of the scenario, there are mentors who don't deserve it. There are mentors who do not qualify to because of their educational profile. There are mentors with the education level of diploma. There are mentors with certificate. Of course, mentors with diploma and certificate might have something to share. They might have teaching experiences in abundance that they have accumulated over time. But having this doesn't qualify them to be mentors. Mentees may resist to be supported by these mentors. The mentors may fail to be committed that they are not equal to the mentees. They suffer inferiority complex. This is what the researcher witnessed practically during field trips.

The other point is mentors' experience. Mentors assigned, relatively, need to be more experienced and in a better professional level than their peers and mentees themselves. However, as observed from the mentors' bio data, discussions made between mentees and researcher and researcher and supervisors at different times, there are teachers assigned mentors in their first and second year of teaching due to lack of teachers with the necessary experience. In other situations, where there are more experienced, qualified to the responsibility, and distinguished teachers who merit mentoring didn't get assigned for different reasons.

Equally important is field of study. A mentee who graduated in and teaching physics needs to be mentored by a physics graduate mentor who is teaching physics. However, from the research, to some degree, what has been observed is different. An English teacher mentors Amharic teacher (mentee), a history teacher mentors a math graduate mentee teaching math. This is not ideal, not expected either. A mentor who graduated in and teaching history may find it very difficult to give professional support to a mentee who graduated in and teaching mathematics. The professional support he provides might be minimal in math teaching. It is not his fields of specialization. Mentors are expected to share experiences in the area of planning, classroom management, managing contents, selection and application of teaching methods, resources, etc. In the process, the straight forward thing to be fulfilled is that both mentees and mentors should be qualified in and teaching same subjects. A mentor could not support a mentee in a subject he did not qualify or not teaching either. His contribution to the mentee might be minimal. Assigning mentors regardless of their qualification and the subject they are teaching might be insensible. Of course, in situations where the kind of mentors required is scarce or where mentors of same subject qualification, same educational level and same subject teaching are not available, this could be tolerated even though, in a situation like this, it is difficult for the mentee to get the necessary professional support from the mentor. So

much so that it is difficult to imagine the apprenticeship has contributed enough to the achievement of the program goals.

Another instance that characterizes the mentoring practice under investigation is assigning mentors to mentees from different schools which are far away from the schools they are teaching. If the mentors assigned to mentees from different schools have the courage, time and commitment to discharge their responsibility, it is appreciable. But their contribution to mentees traveling to other schools for hours for one or two days on weekly basis is questionable. However, still, it could be the solution to the problem instead of leaving the mentees without mentors.

Overall, taking in to account the challenges faced and the practices observed, it is understandable that the mentors lack the required professional attributes, and competences and the mentees have no conducive environment to flourish.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are made;

In relation to the mentoring process:

1. The mentoring process has not been consistent with plan.

In relation to the limitations experienced:

1. Not knowing /having a clear understanding of the program by stake-holders
2. Overloading of the mentees.
3. Not assigning appropriate mentors by schools: assigning mentors disregarding his field of study, what s/he teaching at present
4. merit and experience, etc.
5. Assigning mentees at primary schools/the level which they are not supposed to work at nor prepared and trained for.
6. Misunderstanding of the roles of mentors by mentees, mentors, and educational officials.
7. Lack of commitment from mentors and education officials at woreda and zone levels.

In relation to whether supervisors and mentors are giving the necessary inputs:

1. They are not giving the inputs they are supposed to because their knowledge of the program is not complete.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the conclusions made, the following

recommendations are forwarded.

- a. If the program is to continue and be a success story, all parties which in one way or the other, involve in the program need to have and make a clear understanding of the program and have consensus about how the program should be run .

- b. To make the program successful, providing the necessary and available documents, including program objectives and strategies, need to be provided to all stakeholder beforehand.

- c. For the program to achieve its objectives, the roles and responsibilities of each and every stakeholder involve need to be clear and be accountable when they fail.

- d. To make the program successful, providing the necessary and available documents, including program objectives and strategies need to be provided to all stakeholders.

## Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests.

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