

EFL Teachers' Continuous Professional Development in Addis Ababa Primary Schools: Needs and Challenges

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Abstract

This study is intended to examine continuous professional development needs and challenges of primary school English language teachers in the city administration of Addis Ababa. Mixed method design was employed to gather information in the study. This method was selected because it gave opportunity to compensate the weaknesses of using an instrument and corroborate information from the other tools. The data was collected from teachers, principals, and trainers. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data pertinent to answer the research questions. Two types of questionnaires were employed in the study. One was self-designed which was applied to survey the teachers' continuous professional development needs and challenges. The other was adapted questionnaire and used to collect information about the teachers' perceived English language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Hence, 50 randomly selected primary school English language teachers filled in the self-designed and adapted questionnaires. Interview was conducted with 5 volunteer English language teachers who participated in the interview. 4 principals and 3 trainers were interviewed to corroborate the data collected from the English language teachers. Based on the information collected from the instruments, explanatory (Quan-qua) method was employed to analyze the data. First quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using version SPSS 21. Then the qualitative data were analyzed thematically and combined with the survey results to answer the research questions. As a result it was found that primary English language teachers (the participants) were at high need of continuous professional development in English language proficiency especially in speaking skills and teaching methodology. Furthermore, the teachers had institutional and personal challenges to enhance their professional knowledge through participating on going professional development activities.

Introduction

There are various reasons for teachers' participation in CPD scheme. It is conducted supposing that teachers' knowledge should be adjusted to the new developments in the field of education. Teachers' knowledge may be deteriorated because of their beliefs, goals, and motivations, socioeconomic, sociocultural and other exponents. Therefore it is necessary to update and scale up teachers' knowledge to get solutions to the problems they face in their teaching-learning process. Scholars explain that professional development bases on interest in lifelong learning, a sense of moral obligation, a felt need to enhance teaching skills, an institutional requirement, and for career advancement (Golding and Gray, 2006 and Jasper 2006 cited in Al Asmari , 2016). As to Grundy and Robison, 2004 (cited in Sachs, 2006) the main purposes of CPD are extension, growth, and renewal. Extension is through introducing new knowledge or skills to a teacher's repertoire, growth is by the development of greater levels of expertise, and renewal is achieved through transformation and change of knowledge and practice.

On the other hand, Maggioli (2003) discusses the increasing importance of PD to guarantee teachers to match their teaching goals succeed with their students' learning needs. The author concludes that the ultimate purpose of professional development is to promote effective teaching that results in learning gains for all students. Moreover, Villegas-Reimers (2003) explains the opportunities of teachers' participation in the PD have a significant impact on teachers' beliefs and practices; on students' learning; and on the implementation of educational reforms in addition to maintaining personal satisfaction and economic benefits. The scholar also discusses the factors which need to be considered in planning and implementing professional development activities. These are culture of support from designers and schools; context of professional development; stages of teacher career development variation; time that teachers need to their work and the development; funding for school improvement and professional teacher development; and the effective use of technology.

Day (1999) describes INSET (In-service Education and Training) as a planned event; series of events or extended program of accredited or non-accredited learning, in order to distinguish it from less formal in-school development work and extended partnerships and inter school network. Moreover, INSET has powerful effect on teachers' thinking and practice, which promotes indirectly the quality of students' classroom experiences, and should be applied only with great attention to reduce the limitations in practice. Thus, CPD for teachers is essential to maintain the level of professionalism which improves the quality of education. Coming to EFL teachers, Safaie, et al (2014) argued that for English language teachers to claim to be really qualified and professional for the great task of ELT, the only choice is equipping themselves with subject matter and pedagogic knowledge. To achieve this, attention needs to be given to the processes of professional development and other factors that enhance such development.

Richards and Farrell (2005) explained teacher development serves as a longer-term goal and growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers. It is directed to attain teacher's personal goals (subject matter knowledge, pedagogic expertise, self-awareness, understanding of learners and curriculum and materials and career advancement) and institutional goals (institutional development, career development and enhanced levels of student learning). Besides, PD is needed for second language teachers to help their students develop proficiency in the target language and an understanding of the cultures associated with that language (Maggioli, 2003). It is unquestionable that teachers play key role in promoting quality of education and enhancing students' achievement. This can be realized by updating and upgrading teachers' knowledge and skills through participating on going professional development. Ethiopian EFL teachers, owing to the nature of their profession (being nonnative speakers of English) need to accept continuous professional development as an integrated part of their profession to keep up with the dynamic nature of knowledge, and fill the context gap. For instance, Richards (2011) points out that "non-native English teachers must have reached a threshold proficiency level in the target language in order to be able to teach effectively" (p.3).

Literature also shows that "teachers cannot be made to develop" (Bailey, 2001, p. 13). They need to be willing to make that choice. Research also shows that to a great extent, teachers' choice, and readiness to engage in professional learning delimit their level of engagement and outcomes (Bailey, 2006; Hargreaves, 1994; Little, 2001).

Moreover, Little, (2001) contends that if teachers do not perceive their new learning experiences as relevant to their goals and needs, and if their evaluation of their situations does not result in seeing positive outcome expectations or a happy fit between the learning opportunities and their life, teachers are unlikely to engage actively in professional learning. The Ministry of Education pointed to weaknesses in teacher performance as a principal factor such as lack of content knowledge, poor implementation of active learning, lack of professional commitment and lack of interest (Eyasu, et al. 2017; Workneh and Tassew, 2013). The Teacher development Program (TDP) was developed to curb this flaw. It was also launched the General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) with similar aims to the TDP (MoE 2008). English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education plays a key role in the GEQIP. Many English teachers are provided with training (ELIP) to improve their English proficiency in a tailor-made process known by MoE as the 'Cascade Model'. Despite the programs had been provided to teachers, researchers and discussions at various workshops show that the general education is still in crisis, and EFL teachers and students' English language proficiency, from primary through secondary to tertiary levels, is still low 'poor', 'extremely disappointing' or 'declining' (Negash, 2006 and Heugh, et al, 2007 cited in Dereje, 2014). It is also reported that the ELIP program was a failure (source). So far, observations indicate that the CPD failed in

encompassing variables associated with teachers' socioeconomic, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, and socio-cultural context of Ethiopia. This implies that the contextual factors in our country would necessitate a reconsideration of EFL teachers' competencies related to CPD. Addis Ababa primary school English language teachers are not exceptions. Thus, assessing these teachers' immediate needs in designing CPD opportunities would serve to identify gaps (teachers' motivation, basic language, and pedagogic skills) so as to increase the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning at Ethiopian public schools.

Darling-Hammond, et al. (2009) argue that "professional learning can have a powerful effect on teacher skills and knowledge and on student learning if it is sustained over time, focused on important content, and embedded in the work of professional learning communities that support ongoing improvements in teachers practice" (7). Moreover, scholars such as Valladares and Roux (2014) argued that "top-down approaches are generally disconnected from their classrooms" realities. Once teachers finish the courses, approaches and techniques become irrelevant, and they go back to old routines. It is questionable how much the programs are effective and bring cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal changes. Researchers for instance Eba (2011) reported that the CPD programs in our country are generic and lacked sustainability; and Heugh et.al (2007, p.107) indicated not only 'strong evidence' about teachers' 'lack of English competence', but also that the causes were a 'lack of appropriate training'. However, literature shows as "professional development needs to be sustained and intensive and focused on the actual classroom –both knowledge of subject matter and teaching methodology" (Murray and Christison, 2001, p.200).

EFL teachers' ongoing development is vital to meet societal expectation which targets improvement in students' learning. Second language teachers' professional development is needed to enable them to help their students develop target language proficiency and understand the cultures associated with that language. When planning CPD activities it is crucial to identify the teachers' attitudes, beliefs and skills gaps (Maggioli, 2003). Teachers' belief has great impact to professional development that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students (Guskey, 2002). Scholars therefore suggest that organizers of the PD programs should first analyze the needs of the teachers and then categorize them in terms of skills, knowledge, and attitude. Aims should be set bearing in mind the participants knowledge, experience, previous training, the workload, practical and financial constraints. (Koc, 1992; Evans, 1998, cited in Eski and Aydin, 2012).

1. In what areas of teaching-learning do in-service EFL teachers need in-service training program?

2. What are the institutional and personal challenges that English language teachers experience in their in-service trainings?
3. What are the self-perceived language proficiency levels of elementary school EFL teachers in reading, listening, writing, and speaking?

The purpose of this study is to investigate primary EFL teachers' continuous professional development needs in the city administration of Addis Ababa. Specifically, the inquiry seeks:

- to identify the teachers' specific needs (professional and personal) in implementing the CPD programs,
- to examine the impediments of EFL teachers in practicing professional development activities, and
- to assess EFL teachers' current self-perceived English language proficiency skills .

Purposes of CPD for EFL Teachers

It is obvious that EFL teachers should target their development to be experts in their field as long as they remain in the teaching- learning of English. Professional development for EFL teachers is a vital part of professional life because of its significant positive impact on teachers' beliefs and practices that supports students' learning. Lange (1990) believes that enabling teachers in professional development helps to continue to evolve in the use, adaptation and application of their art and craft in the classroom. Teachers need to be engaged in continuing professional development to better meet the demands of the students and achieve effective education. This need is more evident when it comes to the English language teachers (Cumming, 2011; Tomlinson, 2004). As there are continuous and rapid changes in the teaching of English, institutions need to meet the challenges evolving out of the curriculum reform and student needs. Recently PD has attracted attention due to rapid change in the education that needs to attain high quality in the system, so teachers search to update and upgrade their skills through professional development (Craft, 2000). The scholar also lists the goals of undertaking professional development These are to improve the job performance skills of the whole staff or groups of staff; to improve the job performance skills of an individual teacher; to extend the experience of an individual teacher for career development or promotion purposes; to develop the professional knowledge and understanding of an individual teacher; to extend the personal or general education of an individual; to make staff feel valued; to promote job satisfaction; to develop an enhanced view of the job; to enable teachers to anticipate and prepare for change; and to clarify the whole school or department's policy.

Scholars, for example, Baily, Curtis and Nunan (2004) stated that English language teachers' PD is the backbone of successful language teaching, and they suggested five reasons to

engage in the scheme and take control of teachers' own ongoing development. These are to acquire new knowledge and skills, to cope with and keep up with the pace of change, to increase one's professionalism, status, and even, possibly, income, to empower oneself through increasing one's knowledge base, and to combat negativity and burnout. An English language teacher needs to manage classroom activities effectively and to have a good deal of knowledge and comprehension of many factors and variables that control and govern the process of learning and teaching in the classroom situation. The need to develop professionally as English language teachers necessitates an active engagement in the learning process in which numerous development activities for English language teachers have become handy for the purpose of self-development (Karaaslan, 2003, cited in Al Asmari, 2016). Furthermore, it is unquestionable that students could gain advantage if their teachers are not professionals in their fields. For instance, first EFL teachers need to be able to use the language effectively. Then they should have subject-matter and pedagogic knowledge and teach students to use the language for various communicative purposes. Unless teachers have access to serious and sustained learning opportunities at every stage in their career, they are unlikely to teach in ways that meet demanding new standards for student learning or to participate in the solution of educational problems (Ball and Cohn, 1999 cited in Nesmer, 2001). Moreover, student success is achieved when teachers understand learning and pedagogy, respond the students' needs and demands, develop strong connections between students' experiences and the goals of the curriculum (Darling Hammond et al, 2009; Wei, et al. 2009).

However, as long as EFL teachers stay in the teaching profession, they have to be convinced that engaging in PD improve their teaching skills, knowledge and attitudes. These can make the teachers highly qualified and powerful, and the development also prevents them from burning out (incompetence) that may create problems in the teaching. CPD designers should aim first to make able EFL teachers use the language. Thus, considering and valuing the importance of continuous professional development has dominant influence to alleviate the deteriorating EFL teachers' professional quality and enhance students' achievement.

The Design of CPD for EFL Teachers

The world is changing in different aspects including education. Foreign language education is one which needs due consideration because of its dynamism. EFL teachers should always find ways to keep pace with the rapid changes to promote students' outcome and attain societal expectations. Managing a FL classroom requires teachers' various special teaching skills. As to Brown (1995) EFL teachers need to have a good deal of knowledge and comprehension of many factors and variables that control and govern the teaching-learning process. They also help them to manage the classroom effectively. Predesigned CPD for English language teachers therefore should be adjusted according to the needs of teachers in terms of

knowledge of subject matter, teaching strategies, methods, and skills as well as students' language proficiency needs.

Borg (2006) presents five factors that distinguish FL teachers from that of teachers of other subjects. These are: First, the nature of the subject matter itself. FL teaching is the only subject where effective instruction requires the teacher to use a medium the students do not yet understand. Second, the interaction patterns necessary to provide instruction. Effective FL instruction requires interaction patterns such as group work which are desirable, but not necessary for effective instruction in other subjects. Third, the challenge for teachers of increasing their knowledge of the subject. Language teachers teach communication, not facts. In other subjects, teachers can increase their subject matter knowledge through books, but it is harder for FL teachers to maintain and increase their knowledge of the FL because doing so requires regular opportunities for them to engage in FL communication. Fourth, isolation. FL teachers experience more than teachers of other subjects' feelings of isolation resulting from the absence of colleagues teaching the same subject. Finally, the need of outside support for learning the subject. For effective instruction, FL teachers must seek ways of providing extracurricular activities through which naturalistic learning environments can be created. Such activities are less of a necessity in other subjects (p.3). The scholar states the factors can be as an example of the manner in which language teachers' distinctive characteristics have been conceptualized. This shows that in designing CPD for EFL teachers' needs particular attention to accomplish positive outcomes.

Scholars argued that in-service teacher education in the past valued the outsider-expert knowledge at the expense of teachers' beliefs and practical knowledge and offered one-size-fits-all knowledge about teaching rather than context-specific knowledge of teaching. The professional development of English language teachers has progressed from a transmission-oriented approach to one in which their realities are catered to. The programs should respond to teachers' needs, be based upon their close realities, and account for teachers as learners of their teaching. Thus, the field of English language teaching has come to understand professional development not as the idea of an accumulation of skills but as a highly critical process (Giraldo, 2014).

Furthermore, instead of top-down approaches in which experts "impose" models and recipes on teachers, authors urge context-sensitive models that reflect teachers' decision-making and experience (González, 2007 cited in Giraldo, 2013). The traditional transmission models have long marginalized the teacher's role in the development process and considered teachers as only receivers not generators of new knowledge. Knowledge transmission models have failed to be effective to achieve today's high demands of educational expectations and ambitious reforms

(Guskey, 2003, Fullan and Hargreaves, 2010). Besides, the authors clarified that the models lacked the capability of connecting professional development goals and teacher's needs.

However, it is indicated that 'programs which involve participants in the planning, organization, management, delivery and evaluation of all actions in which they are expected to participate have more chances of success than those planned using a top-down approach, where administrators make decisions on behalf of teachers' (Maggioli, 2003, p.4). Furthermore, Tomlinson (1988) cited in Naashha (2006) recommends that 'teachers must be given opportunities to participate in decisions about what they will learn, how they will learn, and how they will use what they learn. This can be done through surveys, interviews and group discussions involving teachers' (p.51). As mentioned earlier, there is no common agreement in designing effective professional development activities. Guskey (1999) mentions that 'the appropriateness of any particular model varies depending on the goals, the content, and the context for implementation' (p. 29). Teachers' professional needs vary according to their identity, career stages, professional background, dispositions, and context conditions. For example, the needs of language teachers working in EFL setting are different from those teaching in monolingual English contexts. Similarly, Pasternak & Bailey, (2004) argued that native and non-native English speaking teachers have different needs pertaining to their linguistic proficiency and professional preparation.

Generally, the above ideas emphasize that professional development programs should be designed by identifying teachers' needs and setting goals that are achievable. It is mentioned that the designing should be involving and consistent with in the teachers' context. Furthermore, when implementing PD activities, creating a link between the various entities involved in the process enhances to realize the needed outcome.

When we see in Ethiopia it calls for attention that the CPD schemes are mainly designed from MoE. For example, the study conducted by Girma (2005) about secondary school English language implementation of methodological shows that there is a clear disparity between the planned change and the teachers' actual classroom practices. He found that the teachers tend to concentrate on the form and rule of the grammatical structures, while paying little attention to the use and meaning aspects. Another research, Yoseph (2010) explored primary school English teachers to identify the communicative strategies they use in the classroom and the relationship between communicative strategies and lesson topics. He found that the use of communication strategies was not directly related with the lesson topics but depended on the language functions involved in the activities within the topics. The activities in which language functions such as explaining or putting over information and instructions were included did require that the teachers should employ communication strategies. These were the functions that the teachers

found difficult to manipulate. It seems that teachers have no opportunity to reflect on their basic needs in the teaching process from the very beginning the selection criteria is not clear rather focuses on political loyalty and massification. It is always heard that English teachers' proficiency is questionable, but the programs are not designed in such a way to improve the quality of teachers. The researchers above showed that there is English language skills gap in the teachers. Hence this leads to the program designers shift the activities first be developed in such a way to solve inefficiency of English language teachers.

The in-service activities for teachers in Ethiopia take the form of professional development as short and long term trainings in the schools and in formal programs. However, teachers seem not implementing all the professional development activities because most schools are focusing on the training provided by the government. This might be associated with the education system of the country which seems mostly driven politically instead of focusing the quality of teachers that play key role at improving education. Hence, it needs decision and commitment to teachers get motivated and involved in different PD activities to attain professionalism and meet personal and institutional goals. This also requires policy makers and implementers to exert a lot of remedial actions to change the situation. The above activities mentioned for teacher professional development are scientific –which led to success if they are applied in context. However, very few activities are seemed to apply in Ethiopia such as action research, workshops, and teacher support groups sparingly and for reports. These activities are also done based on the MoE or the institution goal. It could be said that they are applicable in our context if teachers and schools are dedicated to make professionals. These professionals can be able to use the language efficiently for the teaching and other communicative purposes.

Challenges of Continuous Professional Development

Successful development occurs if teachers are motivated to take part in the process. This can be possible if impediments are carefully identified and resolved. Day (1999) explains that professional development is not something that can be forced; it is the teacher who develops actively, and not the teacher who is developed passively. The author also clarifies that change, which is not internalized, is likely to be cosmetic, “token” and temporary. If the teachers supposed that the professional development programs serve them no purpose, this will result to resistance. When teachers convince themselves that they have deficiency, they are also likely to be motivated to participate in PD trainings. It could be said that the way CPD is realized can be affected by expectations and requirements of stakeholders, by the desires (values and beliefs) of teachers, contextual requirements (institutional and community), opportunities available, and economic factors. Lange (1997) contends that “teacher renewal faces many problems: lethargy, tradition, bureaucracy, and fear of change, among others” (p.268). Moreover, Little (1993) discussed challenging issues in the design of professional development schemes. These are: First,

the sheer complexity of the reform tasks being proposed, together with the relative absence of tested principles, policies, and practices; the contradictions across policies; and the propensity to seize upon early which are stage experiments as models. Second, the problem of fit between the task of reform and the prevailing models of professional development. The dominance of a training paradigm built on knowledge consumption, and the lesser support for an inquiry and problem-solving paradigm built around knowledge production. Third the relative inattention to teachers' opportunity to learn within the remunerated workday and work year which is an issue in the social organization of teachers' work in schools and their participation in a wider professional community (p.139). The author mentioned difficulties such as policy and assured guidelines, mismatch of the training needs, and not creating occasions to teachers in working days are the impediments for professional improvement.

Villegas-Reimers (2003) discusses the factors which need to be considered in planning and implementing professional development activities. These are culture of support from designers and schools; context of professional development; stages of teacher career development variation; time that teachers need to their work and the development; funding for school improvement and professional teacher development; and the use of technology effectively. In sum, the challenges of CPD pursuit can be categorized as societal, institutional, and contextual factors. PD success will not also be successful if it fails to sustain and cultivate political will because individuals and institutions will rest ultimately on a crucial fund of it (Little, 1993). Scholars have observed that when nonnative speakers become EFL teachers, despite their having been trained in pre-service training courses, their own experience as learners, their personalities, their social and cultural status and other factors influence their way of teaching (Pennycook 1989, Johnson 1996, and Britten, 1998 cited in Mohammadi et al., 2015). Hence, in a context of having or recruiting huge number of teachers who have different needs, it seems unrealistic because in-service training in Ethiopia is provided by predesigned top-down approach and targets all partake in the same program. However, PD policy makers can adjust the situation by triggering questions to look at carefully the challenges in the design and implementation of in-service training activities. They should aim at bringing changes on teachers' motivations, values, and attitudes. Thus, the situation signposts to analyze primary EFL teachers CPD needs, experiences and motivations in addition to assessing the impacts of professional development on the teachers.

Method and Design of the Study

Mixed methods design applies quantitative and qualitative methods to answer research questions in a single study (Mertens, 2005). It is used to capture the best of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2003). The approach is useful to develop a better understanding of complex phenomena by triangulating or corroborating or complementing one

set of results with another and thereby enhancing the validity of inferences (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2002). The fundamental principle of mixed methods research is combining methods which have complementary strengths, and non over lapping weaknesses. When used alone, according to post-positivists, both quantitative and qualitative approaches are flawed. Integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches, however, the deficiencies of one approach can be offset by the advantage of the other (Creswell, et al., 1996). On the whole mixed methods design is chosen for this study based on two reasons. First, studying teachers' professional development needs, challenges and experiences is a complex and multifaceted process that involves the perspectives of different actors so that it would be needed collecting data from different sources. This situation also opens the door to use mixed methods research approach rather than subscribing to only one way. Second, employing a single approach to the study may limit the comprehensiveness of the data, and accuracy of the findings. Therefore, the mixed methods design was employed in this study with the intent to get a complete and comprehensive picture of the topic under study. The quantitative descriptive approach was used to generate data from a wide number of sources about the respondents' knowledge and practices regarding the needs and challenges of continuous professional development.

Sampling

A sample is a representative proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn (Kahn, 2003). The first step in sampling is to define the population to which results will be generalized. A population is the larger group from which sample respondents are selected. Since the entire group of interest to the researcher is rarely available, a distinction is made between the population to which it would be ideal to generalize study results and the population from which subjects can be realistically selected.

The total populations of the study were 58. These were 50 primary school EFL teachers, five principals and four trainers working in Addis Ababa city administration. The researcher selected 5 schools purposively (due to their proximity for the researcher workplace and living area), in two sub-cities namely Nifas silk Lafto and Addis Ketama. These sub-cities also have more English teachers than others so that it helped to get the needed (sufficient) number of samples. In the schools among the total 63 teachers, 50 participants took part in the study. They were chosen randomly as this sampling type gives equal opportunity to all population to be selected in the study. While the primary aim of this study was to examine PD needs and practices through the eyes of EFL teachers, it invited the views of others who work closely with teachers, namely school principals and trainers. Hence, 5 school principals working in the sub-cities where the teachers are working were included in the study, and four trainers in which the teachers

attended/ attending in-service trainings participated in the study. The following table shows the participants' detailed background information.

Category	Details	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	35	61%
	Female	23	39%
	Total	58	100%
Education	Diploma	2	3.3%
	B A degree	53	89.8%
	MA degree	1	3.3%
	PH.D.	2	3.3%
	Total	58	100%
Experience in years	1-5	16	27.1%
	6-10	16	27.1%
	11-15	8	13.5%
	16 and above	18	32.2%
	Total	58	100%

Even though the design of the study invited three groups of participants, it focused primarily on teachers' as they were the main sources of data. However, including school principals was essential to contextualize the topics raised in the study. They are professionals who share and shape teaching, and their work influences teachers' performances, choices, their attitudes, and motivations towards development. Their view gave additional insights for the study. Similarly, the trainers also gave evidence about their in-service students without hesitation as they were intellectuals they might not afraid of speaking realities based on the evidence they have. The study was shaped by legal official approval which I collected from English department to obtain access to the selected schools.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, questionnaires, interview, and field notes were employed to collect data. Two questionnaires were used in the study. One was self-prepared and the other was adopted from Butler (2004) proficiency scale matrix. The self- designed questions were prepared to discover the teachers' CPD needs, experiences and challenges in their teaching-learning context. The items were developed by understanding the topic through reviewing available literatures and issues of Ethiopian EFL teachers CPD programs.

Questionnaires

The purpose of the questionnaire is to gather quantitative data. The teacher surveys are the main quantitative strategy which were designed and employed in this work to gather base line data from EFL teachers. One of the main reasons for choosing to use a questionnaire in this research is due to its convenience for respondents. Questionnaire provides anonymity to participants; hence it encourages them to provide honest responses. Moreover, the use of a self-completion questionnaire has the potential of eliciting bias-free responses compared to an interview (Cohn, et al. 2007).

The two questionnaires were organized into cross-sectional two parts. The first self-designed questionnaire was prepared based on the objectives of the study, literature review insights and personal teaching experiences. Part 1 of self-developed survey (Appendix A) consisted of items about teachers' background information. Part 2 included items representing areas of English language teachers' professional development needs, practices and challenges. A five-level Likert scale was used. The scales were given points. (16 items). These were for 'strongly agree (5), 'agree' (4), 'neutral' (3), "disagree' (2) and 'strongly disagree' (1) to gather information about EFL teachers' continuous professional development needs (23 items), professional development practice (15 items) and professional development challenges

The second questionnaire (Appendix B) was adopted from the Butler (2004) proficiency scale based on the Foreign Language Oral Skills Evaluation Matrix (FLOSEM; Padilla, Sung, and Aninao, 1997). This instrument was chosen because it had been successfully used in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan to assess teachers' perceived language proficiency level. The reliability of the instruments for current level of proficiency was reported as .87. We used the instrument to survey the teachers' current level of English language proficiency. The questionnaire was prepared to rate EFL teachers' self-perceived language proficiency levels in speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills based on descriptions - very limited ability (1point) to native like proficiency (6 point). Therefore, using the questionnaires, Addis Ababa primary school EFL teachers' professional development needs, practices and impediments were examined in their teaching-learning context.

Interview

The purposes of interview include: uses as the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives, helps as an explanatory device to identify variables and relationships, and the interview may use in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking. The interview will also enable to ask for further clarifications of the issues under consideration (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Usually, a semi-structured interview involves an interview guide or suggested questions to understand themes of the lived daily world from the

subjects' own perspectives. It will be used this type of interview to acquire a general idea of the direction and results of the interview by focusing on certain themes and suggested questions (Nunan, 1992). As a result of the flexibility, the semi-structured interviews not only shaped and adjusted the questions based on the teachers' realities and issues emerging from the interviews but also will offer space for detailed explanation, discussion and expansion of the teachers' responses.

Hence, the interview was significant data source in this study. Semi structured interview guide was developed for each of the three groups of participants. These are English language teachers (Appendix C), trainers (Appendix D) and principals (Appendix E). Each guide consisted of questions intended to elicit data pertaining to the research topics. Four teachers who completed the questionnaires, three trainers and five school principals were participated in the interview. These participants were selected purposively by approaching them and requesting their permission for an interview.

Field Notes

Field notes were collected simultaneously and in conjunction with one another because there were often chances of meeting the participants and other professionals during survey or interview process. These were also served to enrich the results obtained through interviews and questionnaires and triangulate the findings.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The validity and reliability of self-prepared instruments were checked before conducting the main study. Twenty EFL teachers were participated, and these participants were excluded from the main survey to avoid data contamination (biased responses).

Data Collection Procedures

In this study, a relatively large and identical sample was selected for both quantitative and qualitative designs to examine participants (EFL teachers) concerning CPD needs, practices and the factors that influence their professional renewal. Therefore, the following procedures were employed to collect the evidence. Primarily, as mentioned before I chose 5 elementary schools in two sub-cities (Jemo, Hibir and Mekanisa in Nifas Silk Lafto sub-city; Addis Tesfa and Hidase in Adiss Ketema sub-city) in Addis Ababa. On the days the departments arranged, first quantitative phase of the study, questionnaires data were collected from EFL teachers at Addis Ababa ten primary public schools to survey EFL teachers' professional development needs, practices, challenges and perceived language proficiency. It was from the mid of September,

2019 to early October, 2019. For the interview, the five interested teachers at the beginning of November, 2019 in different days in their schools at lunch break time.

Principals are gatekeepers to teacher participants and other school data; approaching them effectively is important to the quantity and quality of the data which will be obtained from their schools. Therefore, the principals took part in a semi-structured interview where they responded to questions on their beliefs of roles and teachers' professional development needs, practices and obstacles. Finally, I contacted four (three) trainers and arranged appropriate time for interview.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately. The thematic approach was followed to display the analyses and findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. The themes for the data analyses were derived from the conceptual framework of the study that is grounded in the basic research questions. Analysis of quantitative data was displayed first and then corroborated by qualitative data analysis in the form of texts and quotes. Therefore, data which were collected through questionnaires were coded, entered, cleaned, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) computer software. Descriptive statistics using figures and tables was employed to display the data. Average score and percentage were applied to analyze and interpret the results. Pearson correlation analysis was also conducted to observe the relationship between gender and self-perceived English language proficiency, and teaching experience and self-perceived language proficiency. Furthermore, the field notes which were collected in relation to the interviews were analyzed and used as supplementary sources to support the interpretation, comparison, and triangulation of the findings.

Then, the mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches was applied during the empirical investigation of EFL teachers' professional development needs, constraints, and self-perceived English language proficiency of EFL teachers. It involved a mix of quantitative and qualitative data analysis (QUAN+ qual). The first quantitative data dealt with surveys of teachers' English language teachers' professional development needs and challenges; and the teachers' self- perceived language proficiency in the target schools. The second qualitative data which were collected from school directors and trainers dealt with EFL teachers' CPD needs, practices and challenges that teachers experience in their school context. Field notes were mixed with the qualitative and quantitative data collected from teachers, trainers and principals to enrich the finding. Hence, the quantitative data which was collected from teachers were enhanced with the qualitative information gathered from trainers and principals.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The survey results are presented in figures and tables using descriptive statistics. The interview part is presented by explaining themes quoting the participants words.

Background Information of the Survey Participants

Table 1 shows the survey participants in terms of gender, educational background and teaching experience years. The total number of survey participants was 50, as mentioned in chapter 3. They were teaching in 6 government primary schools in Addis Ababa city administration.

Table 1: Background information of English Language Teachers

Gender	Educational Background		Teaching Experience in Years				Total
	Diploma	Degree	1-5	6-10	11-15	16 and above	
Female	1	23	13	3	4	4	24
Male	2	24	3	13	4	6	26
Total							50

It can be observed from table 1 that there are relatively equal numbers of male and female teachers included in the study. When we see their educational background, majority of the teachers (47) are bachelor's degree holders and only 3 teachers are at diploma level. Many of the teachers have teaching experiences between 1-10 years, but a few teachers (10) have long experiences which seemingly show that the teachers' turn over, meaning teachers' shift their profession to other career that they think it could help them to lead better life.

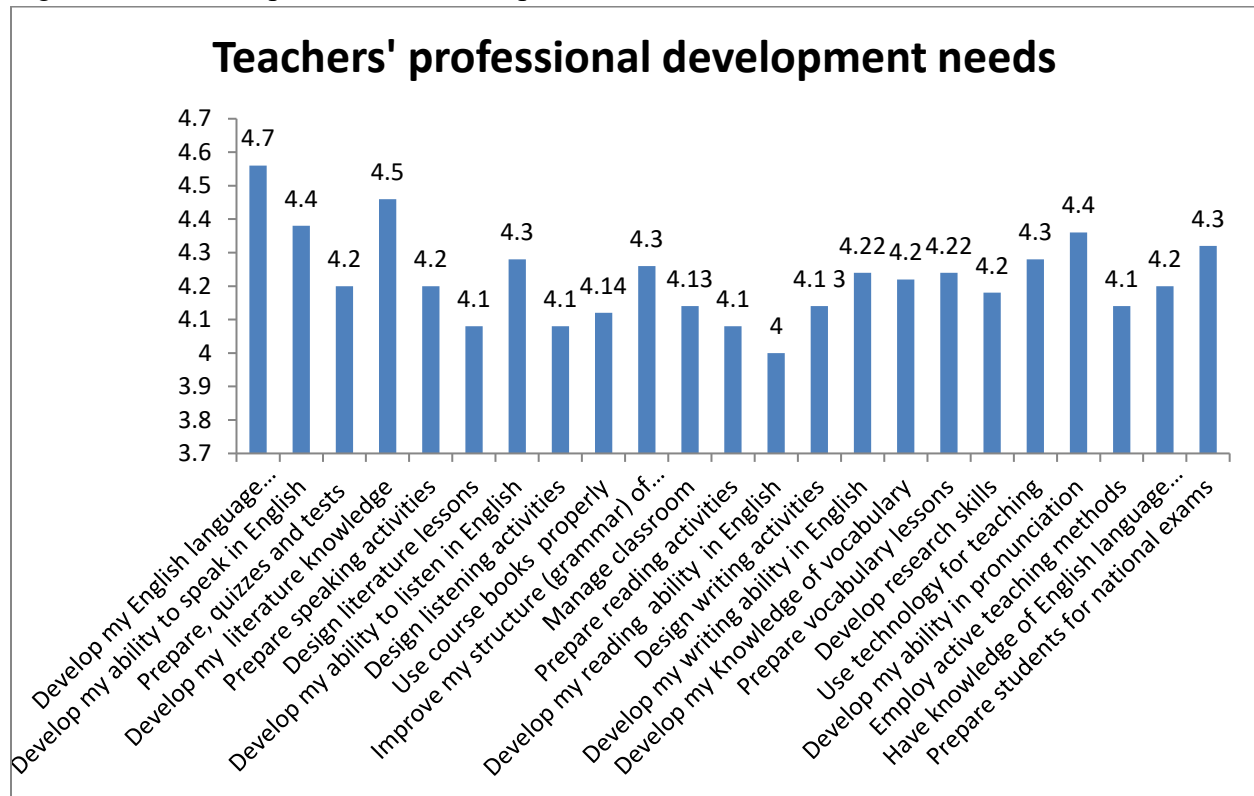
In the following part, I report the findings of the survey results to the research questions. The part presents the information of the survey participants and the results of the statistical analysis conducted to answer the research questions.

Results of Quantitative Data

What are the (CPD) needs of in-service English teachers who are enrolled in a CPD programs?

The quantitative results show that the teachers' aspirations of PD in English language proficiency, subject matter, pedagogic and pedagogic content knowledge to be professionally competent in their career. Figure 2 illustrates teachers' response of their continuous professional development needs.

Figure 1: Teachers' professional development needs



The descriptive statistics (mean scores) in figure 1 reflects that teachers' continuous professional development needs in various skills. The responses average mean demonstrates for all items ranged between approximately 4 and 4.6 and indicates the participants' timely aspirations and consents for professional development activities. The teachers strongly agreed in developing their English language proficiency which is very important to deliver a lesson to students effectively. The participants approved to develop their literature knowledge (4.5), speaking skills (4.4) in English and pronunciation skills (4.36).

The average value (4.3) of the responses to develop English listening ability, grammar knowledge, use of technology and prepare students for national exams depicts the teachers' agreement to equip and adjust themselves with the current changes in language teaching-

learning. Statements such as preparing quizzes, speaking activities, vocabulary lessons, develop teaching methods and research skills have mean value (4.2) demonstrates many respondents' demand in pedagogic content knowledge, meaning that teaching methods with respect to subject matter content.

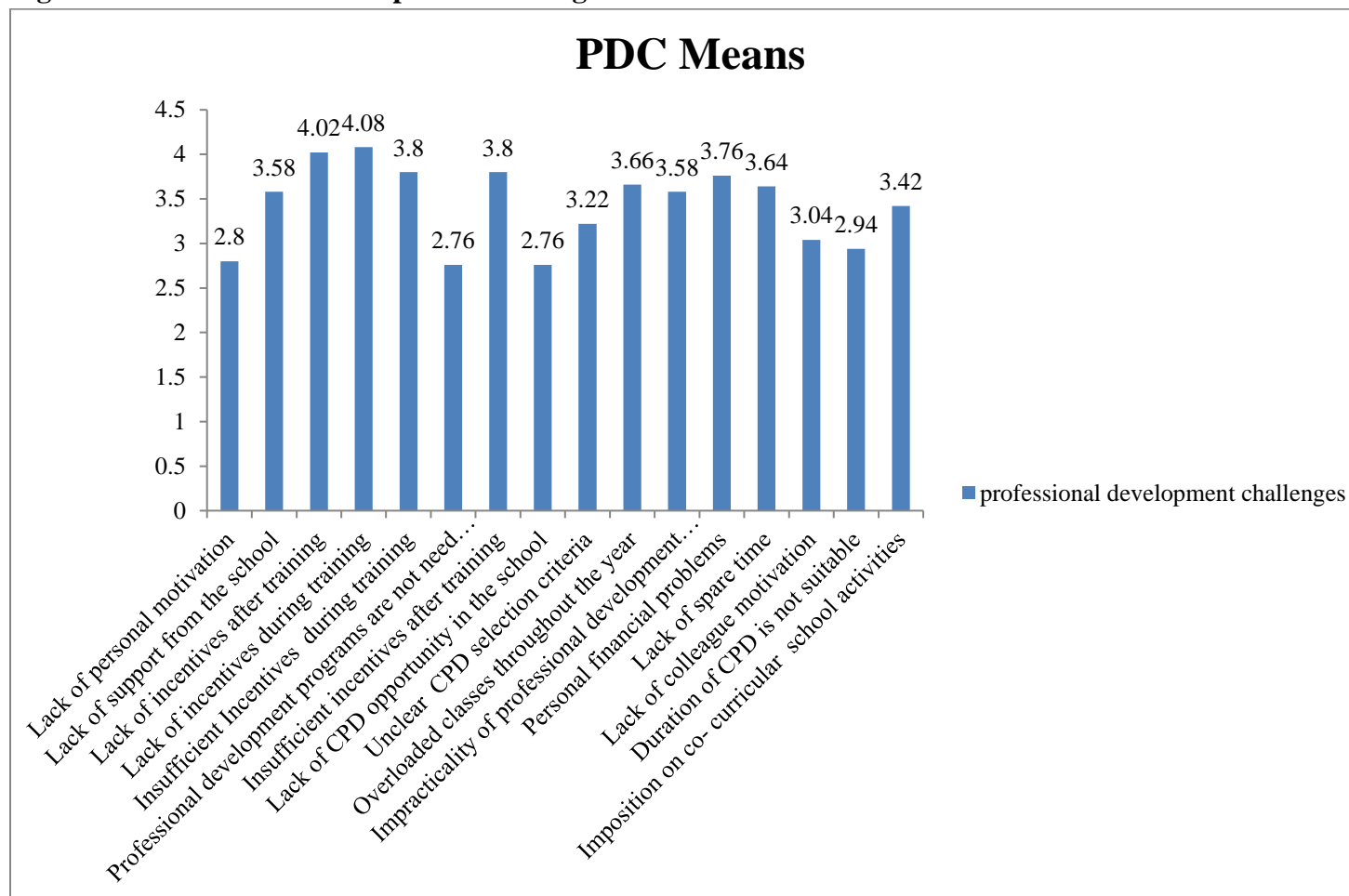
Designing literature, writing, and reading lessons, classroom management, appropriate use of course and active teaching methods skills average mean score (4.1) reveals the teachers' agreement for their lifelong learning. The responses about developing reading skills also exemplifies many teachers need to update their receptive skills. At this level of analysis it can be said that majority of primary EFL teachers need continuous professional development in language proficiency skills, subject matter and pedagogic knowledge.

As can be seen from the above table, when the teachers needs are put thematically the average scores ranges from 4- 4.7 which explains the teachers' high need in professional English language skills and professional knowledge.

What are the institutional and personal challenges that English language teachers experience in their in-service training?

The following figure 3 illustrates average score of the participants' response about institutional and personal impediments the teachers have in their professional renewal movements.

Figure 3: Professional development challenges



The statistics from the above figure 3 reveals that the respondents' most professional development encounters are lack of incentives after and during training. The average means for item 3 (4.02) and item 4 (4.04) represent that teachers' ambition to join teaching profession seemed to base on the benefit they get rather than being experts in their profession. The other high rate result registered is for the statement personal financial problem which has average mean of 3.76. Insufficient incentives during and after training (3.8), and lack of spare time (3.64) average score results also prove the teachers' obstructions to engage in an ongoing professional development activities. Teachers' overloaded classes mean (3.66) reveals the respondents' consensus of other career continuous development obstacles.

Impracticality of professional development activities and lack of support from the school, a mean of 3.58, are the other hindrances agreed by the participants. Imposition co-curricular

school activities and unclear CPD selection criteria are accepted challenges that the teachers frustrate them to partake in an ongoing professional development. The participants feel their negative experiences in maintaining transparency in educational institutions.

On the other hand, some participants didn't show any sign to statements such as lack of personal motivation, professional development programs are not need based, lack of colleague motivation and the unsuitability of duration of CPD and lack of professional development opportunity in the school. Therefore the statistics in figure 3 described that the most common challenges are institutional. These are financial, lack of spare time and lack of support.

What are primary EFL teachers' self- perceived proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills?

Table 2: Frequency on Each Language Skill Domain: Levels of Perceived Proficiency.

Level	Speaking Frequency (%)	Listening Frequency (%)	Reading Frequency (%)	Writing Frequency (%)
1.0	1(2)	2(4)	1(2)	4(8)
1.5	5(10)	2(4)	3(6)	1(2)
2.0	3(6)	1(2)	3(6)	10(20)
2.5	6(12)	7(14)	2(4)	2(4)
3.0	1(2)	3(6)	10(20)	13(26)
3.5	17(34)	13(26)	16(32)	8(16)
4.0	5(10)	4(8)	9(18)	6(12)
4.5	10(20)	15(30)	6(12)	4(8)
5.0	2(4)	3(6)	0(0)	2(4)
5.5	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
6.0	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Total	50(100.0)	50(100.0)	50(100.0)	50(100.0)

Concerning speaking, as indicated in table 2, 34 % of the respondents rated their speaking proficiency level above 3 but below level 4, meaning that the teachers can express themselves using simple language but they make mistakes and express at a normal speed. Some participants (20%) leveled their perceived speaking proficiency above level 4 but below level 5, denoting that they could effortlessly express themselves at a normal speed and although they have minor pauses in search for the correct manner of expression. Only 2% of the participants leveled their proficiency at 3 which denotes they could express themselves using simple expressions even though they make mistakes and pause to express complex ideas. 2 % leveled them as they are fluent, but occasionally have minor pauses in search of correct manner of expression (level 5).

However, many teachers (30%) rated their proficiency in speaking less than level 3. Compared with listening and reading proficiency levels, it illustrates that more teachers consider their speaking proficiency level tended lower than expected level.

In terms of listening, 30% of the teachers considered their proficiency level as 4.5, indicating the participants could understand the main point(s) of a short dialogue or passage. 20% of the respondents could understand the main point(s) of a short dialogue or passage if spoken at slower than normal speed with some repetition (level 3). 8% of the teachers perceived their listening proficiency as level 4, meaning they could understand most of what is said, 6% of the participants' rated that they could understand nearly everything at normal speed, although occasional repetition may be necessary. On the other hand, 24% of the teachers rated their listening proficiency level below 3. Compared with the teachers' reading proficiency levels, it was noted that more teachers' ratings leaned towards lower levels.

Regarding reading, 32% of the teachers rated their proficiency level between levels 3 and 4, implying that the participants could understand the main point(s) of a short passage written in ordinary English with some assistance of dictionary and grammar book. 20% of the participants' considered their reading skills as level 3, the teachers could understand the main point(s) of a short passage written in ordinary English if they can have some assistance such as the use of a dictionary and a grammar book, although there are usually some parts that remain unclear to them. 18% of the respondents could read and understand most of what is written in regular English texts, although depending on the genre of the texts, though they encounter some unclear words and may need to consult a dictionary in order to comprehend the texts (level 4), and 12% of the teachers leveled them between levels 4 and 5 which means the respondents could read nearly everything with ease. However, some (18%) respondents rated their levels below 3. Compared with listening, writing, and speaking proficiency level, the teachers assessed their level higher in reading. 82% of them perceived that they possessed a proficiency level of 3 or higher.

Concerning writing skill, 26% of the respondents rated them as level 3, indicating the teachers write letters and short essays using relatively simple language. They could produce a few complex sentence constructions but with noticeable mistakes in grammar and vocabulary. They usually take a long time to write when they try to express complex ideas. 16% of the teachers assessed themselves in writing as between levels 3 and 4. They could write letters and short essays using relatively simple language, and produce a few complex sentence constructions 12% of the teachers have enough vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to write English with relative ease; however, they occasionally make some noticeable mistakes in grammar and vocabulary (level 4) and 8% of them rated as level 4.5.

On the other hand, 4% of the respondents leveled them as level 5, indicating they could write English almost like a native speaker, but minor unconventional uses of vocabulary and expressions. However, several respondents (34%) rated their writing proficiency below level 3, indicating that they could only write short paragraphs using simple sentences. The teachers' rated perceived writing proficiency level is relatively similar to speaking proficiency levels (30%).

Table 3: Overall averages of self-perceived English language proficiency statistics

		Speaking	Reading	Listening	Writing
N	Valid	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0
	Mean	3.83	4.57	4.05	3.99
	Std. Deviation.	1.72	1.182	1.041	1.047
	Median	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00

It can be seen from table 4.3 that all the domains are rated closely even though self-perceived reading was rated relatively the highest, meaning the teachers can read nearly everything with ease, although it is still slower for them to read in English than in Amharic; they occasionally may encounter some unfamiliar words. The other skills (speaking, listening, and writing) mean score values do not show significant differences according to the descriptions. The average score of the respondents illustrates that their perceived English language proficiency skills in speaking, writing and listening approximately high intermediate. That is the teachers can effortlessly express themselves at near normal speed. Occasionally, they have to slow down when expressing complex ideas and less-common expressions in speaking skills. In writing skills, the participants have enough vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to write English with relative ease; however, they occasionally make some noticeable mistakes in grammar and vocabulary. On the other hand, they can understand most of what is said (all main points and most details) when the conversation is at a near normal speed in listening skills. Therefore it could be concluded that the teachers have no difficulty in using the language in all domains though they need continuous trainings to reach the level to use the language fluently and accurately.

Furthermore, English language teachers' teaching experience and gender were analyzed to see whether there is a variation or not in their reported perceived English language proficiency levels. They are shown in following tables 5 and 6.

As can be seen from table 5 below, the overall self-perceived proficiency of males is 4.26, above from high intermediate, while female rate their proficiency at 3.95, which is closer to high intermediate level. Even though male teachers rated their proficiency levels higher than females in all the domains, it did not show that much significant difference.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of self-perceived proficiency in relation to gender

Gender		Speaking	Reading	Listening	Writing	Overall mean
Male	Mean	4.02	4.77	4.23	4.02	4.26
	N	26	26	26	26	
	Std. Deviation	1.136	1.088	1.002	1.015	
Female	Mean	3.63	4.35	3.85	3.96	3.95
	N	24	24	24	24	
	Std. Deviation	.981	1.264	1.068	1.103	
Total	Mean	3.83	4.57	4.05	3.99	4.11
	N	50	50	50	50	
	Std. Deviation	1.072	1.182	1.041	1.047	

The descriptive statistics below in table 4.5 shows that the teachers with 11-15 years of teaching experience have the highest self-assessment for English language proficiency in all domains, 4.58, above low advanced level, which describe that the teachers have good command of English. However, teachers with 11-15 years of experience rated their perceived proficiency level in the four domains 3.35, closer to mid intermediate level, designates that these teachers can use simple language even though they have difficulties.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of self-perceived proficiency in relation to teaching experience

Teaching experience	Speaking	Reading	Listening	Writing	Overall mean	
1-5	Mean	3.80	4.33	3.87	4.27	4.06
	N	15	15	15	15	
	Std. Deviation	.922	1.332	1.217	.998	
6-10	Mean	3.85	4.68	4.29	3.79	4.15
	N	17	17	17	17	
	Std. Deviation	.931	.999	.686	1.047	
11-15	Mean	3.07	4.21	3.14	3.00	3.35
	N	7	7	7	7	
	Std. Deviation	1.239	1.410	1.180	.957	
16 +	Mean	4.32	4.95	4.50	4.55	4.58
	N	11	11	11	11	
	Std. Deviation	1.210	1.106	.837	.688	
Total	Mean	3.83	4.57	4.05	3.99	4.11
	N	50	50	50	50	
	Std. Deviation	1.072	1.182	1.041	1.047	

Pearson correlation was also conducted to observe the relationship of teaching experience and gender in relation to perceived English language proficiency skills. It was also observed the relationship between the skills.

As can be seen from table 4.6 below, it is observed that there is a significant relationship between speaking and reading (Cor. 0.589, $p < 0.05$); speaking and writing (Cor. 0.635, $p < 0.05$); listening and reading (Cor. 0.639, $p < 0.05$); listening and writing (Cor.0.501, $p < 0.05$) and speaking and listening (Cor. 0.707, $p < 0.05$). The correlation reveals the relation between

productive with productive or productive with receptive skills or vice versa have positive relationships. It indicates that the language skills have some association between them. It means they have positive relationship. However, the table value shows that gender has no relationship with English language proficiency skills, meaning it indicates that they have no positive or negative association between them.

Table 6: Pearson correlation on gender in relation to self-perceived language proficiency in speaking, rearing, writing and listening

		Gender	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.186	-.177	-.029	-.183
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.197	.218	.840	.205
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	-.186	1	.589**	.635**	.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.197		.000	.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Reading	Pearson Correlation	-.177	.589**	1	.495**	.639**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.218	.000		.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Writing	Pearson Correlation	-.029	.635**	.495**	1	.501**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.840	.000	.000		.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Listening	Pearson Correlation	-.183	.707**	.639**	.501**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.205	.000	.000	.000	
	N	50	50	50	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7: Pearson correlation on teaching experience in relation to self-perceived language proficiency in speaking, reading, writing and listening

		Experienc e	Speaking	Reading	Listenin g	Writing
Experienc e	Pearson Correlation	1	.099	.146	.110	.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.492	.312	.448	.892
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	.099	1	.589**	.707**	.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.492		.000	.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Reading	Pearson Correlation	.146	.589**	1	.639**	.495**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.312	.000		.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Listening	Pearson Correlation	.110	.707**	.639**	1	.501**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.448	.000	.000		.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Writing	Pearson Correlation	.020	.635**	.495**	.501**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.892	.000	.000	.000	
	N	50	50	50	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation table 8 above indicates that there is no relationship between teaching experience and self-perceived English language skills, meaning it does not show positive or negative association between them.

Results of Qualitative Data

This study was conducted by collecting information from three groups of participants aiming to answer the research questions. English teachers, trainers and principals were participated for qualitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The themes identified are put based on the data collected from the participants' survey results about primary EFL in-service teachers' continuous professional development needs, practices, and challenges.

The interview data were collected from the trainers (T1, T2, T3 and T4), principals (P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5), and English teachers (E1, E2, E3, and E4). All the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The transcribed data were analyzed thematically as Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) described thematic analysis gives flexibility, relatively easy and quick method to learn, and do. It can usefully summarize key features of a large body of data. It can also highlight similarities and differences across the data set. Besides it can generate unanticipated insights and allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data. The themes were identified by subsequent readings of the transcripts. The following themes developed from the transcripts. The results of the qualitative data were analyzed here by discussing the themes emerged from the interview and supported by presenting quotes of the verbatim

English Language Teachers' Interview

Four English language teachers were interviewed to get information about their professional renewal needs and the hindrances they have in their teaching learning context. The teachers were coded as E1, E2, E3 and E4. In the following part, the interview results were analyzed thematically.

Professional Development Needs

In Ethiopia English language is a foreign language. There is no context to develop the language outside classroom so that English language teachers are required to be proficient to fill the context gap and deliver the content so as to make teaching-learning successful. Hence, proficiency in foreign language is mandatory at least to the threshold level and this could be possible if the teachers are involved consistently in an ongoing professional development activities. The respondents stressed in developing the macro language skills in addition to other skills. They spoke of the need of trainings in speaking, writing, listening. and reading skills.

English teachers spoke of developing their English language productive and receptive skills. Representative of the teachers regarding the skills E1 said as “my professional development needs as a language teacher is to improve my English language skills such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. So my needs are to be fluent and accurate English language speaker. So improving these skills ...major macro skills are my needs off development”. In addition to the macro skills they spoke to develop their pedagogic knowledge. English teachers spoke of the challenges they face in their professional development movement.

The following words the teachers describe that unavailability of technology impedes their ongoing professional development. For instance, the participants spoke as: “there is no sufficient material to teach or develop my skills” (E2); “there is no wi-fi/ internet in the school” (E3) and

“there is no room for listening, listening lab” (E4). Here the teachers perceive the access of the mentioned technological materials help to enhance their career.

Collegial challenge was mentioned by the participants that hinders their ongoing professional development. The quotes taken from E1 and E2 explain the teachers’ view. “Practically there is no helping one another (E1) and “no one contributes to my professional development in the school” (E2). Besides, E1 expressed his dissatisfaction of colleagues. “There is a discouragement from others when speaking English” (E1).

Teacher interviewees believe that institutional obstacles have impact in their career renewal process. The challenges are expressed in the following way. E2 and E1 and E3 spoke the unavailability of training in the school. “There is no skill development program in our school” (E2); “very little support from the school” (E1) and “there is no opportunity in the school, it is institutional problem (E3); and E4 confirmed the over burden activities in the school. “There are so many unnecessary activities, overload work for teachers” (E4).

Teacher participants proved that policy impacts their professional development. Their accounts are as follows: E1 and E3 expressed complain of low salary for teaching profession. “Regarding the salary as compared to other civil servants low paid job (E1) and “there is no incentives, less salary so I hate of the profession, and consider as a transition (E3)”. E4 spoke the training time limit. “Summer program time is very short” (E4). E3 and E1 told the policy’s inherent problem for training English language teachers. “The policy has problem for teaching English (E3); and “No exceptional training for English teachers (E1).

The participants also mentioned their concern of contextual challenges that obstructs their professional development. For instance, E3 told that “The main problem for English teachers is we do not use the language outside” (E3). Similarly E4 proved the verbatim in the following way. “There is no experience sharing outside or in the school” (E4).

Hence it could be generalized from the participants’ words is that context, technology, colleague, policy, and institutions have great impacts for their professional renewal activities.

Trainers’ Interview

Trainers were asked about their in-service trainees’ professional development needs. They expressed their concern of primary EFL teachers’ English language proficiency.

Language proficiency needs

The trainers pointed out that their in-service English language teachers' deteriorated language proficiency expressing their views piteously. They mentioned the teachers' language inefficiency in writing and speaking in a distressed way. In relation to this T1 said: "...language proficiency extremely poor ... students coming from schools their ability of proficiency extremely weak... They are not able to express themselves in speaking or in writing". In the same vein, T2 expressed his dissatisfaction in the following verbatim.

"...majority of the trainees ..of course are not that much proficient ...it is a major challenge. The majority of the students are not that much proficient...of course there are exceptional students but their number is not very counted. The vast majority of the student community... be it speaking or writing mainly. When you come to writing, they are not interested. I am so sorry. It is a pity."

In the same vein T3 indicated that the in-service trainees inefficiency in English language as: "...our students learning in the summer program are very poor in their language proficiency..."

The qualitative data collected from trainers demonstrate that primary English language teachers' proficiency deficit in macro skills particularly in productive skills which is basic to deliver contents in the classroom. Proficiency in the language is indispensable not only to communicate with the students but also to enhance quality of education to meet societal expectations as it is the goal of teaching-learning process. The trainees' language proficiency needs are speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills. The interviewees stressed on the mentioned macro skills even though vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation are mandatory for language teachers. This result contradicts to what the teachers rated their perceived proficiency levels. Hence it could be said that the teachers are at high necessity of English language proficiency.

Challenges

Teachers' continuous professional development is a lifelong process as long as teachers are in the teaching -learning process. Teaching and developing oneself might not always go smoothly throughout the career. There are various challenges that hamper teachers not to be professionally competent. The trainer participants described the obstacles in the following ways. T1 for example viewed as:

“they do not have any interest at all in the teaching profession because it is the reflection of the society. Even though when we consider people joining the teaching profession, it may not full fill their basic needs. Hence any candidate who is joining the profession may not have interest at all. Then those individuals who scored low grades in ESLCE join teaching profession”.

The trainer verbatim demonstrates that most teachers join teaching because they have on option of other fields, so they join the profession without interest. They do not want to be experts in the area but just for survival and a bridge to other professions.

In a comparable view T2 mentioned the trainees’ professional challenges as follows. “many of our students are not that much able enough performing well, they simply come to class for the sake of doing that so from this we can understand is that really there is no genuine effort from the part of the student community to work harder and to get the benefit and then bold on their knowledge. They do not do it.”

Furthermore, T2 expressed the teachers’ professional development challenges are not only trainees’ interest but also the education system in the country.

“In fact we can’t 100% say that the challenge is from the students at the same time it is systemic. There is a problem from the system, there is a problem from the teachers’ side, there is a problem from community side, and there is a problem from the learners’ side”.

T3 also viewed the trainees’ ongoing professional development impediments in his assumption as: “I think most of them are not interested in the teaching profession. They have joined this profession because they have no other choice for living. They joined as a transition just for getting income because most of them have poor background”.

From the above data it could be said that the professional development challenges for EFL in-service teachers emanate from various sources. They could be personal, policy, institutional and financial obstacles. Personal challenges can come from individuals’ interest, motivation, and background. Majority of the teachers joined the profession as a transition because they scored low grades in ESLCE. They take it as a last option for the sake of benefit.

Policy challenges are the other point mentioned by the trainers. The new education policy describes teaching English language as a subject starting from grade 1, and as a medium of instruction for secondary and tertiary levels. This couldn’t solve the problems. Selection of candidates for teaching profession is also the result of the education policy. It is obvious that policy has positive impact on teachers’ continuous professional development success if it is

designed to prove the success of education quality. However, the policy seems to target for political reports of success stories in a pad rather than taking practical measures in the implementation process. These interferences either retard or destruct the accomplishment process. Majority of the trainees' living standard is not encouraging and leading a desperate life, so their interest is degraded.

Community Challenges

Continuous professional development challenges are various types as mentioned earlier; instructors and society contribute their part for incompetency of English language teachers. Instructors play vital role in differentiating the trainees' deficiency during training and could exert their effort to help the teachers to amend the challenges; however, the trainers' low devotion, individual differences and motivation contribute a lot for complicating the situations. Besides, the reflection of the society is not heartening. It seems abandoned sort of profession.

Principals' Interview

Five principals' (P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5) were interviewed and analyzed to compliment the teachers' survey responses. As mentioned in chapter three, I conducted the principals' interview in Amharic adopted a rough translation rather than word-for-word translation because I was faithful to the spirit of the originals rather than translating everything closely. Here I used the translation of the interview in quotes.

The principals expressed that their English language teachers' need all sided training which repair their deficiency. It should focus on language proficiency which include reading, speaking, listening, and writing in addition to teaching methods. In line with this idea P1 spoke as "most of the time it is observed that teachers use their vernacular language to teach English...when we examine this these teachers do have problems in using appropriate words to speak, and grammar etc."

The principals spoke about their English language teachers' standard in a piteous way. It might be the challenges they observed from experiences. P2 expressed as "...deficiency in English language extremely high. It is below the standard, and it is discouraging".

Similarly P3 described his belief of the teachers' difficulties in using the language as follows. "As to me English language teachers have challenges in speaking skills because most of the time these teachers are using Amharic in the classroom as a result the students develop this habit... sometimes I think teachers face problems in understanding their students' English language skill". The other participant P1 told indirectly the parents' complaint as "there are complaints from the parents when they see their children English subject results". On the other

hand one the interviewee (P4) explained about the language teachers training that “if I have been given opportunity to prepare training, I design deficiency based training and focus on speaking and writing in addition to grammar”. In the same vein (P2) expressed what the focus of trainings for English language teacher should be as “the trainings in school is very important but should include English language teachers because the problem in this area is high. English language trainings should focus primarily to develop their language proficiency instead of teaching methods”.

The principals also mentioned various causes to the constraints. One is the contextual limitation in which English in our country is a foreign language, and the only option is classroom even that can also be sometimes switched to mother tongue. Regarding the unavailability of context, P1 spoke that “English language is a foreign language; there is no other opportunity except classroom to share ideas, to use in daily activities and develop the language”. Similarly P5 told the limitation that affect teachers that “As English language is a foreign language, teachers are not effective due to the limited access”.

The policy implementation has also great influence on the teachers. The other is teachers’ educational background. For instance, P3 described how trainings are provided. “Most of the time the trainings are top-down by the government, but I think it should be subject specific”. It influences the quality of teachers because many are selected for teaching profession from low scored students in grade 10 or 12. These candidates seem to have no interest in the career. In line with this P1 expressed his view about teachers’ idleness as: “teachers are not doing anything except daily routine school activities. They do not even have experience of reading and updating their knowledge. Many teachers have problems in expressing their ideas using the language”. P2 also expressed his concern of teachers’ interest about school trainings and their career selection as follows. “Teachers do not have interest in school CPD because they perceive it as political instead of professional improvement...when candidates are selected from low scored students from grade 10 or 12.” Similarly P4 and P5 told that “I do not think all teachers join teaching profession in their choice because they leave after certain times. (P4)” and “majority of the teachers join teaching profession as a transition (P5)”.

The training system is also questionable, and some teachers are recruited for political consumption. P1 pointed his assumption of the training policy as: “there is a problem in the training system and policy”. In the same attitude P4 spoke about the failure of quality of teaching and teachers’ selection in the following words. “It is observed that the quality of teaching is deteriorating, the government should find ways for the area to join candidates in their interest.... I have feeling of selection criteria for teaching profession because it has impacts on their motivation”. On the other hand, P2 expressed teachers’ main interest in trainings.

“Teachers participate in summer program for salary improvement. Their interest is not to update or upgrade the profession” P5 also viewed as: “I believe that the teachers’ interest comes first. The other thing is the incentives have values. Teachers are forced to participate in professional development activities”. The evaluation system in the training colleges focuses on continuous assessment to reduce attrition rate. In line with this P2 spoke his observation of continuous assessment in training institutions. “In the college the trainees are assessed continuously and given points without assessing their ability which has negative impacts on the teaching –learning process”

In sum the principals expressed their concern of EFL teachers’ current levels of language proficiency skills. They discussed that the deteriorated quality of the teachers productive and receptive skills. The causes could be top-down selection criteria, short period of time, lack of sustainable and insufficient (few) trainings, lack of specific opportunity for EFL teachers, absence of government focus and educational background of teachers. Furthermore, low teachers’ salary and benefits, teachers’ motivation and interest have their own impacts.

Discussion

The present study explored primary EFL teachers’ ongoing professional development needs, practices, and challenges. It has also assessed the teachers’ perceived English language proficiency levels in speaking, writing, listening, and reading. In the following part, I present discussion of the results.

In what areas of teaching-learning do in-service EFL teachers need professional development?

To examine the teachers’ professional development needs, the 23 items analysis identified the teachers’ professional development needs. The survey participants strongly agreed that they need to have English language proficiency skills and literature knowledge. Majority of the teachers strongly agreed that they need training to develop their speaking ability. It is also observed that the mean (4.56) for English language proficiency indicating several of primary English language teachers’ high interest to develop their ability in basic language skills. Richards (2017) illustrated competency in English language teaching draws on content or subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, and the ability to teach in English. This skill is usually viewed as influenced by the teacher’s language proficiency. The other productive skill, about writing need, is also agreed by many respondents in the survey. Similarly the participants chose agreement about training in receptive skills - listening and reading. More importantly the survey results show how much primary EFL teachers’ need English language proficiency to teach students successfully. The results support Getachew, Eba and Zeleke’s (2019) study about primary EFL teachers’ professional development needs. Their findings indicate that the teachers’ need

professional development in speaking, writing, grammar skills and vocabularies. Similarly, Yan and He's (2015) findings in the Chinese EFL teachers group verify the present research results. They found that the teachers' high development needs in spoken English competence and methodology. Effective professional development should be understood as a job-embedded commitment that teachers make in order to further the purposes of the profession while addressing their own particular needs. Teacher success stories are living theories of educational quality and should be shared with the wider educational community for the benefit of all involved (Maggoli, 2004). Similarly, Safaie, et al (2014) argued that for English language teachers to claim to be really qualified and professional for the great task of ELT, the only choice is equipping themselves with subject matter and pedagogic knowledge. To achieve this, attention needs to be given to the processes of professional development and other factors that enhance such development. Besides, PD is needed for second language teachers to help their students develop proficiency in the target language and an understanding of the cultures associated with that language (Maggioli, 2003).

Trainees' and principals' interview results are also corroborated that the teachers' extreme deficiencies in macro skills which call for immediate remedy. This makes known trainings for language teachers should focus on these skills. The teachers' verbatim also revealed their need in the productive and receptive skills. The principals and teachers spoke that trainings in the school should address specifically English language teachers as they need to communicate and deliver the subject matter to students. Literature indicates that foreign language teachers need to have subject matter knowledge- which has a number of components. These include knowledge of second language acquisition theory, pedagogical knowledge, curricular and syllabus knowledge, cultural knowledge, as well as teachers' proficiency in the target language and an awareness of the structure and features of the target language (Richards et al., 2017). Butler's (2004) case study finding on Korea, Taiwan, and Japan elementary school teachers suggested that levels of English proficiency necessary for teaching elementary English should be identified in accordance with appropriate guidelines for English proficiency development in the specific context of the elementary English teaching. Hence, the data shown that teachers are not part of decision makers rather they accept the limited in-service program provided by the government to upgrade or update their levels. This process only allows teachers to involve in the development without identifying their immediate needs.

What are challenges that hinder in-service EFL teachers' ongoing professional development?

The participants were asked about EFL teachers' impediments for their ongoing professional development. The survey responses indicate that majority of the teachers agreed that lack of incentives during and after training hinders their progress in professional development.

No serious efforts seemed to be taken in the schools. It is not rewarding for their work or life. The interviews from the trainers also revealed that teachers are leading a desperate life because of the rising cost of life so that they need compensation from trainings but it is not as such encouraging. They also lack interest in the teaching profession and therefore the teachers aspire another option. The results corroborate Herzallah's (2011) study in Gaza primary EFL teachers. He found that money and financial issues are the main self-directed professional development obstacles. Professional development in the service of implementation may obscure questions related to purpose and may mask the internal contradictions and tensions within and across improvement initiatives (Little (1993). The interview results from the teachers, principals and trainers not only corroborated the survey results but also provided useful information about EFL teachers' ongoing professional development hindrances.

Teachers' interview depicted that they are learning other field by any means to change their field. They are also overloaded by routine school activities rather than focusing on improving the teachers' life and knowledge (basic language skills). The principals and the trainees spoke that most teachers joined teaching profession as a last resort. They were not able to join colleges or learn other fields because of their low grades in the national exams. The results supports Eyasu,etal. (2017) and Workneh and Tasew's (2013) study that explains the pre-service teachers are screened and get trained from students who cannot learn preparatory classes. Therefore, the teachers are not enthusiastically working in the profession rather find short ways to lead their life. The trainees' words also portrayed that the dissatisfaction of teachers' preparation for teaching English.

What are the self-perceived language proficiency levels of primary school EFL teachers in reading, listening, writing, and speaking?

From the survey results it is observed that the average value of the teachers' English language proficiency in speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills. It can be seen from the table the mean average of speaking is 3.83, and with a median score of 4. This information is a representative of a high intermediate proficiency rating for the sample, meaning the teachers can smoothly express themselves "at near normal speed but may have to slow down when expressing complex ideas and less-common small expressions" (Butler, 2004). It is also indicated in the table, the teachers' rating about the other productive skill, writing proficiency, which is very difficult skill to master has a median value of 4, and average mean of 3.99 which corresponds to the description people at this level have sufficient vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to write in English with a relative ease though sometimes they make some noticeable mistakes in grammar and vocabulary.

Reading is a receptive skill which is important to understand and comprehend texts. The mean for reading is 4.57, and a median score of 5, demonstrates the participants have mid advanced reading proficiency (Butler, 2004). This means the teachers can read nearly everything with ease, although it is still slower for them to read in English than in Amharic when they encounter some unfamiliar words and expressions. The descriptive analysis of the other receptive skill, listening, has a median of 4 and mean of 4.05 which explains that people at this level have high intermediate skills. The teachers can understand most of what is said (all main points and most details) when the conversation is at a near normal speed” (Butler 2004). The findings depict that the teachers have high intermediate level of language proficiency which means they have good command of English which contradicts the trainers and principals interview results. On the whole the results support Wulyani’s (2017) finding that Indonesian EFL teachers tended to overestimate their own overall English language proficiency. However, the results contrasts Getachew, Eba and Zeleke’s (2019) study which shows that primary school EFL teachers did not perform the minimum requirements which were expected from them to be English language teachers. Similarly, Dereje’s (2012) findings reveal that primary EFL teachers’ English language proficiency and English teaching skills are weak. Therefore, in the present study the teachers’ rated perceived English language proficiency results contrast with the articulations of the trainers and principals. The interviewees strongly expressed that the teachers have high deficiency in English language skills. Research findings in Ethiopia about primary EFL teachers’ language proficiency and teaching skills do not also verify the results of the teachers’ rated self-perceived English language proficiency (Dereje, 2014; Dereje, 2012; Hughes, et al. 2006; and Negash, 2006).

Summary

The ultimate goal of CPD is students’ success by equipping teachers’ with subject matter and pedagogic knowledge. Even though majority of the teachers show their interest to engage in professional development activities, they seem to have no interest in the teaching profession. Zein (2017) discussed that “comprehensive professional development needs analysis occurs when relevant aspects of both profile and professional needs of teachers are seen as concomitantly related to each other within the professional environment in which the teachers operate” (p.307). On the other hand the findings illustrate that these teachers need English language proficiency. The professional development opportunities provided by the government have no teacher control over aspects such as contents (topics), time schedules and procedures. However, literature depicts that EFL teachers need suitable training and resources within realizable time frame to be able to use English as both the medium and target of instruction (Richards, 2017). Professional renewal is connected to teacher’s knowledge of self, students, school, and social context. The data from the participants seemed to show that these teachers do

not practice and reflect. They also do not have access and their own effort to gain new knowledge, experiment and practice in or outside their classroom.

Villegas-Reimers (2003) explains that the opportunities of teachers' participation in the PD have a significant impact on teachers' beliefs and practices; on students' learning; and on the implementation of educational reforms in addition to maintaining personal satisfaction and economic benefits. The existing knowledge for these teachers is gained through their teacher education program (as they are foreign language speakers) they attended. The teachers could not express their right decisions. The development of teachers' knowledge should be understood and supported in relation to teachers' experience and the way that they respond to their work contexts.

Richards and Farrell (2005) explained teacher development serves as a longer-term goal and growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers. It is directed to attain teacher's personal and institutional goals. Therefore, it is observed from the results that teachers have no agency in their learning process. They are not taking ownership of their professional learning activities. Professional developments activities are organized for teachers by external bodies without considering their contextual needs. Such programs might not be successful as the teachers do have different personal, academic and contextual needs.

Findings

This study aimed to investigate primary EFL teachers' continuous professional development needs, practices, and challenges. It also assessed the teachers' current perceived English language proficiency in macro skills. It employed mixed methods design approach through collecting data using questionnaires, interviews, and field notes.

Every profession needs its own quality to transpire things go in the right direction and reach the intended goal. It is also clear that teaching profession seeks careful delivery of knowledge and skills that could bring about behavioral and attitudinal changes in the learners. Day (1999) argued that the insufficiency of being only qualified teachers for professionalism over a career span; but the inevitability of regularly updating subject matter knowledge, teaching methods and skills. Besides the teachers are required to adjust to current changes in technology and respond to challenges coming from students.

All English language teachers should have adequate skills of the English language skills and awareness that match the cycles and grade levels they teach in schools so that they can help learners to achieve the intended proficiency of the English language (MoE, 2013). The findings from the participants' view stressed that primary in-service English language teachers' need to

be proficient in basic language skills. Therefore, the respondents proved that they need to develop their English language proficiency skills, subject matter, pedagogic and pedagogic content knowledge.

Concerning the professional development experiences, the respondents approved the scarcity of the activities. The limited opportunities are summer upgrading and pedagogic engagement. The findings of the study also revealed that teachers' professional developments are organized in a top-down approach. They are not tailored specifically for the teachers but seem to maintain the system norms.

It is observed from the results that desperate teachers (except very few) showing no sign of interest to develop themselves in the teaching profession. The study revealed that majority of the teachers did not get effective institutional professional development activities. On the other hand the findings showed the teachers did not participate in self-directed ongoing practice because of financial problem. The results revealed that the most challenge for the teachers' ongoing development is financial.

Regarding self-perceived language proficiency, it was found contrasting results. The teachers rated their proficiency level high intermediate. It implies that the teachers have good command of English language. However, the survey results about professional development needs proved the teachers need to develop their English language proficiency skills. Similarly, the trainers and principals interview revealed that majority of the teachers were at risk in English language proficiency skills.

Furthermore it was found that there was relationship between gender and language proficiency. Similarly, it revealed the results that there was no association between teaching experiences and perceived English language proficiency. The findings also showed that there were positive relationships between English language skills

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