Practicum as the Center of Teachers' Education Curriculum: Its Implications   for Quality of Teachers' Professionalism in Selected Colleges of Teachers Education in Ethiopia.

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research was to assess the successes and challenges of practicum program and its implications for quality of teachers' professionalism in Bule-Hora and Fitche College of teachers' education. Mixed research design with convergent parallel mixed method was employed. Availability, simple random, stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 52 tutors, 65 mentors and 189 mentees respectively. Two vice-academic deans and 2 practicum coordinators of CTEs' and 26 principals were also selected by using purposive and simple random sampling techniques respectively. Questionnaires, interview, observation and document analyses were the tools used to collect data. To analyze the quantitative data, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used. The findings of the study revealed that though the awareness of stakeholders on the practices of practicum were hopeful; there were different challenges due to shortage of duration, assigning large number of mentees to a single school and a single mentor too. Although it requires special cares and considerations, repeated feedbacks were not given to mentees by mentors and tutors. Although practicum is the heart of teaching-learning process to integrate theoretical-based pedagogy to practical-based pedagogy, it was perceived as additional program. The analyses of students' portfolios indicated that their attempts to write and express their ideas were encouraging though they had challenges. Even though the lines of communication between linkage schools and colleges of teachers' education were strong at institutional levels, there were gaps at the stakeholders' levels these scenarios are the missing links in the renovation from knowledge acquisition to knowledge utilization in the process of teaching profession development.
Key Words: Curriculum, pedagogy, practicum and profession

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Teaching profession just like any other profession calls for the professional knowledge, professional skills and professional practice (Aggarwal,2004).Similarly, teachers' training emphasizes on basic knowledge, professional codes of ethics, methodologies and practical trainings(ETP, 1994). Teachers' professionalism develops around the quality of teachers' knowledge and work. It corresponds with the idea of curriculum knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Recent investigations suggest that epistemological beliefs can provide a basis for understanding what and how knowledge is used in the context of a teacher's professional practice (Brownlee, 2000). Epistemological beliefs appear to influence the choices and decisions a teacher makes in the classroom, including teaching methods, class management and learning focus (Chan & Elliot, 2000). Brownlee (2001) further found that student- teachers holding sophisticated epistemological beliefs were more reflective about their own thinking and were more likely to employ teaching practices that helped children construct their own meanings.

In the Ethiopian case, planning and executing the lesson is the work of the teacher; professionalism on teachers designing is related to the ideas of reflective practitioners. In light of this, Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) remind us; our understanding of reflective practice can be realized through assessing knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. In light of this, Aggarwal (2002) describes that teacher education reflects the knowledge, skills and ability which are relevant to the life of "Teacher as a teacher" by justifying the noble nature of teaching profession. This has been associated with architecture that design and give it civil engineer in planning, acting and teaching are simultaneously done by the teacher himself/herself under normal phenomenon.

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│ Environment   │   │ Training Policy   │
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│ Knowledge of Students   │   │ Pedagogical Knowledge   │
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│ Knowledge of the Curriculum│   │ Knowledge of Subject   │
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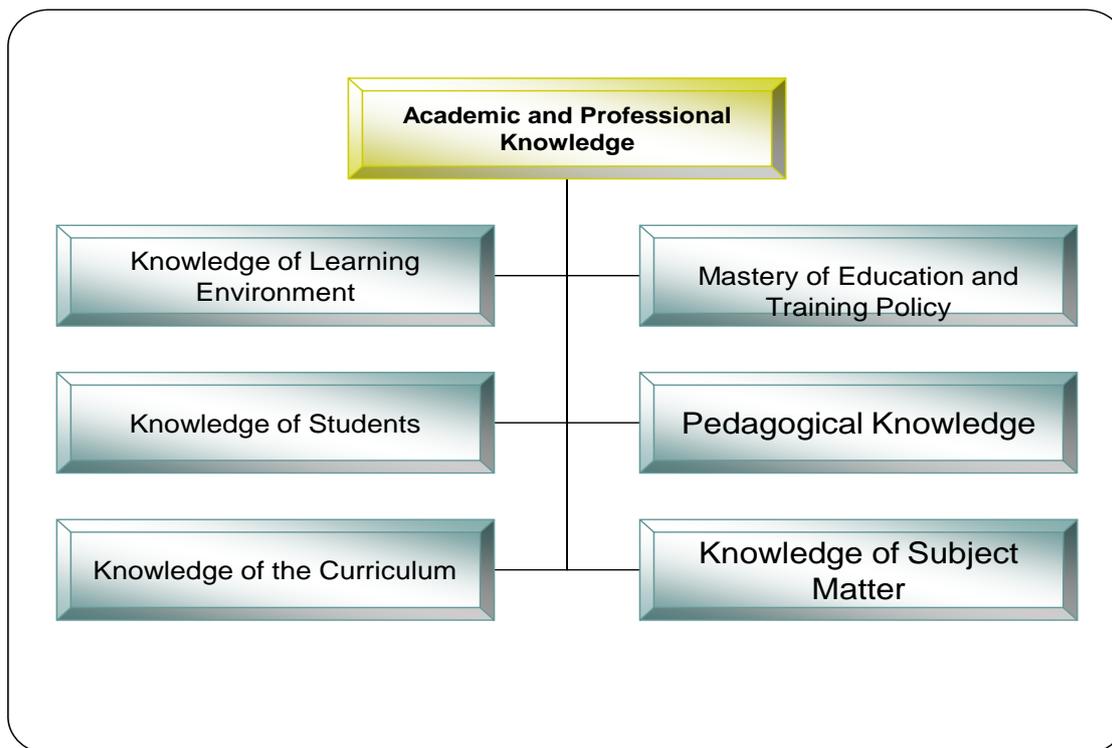
Fig 1: Teachers '   Professional Development Model

It is already known that since 1970's on wards a paradigm shift in education has been taken place in teachers' education program throughout the world. As a result, students' practicum has shifted from direct imitation of already designated skills to further investigation through observation, peer teaching, micro-teaching, and reflection and action research. In practicum, the student- teachers develop understandings of the routines in the teaching profession and self-initiation and sustainable development of skills to get reliable information for their own decision. Strengthening this, Hailom (1997) describes that practicum enables student- teachers to possibly engage themselves in open-reflection and self- appraisal mechanisms. Moreover, Orenstein (2004) points out that the need to practicum is to make education relevant to life, to integrate the theoretical based pedagogy to practical based pedagogy, to make knowledge of teaching futile apart from practice for being it reduces student-teachers anxiety about teaching, to have student teachers background knowledge about real school, to make teachers as collaborator of learners and societies and for other functions of practicum.

Practicum is a professional program which prepare individual to join the teaching profession; learning about teaching from near the beginning of their training and fulfilling the demand of their job, becoming a professional teacher requires building on knowledge gained from colleges of teachers education to be tested through school practice (Ghaye and Renwick,1998). Likely, it is an occasion for learning about teaching and teachers work rather than a performance of routine set of skills and competencies (Fish, 1998). This remarks that definitions of practicum revolve around teachers' professional program by pointing towards improvements of the student-teachers. Similarly, TESO (2003) states practicum as the center of teachers' professional development program. Its purpose is not only to ensure teachers ability in putting learning skills of teaching into practice but also to give background knowledge about realities of existing schools (ICDR, 1999). This indicates that it is the most important aspect of pre-service teacher education which enables students to share experience of the realities of school life and classroom. In attempt to improve and further develop the teacher education system, the Ethiopian ministry of education has conducted a number of assessments at national level (MOE: 2002, 2006, and 2008). A nation-wide study conducted in 2002 on the quality and effectiveness of teacher education in Ethiopia showed the urgent need to bring about a paradigm shift in the teacher education system of the country particularly improving weak pre-service training techniques and absence of continuous professional development opportunities for the teachers and teacher educators were the serious concern.

Practicum as the new paradigm shift from direct peer teaching to constructivist approach of experiential teaching is the most expensive part of initial training because of the cost of travel, subsistence, supervision and assessment (Lewin,2004). This is true when the number of students is large and great, a lot of tutors' time may be allocated to supervise and assessment of students' performances. Mistrusted relationship of students with mentors and tutors, workload and lack of communication on the side of tutors and mentors are the

big challenges of practicum. The mentors, the tutors, the school and the students and others need to have a potential contribution for effective implementation of practicum. Every of the partner are essential but school should have a leading impact on the responsibility (Williams, 1994). In light of this, Hartly (2005) also emphasizes that learning of students should be through collaboration and interdependence with mutual and strong relation but not in isolation. With this respect to this, Shumet (2006) and Hailu (2006) point out that creating proper linkage among the teacher education institutions and the school is crucial for effective implementation of the program. This indicates that the linkage has many advantages for effective implementation of practicum program. Supervisors (tutors and mentors) are encountered in evaluation of student performance, the need to rate the performance of students using standardized format is essential. An assessment of the practicum should be seen as an ongoing development of process, which student teachers receive feedback on their strength and the areas that they need to develop (MoE,2003). This shows that it should be practiced by placement -teachers and teacher-educators according to the practicum guide line.

In Ethiopian context, the histories of teacher education institutes are characterized by focusing on the theoretical knowledge which lacks one of the basic components of teachers' education in the profession. As TESO (2003) indicates, before the implementation of practicum in its present condition, there was teaching training program which was theoretical base with a minimum teaching practice (i.e. for one month). In this teaching practice, there was very little involvement of student-teachers in the actual practice to develop the skills and to acquire basic knowledge about the real environment. Because of this, it was criticized that the excess theory with insufficient practice as irrelevant for teachers development program. Following the drawbacks of the previous teaching practice, the reform emphasizes on shifting of the more theoretical-based training to practicum was undertaken. In Ethiopia, practicum program has been practical as part of the 10+3 pre-service teachers education program after TESO has been drafted as guideline document. Therefore, Colleges of teachers' education are implementing practicum programs following the in-out-in approach. Therefore, to carry out this study the following conceptual frameworks were used to maintain the quality of teachers professionalism by implementing practicum as the center of curriculum.
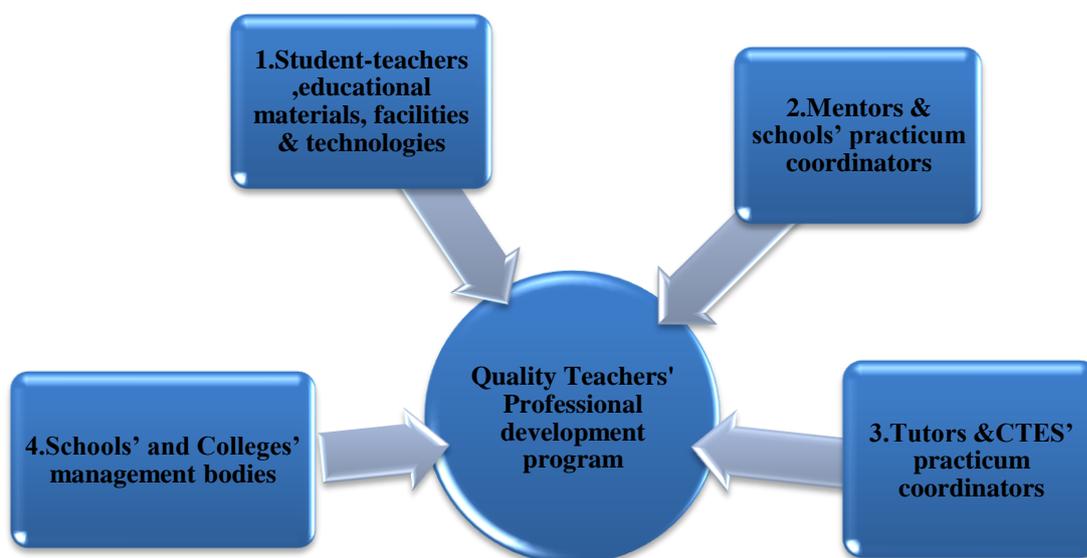
Fig 2: Conceptual Frame work

1.2. Statement of the Problem

From the researcher's long experiences of teaching in HEIs and serving as tutors and coordinators of practicum programs in College of education, in this noble profession, practicum is the best instrument which helps students to comprehend, analyze, reflect and evaluate what are going on in the schools' environment. Despite of the fact that knowledge on the subject matter and professional studies in the colleges of teachers' education alone are not enough for teachers to become effective frontline implementers of the curriculum, the implementation of practicum with respect to the pre-service teachers' education is necessarily required. The

implementation of practicum is characterized by lack of conceptual clarity among major implementers, poor organizations in teachers' education program, schools and poor program structuring (MOE, 2011). Practicum as one of indispensable activities in pre-service teachers professional development, there is a need to give attention on matters of value of what is to be done which helps for the attainment of instructional skills, attitudes and knowledge for student-teachers' future professional development.

MOE (2003, 2007) stated that mentors and tutors have given special responsibilities which need to implement practicum program in colleges of teachers' education. Handal and Perlauvas (1987) and Williams (1994) consider mentors as constructivist and reflective practitioners. However, in our case, there is a problem on mentor's selection. Likely, the tutors do not properly assist the students by giving continuous supervision and evaluation due to the teaching load given parallel to practicum. Student-teachers also lack with heart initiation commitment to build their capacity through manipulation and doing. A study conducted by Shumet (2006) focuses on reflective approach to teacher education but does not fully address the practices and challenges in Colleges of teachers' education and their linkage schools with respect to teachers' professional development. Therefore, studies carried out by (Shumet, 2006; Hailu, 2006; Hailom,1997;MoE 2003,2006, 2008 and 2011) had laid foundations but had not pointed out the challenges and practices of practicum in line to qualities of teachers' professional development program. Hence, as far as the researcher observed therefore, no research has been comprehensively conducted on the successes and challenges of practicum   to avoid professional dilemmas through developing professional practices. Therefore, based on the above substantial information, his professional knowledge and experiences, the researcher was initiated to investigate practicum as the center of teachers' education curriculum and its implications for qualities of teachers' professionalism in College of teachers' education.

1.3. Objectives of the Study
 In order to address the stated problems, the following specific objectives were raised. These are:
1.   To assess the successes and challenges of practicum in advance of teachers' professional development.
2.   To evaluate the efforts of students to be reflective practitioners in order to develop teaching profession.
3.   To scrutinize the competences of different   practitioners in the implementation of practicum program to the acceptable quality standards.
4.   To seek out the echelon to which practicum programs are implemented effectively.

1.4. Research Questions
Based on the stated objectives, the following research questions were raised to be answered. These are:
1. What are the successes and challenges of practicum programs in selected CTE?
2. To what extent are mentors and tutors guide and coach students towards teaching profession?
3. To what extent are teacher candidates competent enough to participate in teaching processes, developing & reflecting their portfolios?
4. What does the relationships between CTE and their linkage schools look-like?

1.5. Delimitations of the Study
The major assumption of this work was to investigate the practices of practicum programs in selected colleges of teachers' education   and its contribution for qualities of teachers' professionalism. The research has been more meaning full if it was conducted in all CTE in Oromia Regional State. However, constraints of time and financial resources forced the researcher to delimit the scope of this research only to Bule-Hora and Fitche College of Teachers Education. On the other hand, the study focused only on the practices and challenges of practicum program as the center of teachers education   and its implications for qualities of teachers' professionalism only into CTE and their linkage primary schools had not addressed the successes and challenges of this program country wise.

II.   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY
2.1. The Research Method
Mixed research design with convergent parallel mixed method was employed to get enough information about the successes and challenges of practicum as center of teachers' education curriculum and its implications for qualities of teachers' professionalism in selected CTE in Oromia Regional State. This method was selected because it is helpful to show situations as they currently exist (Anderson,1990).

2.2. Sources of Data
Both primary and secondary sources of data were used to get adequate information about the practices and challenges of practicum in selected Colleges of teachers' education and their linkage primary schools to develop teaching profession.

2.3. Samples and Sampling Techniques

The sample size of each target population was determined based on the logic which says "the ideal sample size of a target population is large enough to serve as an adequate representative and small enough to be selected economically in terms of both time and complexity of analysis "(Best and Kahn, 1989). The sample size was determined by **$n=N/1+N (e)^2$.** Where: e = the level of precision with plus or minus 5%, n=sample, N=Total population, at 95% confidence level and P=0.05 for categorical level for an alpha level (Yamane, 1967).

Table 1: Target Population and Samples of the Study

S/N	Participants	Population	Samples
1	Tutors(teacher - educators)	52	52
2	Mentors(cooperating teachers)	130	65
3	Students	746	189
4	Vice -Academic Deans	2	2
5	CTEs' practicum coordinators	2	2
6	Principals	52	26
		984	**336**

A total of 336 respondents were selected as samples of the study by using different sampling techniques from total of 984 target population of selected Colleges of teachers' education and their linkage schools. Accordingly, 52 tutors and 65 mentors were selected by using availability and simple random sampling techniques respectively on the bases of their relevance to give genuine information about the successes and challenges of practicum. Moreover, 189 students were selected from 746 students by using stratified random sampling techniques through categorizing them into groups according to their departments. And, then at least 30% of each category was taken as samples of the study by using lottery method. Two vice-academic deans, two practicum coordinators of the CTE and 26 principals from 52 principals were selected by using purposive and simple random sampling techniques respectively   based on the fact that they are directly involved in planning, supervising and evaluating the implementation of practicum programs.

2.4. Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used to gather data were questionnaires, observation and document analysis. Regarding this, Creswell (2013) states that employing multiple data collecting instruments help the researcher to combine strengthens and amends some of the inadequacies and for the triangulation of data. Hence, in this study, questionnaires were the main data gathering instruments while observation and document analysis were used to enrich the data obtained from questionnaires.

2.5. Procedures of Data Collection

Before the actual data collection was carried out, instruments were checked by language instructors and a pilot test was conducted on none sample schools. The collected data were calculated by using Chronbach alpha and resulted in reliability coefficients 0.848, 0.885 and 0.832 for tutors, mentors and students respectively. Based on comments of language instructors and the calculated figures, clarifications and modifications were made on few items of questionnaires.

2.6. Data Management and Analysis

The data collected through questionnaires were tallied, counted, tabulated and analyzed by using appropriate statistical tools. Besides, the data obtained through observation and document analysis were organized and narrated qualitatively. The data obtained through questionnaires were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics (percentage, average mean and grand mean and one-way-ANOVA).

III. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

3.1. The Profiles of Respondents

Table 2: The Profiles of Respondents

No	Variables	Characteristics	Tutors N	Tutors %	Mentors N	Mentors %	Students N	Students %	Total N	Total %
1	Sex	Male	51	96	36	50	113	60	200	65
		Female	1	4	29	50	76	40	106	35
		Total	52	100	65	100	189	100	306	100
2	Qualification	MED/MA	42	77					42	26
		BED/BA	10	23	10	8			20	13
		Diploma			42	70			42	46
		TTI			13	22			13	15
		Total	52	100	65	100			117	100
		Students					189	100	189	100
		Total	52	100	65	100	189	100	306	100
3	Work Experiences	1-5			12	8			6	8
		6-10	10	23	20	34			23	30
		11-15	20	42	13	20			21	28
		16-25	22	35	20	22			20	26
		Total	52	100	65	100			76	100

Item1 of Table 2 shows that 96% of tutors, 50% mentors and   60% students were males whereas 14% of tutors, 50% mentors and 40% of students were females. Therefore, there was low participation of females compared to their male counter parts. Likely, item 2 of the same Table reflects that 97% of tutors were Diploma whereas 23% of tutors   were 1st degree holders. Similarly, 8% of mentors were BA/BED, 70% were Diploma whereas 22% of mentors were Certificate holders. The educational qualifications of few tutors, and some school teachers were below the minimum standard. The 3rd item of Table 2 reflects that 8% of respondents have 1-5 years teaching   experiences, 30% respondents have 6-10 years teaching experiences. 28% and 27% of respondents have 11-16 and 16-20 years teaching experiences. This shows that respondents possessed enough teaching experiences to respond to questionnaires.

Table 3: Colleges of Teachers' Education Duties and Responsibilities

No	Items	Tutors M₁	Mentors M₂	Students M₃	GM	F-Value	Sig
1	Establishes practicum coordinator units	2.93	2.93	3.02	2.96	5.95	0.017
2	Organizes time tables with partner schools	2.87	2.74	2.58	2.73		
3	Organizes transport and accommodation	3.02	3.00	3.22	3.08		
4	Creates assessment criteria for observation	3.08	3.22	3.23	3.17		
5	Monitors and evaluates comments	2.90	2.89	2.69	2.83		
6	Supports partner schools	2.87	2.83	2.85	2.85		
7	Ensures enough resource materials	2.88	2.80	2.93	2.87		
8	Allocates sufficient funds	2.12	2.23	2.85	2.40		
9	Organizes and conducts training sessions, workshop	2.85	3.23	2.68	2.92		
10	Identifies and disseminates good practices	2.93	3.04	2.97	2.98		

As it can be seen from Table 3 item 1, the computed   grand mean value of responses of tutors, mentors and students was2.96which lie below the ideal mean. This indicates that the colleges of teachers' education under investigation established practicum coordinator unit at Colleges of teachers' education levels but not at schools' levels. Likewise, item 2 shows that the grand mean of responses of respondents was2.73 for tutors, mentors and students. It lies below the ideal mean. This indicates that the Colleges of teachers' education do not organize time tables with partner schools. Unlikely, item 3 of Table 3 points out that the grand mean value of

responses ofrespondentswas3.08. It was greater than the ideal mean which indicates that respondents have favorable feelings on transport and accommodation.

Likely, item 4 of the same Table   depicts that the computed grand mean of responses of respondents was 3.17. This depicts that it was   competent enough to create assessment criteria for observation and assessment. The colleges of teachers' education have weaknesses to monitor and evaluate comments. The support of partner schools, ensuring enough resource materials, allocation of sufficient funds, organizing and conducting training sessions, conference and disseminating good practices were rated the grand means   2.85, 2.87,2.40,2.92 and 2.98 by tutors, mentors and students respectively. All grand means lies below the ideal mean. To check the significance at F-value 5.95 whose significance value 0.017 is lesson than the alpha value P=0.05.This shows that there is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

Table 4: The Linkage Schools' Duties and Responsibilities

No	Items	Tutors	Mentors	Students	GM	F-Value	Sig
		M_1	M_2	M_3			
11	Assign practicum coordinators and mentors on merit	2.60	2.84	2.68	2.71	7.70	0.098
12	Principals make inbuilt supervision to update teachers skills	2.93	2.77	2.88	2.86		
13	Organize time table for practicum with the college of teachers education	3.03	2.61	2.84	2.83		
14	Assign students to proper mentors	2.63	2.47	2.65	2.58		
15	Monitor student experiences in relation to school environment	2.99	3.13	3.03	3.05		
16	Monitor successful implementation of practicum	3.10	3.29	3.04	3.14		
17	Monitor students' assessment and evaluation	2.43	2.64	2.88	2.65		

Item 11 of Table 4 shows that the responses of respondents were rated the   grand mean of 2.71 which lies below the ideal mean value. This indicates that practicum coordinator and mentors were not assigned based on merit. Likely, item 12 depicts that the rated grand mean of responses of   respondents was 2.86 which lies below the ideal mean. This shows that principals had not given pay attention to make inbuilt supervision   to update teachers' skills. Item13 of Table 4 shows that the computed grand mean (2.83)   lies below the ideal mean. This shows that partner schools had not organized time table for practicum with CTE. In a similar manner, in Table 4 item 14 depicts that the computed grand mean value of respondents was 2.58.This indicates that the partner schools were failed to assign students to proper mentors. Similarly, item 15 remarks that the partner schools have good tendency to monitor students' experiences in relation to schools. The computed grand mean (3.05) lies above the ideal mean. Item 16 of the same Table indicates that the efforts of partner schools on successful implementation of practicum was rated a grand mean value of 3.14. Lastly, item 17of the same table was rated a grand mean (2.65)which lies below the ideal mean. This shows that partner schools have challenges to monitor students' assessment and evaluation. The significance level at F-value at 7.00 whose significance value 0.098 is lesson than the alpha value P=0.05.This underlines that there is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

Table 5: Teacher-Educators'/ Tutors' Duties and Responsibilities

No	Items	Tutors	Mentors	Students	GM	F-value	Sig
		M_1	M_2	M_3			
18	Make aware about the purpose of practicum	3.07	3.02	3.15	3.08	4.96	0.028
19	Support, monitor and evaluate students properly	3.28	3.00	3.11	3.13		
20	Assess students' performance according the criteria set	2.93	2.64	2.54	2.70		
21	Give constructive oral and written feedbacks.	2.63	2.61	2.62	2.62		
22	Organize supervisory conferences	2.24	2.48	2.48	2.40		

Item 18 of Table 5 shows tutors, mentors and students have expressed their feelings whether or not tutors make students aware about the purpose of practicum. The computed grand mean of their responses was found to be 3.08 which are above the ideal mean indicating that students had awareness on purposes of the practicum. Item 19 of Table5 shows that the tutors had supported monitored and evaluated students' performances properly. This was confirmed by the grand mean values of their responses (3.13) which lie above the ideal mean. on the other hand, tutors faced challenges to assess students performances exactly according to the criteria set. The grand mean value of responses of respondents was 2.70 which lie below the ideal mean. Similarly, item 21 of the same table indicated that tutors have challenges in giving oral and written feedbacks immediately after Likely, item 22 of the same Table shows that tutors was challenged to organize supervisory conferences with mentors and students at the beginning and the end of the program. The rated mean value (2.40)   lies below the ideal mean value. To check the significance at F-value 4.96 whose significance value 0.028 is less than the alpha value P=0.05.This shows that there is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

Table 6: The Roles of School Teachers/Mentors

No	Items	Tutors M$_1$	Mentors M$_2$	Students M$_3$	GM	F-Value	Sig
23	Critically observe students activities and provide feedbacks and constructive criticisms	2.85	3.09	2.76	2.79	9.75	0.084
24	Inducing students into the rules and norms of the schools	3.03	3.07	3.05	3.05		
25	Assist in planning and implementation of educational visits and co-curricular activities	2.60	2.78	2.88	2.75		
26	Give career advice and discuss students' progress with supervisors	2.87	2.56	3.03	2.82		
27	Provide opportunities for students to talk over his/her planning, target setting and action planning	2.47	2.69	2.93	2.70		

In Table 6 ,item 23 shows that mentor have limitation with respect to critically observing students' activities and to provide feedbacks and constructive criticisms on their skills. The computed grand mean (2.79) lies below the ideal mean value. Item 24 of the same Table shows that mentors were inducing students into the rules and norms of the schools which were assured by the rated grand mean (3.05). Unlikely, item 25 remarks that school-teachers attempt to assist student-teachers in planning and implementing educational visits and co-curricular activities was not encouraging. The rated grand mean value of responses of respondents was 2.75 which are below the ideal mean. Similarly, item 26 of the same Table indicates that mentors were not inquisitive to give career advice and discuss students' progress with tutors/supervisors. The grand mean (2.82) which lies below the ideal mean. Finally, item 27 shows that mentors were careless to provide opportunities for students to talk over his/her work. To check the significance at F-value 9.75 whose significance value 0.038 is lesson than the alpha value P=0.05.There is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

Table 7: Responsibilities and Duties of Student-Teachers

No	Item	Tutors M$_1$	Mentors M$_2$	Students M$_3$	GM	F-Value	Sig
28	Attend all the actual school experiences, peer reflection sessions and supervisory conferences	3.41	3.35	3.67	3.48	2.38	0.129
29	Participate in the curricular & co-curricular activities and reflect on his /her experiences	3.10	3.14	3.01	3.09		
30	Carefully develop & reflect their portfolios	2.75	2.65	2.85	2.75		

| 31 | Act and behave in accordance with the school rules and regulations | 3.52 | 2.84 | 3.02 | 3.13 | | |

Item 28 of Table 7 indicates that students were capable in attending all the actual school experience lessons, peer reflection sessions and supervisory conferences. This was assured by the rated grand mean(3.48).Likewise, item 29 of the same Table underlines that students were participating in the schools' curricular and co-curricular activities and reflect on his/her experiences. The grand mean value (3.09) which lies above the ideal mean value. Item 30 of the same Table shows students have weaknesses in preparing self-portfolio. The grand mean (2.75) which lies below the ideal mean. Item 31 of the same Table also describes that students were acting and behaving in accordance with the schools' rules and regulations. To check the significance at t-value 2.38 whose significance value 0.129 is greater than the alpha value P=0.05.There is significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

Table 8:The Duties of Colleges of Teachers' Education Practicum Coordinators

No	Items	Tutors	Mentors	Students	GM	F-Value	Sig
		M_1	M_2	M_3			
32	Organize the placement of students in the schools	3.04	3.28	3.22	3.18	1.92	0.115
33	Monitoring school experiences on behalf of the CTEs	2.87	3.07	2.88			
34	Ensuring assessment document of each students	3.43	2.98	3.09	3.17		
35	Organizing meetings and workshops to strengthen partnership b/n the CTEs & schools	2.90	2.82	3.02	2.91		
36	Following up supervisory conferences between students and tutors	3.06	2.88	2.88	2.94		

Item **32** show that the rated grand mean of responses of respondents was 3.21. This shows that respondents have favorable feelings on practices of practicum coordinator in light of organizing the placement of students in the schools. Similarly, items 33 of the same Table confirms that the computed grand mean(2.88) lies below the ideal mean which shows that practicum coordinators were not effective in monitoring the school experiences on behalf of the colleges of teachers education. Likely, item 34 of the same Table reflects that practicum coordinators try to ensure the final assessment document of each student- teacher at the end of the program. The rated grand mean (3.17) lies above the ideal mean. Unlikely, item 35 and 36 of the same Table indicate that practicum coordinator's efforts to organize meetings and workshops to strengthen partnership between the colleges of teachers' education and partner schools and follow up supervisory conferences between students and tutors were not encouraging to ensure an implementation of the program. The grand mean of item 35 and 36 were 2.91 and 2.94 respectively. To check the significance at F-value 1.92 whose significance value 0.115 is greater than the alpha value P=0.05.This indicates that there are significant differences between the opinions of respondents.

Table 9: The Roles and Duties of Linkage Schools' Practicum Coordinators

No	Items	Tutors	Mentors	Students	GM	F-value	Sig
		M_1	M_2	M_3			
37	Organizing and overseeing the placement and arrangements for students in the school	3.04	3.56	3.21	3.27	6.48	0.009
38	Inducing and familiarizing students to the school environment	3.61	3.84	3.11	3.52		
39	Organizing and attend conferences and seminars that involve students and mentors	2.60	2.72	2.28	2.91		

Item 37 of Table 9 indicates that school practicum coordinators were capable in organizing and overseeing the placement and arrangements for student-teachers in the school though some schools lack

practicum coordinator. This was confirmed by the computed grand mean (3.27) which is greater than the ideal mean. Likewise, item 38 of the same Table underlines that school practicum coordinators were effectively engaged in inducing and familiarizing students to the school environment. The grand mean (3.52) which lie above the ideal mean value. Item 39 of the same Table shows that school practicum coordinators have failures of organizing conferences and seminars that involve students and mentors at the school level. The grand mean value of responses was 2.91 which lie below the ideal mean. To check the significance at F-value 6.48 whose significance value 0.009 is lesson than the alpha value P=0.05.There is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents.

3.2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS
Based on analyses of the data, the following major findings were obtained. These are:
1. The educational qualification and work experiences of tutors, practicum coordinators, and mentors were satisfactory to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate practicum programs in the schools.
2. The finding of the study shows that the main bottlenecks on the implementation of practicum program in the colleges of teachers education were directly associated with lack of in heart initiation of different stakeholders on the practices of practicum program .
3. The finding of the study points out that there were lack of structured and planned communication system on planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating practicum program due to weak communication system among stakeholders of Colleges of teachers' education and their linkage schools(at F-value 5.95 whose significance value 0.017 is lesson than the alpha value P=0.05).This shows thatthere is no significant difference between the opinions of the three categories of respondents)
4. The selection of mentors was not merit, experience, subject matter and pedagogical knowledge, and qualification based. In some schools, certificate, newly employed and pedagogically untrained public teachers were assigned to coach and guide students. This hindered proper implementation of practicum program (at F-value 4.96 whose significance value 0.028 < P=0.05).This shows that there is no significant differences between the opinions of the three categories of respondents.
5. Even though the physical settings of the schools environment were conducive to undertake practicum program, lack of educational facilities and technologies, transport, and large number of mentees assigned to a single mentor were found to be the major problems to implement practicum program (at F-value 7.00 whose significance value 0.098 < P=0.05).This underlines that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the three categories of respondents.
6. The majority of linkage schools have no school practicum coordinator due to teachers turn over. This resulted in poor organization of conferences and seminars that involve students and overseeing the experiences of students in the schools' atmosphere (at F-value 6.48 whose significance value 0.009<P=0.05).There is no significant difference between the opinions of the three categories of respondents.
7. The CTE practicum coordinators are unable to make timely and repeated supervisory conferences at the beginning and at the end of independent teaching among students, college supervisors and cooperating teachers due to teaching loads, lack of budgets etc. To check the significance (at F-value 1.92 whose significance value 0.115>P=0.05).This indicates that there are significant differences between the opinions of the three categories of respondents
8. The findings of the study indicate that assessment and evaluation of practicum program were highly exaggerated and uniform and unable to rank students effectiveness (knowledge, skills and abilities).
9. Though mentors and tutors were working enthusiastically to make students reflective practitioners, their workloads and facilities did not allow them to give continuous support to students (at F-value 9.75 whose significance value 0.014<P=0.05).There is no significant difference between the opinions of the three categories of respondents.
10. The findings of the study mirrored out that even though the Colleges of teachers' education ran un timely trainings on awareness creation and taking supportive feed backs with respect to the program, they were not consent to solve problems encountered in the practicum milieu (at F-value 9.75 whose significance value 0.038< P=0.05).There is no significant difference between the opinions of the three categories of respondents.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Qualification of the tutors, mentors and mentees, principals and practicum coordinators were matched with the required minimum standard set by MoE. So that it is possible to implement practicum program programs properly. On one hand, many linkage primary schools have qualified and experienced teachers. On the other hand, they have some fresh and pedagogically untrained ones to run the program effectively. Besides, large numbers of mentees were assigned to mentors and tutors who confronted them to

capacitate students in all rounded pedagogical knowledge. Besides, the findings of the study also mirrored out that although the reflection practices of students were encouraging, carelessness in internalizing constructive criticism and feedbacks, fear to speaking out, and shyness behaviors   were observed on some student-teachers. The analyses of students' portfolios also indicated that their attempts to write and express their ideas were encouraging even though they had challenges like spelling errors, grammar, flow of ideas and sentence construction. An attempt to undertake supervisory conference given at the beginning of the program and supportive feedbacks taken at the end of the program were not timely and consistent to qualify teaching profession of the candidates.

Although the lines of communication between linkage schools and the CTE were strong at institutional levels, linkage schools' practicum coordinators, CTE practicum coordinators, tutors, mentors and principals were not cordially working together on planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the program. Similarly, assessments and evaluation were carried out by mentors were almost similar for each student. These circumstances directly affected an implementation of practicum program and revolves   dilemma on teaching profession.

Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations were forwarded to alleviate the challenges recognized amid to the colleges of teachers' education and their linkage primary schools.

1.The educational qualifications of the majority of tutors, practicum coordinators   and some mentors fit to the required minimum standard. However, certificate, newly employed and pedagogically untrained public teachers should require further experience sharing training and upgrading at least to diploma level.

2. Capacity building trainings should be given to different parties by the Colleges of teachers' education, principals and practicum coordinators to develop their commitment and sense of belongingness to implement practicum program and to avoid professional dilemma.

3. Having structural and timely feedbacks from stakeholders on each program of practicum is instrumental. So that practicum coordinators and colleges of teachers' education management had better arrange supervisory conferences at the beginning and the end of the program.

4. Ministry of education, REB, ZEB and WEO should provide necessary guide lines, timely information and consistent support to stakeholders on implementation of practicum.

5. The selection of mentor   should be carried out based on merit, qualifications, experiences subject matter and pedagogical knowledge.

6. Schools and CTE had better select practicum coordinators to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the overall program to prevent professional confusion.

7. Assessment and evaluation of practicum programs should be carried out according to the knowledge, abilities and skills of students from the school environment.

8. Teacher educators, school teachers, colleges of teachers' education and schools' practicum coordinators, and students should device supervisory conferences to avoid certain confusion and challenges with respect to implementation of practicum program.

9. Mentors and tutors ought to work enthusiastically to make students reflective practitioners through developing mutual communication mechanisms on career advice to prevent professional dilemma through increasing sense of professionalism in mentees.

10. Administration of the colleges of teachers' education   in collaboration with schools' principals should establish school practicum coordinators in all schools in order to organize and overseeing the experiences of students in the schools' atmosphere.

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