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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBSTACLES

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Abstract
The goal of this study was to investigate the needs for and barriers to the ongoing professional development of elementary school English language teachers. Data collection techniques included surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Surveys of 64 randomly chosen English language teachers in primary schools were used to get the quantitative data. In order to verify the information gathered from the surveys, interviews were done with principals, trainers, and volunteer English language teachers who took part in the surveys, which included surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Surveys of 64 randomly chosen English language teachers in primary schools were used to get the quantitative data. In order to verify the information gathered from the surveys, interviews were done with principals, trainers, and volunteer English language teachers who took part in the surveys. The data were analyzed using a Quan-qual approach. The statistical analysis of the data was primarily concerned with calculating descriptive statistics, specifically the means and percentages of the survey items. The results revealed that primary school EFL teachers need in-service professional development training to improve their English language proficiency skills and pedagogic knowledge. The interviews with principals and trainers supported the results found in the surveys. Moreover, the teachers encountered obstacles in engaging in a continuous professional advancement scheme.

Keyword: continuous professional development, EFL teachers, needs, obstacles

Introduction
Teachers' attitudes, objectives, and motives are significantly influenced by their ongoing professional growth. Villegas-Reimers (2003) indicates that teachers' opportunities for professional development have a substantial impact on their beliefs and behaviors. In-service training procedures must be given priority in order to accomplish this. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), teachers' professional development is a long-term objective and a growth area for their knowledge of teaching and of themselves as instructors. It aims to meet teachers' individual objectives as well as organizational objectives.

Ethiopian EFL teachers must participate in ongoing professional development programs. This will help them keep up with the rapidly changing fields of knowledge, science, and technology. To be able to teach successfully, non-native English teachers must have attained a certain level of competency in the target language (Richards, 2011). This signals that English language teachers need to have the ability to use the language fluently and accurately, along with their knowledge of the subject and skills in delivering their lessons. However, scholars such as Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that Ethiopian English learners and teachers have neither the opportunity nor a realistic purpose for "target language use," which nevertheless is one of the fundamental preconditions for language proficiency development. Understanding the situation, the Ministry makes it clear that an English language teacher should be aware that practically all Ethiopian pupils learn English in a hostile atmosphere that does not help their language acquisition. Teachers must do this by establishing situations in the classroom that promote language usage and practice (MoE 2013) and giving appropriate feedback towards improved or adjusted methodologies. Distinguishing the situation, English language teachers should create a conducive learning environment through their mastery of English language skills, pedagogy, and subject matter knowledge because mastery enables students to effectively learn and practice the target language skills. To better meet the needs of students and provide a successful education, teachers must participate in ongoing professional development trainings (Cumming, 2011; Tomlinson, 2004).

English language teachers have more obvious needs for professional development. The Ministry of Education considered ongoing PD for in-service teachers as a career-long process of improving teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward the local context, particularly classroom practice. To sustain the program, it was envisioned that all schools would implement a school-based (need-based) CPD program specific to content and subject matter methodology (MoE, 2008). However, scholars such as Valladares and Roux (2014) have criticized the practice as being largely removed from the realities of the classroom. Teachers return to their old habits after completing the courses since the approaches and strategies have lost their relevance. The in-service professional development (PD) programs in our nation, according to Eba (2011), are generic and unsustainable, and Heugh et al. (2007) noted that in addition to strong evidence about teachers' lack of English proficiency, the causes were a lack of adequate training. Eyasu et al. (2017) further pointed out that many teachers do not join the teaching profession willingly because of its low level of pay and low infrastructure as compared to other professions. This can have a great impact not only on English language teachers but also on the quality of education. But as Bailey (2001) noted, teachers cannot be forced to grow. They must be prepared to make that decision. Research findings also indicate the same, as mentioned earlier (Eba, 2010; Heuge et al., 2007; and Eyasu et al., 2017). Therefore, based on the review of the relevant literature and the researcher's observations and insights, this study intends to answer the following questions:

1. What are the obstacles that primary English language teachers face during their professional development training or in-service training program?

2. What are the professional development needs of primary English language teachers?

Literature Review

Assessment of teachers' needs for professional development

The need assessment is essential to identifying the teachers' professional development gaps because in-service teachers may have a variety of needs that must be met by participating in ongoing professional development programs. Information is gathered in a particular educational setting. As a result, determining the specific needs of teachers allow them to actively participate in the process of updating and upgrading their knowledge. It's possible that not all EFL teachers share the same expertise in teaching the target language. Thus, it is essential to identify the teachers' actual requirements in order to carry out in-service professional development activities effectively. The idea of need is viewed in the following way by academics: The measured difference or gap between two conditions—the "what should be" or desired status of an entity and the "what is" or its existing state—is what Altschuld (2004) defines as "need" as a word. Similarly, Watkins et al. (2012) write that ″describe needs are simply the differences between your current achievements and your desired accomplishments" (p. 21). Thus, needs most commonly represent discrepancies between one's ambitions and the results of one's current performances. In the same way, needs can signify an accumulation of success when current achievements surpass the desired accomplishments, thereby possibly suggesting an excess of resources going toward the results.

It is also an essential phase to weigh EFL teachers' necessities (subject matter, pedagogic, and language proficiency related) in designing and implementing in-service training activities because need assessment is the process of identifying needs, prioritizing them, using the information obtained to make needs-based decisions, allocating resources, and implementing actions within organizations to resolve problems underlying high-priority needs (Altschuld, 2004). According to Richards and Nunan (1994), needs analysis serves many purposes in English language teaching. It can be used to define and set up goals, objectives, and content for programs. It can also provide information for reviewing and evaluating already-existing programs. Need analysis offers a way to get a larger input into the content, design, and implementation of language programs. As a result, researchers (Jafari & Mahadi, 2013) advise against using certain teaching techniques and methods. They must be creative and come up with effective teaching strategies that work for them. It implies that educators must be flexible and cautious enough to employ a variety of pedagogical strategies. Their professional demands must first be satisfied in order to accomplish this.

Obstacles to continued professional growth

Teachers must be inspired to participate in professional development in order for it to be successful. If obstacles are thoroughly recognized and removed, this is feasible. The difficulties may be administrative, personal, or institutional. Day (1999) argues that professional development cannot be imposed; rather, it is the teacher who actively develops rather than the teacher who is passively developed. The author also makes it

clear that externalized change is likely to be superficial, token, and transient. Resistance will occur if the teachers feel that the professional development activities are useless. Little (1993) also discussed challenging issues with the creation of professional development plans. The first of them is the extreme complexity of the reform tasks being suggested, together with the relative lack of tried-and-true ideas and policies, and, as a result, the propensity to use early-stage experiments as models. The third issue is the mismatch between the need for reform and the prevalent professional development paradigms, lack of support for an inquiry and problem-solving paradigm based on knowledge generation due to the dominance of a training paradigm based on knowledge consumption.

Finally, a problem with the social arrangement of teachers' labor in schools is the relative neglect of teachers' opportunities to learn during the paid workday and work year and their participation in a wider professional community. The author stated obstacles to professional development include mismatching training needs with policy and assurance criteria, failing to provide opportunities for teachers to work, and other issues. Little (2003) draws the conclusion that PD success won't also be effective if it fails to create and preserve political will because people and institutions will eventually depend on it.

In general, Eyasu et al. (2017) and Workneh and Tasew (2013) discovered that pre-service teachers are screened and trained by students who are unable to learn in preparatory classes, resulting in teachers who are not actively working in the teaching profession and instead seeking quick ways to live their lives. Additionally, it is impractical to hire a large number of teachers with diverse requirements because in-service training for EFL teachers in Ethiopia is offered using a top-down, predesigned strategy that expects all participants to participate in the same program.

Method

The study was conducted based on a pragmatic mixed-methods design. Pragmatic schools of thought know that knowledge is a philosophical view that arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions. Mixed methods open the door for the researcher to use multiple methods, different world views, and different assumptions. (Creswell, 2003).

Samples were selected randomly from the Addis Ababa city administration and Akaki sub-city primary school English language teachers. A non-probability sampling strategy was used for quantitative data and a random sampling strategy for qualitative data. Six of the 25 total primary schools in Akaki were randomly selected. Ethiopian EFL teachers' in-service continuous professional development programs were examined in order to produce the items discussed in this study. A questionnaire and interview were employed to collect data for the study. Self-designed questionnaires (Appendix A) were prepared to examine teachers' needs and difficulties in their teaching-learning context.

A pilot study has been conducted to check the appropriateness of the design and procedures that will be followed in the main study. The samples for the pilot study were purposively chosen from five primary schools' English teachers in one primary school.

It was conducted with similar samples as the main research for both quantitative and qualitative designs.

Findings and Discussion

Quantitative Results

Table 1 shows the responses of teachers regarding their needs for ongoing professional development.

Table 1. EFL teachers' Professional development needs

	N	Mean	Frequency (%)			Std.
			Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Deviation
Develop my English language proficiency	64	4.38	55 (85.9)	3 (4.7)	6 (9.4)	1.125
Develop my ability to speak in English	64	4.19	54 (84.4)	5 (7.8)	5(7.8)	1.046
Develop my reading ability in English	64	3.91	48 (75)	5 (7.8)	11 (17.2)	1.244
Develop my ability to listen to English	64	4.14	50 (78.1)	6(9.4)	8(12.5)	1.120
Develop my writing ability in English	64	4.05	50(78.1)	7 (10.3)	7(10.3)	1.151
Improve my knowledge of grammar of the English language	64	4.11	51 (77.7)	3 (4.7)	10 15.6	1.174
Develop my ability in pronunciation	64	4.27	52(81.2)	7(10.3)	5(7.8)	1.067
Develop my Knowledge of vocabulary	64	4.09	51(77.7)	6 (9.4)	7(10.3)	1.126
Employ active teaching methods	64	3.98	56 (87.5)	5 (7.8)	3 (4.7)	.753
Have knowledge of the English language teaching methods and techniques	64	4.2	53 (82.8)	7 (10.3)	4 (6.2)	.957
Use course books properly	64	4.11	50 (78.1)	9 (14.1)	5(7.8)	.934
Design writing activities	64	3.97	53 (82.8)	4 (6.25)	7(10.3)	1.076
Prepare reading activities	64	3.94	50(78.1)	5 (7.8)	9(14.1)	1.126
Prepare vocabulary lessons	64	4.05	55(85.9)	5 (7.8)	4 (6.2)	.933
Prepare speaking activities	64	3.95	50 (78.1)	6 (9.4)	8(12.5)	1.126
Design literature lessons	64	3.92	47 (73.4)	9 (14.1)	8(12.5)	1.091
Design listening activities	64	3.91	47 (73.4)	8 (12.5)	9(14.1)	1.186
Prepare students for national exams	64	4.32	53(82.8)	6 (9.4)	5(7.8)	.984
Prepare, quizzes and tests	64	4.09	52 (81.2)	7(10.3)	5(7.8)	.938
Develop my literature knowledge	64	4.17	53 (82.8)	2 (3.1)	9(14.1)	1.054
Develop research skills	64	4.05	50(78.1)	8 (12.5)	16 (25)	1.006
Use technology for teaching	64	4.25	50(78.1)	8 (12.5)	6 (9.4)	.997
Manage classroom	64	4.02	52 (81.2)	5 (7.8)	7(10.3)	1.016

The teachers' demands for ongoing professional development in a variety of competencies were shown by the mean scores in the aforementioned Table 1 (language-related and pedagogic needs). 85.9% of respondents felt that they needed to improve their English language proficiency (4.38), which is crucial for effectively presenting a lesson to pupils, as seen in the table above about the language-related needs of primary school English language teachers. This revealed that the majority of the participating teachers perceived or felt a fundamental need to improve their English language abilities.It is obvious that EFL teachers' proficiency in the target language is crucial to

using it for various communicative purposes. In almost the same way, the participants (84.4%) approved developing their speaking skills (4.19). Similarly, 81.2 percent of the respondents agreed to develop their pronunciation (4.27). The average values of the respondents' responses about developing listening skills (4.14), the structure of the English language (4.11), vocabulary (4.09), writing skills (4.05), and reading skills (3.91) also indicated the teachers' in-service professional development needs in the areas. Therefore, it could be said that the average values clearly revealed the respondents' approval of updating their knowledge of English language skills and coping with the up-to-date movements in language teaching areas.

Participants in the survey expressed their willingness to improve their pedagogical knowledge needs through participation in professional development programs.Therefore, 87.5% of the respondents described themselves as being in need of active teaching methods skills, and 82.8% of them said that they needed to develop their knowledge of English language teaching methods and techniques. In almost a similar way, 78.1% of the participants agreed to improve their ability to make appropriate use of course materials. Thus, it could be deduced that the teachers' agreement to equip them with expertise and knowledge in their lifelong learning

The average values of statements about the teachers' PD needs in designing speaking (3.95), vocabulary (3.92), literature (3.97), writing (3.97), listening (3.91), and reading (3.94) lessons demonstrated that many respondents claimed to have developed pedagogic knowledge, meaning that teaching methods that help to prepare lessons with respect to subject matter content

The majority of respondents and 82.8% and 81.2% of participants agreed that teachers' skills in preparing students for national exams (4.32) and quizzes (4.09) needed to be improved. This indicated that the teachers needed to develop their language testing skills.

Many of the participants also agreed to develop their academic knowledge. Thus, the mean values of the responses to develop literature knowledge were 4.17. Teachers' willingness to arm themselves and adapt to current changes in language teaching and learning domains can be seen in their scores on the research skills (4.05) and use of technology for teaching (4.25) quizzes.

On one pedagogic skill (classroom management), the participants (81.2%) described their agreement as exemplifying that many of the teachers desired to update their skills in administering students while conducting teaching in the classroom.

Therefore, it may be argued that the majority of primary EFL teachers required ongoing training in language competence abilities, teaching methodology, testing, lesson preparation, and classroom management.

Table 2. Professional development obstacles

Items	N	Mean	Frequency (%)			Std. Deviation
			Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Imposition on co- curricular school activities	64	3.05	30(46.9)	6(9.4)	38 (59.4)	1.419

Lack of support from the school	64	3.56	39 (60.9)	8(12.5)	17(25.6)	1.153
Lack of incentives after training	64	4.05	52 (81.2)	5(7.8)	7(10.3)	.983
Lack of incentives during training	64	4.03	49 (76.6)	10 (15.6)	5(7.8)	.959
Insufficient Incentives during training	64	3.83	46 (71.9)	9(14.1)	9(14.1)	1.062
Insufficient incentives after training	64	3.84	48 (75)	5(7.8)	11 (17.2)	1.101
Lack of CPD opportunity in the school	64	2.83	24 (37.5)	11 (17.2)	29 (45.3)	1.254
Unclear CPD selection criteria	64	3.19	32 (50)	6(9.4)	26 (40.6)	1.355
Overloaded classes throughout the year	64	3.73	45 (70.3)	3 (4.7)	16 (25)	1.493
Duration of CPD is not suitable	64	3.8	46 (71.9)	2 (3.1)	16 (25)	1.275
Shortage of school budget	64	3.81	48 (75)	3(4.7)	13 (20.3)	1.220
Lack of colleague motivation	64	3.02	29 (45.3)	9(14.1)	26 (40.1)	1.279
Professional development programs are not need based	64	2.77	18 (28.1)	14 (21.9)	32 (50)	1.205
Impracticality of professional development activities	64	3.64	40 (62.5)	7(10.3)	17(25.6)	1.200
Lack of spare time	64	3.28	24 (37.5)	12 (18.7)	28 (39.1)	1.303
Personal financial problems	64	3.52	36(56.2)	11 (17.2)	17 (26.6)	1.234
Lack of personal motivation	64	3.05	31 (48.4)	4 (6.2)	29 (45.3)	1.090

The descriptive statistics from the above Table 2 revealed that the respondents' significant professional development challenges were institutional. They included a lack of incentives both during and after training (76.6% and 81.2%, respectively). The average means for items 3 (4.05) and 4 (4.03) indicated that teachers' desire to participate in the CPD program appeared to be based more on the benefits they stand to receive than on their level of expertise in the field of English language teaching. In the same way, insufficient incentives after training (75%), a shortage of school budget (75%), insufficient incentives during training (71.9%), the unsuitability of the duration of CPD (71.9%), overloaded classes throughout the year (70.3%), a lack of support from school (60.9%), personal financial problems (56.2%), and unclear CPD selection criteria (50%) revealed the majority of the teachers' obstacles in their in-service ongoing professional development activities. The average mean values ranged from 3.52-4.05, which indicated the participants' agreement with the challenges that discouraged them from engaging in the in-service training schemes. It was also observed that the respondents' consensus was that the imposition of co-curricular activities (46.9%) was their biggest obstacle to ongoing professional development training.

The respondents also agreed to the training obstacles related to lack of interest and spare time. Thus, many of the teachers also agreed that lack of personal motivation (48.4%), lack of colleague motivation (45.3%), and lack of free time (37.5%) seem to be the main barriers preventing teachers from participating in ongoing professional

development activities. The participants described their dissatisfaction with the challenges related to the training contents. The majority (62.5%) of teachers agreed that the impracticality of professional development activities impeded their participation in professional development trainings, and few respondents (28.1%) said that professional development programs were not need-based. Therefore, the statistics in Table 4 showed that the most common challenge that the majority of the participants approved of was related to the institution, which was finance (lack of incentives during and after trainings).

Interviews

Professional development needs

In addition to other talents, the English language teachers emphasized the growth of macro-language abilities. They discussed the importance of speaking, writing, listening, and reading skill development.

The requirements for macro language skills

The teachers discussed improving their speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills. For instance, E2 and E3 comment on the contents of the training activities as they were not prepared specifically to address the English language teachers' target language proficiency needs. It was clear from the excerpts that the teachers expressed a desire to improve their English language proficiency, which can be met through specific (tailored) in-service ongoing professional development schemes. However, the provided training activities lack content in terms of scope and relevance and are rather general.

Teaching skills needs

The respondents' expressions depict a concern over the limited CPD practices in their schools. They tended to accept that the training schemes are conducted as though they are additional activities that do not focus on the EFL teachers' desire to improve their English language proficiency and pedagogic skills. Therefore, the teachers explicitly stated that they need ongoing professional development trainings that specifically satisfy their target language use (English language proficiency) and teaching skills.

Professional development challenges

Teacher interviewees believe that activities that have no direct relation to the teaching of the English language negatively impact their career renewal processes. In relation to this teacher (E3) and (E4), the impediments they expressed were time constraints, overload in classes, materials, overburden in extracurricular activities, and administrative work. They also stated that the inaccessibility of technological materials in the schools contributed a lot to the shortcomings of their career renewal practices.

The teachers also pointed out their grievances with the absence of support and unavailable skill training programs in their schools. All five interviewed English language teachers indicated the unavailability of training in the school:

The respondents' views seem to depict that the schools do not create a conducive environment for EFL teachers to develop their profession. They rather focus on routine activities, which do not give specific opportunities to update the teachers' language proficiency as well as practical knowledge of teaching methods.

Lack of government support

The teachers emphasized a lack of support from their school, and the CPD activities provided by the government are not satisfactory or present. The support they get from school is not encouraging them to update their English language teaching and professional knowledge. The teachers also expressed their feelings about the students' passiveness and background, the contents of prepared professional development activities, and the delivery methods that impeded their engagement in professional schemes. Moreover, they mentioned that the in-service training activities are general and not specific (tailored). As a result, these have a negative impact on teachers who participate in ongoing professional development training programs.

Trainers' Interview

Language proficiency needs

The trainers distressingly conveyed their worry and mentioned that the English language competency of their in-service English language teachers had declined. They described the teachers' inefficiency in writing and speaking skills as distressful. In relation to this, T4 said the teachers under his supervision (trainees) focused on grammar and vocabulary while they were teaching students. It shows that the in-service EFL teachers have difficulties using the target language (English) to deliver lessons in the teaching-learning process.

Similarly, T2 expressed his dissatisfaction that most of the in-service trainees have problems speaking the language. The trainer's description of in-service EFL trainees' English language proficiency is not encouraging. He mentioned that the majority of the trainees have difficulty with productive skills. The teachers even do not show interest in speaking or writing due to their inefficiency in using the target language. However, education and training policy (1994) stated that teachers at all levels of education (from kindergarten to higher education) are required to have the necessary teaching qualifications and competency in the medium of instruction.

The other interviewee (T3) explained that the in-service trainees' poor English language proficiency is caused by a variety of factors. These include the trainees' educational backgrounds, how they entered the teaching profession, and other factors that may be linked to the degrading English language proficiency in the speaking and writing skills of the in-service primary EFL teachers.

Language proficiency is essential for meeting policy requirements, improving the quality of education, and communicating with pupils. Considering that it is the end result of the teaching-learning process, one of the ELT trainers, T1, explained that the in-service trainees were using the vernacular language because of target language proficiency problems: "The trainees are using their mother tongue because their English language proficiency is poor." target language proficiency problems: "The

trainees are using their mother tongue because their English language proficiency is poor." (T1).

The trainers' verbatim evidence shows that English language teachers in elementary schools are lacking in macro abilities, notably in productive skills, which are essential for presenting instructional content in the classroom. Skills in speaking, writing, listening, and reading are required. Although vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are required for language teachers, the ELT trainers focused on the listed macro-abilities.

Obstacles

The trainers identified several professional development challenges for in-service EFL teachers. The most important of which are the teachers' interests and living standards.

Teachers' interest

In English teaching, there are various factors that hamper EL teachers' ability to use the target language. Among the challenges, the trainer participant (T3), for example, viewed one obstacle as the teachers' interest. He claims that the teachers entered the teaching profession not because they wanted to be English teachers, but as a means of transportation. This implies that the teachers' academic background in the high schools is poor or very poor. That is why they could not join other professions. The teaching profession has become the least popular, and therefore the teachers' interest in the career is not rewarding. In other words, T4 also stated that the teachers do not respect their work (they do not have an interest in the teaching profession) and shift their field of study. Thus, the responses demonstrate that most teachers join the teaching profession because they have no other option. They enter the field of work without enthusiasm. They only intend to use it for survival and as a place to stay until they land their ideal profession, not to become specialists in it.

As a result, the explanation provided by the ELT trainers suggests that the country's educational system as well as trainees' interests are barriers to teachers' professional development. It could be deduced from the trainer's opinion that teachers joined the teaching profession just to get a job. This would imply that teachers would not consider remaining in the profession to develop their professional knowledge throughout their career.

Living standards

The trainees mentioned that the teachers' living standards are not as encouraging because of lower payments or unattractive salaries. T3 and T2 said that the teachers' lives are not attractive enough to encourage them to remain in the teaching profession and/or at least develop their teaching profession academically and pedagogically. As a result, low pay rates demotivate teachers because they make it difficult for them to meet their basic needs while also dealing with the ever-increasing cost of living.

To summarize, based on the trainers' verbatim, it could be argued that there are numerous causes for EFL in-service teachers' professional growth challenges.They

may be in the form of financial, institutional, or human barriers. The interest, drive, and educational background of an individual can all be sources of personal challenges. The trainers' verbatim revealed that the majority of the teachers entered the field as a transition since they did not meet the requirements to learn preparatory education. As articulated by the trainer interviewees, the majority of the in-service EFL trainees' living standards are not encouraging, and they lead a desperate life that could degrade the teachers' interest. Therefore, they are looking for other options, and many teachers are learning about other fields.

Principals' Interview

English language proficiency needs

The principals emphasized the necessity for comprehensive training to address the English language deficiencies of the teachers working in their schools. They recommended that the in-service training should put an emphasis on teaching strategies and target language proficiency, which encompasses speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

In line with this idea, P2 pointed out:

(Actually, there are complaints about English language teachers... They do not have an adequate command of English, even if we encourage the teachers to develop their language skills through launching weekly English-speaking days.

The principal interviewee (P3) expounded the problems by explaining the mismatch between the teachers' efficiency and the design of the text book. In this regard, P3 expressed his view on the teachers' difficulties in using the language as follows:

The text books are designed to engage students actively, but the teachers do not teach in a learner-centered way. This may relate to the teachers' teaching ability and poor command of English.

The other participant, P1, also indirectly described the teachers' English language ability as poor. He stated that the teachers are afraid of teaching in the higher grades in the school:

Teachers should teach all grade levels but should avoid teaching students in grades seven and eight. In these grades, they are off-teaching.

The principal's words indicate the primary EFL teachers have problems using the target language (English) to deliver the lessons in the classroom. In contrast, the Ministry of Education (2013) established domains of national standards for English language teachers.That is, teachers need to have professional English language skills and professional knowledge. According to the document, English language teachers who are unable to use the language correctly in speaking and writing as well as who lack the necessary knowledge and awareness of the English language's vocabulary and grammar expectations of them are unable to effectively teach English in schools. In order to help students get the desired level of English language proficiency, all English language teachers should possess sufficient English language skills and knowledge that are appropriate for the cycles and grade levels they teach in classrooms (MoE, 2013).

Professional development challenges

The principals emphasized the contextual restriction that English is a foreign language in our nation and that the sole option is a classroom, even if that option can frequently be swapped for the mother tongue. However, such types of tailor-made opportunities are scarce. Regarding the unavailability of English language teachers' specific training, P2 stated that:

(There is no tailored training for English language teachers but general training on teaching and learning.)

The other participant (P1) pointed out the influence on the design and implementation of training in the school. He described the significance and practices of the school's training as follows:

The in-service training provided at the school is not as good as it could be. The topics to be worked on are selected by the school administration. The teachers are not seriously involved in the training; it is only for reporting.

P1 went on to say the following about teachers' daily routine school activities: "Teachers are only involved in daily routine school activities." They lack even the understanding of how to read for professional development. Several teachers report having difficulty communicating in the English language.

However, P2 also voiced his concern over teachers' enthusiasm for academic preparation and job choice.

(Some teachers use their time in the classroom as a stepping stone to more fulfilling careers in other fields such as science, technology, engineering, and business.)

In the same vein, P3 stated that:

I do not believe that all teachers choose to enter the teaching profession. After a particular amount of time, they left their jobs... It might be connected to their effectiveness and performance, in my opinion. Their recruitment process had its own factors as well. The training schemes provided in schools, according to P4, are "not need-based" because teachers are not planning and participating on the basis of their own gaps.

Similarly, P3 said the following about the standard of instruction and teachers' attendance in the summer program:

(The duration of the summer training program is very short; knowledge gained from experience is greater.)

In the same vein, P2 expressed his views on the in-service summer training:

(When I see the summer program, I think it is not that effective for getting knowledge due to time constraints and overloaded courses.)

The other principal concluded that teachers participate in the program for promotion purposes only. With regard to this, P1 viewed the program as follows: "The teachers attend the summer upgrading program for mere certification and promotion purposes under the guidance of certification."

In conclusion, principals of primary schools in Ethiopia have expressed concern about the level of English language proficiency among EFL teachers. They hypothesized that top-down selection criteria, a short time frame, a lack of sufficient

and sustainable training, and teachers with weak educational backgrounds could all be contributing factors.

Discussion

It was shown that the majority of primary English language instructors (84.9%) had a high desire to improve their proficiency in fundamental language abilities, as indicated by the mean value of 4.38 for English language proficiency need. The discovery is relevant to Richards' (2017) description of the proficiency of English language teachers in language instruction. He made it clear that understanding of the subject matter, teaching techniques, and the capacity to teach and use English are all necessary for competence in teaching English as a second language. This ability is typically seen as being influenced by the teacher's linguistic skills. The findings complement Getachew, Eba, and Zeleke's (2019) study on the professional development requirements for primary EFL teachers. Their findings show that the teachers' speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary skills require professional improvement. According to the literature study, teachers of foreign languages must possess subject-matter expertise, which comprises a variety of components. These include teachers' fluency in the target language and understanding of the target language's structures and qualities, as well as their knowledge of pedagogy, curriculum, and syllabus, cultural knowledge, and second language acquisition theory (Richards et al., 2017). The success of language education relies heavily on the professional development of English language teachers (Baily, Curtis, and Nunan, 2004). Hence, it is found that those in-service primary EFL teachers need specific, tailored training that could help them improve their English language proficiency and pedagogic knowledge.

The survey results showed that the majority of teachers concurred that their progress in professional development activities is hampered by a lack of incentives both during and after training. And it appeared that no significant efforts were being made in the schools to address this issue. Their lives and careers are not rewarded by it. The trainers' interviews also revealed that the teachers are living in extreme poverty as a result of the increased cost of living. As a result, they are uninterested in becoming teachers, which causes the teachers to pursue other careers. The findings support Herzallah's (2011) investigation of elementary EFL teachers in Gaza. He discovered that the primary barriers to professional advancement are money and financial concerns. According to the literature, when carrying out professional development activities, unanswered queries regarding the training's purpose may arise. Additionally, it was noted that these primary EFL teachers' current expertise was acquired through the teacher education program they attended (as they were foreign language speakers). The educators were unable to articulate their wise choices. Reimers (2003) clarifies, however, that in addition to preserving personal fulfillment and financial gains, the chances for teachers to participate in PD have a substantial impact on teachers' attitudes and practices, on students' learning, and on the implementation of educational innovations. It is also suggested that when professional development opportunities are

well-designed, they assist teachers in mastering content, honing their teaching abilities, evaluating their own performance and that of their students, and addressing changes in teaching and learning that are required in the classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important to comprehend and encourage the professional development of teachers' knowledge in light of their experience and how they react to their working environments. Additionally, the studies by Eyasu et al. (2017) and Workneh and Tasew (2013) demonstrate that students who are unable to learn in preparation classes are evaluated and educated to become pre-service teachers. As a result, the teachers are not working in the teaching profession with enthusiasm but are instead looking for quick fixes for their problems. Additionally, the trainers' verbatim descriptions of in-service teachers' preparation for teaching English were evident in their statements.

Conclusions

The study participants' English language proficiency (speaking skills) is not in a position to promote students' achievement in the target language. The participants stated that they need more professional development training. As a result, needs analyses must be conducted in order to create programs and professional development courses that meet the specific needs of teachers, and it is recommended that in-service CPD trainings for primary English language teachers be systematic during the preparation and implementation processes, taking into account and addressing the teachers' specific needs. It should also be participating in the procedures and focusing on the appropriate desires of the teachers.

The ministry of education should set practical and specific (tailored) CPD programs for EFL teachers and follow the schemes' practicality through different mechanisms, such as evaluative assessments, both progressively and at the end of the programs. Furthermore, when recruiting English language teachers for primary schools, the Ministry should establish criteria for the teachers to pass proficiency tests in advance. For successful EFL teachers' professional development, schools should create a supportive environment, which is crucial for continuous improvement. Incentives and reasonable support trigger teachers' motivation to participate in training activities that help them upgrade their language and teaching skills and promote students' achievement.

It was noted from the findings that the participant teachers seemed to have no interest in the teaching profession; and it was also confirmed from the interviewees' verbatim that many of them have been attending other fields to change their profession. This shows the need for the government to consider teachers' interests in advance and find ways to make the teaching profession, as it is called, a "golden profession" by maintaining the teachers' benefits and securities.

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