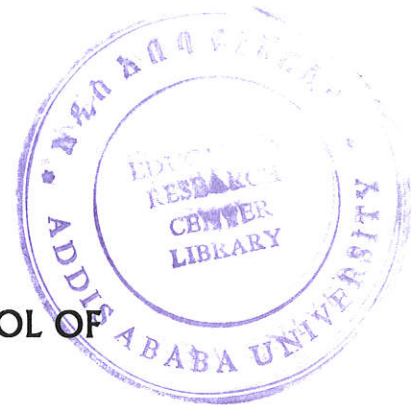


**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**PSYCHOSOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS OF
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN AND
OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL SETTING**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
GRADUATES STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**



**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN
SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION.**

JUNE, 2006

Acknowledgement

"Thank Be to God for His Unspeakable Gift." 2Cor. 9÷15

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest and heartfelt gratitude, special thanks and sincere appreciation to Dr. Seleshi Zeleke, my thesis advisor, who has helped me in every way from the conception to the completion of this work. His critical comments, constructive suggestions and scholarly advice made this thesis a reality. Without his help, this study would have been impossible.

My heartfelt indebtedness goes to my mother W/ro Huluagerish Shitu for her maternal love, concern, help and prayer during my stay away from her.

I am grateful to Dr. Tesfaye Semela and Ato Tilahun Nigatu from Hawassa University, Ato Demewoz Admassu from Kotebe College of Teacher Education, Ato Thewodros Bekele and Ato Ephrem Mergia from Dilla College of Teacher Education and Ato Moges Beyene for their contribution to me in making this thesis a success.

Thanks should go to brothers, sisters, relatives and friends for their support, encouragement and advice during my study.

Finally, I would like to thank all people who have helped me in one way or the other.

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Abstract

This study attempted to examine the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs in and outside the school setting. The questionnaire was distributed among 40 (28 females and 12 males) available teachers and interview was held with 9 (5 females and 4 males) randomly selected teachers from nine governmental schools in Addis Ababa. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were employed to analyze the data. The results indicated that commitment was the most important predictor of turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs. Female teachers showed satisfaction, commitment and intention to stay in the profession than their male colleagues. On the average, teachers of children with special needs experienced high stress, have commitment and intention to stay in the profession. In addition, teachers reported lack of professional development, low salary and low status of the profession in the society as discouraging factors and satisfaction with the change (progress) in children with special needs, children's love for their teachers and interest in teaching as factors that help teachers to stay in the profession. Teachers of children with special needs experienced less positive and more negative experiences in and outside the school setting. Most teachers, however, appear to be interested in serving children with special needs. Implications of the results are discussed and recommendations are also indicated.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem

Education is a fundamental human right and one of the main factors that reduce poverty and improve socio-economic conditions. There is an increasing awareness of education as a human right and consequently a demand to provide education for all citizens (MOE, 2005). Children with special needs are among the citizens who demand proper education. In accessing proper education, teachers of children with special needs are important actors. Teachers of children with special needs play an important role in improving the quality of life of children with special needs via special education. The quality of education services given to children with special needs depend upon the qualities and experiences of teachers of children with special needs. These teachers experienced good and bad from different corners while taking training, teaching children with special needs, communicating with superiors (administrators) and generally living in the society. These experiences manifest themselves through stress and dissatisfaction, interest and commitment and as a result through leaving or staying in the profession. These experiences have negative or positive impact on the education of children with special needs in one way or the other. In Ethiopia, many children with special needs not yet have proper education. About 500,000 school age children

with special needs/with common disabilities/are appealing for school participation (IER, 1995). Among these, only 4000 children with special needs/disabilities/ participate in primary education (MOE, 2005). This seems due to shortage of qualified and competent teachers in the area and due to factors (e.g. dissatisfaction) that affect teachers' full range performance and subsequently affects teachers' career decision/stay in or leave the profession/.

Teachers receive special education certificate on top of their previous certification. Therefore, in most regions, salary of trained special needs education teachers is equal to other teachers with certificate level training. Double certification without promotion or up-grading option, does not motivate to work in special needs education. The teachers are not getting appropriate supervisory support. So that, it is no wonder that teachers who have special needs education training tend to leave their jobs (MOE, 2005).

A school system may have excellent building, resource and even inspired supervisory personnel but it will still be ineffective without interested, committed, and qualified teachers. It should be acknowledged that teaching children with special needs is a more demanding undertaking than teaching ordinary children. It requires much more patience and skill to understand the child with special needs. The child with special needs will inevitably take longer time to learn at least in some areas. This truth seems to make teachers of children with special needs vulnerable

to excessive work, stress, dissatisfaction, and finally it may lead them to quit their job.

On the other hand, teachers of children with special needs may enjoy their profession in helping children with special needs. Teaching means helping children and young people to learn and develop in good ways; and when noticeable changes occur, teachers feel an exhilarating sense of satisfaction-a feeling of accomplishment that motivates them to continue with determination (Mayer & Mayer, 1995).

The new organizational structure and manpower of schools demanding for two special needs education teachers (one leading and one assistant teacher) to support the education and training of children with special needs (MOE, 2005). At present there is a need for approximately 26,000 special needs education teachers. There are only limited number of minimally trained teachers (not more than 400) for special schools and classes at a primary level in the country (MOE, 2005). Lack of qualified special education teachers threatens the quality of education that students with special needs receive (Billingsley, 2003).

In Ethiopia, little or no attention is give to teachers of children with special needs. This is may lead them either to leave the profession or loss of enthusiasm to teach children with special needs. Besides, daily observation, informal talks with teachers of children with special needs and their constant complaint about professional development and salary

indicate that there are at least some problems. The less attention given to teachers of children with special needs and the latter observation initiated the researcher to conduct this study. In response to this issue, the purpose of this study is to explore what psychosocial experiences teachers have in the course of teaching children with special needs and being a special needs education teacher from in and outside school setting. Because these experiences may affect directly special education teachers' interest turnover, retention, satisfaction, health and service rendered to children with special needs (Zabel & Zabel, 1983; Landsman, 1983).

1. 2. Literature Review

1.2.1 Psychosocial Experiences of Teachers of Children with Special Needs: Overview

Teachers have had different experiences (negative and/or positive) in teaching students in particular and in the teaching profession in general. Among these experiences, stress and burnout, job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, commitment to career and intention to stay in or leave the profession are worth mentioning (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Tesfaye, 2004; Billingsley, 2003; Litt & Turk, 1985)

Teachers of children with special needs also share these experiences with some differences (e.g., experiences from curriculum plus activities) due to the very nature of children they have been teaching (McBride, 1983).

Special education is regular education plus something more. The plus quality in the education of exceptional children is made up of extra services necessary to give these children a chance in school (Snyder, 1948). This implies that teachers of students with disabilities shoulder many responsibilities (e.g., teaching home living skills) which might impose challenges upon their day-to-day activities besides teaching.

Teachers are required to work intensively and intimately with students with special needs on a continuous basis. They learn about students' psychological, social and/or physical problems and are expected to provide aid or treatment of some kind (Malasch & Pines, 1977; cited in Zable & Zable, 1983). These problems create some kind of psychological pressure on teachers.

According to recent international researches, special education teachers serve one of the most stressful occupations (e.g., Antoniou, Polychroni, & Watlers, 2000). Special working conditions such as the high ratio of teachers and students, the limited progress due to the various problems of the students with special needs and the high workload exert additional psychological pressure on the personality and the work performance of special education teachers (Antoniou et al., 2000). Unless measures are taken, these psychological pressures will progress and produce high level of occupational stress and often lead to job dissatisfaction, absenteeism and work turnover. Moreover, the correlates of teachers stress may be psychological (anxiety, depression) physiological (headache,

hypertension), and/or behavioral (alcohol consumption, smoking) problems (Gersten, Keating, Yavanoff, & Harniss, 2001).

Strengthening the above findings, Billingsley (2003) explained:

Excessive and prolonged work problems lead to negative affective reactions, such as increased stress, lower job satisfaction or dissatisfaction and reduced organizational commitment. The combination of multiple, interacting work related problems (e.g. too many students, too much paperwork, too little support and lack of the needed resources) clearly weakens the teacher's ability to be effective and therefore reduces their opportunities for positive intrinsic rewards that are important to teachers (p.26).

Gersten et al. (2001) identified the cause of the work variables on intentions to stay in or leave the profession. To them, intention to leave or stay in the profession is mediated by variables such as working conditions, stress, commitment and job satisfaction.

1. 2.1.1 Teacher Stress: Its Sources and Consequences

The international concern with teachers' stress and burnout stem from the mounting evidence that prolonged occupational stress can lead to both physical and mental ill-health and also a concern that this problem will impair the quality of teaching (Antoniou et al., 2000). Evidently, a large proportion of teachers experience stress and burnout (McBride, 1983; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Zable & Zable, 1983). Stress can be expressed as teachers' experiences of unpleasant emotions, such as anger, tension, frustration, anxiety and nervousness (Kyriacou, 1987).

The problem caused by stress and the resultant effect is called burnout (McBride, 1983). Stress can be produced by a variety of situations and experiences in one's personal and/or professional life. For teachers, specific job-related stressors have been identified (McBride, 1983; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979) and the most often reported causes are excessive clerical schoolwork, time pressure, over crowded classrooms, inadequate salary and poor working condition.

In the endeavor to control stress, many researches have been done. After consecutive and comprehensive studies, stress is conceptualized as a response syndrome of negative affect that is developed when there are prolonged and increased pressures that cannot be controlled by the coping strategies that the individuals have (Kyriacou, 1987). These prolonged and increased pressures stem from different sources. Different scholars (e.g., Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Litt & Turk, 1985; Antoniou et al., 2000; Brown & Uehara, 1999) identified different sources of stress. Researchers focus on those types that are constantly reported by teachers and showed their magnitude and effect. Among the many sources of stress, poor working environment (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Antoniou et al., 2000) inadequate administrative support (Haberman, 2005; Hammond & Onikama, 1997; in Brown & Uehara, 1999), overload (Antoniou et al., 2000) and poor public opinion (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982) are worth mentioning.

Different researchers gave different weight for the sources of stress. For Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979), poor working condition explained more for teacher stress. For Haberman (2005), inadequate administration support comes first as a strong source for stress.

Though some of the sources are given from stress studies, every researcher in the area identified a long list. For example, Antoniou et al. (2000) identified those factors that are responsible for high levels of psychological pressure for teachers as limited progress of pupils, heavy workload, role overload, poor work environment, lack of time or resource and professional recognition needs. Furthermore, with some difference, Hammond and Onikama (1997) cited in Brown and Uehara (1999) reported pressure due to school reform efforts, inadequate administration support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision making, the burden of paper work and lack of resource as factors that can cause stress among school staff.

Antoniou et al. (2000) concerning the special education teachers reported that the additional sources of stress refer to the individual learning (IEPs), emotional and other needs of the children that may be accompanied by mental, physical and/or sensory impairments.

More specifically, little progress and the lack of interest from the part of the pupils are found to be the most important sources of stress

(Antoniou et al., 2000). This may be because teachers are responsible of children who have limited ability in comprehending the curriculum as well as other learning difficulties (Payne, 2005).

In the other study, Gersten et al. (2001) identified sources of stress in special education teachers. In this study, stress due to job design was found as the more stressing factor. This is due to the discrepancy between what teachers believe about their job (i.e., that they are there to teach children with disabilities) and the realities of their job, (i.e. burdensome paper workloads, extensive time spent in meetings, limited opportunities for individualization and huge range in student performance level).

A study comparing schoolteachers with semi-professionals matched for sex, age and marital status reported that 79% of teachers mentioned their jobs as a "main source of stress" in their life, whereas only 38% of non-teachers did so (Cox, Mackay, & Brokley, 1978; cited in Litt & Turk, 1985). The persistent and pervasive natures of teacher stress studies make it clear that teaching has become a high stress occupation (Haberman, 2005).

As it has been seen above, sources of stress are different and many. The cumulative effects of stress affect job satisfaction, commitment to teaching and intention to stay in the profession. Almost all studies reviewed in this section identified stress as correlate of turnover intention

or teacher attrition. Stress is also characterized by and correlated to job dissatisfaction (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Litt & Turk, 1985; Brown & Uehara, 1999), intention to leave the profession (Brown & Uehara, 1999; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Gersten et al., 2001; Litt & Turk, 1985; Harberman, 2005), psychological and physical distress (Litt & Turk, 1985; Haberman, 2005), absenteeism (Kyriacou, 1979; Litt & Turk, 1985; Brown & Uehara, 1999) and lowered productivity (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Specific to special educators, Male and May (1997) cited in Antoniou et al., (2000) found that 80% the head teachers of special schools of the sample believed that the teaching profession was a very stressful occupation and more than 50% of the sample did not plan to continue this occupation in the future.

1. 2.1.2 Job Satisfaction: Concept, Causes and Effects

Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is the degree to which an individual feels positively or negatively about various aspects of the job and relationship with co-workers. It represents the personal meaning or perceived quality of one's job and associated work experiences (Schermehorn, 1989). Satisfaction with one's profession is the result of various attitudes such as salaries, supervision, steadiness of employment, condition of work, advancement opportunities, recognition abilities, fair evaluation of work, fair treatment of the employer as well as individual characteristics and group (colleague) relationships outside the job (Blum & Naylor, 1984; cited in Menna & Tesfaye, 2000)

Specific to teachers, Blasé (1982) defined satisfaction as it refers to a positive, subjective emotional state primarily associated with receiving adequate intrinsic rewards from work with students. Low levels of teacher satisfaction related emotionally with feelings of resentment, frustration, boredom, irritability, anger, stagnation, helplessness and severe depression. Raschke, Dedrick, Strathe and Hawkes (1985) also confirmed that teachers derived their primary job satisfaction from the intrinsic benefits that accrue from working with children.

Researchers documented those sources of teacher satisfaction from intrinsic to extrinsic factors. According to Bogler (2001), teachers' perception of occupational prestige, self-esteem, autonomy at work and professional development contribute much to job satisfaction. In addition to the above mentioned sources of job satisfaction, organizational climate (Culver, Wolfle, & Cross, 1990), student achievement (Blasé, 1982; Rhoeds et al., 2004; Bogler, 2001), higher pay (Rhoeds et al., 2004), reduction in overall work load and less administration (Rhoeds et al., 2004) are identified as predictors of teacher satisfaction in specific terms.

DeNobile and McCormick (2005) called sources of job satisfaction as dimensions of work that affect job satisfaction. These dimensions are teacher principal relationships, recognition, relation with colleagues, relation with students, participation in decision making, pay, working conditions, school culture, communication, responsibility, feedback from others, and the work it self. According to DeNobile and McCormick

(2005) this exploration of job satisfaction in terms of job dimension had the advantage of being more specific about what aspects of work might be leading to satisfaction or dissatisfaction and allowing for a better focused process of remediation.

In other expression Bogler (2001) categorized the sources of satisfaction as the higher order needs (satisfiers) and lower order needs (dissatisfying factors). The higher order needs apply to the intrinsic aspects of work such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and opportunity for advancement. The lower order needs correspond to extrinsic matters of work, such as working conditions, supervision, work policy, salary and interpersonal relationship.

Teachers' satisfaction from the job is highly important for the nexus between teachers and students. Satisfied teachers will be more enthusiastic about investing time and energy in teaching their students (Bogler, 2001).

Job satisfaction through professional support by school bosses and officials are significant predictors of teachers' career decision. In light of this, Menna and Tesfaye (2000) found that teachers who are satisfied with effective supervision and professional support from superiors showed intention to stay in the teaching profession. Chapman (1984) also reported that career satisfaction is significantly related to person's decision to leave or never enter teaching.

Teacher dissatisfaction, on the other hand, has been given equal attention to satisfaction since it has great effects in the teaching-learning process. As equally important as satisfaction, researchers identified the sources and effects of dissatisfaction. In this effort, teachers indicated less satisfaction with their job and less overall satisfaction than persons in other occupation (Chapman, 1984). Most frequently, teacher dissatisfaction is associated with working condition and students' achievement. Blasé (1982) described it as low satisfaction stemmed mainly from teachers perceptions of ineffectiveness with students and was a condition that generally resulted when the teachers' efforts didn't lead to valued outcomes. Salary inadequacy (Seyoum, 1992; Tesfaye, 2004; Raschke et al., 1985; Farrugia, 1986; Bogler, 2001), lack of transparent and participatory decision (Tefaye, 2004; Raschke et al., 1985), administration problem (Bogler, 2001; Rhodes et al., 2004), overload (Rhodes et al., 2004; Raschke et al., 1985), and disruptive students (Rhodes et al., 2004; Raschke et al., 1985) were identified as the main sources of dissatisfaction in the teaching profession. The absence of opportunities for professional growth has also been found to be related to the dissatisfaction of teachers (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990).

Dissatisfaction in teaching create problem to the teachers, students and in broad general term to the education sector. Teacher dissatisfaction with the condition of their profession and with their occupational setting

is clearly the most visible and significant factor for the crisis in teaching (Raschke et al., 1985). Dissatisfaction is associated with absenteeism, sickness, stress and burnout (Culver et al., 1990) and in turn hampers the teaching-learning process. Teachers who planned to leave the profession expressed dissatisfaction and more negative attitudes towards teaching-as a career and toward the school administration. Job dissatisfaction triggers the turnover intention and ultimately leading to quit (Bogler, 2001).

More comprehensively, DeNoble and McCormick (2005) reported that job dissatisfaction and reduced satisfaction have been associated with several outcomes for employees and in turn, organizations. For schools, these often lead to the added cost of disrupted learning for students. Among the most costly of these to organizations are absenteeism, and turnover (which together can be classed as withdrawal), lowered commitment, lowered productivity and diminished health of staff members.

In addition, Bame (1991) identified some of the consequences which emerged from job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. These are teachers' plan to remain or leave teaching, teachers' transmission of values and attitudes (both positive and negative) about teaching to their pupils and absenteeism. Dissatisfied teachers are not only potential dropouts as compared with satisfied teachers, more of them are also likely to be transmitters of negative values and attitudes about teaching to pupils

they teach.

Dissatisfaction from the work of teaching may manifest itself most dramatically in a decision to leave the teaching profession or to leave a particular school. Or they may remain in their current assignments, but put forth only a minimal effort or resort chronic absenteeism, (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990).

In sum, increasing teachers' satisfaction is one of the most important ways to reduce attrition. Job satisfaction and attrition are strongly linked in studies of career intentions (Gersten et al., 2001). There is clear evidence that satisfied employees show better performance in their work and have better and long live in the profession (Robbins, 1989). On the other hand, dissatisfied employees are more likely to exhibit higher turnover, absenteeism, poor mental and physical health and lower motivation (Bateman & Snell, 1999).

1.2.1.3. Teachers' Perception of their Profession and Status of

Teaching Profession

Occupational prestige, teachers' self-esteem, autonomy in class, professional self-development, degree of consideration in the opinions of teachers and professional autonomy are factors that considered as dimensions of teachers' occupation perceptions (Bogler, 2001).

Teachers' occupation perception refers mainly to the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of the teaching occupation. Intrinsic properties relate to aspects of teaching such as autonomy at work, professional prestige and status, personal development and self-esteem. Extrinsic properties refer to the physical aspects of the workplace and to its benefits (e.g., salary) (Bogler, 2001). These factors seem not providing security to teachers to perceive their profession positively. The main factor to teachers to perceive their profession is the status they are accorded and the satisfaction they have got. Menna and Tesfaye (2000) found that the greater majority (67.6%) of the sample teachers perceived low societal status when they compared themselves with other groups of people working in other governmental and non-governmental organizations. This is, in part, because teachers' recognition need is not met and the effort they pay is not well celebrated (Girma, 1995).

Teachers' perceptions of their occupation are highly significant in affecting their satisfaction from the job. The more teachers perceive their teaching job as a profession and central to their lives, the more they will be satisfied with it. Viewing teaching as an occupation confers a sense of self-esteem and professional prestige that will lead teachers to consider it as central to their lives and will thus increase their satisfaction from their work (Bogler, 2001).

The term 'status' as used in relation to teachers means both the standing or regard accorded to them as evidenced by the level of appreciation of

the importance of their functions and of their competence in performing it, and the working conditions, remuneration and other material benefits accorded to them relative to other professions (Aggarwal, 1995).

These days, the social attitudes toward teachers have changed. Not many years ago, primary school teachers and particularly secondary school teachers with university degree had high cultural and social status. Society today tends to rank social status in terms of earnings. Knowledge, selfless dedication and vocation count for little now (Esteve, 2000).

Public respect for education has declined and teachers are forced to devalue their profession by the society's views to the profession (Raschke et al., 1985). In Ghana, members of the general public, rightly or wrongly, regard teaching, especially in the elementary schools, as something anybody can do and this attitude reduces the prestige which they accord to teaching (Bame, 1991). According to Rhodes et al. (2004), society's view of teachers is deeply dissatisfying to teachers and a possible cause for leaving the profession. Lack of recognition by the society leads teachers to frustration and feelings of low self worth and morale. That may be reflected in reluctance to work and inability to be related to the receivers of their service (Antoniou et al., 2000). The public value judgment of teachers and their work is largely negative (Esteve, 2000).

Perceived social status of teachers is basically the social position that their economic and professional status offers in relation to other groups. Economically, the earning power, which determines the purchasing power and the kind of property they can afford to own, form high or low images of teachers in the society (Menna & Tesfaye, 2000).

The negative attitude of the society is expressed in a way that when there is a teaching failure, possibly through circumstances beyond their control, teachers are blamed immediately and directly for the failure and all its consequences. In addition, if children do well, the parents believe that their children are good students. If children do badly then the cause is bad teaching (Esteve, 2000). These things, i.e., collective societal views made teachers to develop intentions to leave the profession. Because normative believes representing social pressure, the social status the job offers, and the social value system influence teachers' perception of whether or not they should join the teaching profession or stay in it and their motivation to comply with their expectation.

1.2.1.4 Commitment: Concept and Explanation

Commitment may be of various forms and types and is, therefore, conceptualized in a variety of ways by researchers. An individual in the work setting experiences simultaneously varying degrees of commitment towards several aspects of working life such as the employing organization, the job or task and personal career. A person may be

committed to his job or task but not necessarily to his organization and vice versa (Nir, 2001).

In service-oriented organizations like school, three types of teacher commitment are emphasized (Nir, 2001). First, there is commitment to teaching, reflecting a high degree of psychological attachment on behalf of the service provider (i.e., the teacher) to the teaching profession (Coladaric, 1992; cited in Nir, 2001). Second, there is commitment to the clients, referring to the degree of teacher dedication to helping students learn regardless of their academic difficulties and social background and to promoting their social integration in the classroom (Kushma, 1992; cited in Nir, 2001). Third, there is organizational commitment, referring to employees' commitment to the organizational context within which the service is provided. The greater the perceived benefits provided by the school to teachers, the more likely teachers' commitment to the school will increase (Nir, 2001). These three types of commitment are intertwined and are difficult to measure separately (Louis, 1991; cited in Nir, 2001). In this study, these three types of commitment are used as one variable and called as commitment.

Teachers may be committed to teaching, to their school, or to their students and that their patterns of behavior vary depending upon which commitments are stressed. A commitment to students may contribute a warm, supportive climate that is likely to reduce the dropout rate but

may not contribute much to academic achievement, while commitment to teaching may have the opposite effect (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Committed teachers may have strong psychological ties to their school, their students or their subject area/profession.

Teacher commitment to teaching played an important part in determining whether a teacher remained in or left the profession. In addition, teacher commitment is a determiner of teacher satisfaction and performance (Culver et al., 1990). The intrinsic rewards derived from pedagogical interaction sustain teachers' occupational commitment in spite of the frustrations and disappointments in the material sphere (Farrugia, 1986).

Career commitment is a personal factor which has a predictive power for career decision. Career commitment (preference for teaching job in spite of the disadvantages) increases the likelihood that teachers would decide to stay in the teaching job. Thus, commitment to teaching profession is one of the strongest predictors of teachers' career plan (Menna & Tesfaye, 2000). Teachers with higher levels of professional and organizational commitment are more likely to stay or intend to stay in teaching (Gersten et al., 2001).

The other way, commitment can be affected by negative experiences. For example, school management of student behavior and burden of non-teaching obligations affect new teachers' commitment much more than it

does on experienced teachers (Buckley, Schneider, & Shang, 2004).

As far as experience is concerned, teachers who taught continuously reported a higher initial commitment to teaching, and more often believed their educational experiences were well utilized in their employment (Chapman, 1984; Buckley et al., 2004). In special education, higher levels of commitment are associated with leadership support, fewer role problems (e.g. conflict, overload, dissonance, lower levels of stress, more teaching experience) and higher levels of job satisfaction (Gersten et al., 2001). Special education teachers are valued mostly for their commitment to serve such a vast dimensional group of students (Payne, 2005).

School settings that facilitate learning opportunities may increase teachers' commitment by expanding the meaningfulness and professional stature of the work by avoiding the burnout of tedious routine and by enhancing the teachers' ability to perform core tasks well, thereby increasing psychical rewards and the teacher sense of efficacy (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990)

1. 2.1.5 Career Plan: Overview

Teachers traverse through a four-stage process before deciding to stay in or leave teaching career. These stages were identified as: 1) selection stage, 2) integration stage or developing career satisfaction, performance and commitment to teaching, 3) evaluation stage or appraisal of teaching

and alternative jobs, and, 4) decision stage or making decision regarding staying in or leaving teaching career (Gardy & Figueria, 1987; cited in Menna & Tesfaye, 2000).

In addition, to understand teachers' decision to persist in or leave teaching, it is necessary to take into account the: a) personal characteristics of teachers, b) nature of teacher training and early teaching experience, c) degree to which the teacher is socially and professionally integrated into the teaching profession, d) satisfaction teachers derive from their careers, and, e) external environmental influences impinging on teachers' career (Chapman, 1984).

1.2.1.5.1 Retention

Efforts to reduce attrition should be based on understanding of factors that contribute to special educators' decision to leave the field. Many factors can be cited for the causes that affect retention. To mention, teachers' retention is affected by factors like external (economic, societal, institutional), employment (professional qualification, working condition rewards, and commitment to school, teaching field and teaching profession) and personal factors (life circumstances and priorities) (Billingsley, 2003).

Moreover, teacher retention is affected by dissatisfaction with pay, dissatisfaction with the involvement of the community and length of service at school (Buckley et al., 2004; Hayes, 2004). On the other hand, teachers who felt they were provided with opportunities to learn on the

job tended to be less likely to leave (Gersten et al., 2001). Special education teachers are attracted to their specialty area because they want to help students overcome obstacles and become a functioning member of a community (Markham, Green, & Ross, 1996). Gersten et al. (2001) found that collegial support is crux for retention of special educators. Besides, to retain teachers, a focus on understanding job design and finding a means for reducing stress due to job design is critical.

In many countries throughout the world there have been problems in both attracting entrants into teaching as a career and in retaining those who do entered the profession. Or a long proportion of those who do choose to enter the teaching profession leave teaching for another career within five years (Kyriacou, Kunc, Stephens, & Hultgren, 2003).

1. 2.1.5.2. Turnover: Its Causes and Effects

A number of studies have explored the reason by teachers who leave the profession within the first few years. Four reasons (work load, salary, pupils' misbehavior and low status) appear to be particularly frequent.

More recently, Haberman (2005) identified the most common reasons for leaving teaching profession. These are overwhelming overloads, discipline problem, low pay, little respect, lack of administrative support and the clerical work. In more similar way, Raschke et al. (1985) showed that thousands of classroom educators are leaving the teaching profession:

some primarily for economic reason but many others have found teaching to be unrewarding in light of public criticism, conflicting social expectations, unsupportive parents and administrators, and students no longer possessing necessary for sustained academic achievement.

A local study by Aklilu (1967) identified the outstanding reasons that frustrated teachers and compelled them to leave the profession. These are economic and financial problems, administrative inefficiency, unfavorable working conditions, little chance for personal development through further education and low social status accorded to teachers by officials, parents and the community. The latter study also confirmed that perceived social status, career commitment, gender, supervision and support, and initial preference for teaching are significant predictors of career decision (either to stay in or leave the profession) (Menna & Tesfaye, 2000). Special educators with higher paying jobs were more likely to stay than those with lower paying jobs (Billingsley, 2003).

Increasing teachers' salaries appears to improve retention. However, the benefit of facility improvement for retention can be equal to or even greater than those from pay increase. It could thus be more cost effective teacher retention strategy than a permanent salary increase for teachers in the medium to long term (Buckley et al., 2004)

1.2.2 Working Conditions: Concepts, Types and their Effect

Teachers' working conditions are conceived as including the workplace condition factors and job related environmental variables that represent teachers' views about their social and economic rewards of teaching (Tesfaye, 2003). Researchers identified working condition variables (e.g., Billingsley, 2003; Firestone & Pennell, 1993). However, there is no agreed upon notion on the types. Billingsley (2003), after many years of investigation found that working condition variables include salary, school climate, administrative support, colleague support, professional development, teachers role, paper work, students and caseload issues. In Firestone and Pennell's (1993) study, the variables considered as working condition are job design characteristics, feedback, collaboration, learning opportunities, resources, autonomy and participation.

Other researches (e.g., Gersten et al., 2001) focused on an in-depth understanding of aspects of the working conditions of special educators that lead to increased job satisfaction and a higher commitment to the field of special education. Considerable researches have been done on retention of special education teachers in relation to working conditions. Working conditions were reported to seriously affect teachers' morale, level of effort, and quality of their work (Gersten et al., 2001). Schools with better working conditions or more ample economic resources for the support of teaching and students welfare have more satisfied teachers (Sargent & Hannum, 2003). Gersten et al. (2001)

noted that poor working condition could affect teachers in negative ways leading to withdrawal from involvement in the job and eventually decisions to leave the position or the field. Good working conditions provide psychological states that are pleasurable, meaningful or satisfying (Firestone & Pennell, 1993)

Specific to special educators, Council for Exceptional Children (1988) cited in Gersten et al. (2001) reported that poor working conditions contribute to high rate of special educators leaving the field, teachers burnout and substandard quality of education for student with special needs.

Most frequently, salary is discussed as a determinant working condition for special and general education teachers (Farrugia, 1986; Billingsley, 2003; Buckley et al., 2004). Teachers' preferences across a range of job and school conditions may be just as important as salary in the retention decision. Teachers might be willing to take lower salaries in exchange for better working conditions (Buckley et al., 2004).

Administrative and colleague support plays a great role in teacher career decision. Chapman and Hutcheson (1982) explained that the quality of interpersonal relationships between teachers and administrators and the positive value and recognition that teachers receive from their large circle of friends is of particular importance in teachers' self assessment of their success.

Teachers with supportive supervisors reported less emotional exhaustion, more positive attitude towards students and greater personal accomplishment (Russel et al., 1987). Special educators who engaged in meaningful substantive conversations with administrators and staff at their school about their jobs show reduced role dissonance and stress (Gersten et al., 2001; Billingsley, 2003). In connection with career plan, teachers are more likely to leave teaching or indicate intent to leave without adequate support from administrators and colleagues (Billingsley, 2003).

Facility quality is another working condition that strongly affects teachers. As the perceived quality of the school facilities improves, the probability of retention increases (Buckley et al., 2004). The lack of resources in a school also contributes to teacher job dissatisfaction, which then can lead to attrition (Buckley et al., 2004).

Overload is reported as the factor which determines teachers' career plan. Teachers who plan to leave special education teaching as soon as possible are significantly more likely to rate their work as *'not at all manageable'* compared to those who indicate intent to stay (Carlson & Billingsley, 2001; cited in Billingsley, 2003). Specifically, problems with role overload and design have been strongly linked to special education attrition, as much more than any other work-related factors (Billingsley, 2003). Teachers often have very little time to spare. Their teaching day is segmented into a series of short (and usually busy) blocks of class

contact. Their nights are generally spent grading papers and preparing for next day (Chapman & Hutcheson, 1982). In more general terms, teachers are expected to do many things in addition to their classroom work. They must allocate time for planning, pupils' evaluation and their in-service training. They must counsel and orient the students, attend to visit parents, organize extracurricular activities for the pupils, attend staff meetings and other different types of meetings and then perhaps they have to attend to the security to buildings and materials and pupils reaction periods (Esteve, 2000).

In sum, working condition factors associated with staying include: higher pay, positive school climate, adequate support system, opportunities for professional development, reasonable role demand and manageable case loads. The reverse is true for leaving (Billingsley, 2003).

1.2.3 Demographic Characteristics

Several key teacher characteristics and personal factors that influence teachers' decision to leave special education are identified. There are consistent reports that younger and inexperienced special educators are more likely to leave than their older, more experienced counterparts; uncertified teachers are more likely to leave than certified teachers. Teachers' personal circumstance and priorities influence attrition and retention (Billingsley, 2003).

The relationship of teacher characteristics to turnover intention has been

studied fairly extensively in the last two decades in general education turnover intention research but has been received less attention in special education studies (Billingsley, 2003). Some special education researchers (e.g., Gersten et al., 2001) have investigated the relationship between attrition and demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, qualification etc).

1.2.3.1. Gender

Gender difference in turnover intention persists at all age levels (Bame, 1991) and the result is mixed (Billingsley, 2003). In Ethiopian context and regular education setting, Tesfaye (2003) found that female teachers tend to plan staying in the profession while their male counterparts tend to leave the profession. Moreover, Menna and Tesfaye (2000) revealed that women teachers found to show higher inclination of staying in their career as opposed to their men counterparts. No local study was conducted to show the relationship between gender and turnover intention among special education teachers. Mixed results were found in overseas researches. Morvant et al. (1995) cited in Billingsley (2003) found that male teachers are more likely to indicate intention to leave. In other study Singer (1993a) cited in Billingsley (2003) reported that young female special educators leave the profession at higher rate as their male counterparts.

1.2.3.2 Qualification and Teaching Experience

Qualification and experience may affect teachers' intent to stay in teaching job or look for another opportunity since better tenure and qualification are widely considered as a major criterion to qualify for other job that may offer better status and prestige (Menna & Tesfaye, 2000). Degree-holding, experienced and pedagogically trained teachers have better chance for employment elsewhere but that are most needed by educational system (Dargie, 2002).

On the contrary, in western culture, high levels of turnover were associated with teachers who are not fully certified in their main assignment. However, those with more training were more likely to indicate intention to leave (Cross & Billingsley, 1994; cited in Billingsley, 2003) Balkin et al. (2002) also reported that those with higher qualification perceive greater employability in non-teaching positions and therefore are more likely to leave.

As opposed to the above notion, higher qualification thought to offer opportunity to teachers and in so doing is likely to result in greater job satisfaction and hence increase retention with the profession (Rhodes et al., 2004). As far as experience is concerned, Balkin et al, (2002) reported that inexperienced teachers are more likely to withdraw from teaching than experienced teachers.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Several studies (e.g., Tesfaye, 2003; Getachew, 1999) have shown that teachers have different experiences (positive and/or negative) in the teaching profession. Similarly, with some exception due to the disabilities children have, special education teachers have positive (e.g., satisfaction in helping the needy children and taking care of vulnerable children) and negative (e.g., dissatisfaction, low status) experiences in relation to teaching children with special needs and being special education teacher. Thus, this study will try to address the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs that they experience in relation to teaching children with special needs and being special education teacher. From this standpoint, this study will answer the following questions.

1. Do job related (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and demographic (gender, qualification, teaching experience in special education, children's disability type) variables predict turnover intention?
2. Is there statistically significant gender difference in job related variables (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and turnover intention?
3. Is there statistically significant difference between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment in job related variables (stress, job

satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and turnover intention?

4. What is the extent/level of stress, job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention and perception of working condition in teachers of children with special needs?
5. How do special education teachers perceive their profession? What are the factors that explain their (favorable or unfavorable) perception?
6. What psychosocial experience do teachers have in and outside the school in relation to teaching children with special needs?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Special education operates within the framework of general education. Its quality and effectiveness depend on the quality of personnel involved in it and the appropriateness of the curriculum materials and other facilities. Children with special needs need to learn several skills ranging from functional academics to home living skills. Competent teachers are crucial for the education of children with special needs and effective mainstreaming of these children into the society.

Though this is the fact, teachers' competence and efficacy have been impaired by negative experiences like stress, dissatisfaction and lack of professional development. To this effect, the interest to educate children with special needs will become unsuccessful plan to the government and

teachers themselves. On the other hand, positive experiences like satisfaction from helping the needy children are encouraging and should be taken as an input in searching for the solutions of the problems.

In sum, understanding of the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs has two-fold importance. The first is to improve the conditions in which teachers work in order to take care of teachers and the second is, as a result, to increase the learning opportunity of students with special needs.

The present study is ,so that, expected to disclose the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs and shed some light for further investigation in the area.

In addition, the investigation of the experiences of teachers of children with special needs would contribute to:

- provide information on the career intentions of teachers of children with special needs.
- identify the role of job related variables and demographic characteristics on the teachers' career plan.
- provide useful data to the concerned bodies regarding the experiences of teachers of children with special needs.
- indicate some problems that teachers of children with special needs face.

- suggest some implications for the improvement of situations to teachers of children with special needs.
- raise the awareness of administrators of schools and Addis Ababa education bureau officials.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

The present study focuses on the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs and the effects of these experiences on career decision. The study is delimited to the governmental schools and participants were taken from nine schools which have an access to education for children with special needs. The main reason for focusing on governmental schools is that there are relatively many teachers and there is a clear difference between governmental and non-governmental schools in terms of salary, teaching materials, school environment, leadership style and fringe benefits. Thus, the generalizability of the present study could be for teachers of children with special needs who work in governmental schools in Addis Ababa.

1.6 Operational Definitions

Experience: Social and psychological situations that have happened to special education teachers in relation to teaching children with special needs and being special education teacher, and influences the way they think and behave.

Outside school setting: refers to home, neighbors, and other places whereat teachers of children with special needs have influenced and are influenced.

Psychological experiences: teachers' perception of their profession and working condition, feelings of stress, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, commitment and intentions to leave or stay in the profession.

Psychosocial experiences: the psychological and social experiences of teachers of children with special needs in and outside the school setting.

Social experiences: teachers' interaction with students, administrators, families, neighbors, friends and the society at large and the feelings resulting from these interactions.

CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

In this section, the participants involved and sampling procedure, instrumentation and variables, instrument tryout and its report, data collection, and method of data analysis are presented.

2.1. Participants

The study area for this research is Addis Ababa. The reason for the selection is that several special schools, special classes, units and integrated classes are found in Addis Ababa. There are about sixteen schools (Special school= 2, special class=5, Unit= 4 and integrated class=5) which provide access to education for children with special needs. Among these, two schools (one special school and one integrate school) are owned by non-governmental organization. All governmental schools were selected for this study. Among these schools, four inclusive schools and one unit have no trained special education teacher and for this reason are excluded from the study. The remaining governmental schools (special school=1, special class=5 and units=3) were selected purposefully for the study to control differences between the governmental and nongovernmental schools. All 44 teachers (male=15 and female=29) were taken from these schools. Thus, the teachers were selected using available sampling technique.

Table1: Summary of the schools and teachers taken for the study.

School	Number of teachers			School type
	Female	Male	Total	
1. Abune Baslious	2	-	2	Special class
2. Akaki Yemengist	1	2	3	Special class
3. Alpha	5	3	8	Special School
4. Belay Zeleke No. 1	2	1	3	Special class
5. Kokebe Tsibah	2	1	3	Unit
6. Lidet Selam	1	-	1	Special class
7. Minilik II, Primary	6	3	9	Unit
8. Sibste Negasi	2	-	2	Special class
9. Yekatit 23	8	5	13	Unit
Total	29	15	44	

2.2. Instrumentation and Variables

To get adequate information for the study, two types of instruments (self reported questionnaire and semi structured interview) were used.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to collect information about the turnover intention, stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and demographic characteristics of teachers of children with special needs. It was made up of several scales that assess turnover intention, stress, job satisfaction, working condition and commitment. And also it contained

open ended and close-ended questions to obtain background characteristics of the participants.

Criterion variable (Turnover intention)

The criterion variable for this study was turnover intention (intention to leave) of teachers of children with special needs. It was measured by Likert- type scale comprising four items with five response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The items were partly adapted from Elitharp (2005).

It was designed to estimate the likelihood that a given special education teacher forms the intention to leave the profession. The justification is that turnover intention reliably predicts actual turnover (Chen, Huli, and Sego, 1998, cited in Tesfaye, 2003). The minimum and maximum possible scores in this scale are four and twenty, respectively. High scores on turnover intention measure indicate high probability to leave teaching children with special needs.

Predictor Variables(Independent Variables)

Predictor variables are job related variables like stress, job satisfaction, commitment and working condition and demographic characteristics (gender, children's disability type, qualification and teaching experience in special education).

Stress

The stress measure was developed by taking sources of stress to be rated with a range from 'not at all stress' to 'very high stress'. The items were collected from local and overseas researches (e.g., Girma, 1995; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe 1979; Markham et al., 1996; Antonio et al., 2000) and adapted to fit for teachers of children with special needs. Ten items were used in this scale. Negatively worded items were reverse coded. High scores on the stress scale indicate high stress and low scores indicate low stress in teachers. The minimum and maximum possible scores are zero and fifty, respectively.

Job satisfaction

Teachers' job satisfaction measure was developed by the investigator and partly adapted from different researches (e.g., Tesfaye, 1999; Girma, 1995; Tesfaye, 2003; Culver et al., 1990; Rhodes et al., 2004). Modifications were made to fit for teachers of children with special needs. The measure consisted of ten items rated on five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Negatively worded items were reverse coded before analysis. The minimum and maximum possible scores in this scale are ten and fifty, respectively. High scores indicate satisfaction and low scores indicate dissatisfaction.

Working condition

Items that indicate one's working condition were selected from different local and overseas researches (e.g., Tesfaye, 1999; Tesfaye, 2003; Firststone and Pennell, 1993; Billingsley et al., 2004). Modifications were made to fit into teachers of children with special needs. The measure of working condition consisted of ten items rated on five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Negatively worded items were reverse coded before analysis. The minimum and maximum possible scores in this scale are ten and fifty, respectively. High scores indicate good working condition and low scores indicate bad working condition.

Commitment

Items indicating one's commitment were selected from different researches (e.g., Tesfaye, 2003; Tesfaye, 1999, Kyriacou et al., 2003) and modified to fit for teachers of children with special needs. Ten items were used to measure commitment of teachers of children with special needs. The items were arranged in a five point Liker-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Negatively worded items were reverse coded. The minimum and maximum possible scores in this scale are ten and fifty, respectively. High scores indicate high commitment and low scores indicate low commitment of teachers of children with special needs.

Qualification

Respondents were asked to indicate their qualification on the space provided. Having collected, qualification 10+1 coded as '1', 12+1 coded as '2', 12+2 coded as '3' and 12+3 coded as '4' in the analyses.

Teaching experience in special education

Respondents were asked to indicate their experience in teaching children with special needs in years. Having aggregated, the service years were categorized into 1—5, 6—10, 11—15, 16—20 and above 20. To ease the analysis, these categories were coded as follows (one through five = '1', six through ten = '2', eleven through fifteen = '3' sixteen through twenty = '4' and, above twenty = '5').

Children's disability type

Teachers were asked to choose the types of students with disability they teach from the given alternatives. Teachers who were teaching children with mental retardation were coded '0' and others who were teaching students with hearing impairment were coded '1'.

Interview

Semi structured interview was used to assess the social experiences of teachers of children with special needs and to supplement, enrich and crosscheck the data obtained through the questionnaire. Face to face interview was conducted with nine (F=5 and M=4) special education teachers. They were randomly selected from nine schools (one from each

school) which were selected as the study sites. The themes of the semi-structured interview were (1) social experiences teachers had in and outside the school, (2) psychological experiences (e.g., interest, job satisfaction) teachers had in relation to teaching children with special needs and (3) factors associated with staying in or leaving the profession. Many probes were made at the time of the interview. Interviewees were guided whenever they left the main themes during interview. The interviews were conducted by the researcher himself. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. The average time spent on a single interview was 56 minutes.

2.3. Instrument Tryout

The instrument was prepared for tryout after passing many processes. The processes include collecting items and developing instruments, formatting into scales and questions, and doing forward and backward translations. After preparing the instrument in English, it was translated into Amharic language for the ease of communication with the participants. The instrument was first translated into Amharic by an English language teacher and a psychology postgraduate student. The instrument was also translated back into English by English language postgraduate student. Minor differences were observed and corrected through discussion held among these translators and the researcher. Finally the instrument was made ready for pilot test.

The main objective of the pilot test was to test and improve the instruments. Since items of the measures were collected and developed from literature, checking their reliability was necessary. In doing so, the questionnaire was distributed among twenty (17 from Sebeta Special School for the Blind and 3 from Minilik II primary school) teachers of children with special needs. The data obtained were analyzed by using SPSS 11.0 to see the reliability. Following is summary table which contains the reliability of each scale and number of items improved in each scale.

Table 2: Summary of reliability of the scales

Scale	Reliability (Cronbach alpha)	No. of items improved after the pilot test
1. Stress	.71	2 (item 8 and 10)
2. Job Satisfaction	.74	1 (item 8)
3. Working condition	.70	1 (item 2)
4. Commitment	.80	1 (item 5)
5. Intention to leave	.96	—

Reliabilities found from the pilot test were acceptable to conduct study (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). No item was discarded. Rather wording of the items were improved after inspecting the value of item-total correlation (items with low correlations were considered for improvement)

2.4. Data collection

An official letter from the Department of Psychology entitled, 'To Whom It May Concern' was taken. Each school principal of the target schools was given this letter. Principals addressed the letters to the respective individuals in special schools, units and classes. Those individuals cooperated and each participant was communicated. Participants were informed about the objective of the study and asked to participate in filling the questionnaire. All special education teachers volunteered to participate in the study. Then, the questionnaire was distributed and participants agreed to fill and return within four days time. After four days, the questionnaires were collected from each school. The return rate of the questionnaire was about 91%.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were entered into the computer using the SPSS program. To analyse the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Mean, standard deviation, maximum value, minimum value and percentage were computed to see the general pattern of the variables and demographic characteristics. Product-moment correlation (Bivariate) was used to see inter-correlations among variables.

To investigate how independent variables predict the dependent variable,

multiple regressions and stepwise multiple regression analyses were employed.

T- test was employed to see mean differences between different groups. One sample t-test was also used to investigate the level of stress, job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention and perception of working condition in teachers of children with special needs. The data obtained through interviews were presented verbatim as direct quotations and explanations were also given.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

The results of this study are presented in two parts. The first part deals with the data obtained through the questionnaire while the second part deals with the data obtained through the interview. The first part is presented in the following order: descriptive and bivariate correlation of the study variables, the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable, difference in gender and difference between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment in job-related variables, and the level of stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and turnover intention. The second part contains positive and negative experiences of teachers and participants' perception of their profession.

3.1. Data Obtained Through Questionnaire

The demographic characteristics of participants of the study are presented in Table 3. Each variable has its own category and at the same time frequency and percent.

Table 3: Participants of the study by gender, age, qualification, children's disability, training and experience in teaching children with special needs.

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	28	70
	Male	12	30
Age	20-30	5	12.5
	31-40	15	37.5
	41-50	13	32.5
	Above 50	4	10
	Missing	3	7.5
Qualification	10+1	2	5
	12+1	25	62.5
	12+2	12	30
	12+3	1	2.5
Children's disability	MR	16	40
	HI	24	60
Training in SNE*	< 1 year	7	17.5
	1 year	30	75
	1 year and short term training	3	7.5
Experience in SNE	1-5	20	50
	6-10	11	27.5
	11-15	5	12.5
	16-20	3	7.5

*Special Needs education

As can be seen from Table 3, 70% (28) female and 30% (12) male teachers of children with special needs participated in this study. The majority, (70%) lies in the age range of 31 to 50. All participants were certified to teach in regular education classes before they become teachers of children with special needs. Among these, 62.5% had TTI certificate and 30% had diploma. Of the total participants, 60% of the teachers teach children with hearing impairment and the remaining 40% teach children with mental retardation.

As indicated in Table 3, the majority of the participants (75% (30)) had taken special education training for one-year duration. Experience wise, 50% of the participants have five or less years of experience in teaching children with special needs. About quarter of the participants have six to 10 years of experience.

3.1.1. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation of the Study

Variables

Table 4 shows the minimum and maximum values, and the mean and standard deviation of some selected variables of the study. The inter-correlations of the variables are also given. The number of participants in each variable is 40.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics and Inter-correlation Matrix of the Study

Variables												
Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	-	-	-	-	-							
2. Qualification	10+1	12+3	-	-	.31*	-						
3. TE ^a	1	27	7.53	5.61	-.02	.34*	-					
4. Children's disability	-	-	-	-	.09	.42*	.26	-				
5. Stress	22	48	37.53	6.97	-.16	.49**	.37*	-.18	-			
6. Job Satisfaction	10	39	28.95	5.95	.47**	.05	.11	.06	-.24	-		
7. Working Condition	13	41	28.43	7.12	-.27*	.17	.16	.35*	-.32*	.57*	-	
8. Commitment	14	50	36.67	10.24	-.37*	.05	-.00	-.07	.046	.67**	.31*	-
9. Turnover Intention	4	20	10.33	5.19	.39*	-.08	.10	.12	.10	-.65**	-.33*	-.85**

^aTE=Teaching experience in special needs education setting

* p<.05

** p<.01

The descriptive statistics (Table 4) indicate the minimum and maximum values, means and standard deviation of the variables in the study. More specifically, the maximum possible score for the job-related variables (stress, job satisfaction, working condition and commitment) is 50. The minimum possible score for stress is zero whereas for the other variables

it is 10. For the dependent variable (i.e., turnover intention or intention to leave) the minimum and maximum possible scores are 4 and 20, respectively.

Therefore, one can inspect the maximum and minimum values of each variable and at the same time the means and standard deviations. For instance, the commitment variable has the minimum value of 14 and the maximum value of 50 with a mean of 36.67 and a standard deviation of 10.24.

The bivariate correlation matrix (Table 4) indicates that commitment ($r = -.85, p < .01$), job satisfaction ($r = -.65, p < .01$), working condition ($r = -.33, p < .05$) and gender ($r = .39, P < .05$) are correlated significantly with teachers' turnover intention. The correlations of the other variables (e.g., qualification, teaching experience, children's disability, stress) are not statistically significant. Some of the independent variables were also correlated significantly with each other. For example, working condition correlated with children's disability ($r = .35, P < .05$), with stress ($r = -.35, P < .01$), with job satisfaction ($r = .57, P < .05$) and with commitment ($r = .31, P < .05$).

3.1.2. The Relationship between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable

The relationship between the independent variables (gender, qualification, teaching experience, children's disability, stress, job

satisfaction, working condition and commitment), and the dependent variable (turnover intention) were analyzed.

Multiple regression analyses were run to see the variance in intention to leave that is explained by the independent variables. The analyses showed that all the independent variables taken together significantly predict turnover intention (intention to leave) of teachers of children with special needs, $F(8, 31) = 13.54$, $P < .01$, $R^2 = .72$.

All independent variables combined (gender, qualification, teaching experience, children's disability, stress, job satisfaction, working condition and commitment) accounted for 72% of the variance in turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs.

Table 5: Regression coefficient for predicting turnover intention from the independent variables.

Variables	B	SE-B	Beta (β)	t
Gender	1.38	1.21	.12	0.26
Qualification	-0.75	0.90	-.09	0.82
Teaching Experiences	0.85	0.46	.18	1.83
Children's disability	0.96	0.09	.18	0.89
Stress	0.13	0.08	.17	1.56
Job Satisfaction	0.46	0.13	-.05	-0.36
Working condition	-0.02	0.08	-.02	-0.18
Commitment	-0.38	0.63	-.75	-6.10*

*p < .001 constant = 19.850

However, a closer examination of the results of the regression analysis for each independent variable indicated that except commitment ($\beta = -.75$, $p < .001$), all other independent variables failed to predict teachers' turnover intention.

The prediction of turnover intention from gender, qualification, teaching experience, children's disability, stress, job satisfaction and working condition are not statistically significant among teachers of children with special needs.

The stepwise multiple regression analysis also showed that commitment is an important contributor to the variance in turnover intention among teachers of children with special needs [$F(1, 39) = 95.623$, $P < 0.001$, $R^2 = .708$]. Commitment uniquely contributed about 70.8% of the variance. The remaining seven variables have no statistically significant contribution above and beyond the variance accounted for by commitment.

3.1.3 Gender Differences in Some Selected Variables.

The table below shows gender differences in stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and turnover intention.

Table 6: Mean differences between males and females in some selected variables.

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t
Stress	F	28	38.25	6.61	1.01
	M	12	35.83	7.76	
Job satisfaction	F	28	30.79	4.02	3.35*
	M	12	24.67	7.56	
Working condition	F	28	29.68	7.43	1.75
	M	12	25.50	5.55	
Commitment	F	28	39.14	9.75	2.48*
	M	12	30.92	9.38	
Turnover intention	F	28	9.03	4.63	
	M	12	13.33	5.34	-2.57*

*p< .05, df =38

The t-test results show statistically significant difference between females and males in job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention. As shown in Table 6, there is a statistically significant difference between females and males in job satisfaction [t (38) = 3.35, p<.05] and commitment [t (38) = 2.48, P<.05] in favor of females. Female teachers are more satisfied and committed than their male counterparts. On the other hand, males differ from females [t (38) = -2.57, P<.05] in turnover intention. Meaning males show intention to leave their profession when compared to female special education teachers.

No statistically significant gender difference was observed in stress and working condition.

3.1.4. Group Difference due to Children's Disability in Some Selected Variables

Table 7 shows the difference between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment in stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and turnover intention.

Table 7: Difference between teachers of children with MR and HI by some selected variables.

Variables	Children's disability	N	Mean	SD	t
Stress	MR	16	39.06	6.20	1.14
	HI	24	36.50	7.38	
Job satisfaction	MR	16	28.50	3.69	-0.39
	HI	24	29.25	7.13	
Working condition	MR	16	25.38	5.63	-2.33*
	HI	24	30.46	7.38	
Commitment	MR	16	37.56	9.76	0.44
	HI	24	36.08	10.71	
Turnover intention	MR	16	9.56	4.55	-0.76
	HI	24	10.83	5.60	

Note: MR = mental retardation,
 HI = hearing impairment
 * $p < .05$, $df = 38$

Except working condition, no statistically significant group differences were observed on the other variables. The working condition difference is in favor of teachers of children with hearing impairment ($t(38) = -2.33, p < .05$).

3.1.5 Special Education Teachers' Experience and Perception on some Selected Variables

The levels of experience and perceptions of teachers in stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and turnover intention were examined using one sample t-test. The test values indicate the value of neutral (ambivalence) mean scores in each selected variable. The mean scores that are above or below the test values are tested for statistical significance using one sample t- test.

Thirty and 12 were taken as test values to examine the participants' stress, job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention and perception of working condition.

Table 8: One sample t-test for stress, job satisfaction, commitment, turnover intention and perception of working condition among teachers of children with special needs (N=40).

Variables	Mean	SD	t	Test value
Stress	37.53	6.97	6.83**	30
Job satisfaction	28.95	5.95	-1.12	30
Working condition	28.43	7.12	-1.40	30
Commitment	36.67	10.24	4.12**	30
Turnover Intention	10.33	5.19	-2.04*	12

*p< .05 ** p<.01 df= 39

As can be seen in Table 8, teachers of children with special needs experienced stress. In addition, teachers of children with special needs

showed commitment. As a group, teachers showed intention to stay in the profession too. The values of working condition and job satisfaction have no significant difference with the test value.

3.1.6 Decisions to Stay in or Leave the Teaching Profession Given some Conditions and Factors for the Decision

Teachers were asked to indicate whether they would stay in or leave the profession given some conditions. They were also asked to report perceived reasons to stay in or leave the profession. The responses are summarized in terms of percentage and list of reasons in Table 9 and 10.

Table 9: Teachers' response on issues concerning staying in or leaving the profession.

Description	Yes		No		Others	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Whether to leave or stay in the presence of opportunity to leave	23	57.5	14	35	3	7.5
2. Whether planning to leave within the next 5 years.	17	42.5	24	52.5	2	5
3. Whether searching for another job right now.	5	12.5	33	82.5	2	5
4. Whether pursuing education other than special education in colleges and universities.	23	57.5	17	42.5	-	-
5. Whether joining this profession by choice.	34	85	5	12.5	1	2.5
6. Whether to stop teaching if one can get another job with the same pay	15	37.5	23	57.5	2	5
7. Whether to choose the profession if one can decide all over again.	17	42.5	22	55	1	2.5

The data in Table 9 indicates that 57.5% of the participants wanted to

leave the profession if there is an opportunity for another job. On the other hand, whether or not there is an opportunity, 42.5% of the teachers planned to leave the profession within five years time. Even though 82.5% of the teachers seem stable in their work, 57.5% of the participants are pursuing their education in non-special education departments in colleges and universities. The great majority joined the profession with their own choice (85%). Nonetheless, a significant number of the teachers show interest to leave for other jobs (37.5%) and would not choose the profession if they could decide all over again (55%).

Table 10: Teachers' Perceived reasons for leaving and staying in the special education profession

Reasons (factors) for leaving the profession	Reasons (factors) for staying in the profession
- Lack of opportunity for professional development (15)*	Satisfaction with the changes in children with special needs (11)
- Low payment (low salary) (15)	To help children with special needs (9)
- Low status of the profession in the society. (13)	Children's love to their teachers (9)
- Lack of support and attention from parents, the society and the government (9)	Interest in teaching children with special need (7)
- The absence of owner for the profession (7)	Loving children with special needs and enjoyin being with them (6)
- Lack of fringe benefits (e.g., night classes) (7)	Loving the profession (6)
- Lack of awareness in the society (7)	Sympathy to children with special needs (4)
- Lack of teaching materials (6)	To communicate with children with hearing impairment (specific to teacher of children with hearing impairment) (3)
- Tiresome work (Job) (6)	To contribute for the expansion of special education in the country (2)
- Slow progress of students though many efforts are exerted (5)	To get spiritual satisfaction in teaching students with special needs (2)
- Shortage of words in sign language (specific to teachers of students with hearing impairment) (3)	Lack of other opportunities (1)
- Lack of professional support and training by experts (3)	
- Students lack interest to learn (3)	
- Undermining teachers of children with special needs and considering them as persons with disability (2)	

* Numbers in bracket indicate number of respondents who mention the point among 40 participants.

3.2 Data Obtained Through Interview

As stated earlier, the purpose of the interview was to answer some questions pertaining to experiences of teachers of children with special needs and to supplement the information obtained through questionnaire. Responses to interviews and probes are discussed as follows.

3.2.1 Positive Experiences of Teachers of Children with Special Needs

Teachers were asked to report the positive experiences they had in and outside the school in relation to teaching children with special needs. Experiences in relation to being special education teacher were also considered. The question mainly focused on positive experiences from colleagues, administrators and students inside the school and friends, family members, relatives, neighbors and the society at large outside the school setting. The questions and probes were related more with the social experiences of teachers of children with special needs. In response to this, almost all teachers who participated in the interview reported that the only positive experience they had in teaching children with special needs and being a special education teacher is the children's love to their teachers. Unlike others, one participant from Yekatit 23 School appreciated the relationship, support and encouragement from regular education teachers. Participants from Alpha special school, Akaki and Belay Zeleke No. 2 schools gave credit for the help, attention and encouragement they have got from directors and deputy directors. Despite the above few positive reports, most teachers maintained that they had no positive experience in and outside the school.

3.2.2 Negative Experiences of Teachers of Children with Special Needs

Special education teachers were also asked to report the negative experiences they had in and outside the school. In response, they reported negative experiences they had from colleagues of regular education, administrators, regular students, children with special needs, friends, family members, neighbors and the general public. With some exceptions, the participants indicated that regular teachers (in special classes and units) have no positive attitude towards special education teachers. This was mainly expressed in terms of alienation of teachers of children with special needs. Besides, according to some respondents, regular teachers consider them as having some kind of disability themselves. For instance, some interviewees reported that teachers of children with mental retardation are perceived as having mental retardation themselves. They are also seen as inefficient teachers. In most schools, directors are not supportive and efficient in running and administering special education program properly. These directors are not cooperative to realize the goals set. They do not give equal attention for special education as the regular education. Participants said that this is because of lack of awareness about special education and children with special needs. In contrast, some directors are very much cooperative and run the special education program with the regular education budget.

As far as children with special needs are concerned, the interviewees complained that limited/slow changes in academics in students are sources of the negative experiences. Teachers also experienced negative experience from regular students. These students were bullying, calling in nickname and discriminating children with special needs. These actions of regular students were also reported as a source of conflict between special education teachers and regular students.

Negative experiences from outside the school were well explained. All interviewees said that there is no support and encouragement from friends, family, relatives, neighbors and the society. For example, one interviewee reported that her friends terminated their friendship with her after she became special education teacher. According to this respondent, some teachers were discouraged to join teaching special needs education. For instance, some said, "It is too difficult to teach children with special needs." Others said, "We could not be successful in teaching hearing children, let alone children with hearing impairment." These perceptions collectively have the power to discourage teachers of children with special needs and affect their daily activities.

It was reported that in most cases, families of special education teachers are neither supportive nor discouraging. However, some families urge teachers to quit the profession because of its challenges. For instance, one interviewee reported that his family strongly advised him not to

choose this profession. His family members expressed their opposition by bullying. The interviewee said, "My brothers and sisters call me the 'MR' [*having mental retardation*]. I am discouraged and as a result I want to leave the profession".

Like family members, relatives of special education teachers have unfavorable attitude towards teachers of children with special needs. In some occasions, when relatives meet, they would often raise the issue and would try to convince teachers that they shall quit the profession. According to some respondents, the neighbors of special education teachers are not that much aware of the job of special education teachers. Those who have awareness consider teachers as if they know nothing except looking after children with disability. For instance, one participant said:

My neighbors wanted someone to consult on matters related to education and one of them referred them to ask me. Immediately they said, 'She is a teacher of children with mental retardation. She does not know about this issue', and I felt bad at that time

Teachers of children with special needs were also discouraged because of the non-supportive, non-cooperative and non-understanding behavior of the society.

They reported that:

The society lacks awareness, even families of children with special needs are not aware of the work we do. Families of children with disability, as part of the society, are not cooperative. Rather, they often blame teachers for the aid that comes in the name of their children. Most families believe that the aid in the name of their children is corrupted by teachers and see these teachers as persons who become prosperous with the aid. The reality is that there is no aid in the name of students with disability.

"Even though the society and families of children with disability seemed to have unfavorable attitudes toward teachers, it was done innocently because of lack of awareness", said one special education teacher. What is promising here is, teachers attribute the negative attitudes of the society to lack of awareness and suggested launching awareness creating and awareness raising programs by the government and NGOs which work in the area. In this connection, most interviewees also said that people with disability should be represented in the parliament.

3.2.3 How do Teachers perceive their Profession?

Evidently, the teaching profession has been given low status. Participants with sad tone expressed that the teaching profession is accorded low status and teaching children with special needs is given even a lower status than teaching in regular education setting.

One interviewee expressed angrily:

The community considered me as if I cannot do anything worth. Even in the school, regular teachers assumed me as I could not teach regular students. As a result, I am given low status in the school community. I am very much eager to show them how I can teach in a regular class setting.

Teachers also complain about the lack of attention for teachers of children with special needs from all directions. They explained that the government, the school administrators and other concerned bodies do not give attention to teachers of children with special needs. At times they are labeled '*good for nothing*' except looking after (not teaching) children with special needs. "The profession is not given due attention", said one interviewee. Some officials of the sub city education department said to teachers of children with special needs, "We are incapable of reaching regular students but you are talking about something additional." This tells much about the status of the profession. Performance evaluation is not implemented in most schools for special education teachers. This is because administrators considered special education as something special which cannot be measured and evaluated. It is considered as something lower than regular education.

"Even though attention is not given, special education is more useful than expected", said the informant. They confirmed the usefulness of the

profession because it is helpful and useful to children with special needs, parents, the society and the country. If the profession were non-existent, the fate of children with special needs would have been at home hidden from the community and parents would have invested much time to rear them.

Teachers of children with special needs were asked about their attitudes toward the profession. In response, most teachers have favorable attitudes toward their profession and their students with special needs. Nonetheless, they are disappointed by many factors (e.g., societal attitudes toward the profession) and seem to be tempted to take actions (e.g., leaving the profession). Basically, some teachers have unfavorable attitude from the very beginning. They joined the profession to realize their objectives of entering to city or town and to learn another subject in the continuing education programs of colleges and universities. However, most of the participants confirmed that they have favorable attitude though the profession did not get acceptance in the community, and at least by some education officials and school directors. At times teachers of children with special needs developed unfavorable attitudes when they failed to manage children with special needs. One participant's idea shows how the cumulative effects of negative experiences force individuals to change their attitude. He said, "I was interested in and had positive attitude to the profession, but the community forced me to change my attitude and let-down what I accepted."

Special education teachers were also asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the profession in general and with teaching children with special needs in particular. With dramatic similarity, all participants said that the only source of satisfaction is the assistance we provide to children with special needs and the change or progress students show in academic and non-academic activities.

In most cases, teachers reported dissatisfaction. The sources of the dissatisfaction are lack of support from the school administrators, education bureau officials and other concerned bodies, negative attitudes of the community toward the profession, children with special needs and teachers of children with special needs, lack of teaching materials, the absence of professional development and inadequate payment.

Most teachers of children with special needs were regular education teachers. Thus, they were asked about advantages (benefits from the profession) and disadvantages in their new profession. They reported that being special education teacher has no advantage. To the contrary, they had come up with a long list of disadvantages. Among the disadvantages, lack of respect, lack of professional development and increased workload are worth mentioning.

Special education teachers were asked to express their feeling regarding their interest in teaching children with special needs. In response to this question, some (three of nine) respondents said that they are not

interested and most (six of nine) said that they are interested. Both groups reported the factors for their interest and lack of interest. Those who are interested said that they were initially interested and joined the profession by their own choice to serve children with special needs. Those who are not interested reported that they joined the profession either casually or to fulfill other needs like transferring to town from rural areas or to avoid self contained classes.

To present directly, one interviewee said:

I joined the profession casually when I saw the notice posted in our school without interest and without knowing what special education is. Finally, I received low status from my family, friends, administrators and the general public. The pressure from different sources subjected me to frustration and I may decide to leave the profession.

The other participant said:

Frankly speaking, I was not interested in joining the profession. My very objective was to be transferred to the capital. I was attending continuing education program and it was difficult to shuttle specially at night. I am cognizant of the fact that they can transfer me if I attend one-year special education course. I did this and am now working in the capital attending my education. I am sure I will be leaving this profession right after I complete my education.

Some teachers are interested in teaching children with special needs. This is because children with special needs love their teachers and they are the most innocent. One participant said:

I am very much interested because I am teaching children who are discriminated even by their own families. They love and trust me more than their families. They tell me what they feel, what they want and what they deserve. The school is the place of freedom for them and I am interested in teaching children with special needs and enjoy it.

Those who are interested, however, are afraid that they would lose interest through time due to public opinion on the profession, lack of support and other factors.

Teachers of children with special needs were also asked whether they are encouraged or discouraged in teaching children with special needs. With perfect similarity, all the teachers who participated in the interview reported the absence of factors that encourage them in teaching children with special needs. To the contrary, teachers reported a dozen of discouraging factors in teaching children with special needs. These include low salary, lack of support, low status of the profession, lack of teaching materials.

One participant said:

It is difficult to teach children with special needs without teaching aids. The administration is not that much concerned about special education. Some of the families of children with special needs and the society at large are not

cooperative and supportive. There is no professional development in this profession and have not been accepted by the society. These things collectively discouraged me.

Teachers of students with hearing impairment, on their part, mentioned inability to teach children with hearing impairment with the existing sign language. An interviewee said:

I am not capable of teaching due to limited number of words (i.e. 1009) in sign language. I could not teach the content, what I feel and what I think. I, always, suffer from tension being incapable of elaborating contents on the text using sign language.

In summary, special education teachers listed a number of reasons for leaving the profession. In fact, some are mentioned more frequently than others. For example, many potential leavers constantly mentioned lack of opportunity for professional development and low payment as the main reasons to leave the profession. The low status of the profession in the society also aggravates the turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs.

Although equal chance was given for the interviewees to list reasons for staying in the profession, only a short list was obtained. Almost all reasons are associated with students with special needs and the profession. Commitment to help the students and the profession force them to stay in the profession. Mostly, teachers show interest to stay in the profession for the sake of children with special needs. Commitment to the profession and commitment to the children with special needs are the main reasons to stay in the profession.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

The present study focuses on the psychosocial experience of teachers of children with special needs and their turnover intention. To examine the experience that teachers have and their turnover intention, the data obtained was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results of these analyses are discussed below.

4.1 The Relationship between the Independent Variable and the Dependent Variable

One of the findings in this study was the relationship between the independent variables (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment, gender, qualification, teaching experience and children's disability) and the dependent variable (turnover intention). In the present study turnover intention shows a significant relationship with gender ($r = .39, P < .05$) with job satisfaction ($r = -.65, P < .01$) with working condition ($r = -.33, P < .05$), and with commitment ($r = -.85, P < .01$).

Gender has a positive and significant relationship with turnover intention. That is, male special education teachers seem to have intention to leave the profession more so than their female colleagues. This result is consistent with studies conducted in local regular schools (Menna & Tesfaye, 2000; Tesfaye, 2003; Tesfaye & Demewoz, 2004). It

should be noted that though gender and intention to leave the teaching profession were significantly related, gender could not significantly predict turnover intention. One possible explanation for this is that, though the relation was significant, the power of the relationship is weak as compared to commitment. However, the relationship was not uncommon in studies that dealt with career decision of teachers especially in the local context.

Job satisfaction has a negative and high relationship with turnover intention in the present study. Among regular schoolteachers, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979), and Chapman (1984) reported findings that corroborated the present finding. The relationship implies that teachers who are dissatisfied show propensity to leave the profession than those who are not dissatisfied and vice versa. The more satisfied a teacher in his/her job is, it is less likely for him/her to leave teaching (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Litt & Turk, 1985; Borg & Riding, 1991).

Working condition correlated relatively low but significantly with turnover intention. The negative relationship indicates that teachers who work in good working condition are less likely to leave the profession. In agreement with the present result, Buckley et al., (2004) reported that as working condition improves, the probability of retention increases. As opposed to this, a local study by Menna and Tesfaye (2000) uncovered the absence of significant relationship between working condition and

turnover intention. The possible explanation for this discrepancy is that working condition of regular teachers may differ to that of teachers of children with special needs and also the discrepancy may be due to the difference in study site and population. Settings (e.g., regular and special education) are quite different from one school to another or from one country to another and so on. Thus, even in the same country/locality, some studies may report significant relationship while others may not.

Commitment and turnover intention correlated highly significantly and positively. As stated earlier, commitment in this study refers to commitment to the teaching profession, to the students and to the school. So, the present study is partially consistent with the results of many studies that were conducted in education and non-education settings since they considered at least one of the components of commitment (Chang, 1999; Menna & Tesfaye, 2000). The implication of this result is that teachers who are committed to the profession appear to be stable in their profession. Teachers with high commitment reported low intention to leave. This is because committed teachers give attention to their students and development of their profession regardless of several discouraging and dissatisfying factors that may lead teachers to leave the profession.

As opposed to the above mentioned variables, qualification, teaching experience in special education, teaching assignment and stress were found to have non-significant relationship with the turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs. As far as qualification is concerned, mixed results were reported. Some found (e.g., Billingsley, 2003) that when qualification and certification increase, teacher becomes less likely to stay in the profession since quality personnel could easily be employed. However, others (e.g., Balkin et al., 2002) reported that qualification is a key factor to career decision. When teachers become more qualified, they show linkage with the profession and tend to stay in the profession. Or else, they will not get the same benefit with the qualification they have outside teaching. As a result, they may want to stay than leave whenever they become qualified. In agreement with the present finding, Menna and Tesfaye (2000) found no significant relationship between qualification and career plan.

Children's disability and turnover intention had no significant relationship. It was expected that either teachers of children with hearing impairment or with mental retardation might show intention to leave due to the type of disability children have. As found through the interview, teachers are dedicated and committed to these children. Due to this, factors that affect career plan of such teachers do not matter. Thus, the result is not surprising.

The finding that stress and turnover intention did not show significant relationship in this study was not expected. This finding is inconsistent with many local and overseas studies that reported a significant relationship between stress and turnover intention (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Borg & Riding, 1991; Getachew, 1999).

A possible explanation for the absence of significant relationship in the present study may be attributed to the interest of teachers to help children with special needs regardless of many stressing factors like low salaries and lack of professional development. Supporting this explanation, an interviewee said, "Though nothing is promising in this profession, I must help these children since they are citizens. Who would take the responsibility of serving these children if I left the profession?"

4.2 The Predictive Power of Independent Variables to the Dependent

Variable

Multiple regression analysis was run to see the relative power of the variables involved in this study in predicting turnover intention. In this process, all predictor variables taken together explained 72 per cent of the proportion of variance in turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs. In the present study, commitment was the most important variable accounted for 70.8 percent of the variance in turnover intention uniquely. The remaining variables (gender, qualification,

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teaching experience, stress, job satisfaction, working condition and children's disability) explained altogether only 1.2% of the variance in turnover intention.

This result suggests that commitment is an important variable which affects the turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs. As stated earlier, commitment refers to teachers' commitment to the profession, students and organization (school). Many studies in the area focused on professional commitment and sometimes included commitment to students and school. In any case, studies that examined at least one of the three variables (commitment to profession, student and organization will be considered here).

The results of the present study are consistent with that of many studies which were conducted in general education setting. Tesfaye (2003) found that career commitment is the most important variable in predicting and mediating turnover intention of all other job related variables treated in his study. In his study, career commitment almost exclusively contributed the variance accounted for by job related personal variables. Also, the present result is in agreement with the finding of Menna and Tesfaye (2000) who found career commitment as the strongest predictor of teachers' career plan.

The findings of the present study are also consistent with results of other studies which were conducted in non-educational setting (Chang, 1999). Chang reported commitment as stronger in predicting turnover intention and indicated that when individuals are committed to the organization, they are less willing to leave the company and the degree is stronger for those highly committed to their careers.

Thus, the present result is not new as far as commitment as a strong predictor is concerned. It is not uncommon to find commitment as a strong predictor of turnover intention in educational and non-educational studies (e.g., Chang, 1999; Menna & Tesfaye, 2000; Tesfaye, 2003).

Special education teachers are serving students with disabilities and these children need something additional (e.g., home living skills training) to the academics. Hence, it is not surprising if the teachers are stressed, dissatisfied and perceived poor working condition. If they were not committed specially to help/support their students, they would have left the teaching profession. The buffering effect of commitment plays a great role in making teachers think of helping children with special needs regardless of stress, dissatisfaction and poor working condition. In line with this idea, Payne (2005) stated that special education teachers are valued mostly for their commitment to serve such a vast dimensional group.

Another explanation for the finding may lie on teachers' preference to the job. Initially, 85 per cent of the participants joined the profession by their own choice and this may lead them to be committed.

Committed teachers are rendering service despite discouraging factors. The present finding suggests that teachers of children with special needs show commitment and commitment itself become the strongest predictor of turnover intention.

Tesfaye (2003) found that career commitment buffers dissatisfaction and poor working condition. This means that those who are more committed but dissatisfied and working in poor working condition will not show intent to leave due to the buffering effect of career commitment. Consistently, special education teachers in the present study show commitment regardless of the lack of professional development, low salary, low status of the professional in the society, dissatisfaction and high stress.

4.3 Gender and children's disability differences

Mean differences in gender and children's disability differences were examined between females and males, and between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment in stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment

and turnover intention.

4.3.1 Gender Difference in Stress, Job Satisfaction, Working Condition, Commitment and Turnover Intention.

Statistically significant gender differences were found in job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention. More specifically, female special education teachers have relatively higher mean score ($M=30.79$) in job satisfaction than their male colleagues ($M=24.67$), $t(38) = 3.35$, $P < .05$.

This result is consistent with the findings of Borg and Riding (1991), Bame (1991), and Tesfaye (2003) which were conducted on teachers in regular education settings. This finding is not surprising specially in our context where the educated females are few in number and job availability is limited. In such conditions, female teachers may enjoy the status given for educated women and be in good terms with the profession since teaching is stereotyped as female occupation or since teaching is mostly assumed to be the domain of females (Ababayehu, 1995). This may also be because females tend to compare themselves with other women who have little or no chance for employment (Teskaye, 2003).

The other possible explanation is that female teachers may acknowledge the behavior of children with special needs than males since females are better at child rearing and may thus be better than males in handling

children with special needs. As opposed to this, male special education teachers may lack patience in the job and feel dissatisfied. In agreement with this argument, one female interviewee said, "Since the job needs maternity trait, males will not be good at handling children with special needs. Mostly, they become impatient easily with the tiresome activities like teaching home living skills."

Statistically significant gender difference was also observed in commitment. Female special education teachers have higher mean score in commitment ($M= 39.14$) than their male counterparts ($M= 30.92$), $t(38) = 2.4, P < .05$. The present result is consistent with the findings of Borg and Riding (1991) and Tesfaye (2003) both of which were conducted in regular education setting. Borg and Riding (1991), for example, reported that irrespective of age or the curriculum subject(s) taught, male teachers compared with their female colleagues were less committed.

The possible explanation for the difference in commitment may be somewhat similar to job satisfaction. Female teachers seem more sympathetic to these children and as a result they may be more committed to help these children to be independent in their life. Females reportedly join this profession to help these children and stay in for the sake of children with special needs.

One interviewee said:

I am here only to serve these children. I have no ears for my personal needs. I love them and they too. Now I feel that all these children are my biological children. I feel sad when my parents, friends and other people do not ask me about my children's well being. Whenever I prepare ceremony my respected guests are these children.

Thus, the result may not be surprising. Also, absence of women in prestigious careers may force female teachers to conform to traditional roles, which in turn fosters a sense of fulfillment for being in the teaching profession (Tesfaye, 2003). Internal feeling of fulfillment, in turn, may create commitment to children with special needs.

Another important finding in this study is the gender difference observed in turnover intention. Male special education teachers have higher mean score ($M=13.33$) than their female colleagues ($M= 9.03$), [$t(38) = -2.57, P < .01$].

Males show higher propensity to leave than females in this study. The present result is consistent with that of the many studies conducted in special and regular education settings. In agreement with this finding, Menna and Tesfaye (2000) reported that the likelihood of leaving the teaching profession is higher if the teacher is male. In line with this, Bame (1991) found that the proportion of male teachers who had intention to leave was somewhat alarming and nearly three quarter of them at one time thought of leaving teaching. A recent study by Tesfaye

(2003) also revealed that male teachers as a group reported higher propensity to leave teaching. In western countries the findings are mixed. For instance, Morvant et al., (1999) cited in Billingsley (2003) found that male teachers are more likely to indicate intention to leave whereas Singer (1993a) cited in Billingsley (2003) found that young female special education teachers leave the profession at higher rate than their male colleagues. However, studies in Ethiopia, as well as in sub-Saharan Africa revealed consistent results indicating that males show higher intention to leave the teaching profession (Bame, 1991; Menna & Tesfaye, 2000; Tesfaye 2003).

The likely explanation may be that females are less likely to be affected by the strange behaviors of some students with special needs. In contrast, male special education teachers lack the skill to deal with a child while refusing to do something as directed as compared to females. As a result male teachers may show intention to leave the profession. However, the limited job availability should be taken into account in interpreting this result. Mostly, females acknowledge teaching and accept the profession as a female domain. Females tend to think that teaching (in primary school) is consistent with their sex roles (Tefaye, 2003). Generally, teachers show intention to stay in the profession irrespective of gender.

As opposed to the variables discussed above, statistically significant difference was not observed between females and males in stress and working condition.

Mixed results were found in studies concerning gender difference in stress of teachers. For instance, Borg and Riding (1991) reported that males are more stressed than females whereas Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) found that females are more stressed than males. The discrepancy of results of previous studies could be due to cultural and methodological differences at least in part. The present study found a result that is not consistent with both findings. In this study the mean score of females ($M=38.25$) and the mean score of males ($M=35.83$) did not differ significantly [$t(38) = 1.006, P>.05$]. The absence of gender difference in stress is not surprising in our context. This is because both groups are equally suffering from the major stressing factors like low salary and lack of professional development. Besides, the nature of the work demands much effort to attain the goals set by teachers themselves and education bureau officials/ Ministry of Education.

Equally important was the examination of males' and females' perceived working condition. The mean score of females ($M= 29.68$) and the mean score of males ($M= 25.50$) did not differ significantly [$t(38) = 1.745, P>.05$].

As far as working condition is concerned, mostly both females and males share the same working condition. From daily observations and reports

of the participants, both groups lack teaching materials, administrative support and conducive environment to teach children with special needs. Thus, the absence of gender difference in working condition perception would not be surprising.

4.3.2 Difference between Teachers of Children with Mental Retardation and Teachers of Children with Hearing Impairment

It was assumed that the difference in students' disabilities might create difference in stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment and turnover intention between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment. Contrary to the above assumption, both groups did not show statistically significant difference in stress, job satisfaction commitment and turnover intention. However, there was a significant difference between the two groups of teachers in perceived working condition.

The mean score of teachers of children with hearing impairment (M=30.46) is significantly higher than the mean score of teachers of children with mental retardation (M= 25.38), [t(38) = -2.33, P<.05], in working condition. The mean difference indicates that teachers of children with hearing impairment perceived better working condition than teachers of children with mental retardation. To the knowledge of the researcher, no study compared the working condition of teachers of children with hearing impairment and teachers of children with mental

leading factors to stay in the profession. Durojaiye (1972) found that teachers of children with special needs chose the profession due to various reasons and the statements frequently made by them were, '*these children need us*', '*they are very friendly*' and '*it is good teaching them*'. From these stand points, the result found in the present study is something that one expects since commitment is very necessary to stay in the profession and to serve children with special needs.

The present study also revealed that teachers of children with special needs reported less intention to stay in the profession. It was confirmed by testing the mean score of the total teachers ($M=10.33$) using one sample t-test. The result [$t(39) = -2.043, P<.05$] indicates that teachers mean score on turnover intention is significantly lower than the test value 12 which is an ambivalent to differentiate the high and low mean scores. This result is not consistent with Tesfaye's (2003) result. Tesfaye revealed that on average, teachers are more at a propensity to plan leaving their career than staying in it regardless of the effects of socio-demographics, perceived work place condition, job-related environmental variables, and job-related personal variables. Meaning, teachers showed interest to leave teaching profession without the effects of the above mentioned variables. The inconsistency could be attributed to the difference in methodology, population and setting.

The result is encouraging since the majority of the participants are

complaining about the low salary, low social status and lack of professional development. The need to stay in the profession may be the need to help children with special needs and as a result the commitment teachers have to the children and the profession.

The multiple regression revealed commitment as an important predictor of turnover intention ($\beta=-.75, P<.001$). In agreement with this specific result, teachers show moderately high commitment ($M=36.67$), [$t(39) = 4.12, P<.01$] and the intention to stay in the profession may be the direct effect of commitment teachers have.

4.5 Turnover Intentions and Factors that Affect Special Education Teachers

Teachers of children with special needs are working in a very discouraging situation. They have been constantly complaining for what they and their students with special needs deserve. Special education is juvenile in our country and the government is busy in reaching regular students. As a result, the voice of teachers of children with special needs is not yet heard. In effect, teachers of children with special needs gradually experienced negative experiences from their job in particular and from their profession in general.

The present study disclosed many factors which affect the career intention of teachers. The qualitative analysis in the present study revealed specific factors whilst the quantitative part tells only about

general trends. Among the many factors that highly affect teachers' turnover intention, lack of opportunity for professional development, low (inadequate) payment and low status of the profession in the society are the most important variables. In agreement with this finding, Tesfaye and Demewoz (2004) reported factors that affect teachers' career plan and these were society's negative attitude towards the teaching profession, less economic benefit, less chance for career advancement in their decreasing order. In their study, society's negative attitude towards the profession was the most important factor for career decision. A study on Ghanaian teachers also revealed that the three most important factors which drive teachers out of teaching service are inadequate salary, lack of opportunity for promotion and low prestige in elementary teaching (Bame, 1991). Similarly, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) identified poor salary, poor promotion prospects and general dissatisfaction as the most frequent reasons given by teachers for leaving the profession.

Consistently, the present study revealed that salary, professional development and societal attitude are important factors in career intention. Since teachers' salaries are inadequate to cover their bills, teachers may show propensity to leave teaching. In line with this, Esteve (2000) argued that teachers are people who lack the ability to earn more. When they internalize the materialistic mentality, they soon leave teaching to seek occupation with more remuneration. Let alone in our

context, teachers in developed countries emphasized salary in their career decision. In one study, for example, when teachers were asked about the most important reasons for thinking to leave, 76 per cent of teachers mentioned salary and 45 percent stated poor opportunities for advancement (Litt & Turk, 1985).

Other factors that must be given due attention are lack of awareness in the society, lack of fringe benefits and the absence of professional ownership. In line with this, Rascket et al. (1985) reported lack of support from parents/community, lack of recognition for teaching excellence and financial problems as factors that aggravate teachers' decision to leave the teaching profession.

Special education teachers joined the profession for various reasons. However, most of them (85%) were teachers because they are interested to help children with special needs. As opposed to this, parents/community and the education bureau are not supportive and encouraging. In effect, teachers become discouraged and show intention to leave the profession.

Many of the teachers were heard saying:

Special needs education has no owner at any level. Experts at education bureau used the position to pave their way for other position or scholarships. There is no expert at sub city education department level to be consulted on matters that need professional support. Through time, special needs education has been named ownerless profession.

On the part of parents/community, leave alone supporting special educators, sometimes parents accuse of teachers for aids in the name of their children. The cumulative effect of these problems will lead teachers to leave the profession at one point in time.

The lack of opportunity for another job may force teachers to stay in the profession. But this has its own potential danger for the overall education process. In the endeavor to discern the state of teachers, many questions were raised. It was found that 57.5% of the teachers may leave the profession if they get an opportunity for another job; 42.5% of the teachers planned to leave within the next five years; 57.5% attend their education in continuing education programs and, 42.5% would not choose the profession if they could decide all over again. These are the indicators of career plans for significant proportion of teachers. These teachers may not stay if there is availability of job. In agreement with this finding, Bame (1991) commented that the failure to leave was obviously due to a number of variables, one of which might be that they did not perceive any alternative avenue for employment. They might leave teaching when alternative jobs are become available to them.

In a nut shell, a significantly high number of teachers showed intention to leave. They are staying, in part, due to lack of other jobs and reasonable salary with the experience they have. Though many problems urge teachers to leave the profession, commitment buffers the negative

effects of the discouraging factors.

Teachers were asked about the factors that helped them to stay in the profession. In one way or another, the responses revolve around the children and the profession. Among the factors, helping children with special needs, satisfaction with the progress in children, interest in teaching children with special needs, loving the profession and children's love to their teachers are the first five important variables. These imply that teachers have professional commitment and commitment to children with special needs. These commitments may also buffer the negative effects of stress, dissatisfaction and low salary. It is to be recalled that commitment is an important predictor of the turnover intention of teachers in this study ($\beta = -0.75$, $P < .001$). In agreement with the above idea, one interviewee said, "I am here only to help children with special needs. I have never been receiving encouragement since I joined the profession. I love the profession when I see changes in my children." Consistent with this finding, Kyriacou et al. (2003) identified factors that help teachers to become a teacher and to stay in the profession. These were altruistic reasons (e.g. wanting to help others succeed), intrinsic reasons (e.g. enjoying the activity of teaching) and extrinsic reasons (e.g. long holidays). Farugia (1986) investigated Maltese teachers about their profession and found that 62.5% of the respondents said that they were drawn to teaching and stay in by the desire either to work with young people or to practice what they regard as a highly stimulating vocation,

or to pass on to other the knowledge, skills and values they had acquired at school.

4.6 Experiences of Teachers of Children with Special Needs

The present study revealed positive and negative experiences of teachers in the psychological and social spheres of their job. Psychologically, they are stressed, less satisfied, moderately highly committed and showed less intention to stay. Socially, they experienced low status in the community, lack social/parental support, lack professional acceptance in the society at large.

By and large, special education teachers are not working in a condition which encourages them in and outside school. As a result, they reported several negative experiences. The positive experience mentioned more frequently was children's love of their teachers. Societal attitude towards the profession is the leading negative experience which affects the social experiences of teachers of children with special needs. In agreement with the present study, Esteve (2000) reported that the degree of social support of the educational system by the community and parents has deteriorated. Even in western countries, society's collective negative value judgment of teachers made teachers the scapegoats of the educational system; completely responsible for all that is wrong with it. The general lack of support and social recognition of teachers' work is more obvious. Society, in general, has reduced its expectation and support for teachers.

At present, the public value judgment of teachers and their work is largely negative.

Society at large in general and some parents of children with special needs in particular do not have positive attitude towards teachers. One interviewee's experience is worth mentioning here. She said:

Parents of children with special needs came to school and asked me about aid in the name of their children. It was strange for me and I told them as there was no aid. They did not believe me; rather, they insulted me. I have never forgotten how I wept that day.

In agreement with this, experiences of teachers of western countries were almost similar. Esteve (2000) reported that if individual teachers work to introduce quality into their teaching, if they work extra hours, it is rare that this dedication to duty is recognized or valued. Nevertheless, when there is a teaching failure possibly through circumstances beyond their control, teachers are blamed immediately and directly for the failure and all its consequences.

The professional status teachers have in the society also discouraged teachers of children with special needs. In line with this, Durojaiye (1972) revealed that the largest proportion of teachers emphasizing frustration about professional status came from special school teachers who complained of lack of appreciation, lack of understanding and

stigmatization (alienation) from and by the public at large because of their being teachers in special schools for children with special needs.

As a result, teachers perceive their profession as non-rewarding and significantly more (57.5%) teachers want to leave the profession if there are other opportunities. The present study is consistent with Menna and Tesfaye's (2000) finding. Menna and Tesfaye's study revealed that teachers' perception of their social status is strongly related to career plan. The majority (67.6%) of the teachers perceived low social status and at the same time showed intent to leave. This is, in part, due to the fact that society today tends to rank social status in terms of earnings (Esetve, 2000).

Teaching in general and teaching children with special needs in particular are not regarded as professions holding a high social status in the society as compared with other occupations. This may lead teachers to frustration and feeling of low self-worth and low morale (Antonion et al., 2000). The possible explanation for this may be that the general public may assume teaching special needs education as something any body can do and this attitude might reduce the prestige which the public accorded to teaching.

The other major complaint of teachers of children with special needs is lack of professional development. They constantly complain that they could not improve their education and missed many advantages (e.g., salary increment) since there is no professional development. This study

revealed that professional development is a key factor to retain teachers. In agreement with the present study, Gersten et al. (2001) revealed that teachers who felt they were provided opportunities to learn on the job tended to be less likely to leave. Professional development helps to ameliorate the problem of teacher attrition. Professional development widely thought to offer opportunity to teachers and in so doing is likely to result in greater job satisfaction and hence increase retention with the profession (Rhodes et al., 2004). Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990) also found that the absence of opportunities for professional growth has been related to the dissatisfaction and attrition of teachers. A local study by Darge (2002) also reminds us of the idea that opportunities for further education and training significantly better recognition of teachers' contribution to society particularly when turnover is high.

Teachers of children with special needs might need professional development for many purposes. The main reasons would be the need for better remuneration and increased status due to the newly received diploma or degree. Also, the need for up-to-date information should not be overlooked.

At the very beginning, the majority (85%) of the teachers chose the profession by their own. A considerable number of teachers (i.e. 42.5%) planned to leave teaching children with special needs within the forthcoming five years. In the presence of many reasons that may lead

teachers to leave, most of them are still wanting to stay in the profession. The possible explanation could be that special education teachers were attracted to their specialty because they wanted to help students overcome obstacles and become functioning members of the community. Accordingly, these teachers might see many of the problems in preparing students to function outside their classroom as challenges and opportunities (Markham et al., 1986). As opposed to this, some might use teaching as a socially acceptable means of "buying time" while deciding what career to pursue, or they believed teacher training would be an appropriate preparation for whatever they were interested in pursuing (Chapman, 1984). The present study also revealed that 57.5 per cent of the special education teachers are attending their education in the continuing education programs of colleges and universities. This would pave the way to leave the profession right after completion of their studies. Supporting this idea, one interviewee said, "I joined this profession to be deployed to town and to pursue my education in the university. I will leave this profession as soon as I complete my education."

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The present study was conducted to address the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs and turnover intention as a function of these experiences. In this effort, the following research questions were formulated for investigation.

1. Do job related (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and demographic (gender, qualification, teaching experience in special education, children's disability type) variables significantly predict turnover intention?
2. Is there statistically significant gender difference in job related variables (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and turnover intention?
3. Is there statistically significant difference between teachers of children with mental retardation and teachers of children with hearing impairment in job related variables (stress, job satisfaction, working condition, commitment) and turnover intention?

4. What is the extent/level of stress, job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention and perception of working condition among teachers of children with special needs?
5. How do special education teachers perceive their profession? What are the factors that explain their (favorable or unfavorable) perception?
6. What psychosocial experiences do teachers have in and outside the school in relation to teaching children with special needs?

There are about sixteen schools in Addis Ababa which provide access to education for children with special needs. Of these, nine governmental schools which have trained special education teachers were selected and all available teachers were included in the study. The total number of participants was 40 (male =12 and female = 28).

Two types of instruments (questionnaire and interview) were used to collect the necessary information. The instruments were pilot tested using 20 teachers of children with special needs. Based on this, items were improved at least in their wording. Analyses were carried out using descriptive (mean standard deviation, percentage, bivariate correlation) and inferential statistics (multiple and stepwise regression, independent t-test and one sample t-test). The data obtained through interview were presented verbatim as direct quotations and analyzed qualitatively.

The analyses disclosed the following results.

- Commitment plays a great role in predicting turnover intention of teachers of children with special needs.
- Statistically significant gender differences were observed in job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention. Females showed higher job satisfaction, commitment and intention to stay in the profession than their male colleagues did.
- On the average, teachers of children with special needs experience high stress, have moderately high commitment and less intention to stay.
- Lack of professional development, low status of the profession in the society and inadequate salaries were frequently mentioned as discouraging factors. Whereas children's love of their teachers and the interest of teachers to serve children with special needs are the main factors that force teachers to stay in the profession.
- Special education teachers are not supported and encouraged inside and outside the school. More specifically, school administrators, parents of children with special needs, education bureau officials and the society at large are not in favor of teachers of children with special needs. This is due to lack of awareness about special needs education. The cumulative effect of these problems affects teachers of children with special needs and they perceive their profession as non-rewarding but a useful one.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings one can conclude that:

1. Commitment is the most important factor that could determine whether teachers of children with special needs decide to stay in or leave the profession.
2. Teachers of children with special needs tend to experience high stress, have moderately high commitment and less intention to stay in the profession.
3. Females are relatively satisfied, committed and have intention to stay in the profession as compared to their male colleagues.
4. Lack of professional development, low status of the profession in the society and inadequate salary seem to be the most discouraging factors as far as teachers of children with special needs are concerned.
5. Teachers' interest to serve children with special needs, children's love to their teachers and satisfaction from children's progress are important factors that help teachers to stay in the profession
6. Teachers of children with special needs perceive their profession as non-rewarding but useful in helping the society in general and children with special needs and their parents in particular.
7. Society at large and parents of children with special needs in particular do not tend to support and encourage teachers of children with special needs.

8. Most teachers of children with special needs appear to be interested in teaching children with special needs although there is nothing encouraging except perceived children's love of their teachers.
9. Generally, teachers of children with special needs experienced more negative and less positive experiences in and outside the school.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Special needs education teacher training institutions should play an important role in producing committed teachers alongside the cognitive aspect of the training. Commitment to the profession and to children with special needs help teachers to stay in the teaching profession.
2. Teachers of children with special needs should be given chance for professional development. Professional development helps teachers to acquire up-to-date information, increase their status and salaries which in turn has a positive impact on teacher retention.
3. Ministry of Education should create awareness among the public about disabilities in general and special needs education in particular. This will help education bureau officials, parents of children with special needs and the society at large to be on the side of teachers of children with special needs at least through support, encouragement and favorable attitude.

Support, encouragement and interaction from school administrators, parents of children with special needs, education bureau officials and society at large is very crucial to retain teachers, reduce stress, increase satisfaction and develop commitment among teachers of children with special needs.

4. Special needs education teachers should be provided hardship allowance, family inclusive medical care, salary increment or at least one of these. These help to retain the existing teachers and to attract new trainees into the teaching profession.
5. Employing more female teachers is recommended for various reasons. Female teachers have high commitment, good interaction with children with special needs, and mostly have better intention to stay in the profession.
6. Further research should be conducted with a national sample to understand the magnitude of turnover and the problems teachers of children with special needs are facing. This helps the Ministry of Education to take actions in relation to the findings. Individuals will be appreciated, if they take the initiative to carry out a research in the area for better understanding and solutions of the problems.

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Appendix A

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Psychology

Dear Teacher,

The purpose of this study is to examine the psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs in relation to teaching children with special needs and the effect of these experiences in career decision. Thereby, this is, to suggest possible solutions to improve weak sides and to strengthen strong sides. Therefore, your contribution is a key to identify the points and kindly requested to fill the questionnaire. The information/data collected through this questionnaire will only be used for academic purpose and will be kept confidential. In addition, your name is not included in the questionnaire and you will not be identified with your responses. Honesty and frankness is highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

General Information

This questionnaire has three parts. Each part has its own instruction which helps the respondent on how to provide the response. Please, read carefully each item and answer all questions. Honesty and frankness is highly appreciated.

Part I

Following are six sub sections arranged in a Likert-type scale. Please, carefully read the instruction and respond for each item.

1. Potential Sources of Stress

Following are possible sources of stress in relation to teaching children with special needs. The assumed sources of stress may have different level. Indicate the level of stress with regard to the issue raised as it applies to you. Use tick “√” “mark while responding.

S.N	Items	VH	H	M	Low	VL	Not
1	Scarcity of teaching materials						
2	Teaching students with disability						
3	Inadequate salary (Low payment)						
4	Lack of administrative support						
5	Too much work (overloaded)						
6	Low status of the profession in the society						
7	Poor learning progress of students with disability.						
8	Unfair evaluation of teacher's performance by principals/directors.						
9	Limited promotion opportunity in one's career.						
10	Giving special attention to individual student with disability						

VH= very high, H=high, MOD=moderate, VL= very low and Not= not at all.

2. Measures of job satisfaction

Below are items related to job satisfaction. Indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement for each item by putting a tick (“√”) mark.

Strongly agree= SA

Disagree= D

Agree= A

Strongly Disagree= SD

Undecided=U

S.N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I feel that my future security in this job is guaranteed					
2	I feel dissatisfaction with the pay (salary) I get					
3	I am satisfied in my job due to the progress of my students					
4	The opportunity for advancement in this job is not promising					
5	I am not satisfied with the procedure used to promote teachers in this profession					
6	Teaching children with special needs gives me a great deal of satisfaction					
7	The school compound presents me an atmosphere conducive to teach children with special needs					
8	Teaching children with special needs is mostly full of routine activities					
9	I am given respect from the school community for the job I do.					
10	I feel I am satisfied being an important part of the school system.					

4. Measures of Working Conditions

The following items are used to assess the working condition of teachers of children with special needs. Please, indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement to each item. Use tick (“√”) mark to indicate your response.

S.N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	The technical support from the school is satisfactory					
2.	Salary is not sufficient as compared to the nature of the work (workload)					
3	Teaching aids and materials are sufficient					
4	I have ample opportunities in my school to collaborate with my colleagues					
5	The school compound is not attractive to work in.					
6	The school administration supports me in my effort to improve education of children.					
7	I am not evaluated fairly by my supervisors about my performance					
8	My work load is not manageable					
9	Teachers’ promotion is fairly processed by concerned bodies					
10	I have good relationship with fellow teachers					

5. Measures of Commitment

Following are items indicating commitment in one's working life. Please, indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement to each statement. Put a tick ("√") mark on your response.

S.N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	I will continue in teaching children with special needs for the rest of my life					
2	I am willing to exert a considerable effort to support students with special needs					
3	I have the willingness to exert desirable effort on behalf of my school					
4	I feel unpleasant from time to time since the problems in this profession are many					
5	I am really proud of being a teacher of children with special needs					
6	I would like to take a different job other than teaching students with special needs					
7	If I could do all over again, I would not choose this profession					
8	I want to help children with special needs to achieve success					
9	I am no longer as interested to this profession as I once were					
10	This profession is the right career for me					

Part II

Career plan

This section constitutes measures of career plan. Please provide necessary information for each question raised from the given alternatives or on the space provided.

S.N	Items	SA	S	U	D	SD
1	I often think about quitting					
2	It is very likely that I will actively looking for a new job in the next year					
3	I will leave this job as soon as I find another job.					
4	I will leave this job in the next year.					

5. At this time in your career, would you want to quit (stop) your job if possible?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

6. Are you planning to leave your job with in the next 5 years?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

7. Are you actually searching for another job right now?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

8. Are you taking courses in any college or university other than special education to up grade yourself?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

9. Did you join this profession by your choice?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

10. If you could earn as much equal money in other occupation, would you stop teaching children with special needs?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

11. If you could decide all over it again, would you choose the profession again as a life career?

Yes No Other, please specify _____

Appendix B

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies Department of Psychology

Interview Guide

Interview to be held with teachers of children with special needs

Semi-structured interview themes on psychosocial experiences of teachers of children with special needs.

1. What positive experiences do you have in relation to teaching children with special needs and being teacher of children with special needs?
 - Inside the school
 - colleagues
 - administrators
 - students
 - Outside the school
 - friends
 - family
 - relatives
 - neighbors
 - community/society
2. What negative experiences do you have in relation to teaching children with special needs?
 - Inside the school
 - colleagues
 - administrators
 - students

- Outside the school
 - friends
 - family
 - relatives
 - neighbors
 - community
3. What do you feel/perceive about your profession?
 - Status (prestige)
 - Usefulness of the profession
 - Favorable Vs unfavorable attitude
 - Satisfaction Vs dissatisfaction within job
 - Advantage Vs disadvantage(benefits from the profession)
 4. Are you interested in teaching children with Special needs?
 - Factors for interest
 5. What discourages you in teaching children with special needs in and outside the school?
 6. If you plan to leave the profession, what are the most important factors that contributed to this?
 7. If you plan to stay in the profession, what are the most important factors that contributed to this?
 8. If you have a chance to do something for teachers of children with special need, what measures would you take?
 9. Any additional point that you want to raise?

Appendix C

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ድህረ ምረቃ ት/ቤት የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ክፍል

ውድ መምህር

የዚህ ጥናት ዓላማ የልዩ ፍላጎት ትምህርት መምህራን በመማር ማስተማሩ ሂደት የሚገጥሟቸውን ማህበራዊና ሥነ-ልቦናዊ የሆኑ ከሥራው ጋር የተገናኙ አዎንታዊና አሉታዊ ገጠመኞችን ለመለየት፤ እነዚህ አዎንታዊና አሉታዊ ልምዶች በሥራ ዓለም ለመቆየት ወይም ለመልቀቅ ያላቸውን ተዛምዶ በማየት እና አሉታዊ ገጠመኞችን ለማስወገድ የሚረዱ የመፍትሔ ሃሳቦችን ለመጠቀምና አዎንታዊ ልምዶች እንዲጠነክሩ ለማድረግ ነው። ስለሆነም ነጥቦችን በውል ለይቶ ለማወቅ የእርስዎ አስተዋፅኦ ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ መጠይቁን በመሙላት እንዲተባበሩ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ። በዚህ መጠይቅ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ለትምህርት አገልግሎት ብቻ ከመዋሉ ባሻገር በምስጢር የሚያዝ ይሆናል። በተጨማሪ ስምዎ በመጠይቁ ባለመካተቱ እርስዎ የሞሉትን መጠይቅ ማወቅ አይቻልም። ስለዚህ የሚሰማዎትን እውነተኛ ስሜት በነፃነት ይግለፁ።

በቅድሚያ ስለትብብርዎ በጣም አመሰግናለሁ።

ጠቅላላ መረጃ

ይህ መጠይቅ ሶስት ክፍሎች ያሉት ሲሆን በእያንዳንዱ ክፍል መላሹ እንዴት መመለስ እንዳለበት የሚያስረዱ መመሪያዎች ተሰጥተዋል። እባክዎ እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ በጥምና ካነበቡ በኋላ መልስ ይስጡ።

ክፍል አንድ

ቀጥሎ በአምስት ንዑስ ክፍሎች የተቀመጡ መመዘኛዎች ቀርበዋል። ከእያንዳንዱ ንዑስ ክፍል ስር በተቀመጠው መመሪያ መሠረት መልስ ይስጡ። የእርስዎ ትክክለኛና ግልፅ መልስ ለጥናቱ መሳካት ወሳኝ ነው።

1. የጫና ወይም የውጥረት ምንጮች (Sources of Stress)

ቀጥሎ ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ልጆች ከማስተማር ጋር በተያያዘ የውጥረት ወይም ጫና ምንጮች ናቸው ተብለው የሚታሰቡ ነጥቦች ተዘርዝረዋል። እነዚህ ምንጮች የተለያዩ የውጥረት ደረጃ ሊኖራቸው ይችላል። ስለሆነም በእርስዎ ላይ ያለውን የጫና መጠን ከተነሳው ሃሳብ አንጻር ከተሰጡት አማራጮች መርጠው ያመልክቱ። መልስ ሲሰጡ የ“✓” ምልክት ይጠቀሙ።

ተ.ቁ.	ዐረፍተ ነገሮች	የውጥረት (ጫና) ደረጃ					
		በጣም ከፍተኛ	ከፍተኛ	መካከለኛ	ዝቅተኛ	በጣም ዝቅተኛ	ጫና የለውም
1	የማስተማሪያ መሣሪያዎች እጥረት						
2	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች ማስተማር						
3	በቂ ያልሆነ ደመወዝ (ዝቅተኛ ክፍያ)						
4	አስተዳደራዊ አገዛ (ድጋፍ) ማጣት						
5	የሥራ ብዛት (ከመጠን ያለፈ የስራ ጫና)						
6	ሀብረተሰቡ ለሙያው ያለው ዝቅተኛ አመለካከት						
7	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተማሪዎች በትምህርታቸው የሚያሳዩት መሻሻል ዝቅተኛ መሆን						
8	በርዕሳን መምህራን የሚደረግ ተገቢ ያልሆነ የመምህራን የሥራ አፈፃፀም ግምገማ						
9	የመምህራን የደረጃ እድገት የማግኘት እድል ውስን መሆን						
10	ለእያንዳንዱ ተማሪ ልዩ ትኩረት መስጠት						

3. በሥራ መርካት (Job Satisfaction)

በዚህ በታች በሥራ መርካትን የተመለከቱ ነጥቦች ተነስተዋል። በተነሱት ነጥቦች ላይ የሚሠማሙበትን ወይም የማይስማሙበትን ደረጃ የ“✓” ምልክት በማስቀመጥ ያመልክቱ።

ተ.ቁ.	ዐረፍተ ነገሮች	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	አልወሰንኩም	አልስማማም	በጣም አልስማማም
1	በዚህ ሥራ የወደፊት ዋስትና እንዳለኝ ይሰማኛል					
2	በሚከፈለኝ ክፍያ (ደመወዝ) አልረካም					
3	በተማሪዎቼ የትምህርት ውጤት መሻሻል ምክንያት በስራዬ ረክቻለሁ					
4	በዚህ መ.ያ ራስን የማሻሻል እድል ተስፋ ሰጭ አይደለም					
5	በዚህ መ.ያ ውስጥ ያሉ መምህራንን ደረጃ ለማሳደግ የሚተገበረው የአሰራር ሂደት አያስደስተኝም					
6	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ልጆች ማስተማር ከፍተኛ እርካታ ይሠጠኛል					
7	የት/ቤቱ ጠቅላላ አደረጃጀት ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች እንዳስተምር ምቹ ሁኔታ ፈጥሮልኛል					
8	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች ማስተማር አሰልፎ ተግባር ነው					
9	በምሰራው ሥራ ከት/ቤቱ ማህበረሰብ ተገቢውን ክብር አገኛለሁ					
10	በት/ቤቱ ስርዓት ውስጥ ጠቃሚ ሰው በመሆኔ እርካታ ይሰማኛል					

4. የገራሽ ስራ ሁኔታ (Working Conditions)

የሚከተሉት ነጥቦች የልዩ ፍላጎት መሰረት ለሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡ ስለሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡

ተ.ቁ.	ዕድገት ነገር	ሰላም	አስተማማኝ ስራ	አልወሰነ ስራ	አልወሰነ ስራ	አልወሰነ ስራ	አልወሰነ ስራ
I	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
2	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡ (በዚህ ስራ ላይ)						
3	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
4	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
5	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
6	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
7	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
8	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
9	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						
10	የሰራተኛው ስራ ሁኔታ ለመግለጻት ይጠቀማሉ፡፡						

5. ቁርጠኝነት (Commitment)

የሚከተሉት ነጥቦች አንድ ሰው ለሥራው ያለውን ቁርጠኝነት የሚያመለክቱ ናቸው። የሚስማሙበትን ወይም የማይስማሙበትን ደረጃ ለአያንዳንዱ ነጥብ ያመልክቱ።

ተ.ቁ.	ዐረፍተ ነገሮች	በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	አልወሰንኩም	አልስማማም	በጣም አልስማማም
1	በሀይወት ዘመኔ ሁሉ ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች በማስተማር እቀጥላለሁ					
2	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች ለመርዳት አስፈላጊውን ጥረት ለማድረግ ዝግጁ ነኝ					
3	በት/ቤቴ ስም አስፈላጊውን ጥረት ለማድረግ ፈቃደኛ ነኝ					
4	በዚህ ሙያ ለመቀጠል ያለኝ ፍላጎት ከጊዜ ወደ ጊዜ እየቀነሰ መጥቷል					
5	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸው ተማሪዎች መምህር በመሆኔ በእውነቱ ከራሳችን ይለማኛል					
6	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች ከማስተማር ይልቅ ሌላ ስራ ባገኝ እመርጣለሁ					
7	ሁሉን ነገር እንደገና ማድረግ ብቸል፤ ይህን ሙያዬን ዳግም አልመርጠውም					
8	ልዩ ፍላጎት ያላቸውን ተማሪዎች ለመረዳት ቆርጫ ተነስቻለሁ።					
9	ለዚህ ሙያ ያለኝ ፍላጎት እንደበሬቱ አይደለም					
10	ይህ ስራ ለኔ ተክክለኛ ሙያ ነው					

12. በሙያው እንዲቀጥሉ የሚያደርጉዎት ዋና ዋና ምክንያቶች ምንድን ናቸው?

የመጀመሪያዎችን አምስት ዋና ዋና ምክንያቶችን ይዘርዝሩ?

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

13. ሙያውን ለመተው (ለመልቀቅ) የሚያስገድዱ ነገሮች ምንድን ናቸው? የመጀመሪያዎቹን አምስት ዋና ዋና ምክንያቶችን ይዘርዝሩ።

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

ክፍል ሦስት

የግል መረጃዎች

በዚህ ክፍል የግል መረጃዎችን የተመለከቱ ነጥቦች ተነስተዋል። አስፈላጊውን መረጃ በመስጠት ይተባበሩ።

1. የታ 1.1 ወንድ 1.2 ሴት

2. እድሜ -----

3. የትምህርት ደረጃ -----

4. የልዩ ፍላጎት ትምህርት ስልጠና ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ተከታትለዋል?

5. የሚያስተምሯቸው ተማሪዎች ያለባቸው

ሀ. የአዕምሮ እድገት ዝግመት

ለ. መስማት የተሳናቸው

ሐ. ማየት የተሳናቸው

መ. የአካል ጎዳተኞች (motor disorder)

ሠ. ሌላ ይጥቀሱ -----

6. የማስተማር ልምድ በልዩ ፍላጎት ----- ዓመት

በሌላ ካለ ----- ዓመት

ስለትብብርዎ በጣም አመሠግናለሁ።

Appendix- D

Distribution of responses in response options of stress, job satisfaction,
working condition, commitment and turnover interaction

1. Stress

	0		1		2		3		4		5		M	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Item 1	1	2.5	4	10	1	2.5	3	7.5	9	22.5	22	55	4.03	1.44
Item 2	2	5	1	2.5	2	5	7	17.5	7	17.5	21	52.5	3.98	1.40
Item 3	-	-	3	7.5	2	5	11	27.5	5	12.5	19	47.5	3.88	1.28
Item 4	2	5	2	5	2	5	14	35	7	17.5	14	35	3.65	1.29
Item 5	3	7.5	1	2.5	-	-	20	50	7	17.5	9	22.5	3.35	1.33
Item 6	-	-	4	10	3	7.5	3	7.5	6	15	24	60	4.08	1.38
Item 7	-	-	2	5	5	12.5	9	22.5	3	7.5	21	52.5	3.90	1.32
Item 8	6	15	5	12.5	5	12.5	9	22.5	4	10	11	27.5	3.83	1.80
Item 9	2	5	1	2.5	4	10	4	10	7	17.5	22	55.5	3.98	1.46
Item 10	1	2.5	3	7.5	1	2.5	9	22.5	7	17.5	19	47.5	3.88	1.38
Total	16	4	26	6.5	25	6.25	89	22.25	62	15.5	182	45.5	37.53	6.97

2. Job satisfaction

	1		2		3		4		5		M	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Item 1	5	12.5	6	15	7	17.5	4	10	18	45	3.60	1.50
Item 2		60	5	12.5	1	2.5	6	15	4	10	2.03	1.48
Item 3	24	10	13	32.5	2	5	10	25	11	27.5	3.28	1.43
Item 4	4	55	6	15	2	5	7	17.5	3	7.5	2.08	1.42
Item 5	22	865	7	17.5	-	-	5	152.5	2	5	1.75	1.26
Item 6	26	5	-	-	2	5	11	27.5	25	62.5	4.43	0.98
Item 7	2	37.5	15	37.5	-	-	6	15	4	10	2.23	1.37
Item 8	15	15	9	22.5	1	2.5	15	37.5	9	22.5	3.30	1.44
Item 9	6	17.5	10	25	3	7.5	10	25	10	25	3.15	1.49
Item 10	7	25	4	10	4	10	15	37.5	7	17.5	3.13	1.48
Total	121	30	75	18.75	22	5.5	89	22.25	93	23.25	28.95	7.12

3. Working condition

	1		2		3		4		5		M	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Item1	10	25	16	40	-	-	11	27.5	3	7.5	2.53	1.50
Item 2	21	52.5	12	30	1	2.5	4	10	2	5	1.85	1.48
Item 3	12	30	19	47.5	1	2.5	4	10	4	10	2.23	1.43
Item 4	5	12.5	9	22.5	4	10	10	25	12	30	3.38	1.42
Item 5	12	30	14	35	1	2.5	8	20	5	12.5	2.50	1.26
Item 6	5	12.5	12	30	2	5	6	15	15	37.5	3.35	0.98
Item 7	10	25	7	17.5	2	5	15	37.5	6	15	3.00	1.37
Item 8	3	7.5	16	40	5	12.5	13	32.5	3	7.5	2.93	1.44
Item 9	12	30	15	37.5	6	15	4	10	3	7.5	2.28	1.99
Item10	1	2.5	3	7.5	1	2.5	9	22.5	26	65	4.40	1.49
Total	91	22.75	123	30.75	23	5.75	84	21	79	19.75	28.43	7.12

4. Commitment

	1		2		3		4		5		M	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Item1	5	12.5	4	10	7	17.5	6	15	18	45	3.70	1.45
Item2	2	5	-	-	2	5	15	37	21	52.5	4.33	0.97
Item3	-	-	4	10	2	5	11	27.5	23	57.5	4.33	0.97
Item4	11	27.5	8	20	3	7.5	10	5	8	20	2.90	1.54
Item5	5	12.5	3	7.5	4	10	8	20	20	50	3.88	1.43
Item6	6	15	5	12.5	5	12.5	14	35	10	25	3.43	1.39
Item7	5	12.5	4	10	8	20	14	35	9	22.5	3.45	1.30
Item8	2	5	2	5	3	7.5	18	45	15	37.5	4.05	1.06
Item9	7	17.5	9	22.5	4	10	12	30	8	20	3.13	1.44
Item10	4	10	7	17.5	10	25	3	7.5	16	40	3.50	1.43
Total	47	11.75	46	11.5	48	12	111	27.75	148	37	36.67	10.24

5. Turnover Intention

	1		2		3		4		5		M	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Item 1	13	32.5	8	20	8	20	6	15	5	12.5	2.55	1.41
Item 2	13	32.5	9	22.5	9	22.5	5	12.5	4	10	2.45	1.34
Item 3	15	37.5	6	15	10	25	5	12.5	4	10	2.43	1.30
Item 4	10	25	10	25	5	12.5	4	10	11	27.5	2.90	1.58
Total	51	31.88	33	20.63	32	20	20	12.5	24	15	10.33	5.19

Appendix -E

Proportion of Teachers' Experience in Stress, Job Satisfaction, Working condition, Commitment and Turnover intention by High and Low scores.

	Stress		Job satisfaction		Working Condition		Commitment		Turnover Intention	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Mean	1.13	4.28	1.55	4.51	1.71	4.48	2.00	4.57	1.84	4.55
S.D	0.78	0.86	0.67	0.50	0.63	0.50	0.82	0.50	0.83	0.50
f	67	333	218	182	237	163	141	259	116	44
%	16.5	83.5	54.5	45.5	59.25	40.75	35.25	64.75	72.5	27.5

Declaration

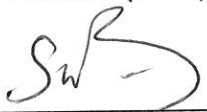
I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name : Fantahun Admas

Signature  _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor

Name: Seleshi Zeleke (PhD)

Signature  _____