



Addis Ababa University
College of Education and Behavioral Studies
Department of Curriculum and Teachers' Professional Development Studies

Implementation of Decentralization of Primary School Curriculum
Development in Ethiopia: The Cases of Addis Ababa,
Gambella and Oromia Regions

By

Belete Damtew

Advisor

Ambissa Kenea(Ph.D)

A Dissertation Submitted to Department of Curriculum and Teachers'
Professional Development Studies in fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum Design and Development

Addis Ababa University
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
June, 2020



Addis Ababa University
College of Education and Behavioral Studies
Department Of Curriculum and Teachers' Professional Development Studies

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Belete Damitew entitled: 'Implementation Decentralization of Primary School Curriculum Development in Ethiopia: The Cases of Addis Ababa, Gambella and Oromia Regions and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum Design and Development that complies with regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards concerning originality and quality.

Approved by examining committee

_____ Signature _____ Date _____

External Examiner

_____ Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Examiner

Dr. Ambisa Kenea Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor

_____ Signature _____ Date _____

Chairperson of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those who supported me to complete my thesis directly or indirectly. First and foremost my special thanks go to my academic advisor Ambissa Kenea (PhD) who gave me invaluable guidance and constructive comments tirelessly throughout my study. I am very fortunate to have his regular and friendly support which motivated me to work hard and learned a lot from his experience.

I would also want to thank curriculum department and planning offices of Addis Ababa City Administration Education Bureau, Gambella Region Education Bureau and Oromia Region Education Bureau for their support in getting necessary information and data. In addition, I am also grateful to all research participants for their cooperativeness and willingness to give the necessary information that I needed for my study by devoting their time and energy for the long interviews.

I would like to express my gratitude to my wife W/ro Mulunesh Yadessa for her unreserved support and encouragement to focus on my study. She has given necessary care and support for our sons. I would also feel happy to thank my sons Ye'amlak, Milki, Ketoran and Nafilet for their patience during my absence.

I also thank my friends Gizachew Mekonnin and Tafese Mengesha who have been always with me by giving moral and material support.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my gratitude to Addis Ababa and Metu Universities for sponsoring my research work.

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to understand decentralization of primary school curriculum development in Ethiopia since 1993. It is therefore the basic concern of this study to uncover how Regions have developed their own primary school curricula as mandated by the policy (and the various proclamations). The study was undertaken in three regions selected based on maximum variations sampling. Qualitative multiple case study design was employed to undertake the study. Most of previous and current curriculum heads and experienced curriculum experts both at the centre and regions, textbook development coordinator at the centre, textbook writers, sub-city/woreda curriculum experts and primary school principals at each region were selected purposefully and some were selected by snow ball sampling to participate in the study. Furthermore, different educational documents and observation of physical settings of the regional curriculum department offices were used as sources of data for the study. To gather data semi-structured interview, document analysis and observation were used. The data collected through semi-structured interview were transcribed and analysed thematically based on the research questions. The findings of the study disclose that there was no conducive institutional arrangements and trained human power in the regions to carry out PSCD though there were necessary plans, materials resources and facilities in all the three sample regions' REBs. For instance, heads of the bureaus and curriculum department in all the studied areas were assigned based on their political affiliation. The recruitment criteria for regional curriculum experts are not based on job description of the experts and even these criteria were not followed in some of the regions (Gambella and Oromia). It is also revealed that there is no short and long term strategic planning to develop the regional curriculum experts' capacities with regard to curriculum development in all the sample regions. The study also confirmed that curriculum development processes such as need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change and syllabus design were mainly decided by MoE. The main roles and responsibilities of REBs were developing and publishing textbooks until 2009. Furthermore, the participation of local stakeholders in PSCD decision making is minimal and no mechanisms set forward by REBs' to communicate with local stakeholders while developing PSC. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that though there was legislation to decentralize PSC to regions at rhetoric level, in practice decentralization of PSC was not implemented as expected. Hence, it is suggested that the structure of curriculum department both at MoE and REBs should be restructured to facilitate the implementation of PSCD decentralization policy. To this end, a semi-autonomous institute of Curriculum Development and Research with a mandate to develop and research PSC has to be established at regional level with meritorious based recruitment of heads. The institution should be organized in such a way that it has capacity to develop, coordinate and monitor the PSCD process tasks through undertaking research. It should also have clearly set mechanisms to communicate with local stakeholders in developing PSC.

Table of contents

Contents	Page
Acknowledgements _____	iii
Abstract _____	iv
Table of contents _____	v
List of Tables _____	x
Figure _____	x
Abbreviations _____	xi
Chapter One: Introduction _____	1
1.1. Background of the Study _____	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem _____	4
1.3. Objective of the Study _____	7
1.4. The Research Questions _____	7
1.5. Significance of the Study _____	8
1.6. Scope of the Study _____	9
1.7. Limitation of the Study _____	9
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature _____	11
2.1. The Concept of Decentralization _____	11
2.2. Dimensions of Decentralization _____	14
2.3. Forms of Decentralization _____	18
2.4. Rationales of Decentralization _____	19
2.5. Roles and Responsibilities of Central and Local Governments in Decentralized System _____	21
2.6. Theories Relevant to Decentralization _____	24
2.7. Overview of Decentralization of Different Countries _____	46

2.8. Education Decentralization_____	49
2.9. Curriculum: Concepts and Development _____	60
2.10. Overview of Ethiopian Modern Education Context _____	68
2.10.1. The Centralized Education System in Ethiopia(1908-1991) _____	68
2.10.2. The post 1991 Decentralized Education System in Ethiopia _____	77
2.11. Conceptual Framework for the Study _____	107
Chapter Three: The Research Methodology _____	111
3.1. Qualitative Research Approach: A Choice for this Study _____	111
3.2. Research Design _____	111
3.3. Cases and participants Selection_____	112
3.4. Sources of Data_____	113
3.5. Data Collection Instruments _____	115
3.6. Procedures in Data Collection _____	117
3.7. Data Analysis Procedures _____	119
3.8. Trustworthiness of the Study _____	120
3.9. Ethical Issues _____	121
Chapter Four: Presentation of Empirical Results of Addis Ababa City Administration (AACCA) _____	123
4.1. Context _____	123
4.2. Institutional Capacity _____	127
4.2.1. Institutional arrangements _____	127
4.2.2. Human power _____	130
4.3. The Practice of PSCD _____	131
4.3.1. Controlled needs assessment _____	132
4.3.2. Top-down initiation of PSC revision/change _____	135
4.3.3. Centrally monopolized curriculum _____	135

4.3.4. Recentralization of PS Textbooks Preparation and Publication _____	141
4.3.5. GEQIP I budget as an instrument to recentralize preparation, publication and distribution of PS curriculum materials _____	147
4.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD in AACA _____	155
4.4.1. Importance of local stakeholders’ participation in curriculum decision making _____	155
4.4.2. Different participation of local stakeholders in PSCD _____	156
4.4.3. Textbook validation as major means of local stakeholders’ participation _____	157

Chapter Five: Presentation of Empirical Results of Gambella Regional State (GRS)

_____	160
5.1. The Context _____	160
5.2. Institutional Capacity of GRSEB _____	164
5.2.1. The institutional arrangements _____	164
5.2.2. The Human Power _____	170
5.3. The Practice of PSCD _____	175
5.3.1. MoE as a sole need assessor of the region _____	175
5.3.2. Adaptation of centrally developed syllabuses to regional contexts _	178
5.3.3. Textbooks preparation, publication, distribution and evaluation in the region _____	183
5.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in the PSCD in GRS _____	186

Chapter Six: Presentation of Empirical Results of Oromia Regional State (ORS)

6.1. The Context _____	189
6.2. Institutional Capacity _____	192
6.2.1. The institutional arrangements _____	192
6.2.2. The Human Power _____	199
6.3. The Practice of PSCD _____	204

6.3.1. MoE’s supremacy in regional need assessment and initiation of curriculum revision/change _____	205
6.3.2. Centrally controlled curriculum _____	207
6.3.3. The recentralization of curriculum materials development in the region 215	
6.3.4. Quota system participation in centrally designed PS syllabuses____	220
6.3.5. Maintaining quality as main cause for recentralization of PSCD ____	223
6.3.6. Fake participation on selection of the private publishing agencies and textbook validation _____	229
6.3.7. The politics of PS Afaan Oromo language curriculum development	233
6.3.8. Back to the previous slogan _____	239
6.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD Decision Making in ORS __	241
6.4.1. Needs assessment as a major instrument to local stakeholders’ participation_____	242
6.4.2. Professional participation than local stakeholders’ participation ____	243
Chapter Seven: Cross-Case Analysis _____	247
7.1. Regional Education Context _____	247
7.2. Institutional Strengths to Carry out PSCD _____	248
7.3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Central and Regional Governments in deciding on PSCD processes _____	250
7.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD _____	252
Chapter Eight: Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations _____	253
8.1. Discussions _____	253
8.1.1. The strength of institutional capacity _____	253
8.1.2. Recruitment and development of curriculum experts _____	254
8.1.3. The rhetoric and practice of regional autonomy in PSCD _____	256
8.1.4. Participation of local stakeholders in PSCD _____	266
8.2. Conclusions _____	268

8.3. Recommendations	270
References	272
Appendices	293
Appendix A: Interview Guides	293
Appendix B: Observation Checklist	295
Appendix C: Permission to GREB	296
Appendix D: Permission to AACAEB	297
Appendix E: AACA primary school subjects period allotment	298
Appendix F: GRS primary school subjects period allotment	299
Appendix G: ORS primary school subjects period allotment	300

List of Tables

Table 1: Schedule for the preparation, try out and implementation of the new curriculum materials-----	97
Table 2: Participants of the study-----	114
Table 3: Primary School Education Subjects and their Period Allotment in AACA-----	124
Table 4: Primary school education subjects and their period allotment in GRS -----	162
Table 5: Primary school education subjects and their period's allotment in ORS-----	190
Table 6: Participants in PS Syllabuses Design of 2008 and 2009 at MoE-----	159

Figure

Conceptual Framework-----	109
---------------------------	-----

Abbreviations

AACA: Addis Ababa City Administration

AACAEB: Addis Ababa City Administration Education Bureau

AACA CL: Addis Ababa City Administration Curriculum Leader

AACAEB SCE: Addis Ababa City Administration Subject Curriculum Expert

AAU: Addis Ababa University

BA: Bachelors of Arts

BESO: Basic Education System Overhaul

BPR: Business Process Re-engineering

BSC: Bachelors of Science

CPA: Commission for Personnel Administration

DFID: Department for International Development

EGRA: Early Grade Reading Assessment

EHRC: Ethiopian Human Rights Councils

EMIS: Education Management Information System

EMPDA: Education Materials Production and Distribution Agency

ERGESE: Evaluative Research on the General Education System of Ethiopia

ETP: Education and Training Policy

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GECFDD: General Education Curriculum Framework Development Department

ICDR: Institute of Curriculum Development and Research

IMF: The International Monetary Fund

KG: Kindergarten

LCC: Local Content Curriculum

MA: Masters of Arts

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoEFA: Ministry of Education and Fine Art

MSc: Masters of Science

NLA: National Learning Assessment

Ph. D: Doctor of Philosophy

PMGSE: Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia

PSC: Primary School Curriculum

PSCD: Primary School Curriculum Development

READ TA: Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Technical Assistance

REBs: Regional Education Bureaus

RTI: Research Triangle Institute

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OPDO: Oromo People Democratic Organization

OREB CL1: Oromia Region Education Bureau Curriculum Leader one

OREB CL2: Oromia Region Education Bureau Curriculum Leader two

ORPSP: Oromia Region Primary School Principal

ORWOR: Oromia Region Woreda Office Representative

SDPRP: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program

SIDA: Swedish International Development Agency

SIP: School Improvement Program

SNNPR: South Nation, Nationalities and People Region

TDP: Teacher Development Program

TGE: Transitional Government of Ethiopia

UK: United Kingdom

UNICEF: United Nation International Children Emergency Fund

USA: United State of America

USAID: United State Agency for International Development

WEO: Woreda Education Office

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Many countries both developed as well as developing have been involved in the process of decentralization by devolving power and responsibilities of the central states to lower tiers of governments such as regions/states, provinces, districts or local community (Manor, 1999; Mukundan, 2003; Rondinelli, Nellis & Cheema, 1983). Karlsen (2000) and Matete (2016) indicate that decentralization has been used as a major policy strategy in various public sectors including education with the intention of attaining desired reforms in a particular sector to bring about improvement.

A big push towards decentralization in African states has begun in the early 1990s with changes in a number of areas in the process of policy implementation. Since then, the majority of African central governments have initiated to transfer authority, power, responsibilities, and resources to sub-national levels with some variations among countries (Dickovick & Riedl, 2010; Wunsch, 2014).

In Ethiopia, with change of government in 1991, decentralization as main policy strategic reform has come into being. Ethiopian decentralization reforms have been codified in laws through different documents. These were passed through a series of legal frameworks such as Proclamation No. 7/1992 (TGE, 1992A) that established national-regional self-government, Proclamation No. 33/1992 (TGE, 1992B) which identified the sharing of revenue between the central government and the regional self-governing states and Proclamation No. 41/1993 (TGE, 1993) which defined the powers, duties and responsibilities of the central and regional executive organs.

The 1995 constitution of Ethiopia also strengthened the issue of decentralization giving rise to the federal system of administration. It is indicated in the constitution of the country, which is the supreme law of the land, that the need for decentralization in the country is targeted to cure the ills of the previous governments through democratization (FDRE, 1995). The main purpose of the constitution was to bring government closer to the people through a process of decentralization intended to increase public participation

and responsiveness to local needs. Strengthening this idea, Gulyani, De Groot, Yitbarek, Meheret and Connors (2001) describe this Constitution as:

The 1995 Constitution of Ethiopia introduced radical reform of governance structures, including devolution of significant resources and responsibilities from central agencies to nine regional administrations [and two city administrations]. An explicit goal of the new Constitution is to bring government closer to the people through a process of decentralization intended to increase public participation and responsiveness to local needs. (p. 3)

By doing so, the authors argue that each ethnic group is represented in the country's political and resource allocation processes. Similarly, Tegegne and Kassahun (2004) underscore that decentralization reform in Ethiopia was meant to bring political stability and contribute to democratic governance, improve service delivery and attain equity.

Decentralization in Ethiopia can be seen as “big push” or “big bang” decentralization (Dickovick & Tegegne, 2010; Garcia & Rajkumar, 2008), which implies the occurrence of political, administrative and fiscal decentralization simultaneously. These political, fiscal, and administrative authorities devolved to various local levels and empowered them to make decisions on matters under their respective jurisdictions. The decentralization processes also created new forms of organization at different local levels, and there is an expanded activity and responsibility accorded to sub-national government.

Generally speaking, one of the most substantial changes that have been brought with implementation of decentralization in Ethiopia is the transformation of the country's public sectors from a highly centralized system to a more decentralized one in order to increase efficiency and coverage in the provision of local public services. This has been made through the establishment of the necessary institutions to lead and run government functions. Legislative, judicial and executive branches of government were created by Constitution at federal, regional and local levels (Dickovick & Tegegne, 2010).

The decentralization reform of Ethiopia has given more impetus to the empowerment of regional governments: the mandate to have legislative, executive and judicial powers in

respect of all matters within their regions. Regional governments are empowered to have their own constitution and other related laws, plan and execute social and economic development. However, issues like defense, foreign affairs and economic policy, are left on the hands of central government (Tegegne & Kassahun, 2004)

The education system in Ethiopia has been organized in consistent with the Federal Government's State Structure (MoE, 2002a, 2006a; TGE, 1993). Accordingly, each of the nine Regional States and the two City Administrations has its own bureau of education responsible for administrating and managing the educational system with substantial subsidy from the Federal Government for the general education, technical and vocational training and teacher training colleges that operate in its respective states. The structure ranges to Zonal Educational Departments, Woreda Education Offices and schools (MoE, 2002a).

It has been decentralized through formulations of two main policy documents: Proclamation No. 41 of 1993 and Education and Training Policy of 1994. The Proclamation defines the powers and duties of Ministry of Education (MoE) and Regional Education Bureaus (REBs). As such this proclamation has given MoE the mandate to formulate national education policy, set education and training standards at all levels of education; monitor implementation and ensuring that standards are respected, formulate the general framework of curricula of education. REBs have the right to manage the general education, technical and vocational training and teacher training colleges that operate in their respective states.

Specific to primary education curriculum, the proclamation gives REBs the mandate to prepare their own curriculum based on the regions particular needs guided by the standards and guidelines that are set by MoE (TGE, 1993). Similarly, education and training policy of Ethiopia which was formulated in 1994 gives special emphasis to curriculum decentralization as indicated under its curriculum strategy that reads: "Ensure that the curriculum [is] developed and textbooks [are] prepared at central and regional levels, are based on sound pedagogical and psychological principles and are up to international standard, giving due attention to concrete local conditions and gender issues" (TGE, 1994, pp.12-13). Even though there is no clear demarcation of levels of

education where MoE and REB have to operate their roles and responsibilities as indicated above, it is evident from different documents of education, MoE (2002a, 2006a) and TGE (1993) that the REBs have the roles and responsibilities of developing primary school curriculum and preparing and publish textbooks whereas MoE works on curriculum development and textbook preparation at secondary level except mother tongue subjects.

Therefore, this could be seen as a new era of curriculum development in the history of Ethiopian modern education where uniform centrally developed curriculum and curriculum materials were used throughout the country to all students irrespective of the existing variations.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

With government change of 1991, decentralization of primary school curriculum development (PSC) to regional level has become prevalent in Ethiopia. This is a sharp departure from the previous centrally controlled primary school curriculum. This shows that Ethiopia's current education policy gives emphasis for active participation of local stakeholders in localizing the primary school curriculum. Curriculum decentralization, Goldring (1994) states, enables local level governments to respond to their environment through sharing decision-making power with local stakeholders which in turn can bring quality learning. More specifically, in Ethiopia REBs have been mandated by legislation to develop their PSC since 1993 based on standards set by MoE.

Since then there are many studies made on education decentralization in Ethiopia which mainly deal with issues like community participation on financing, service delivery, school leadership and management and curriculum planning process. For instance, study by Obsa (2010) deals with rural community participation in decentralized education system. The study used qualitative case study design with focus group discussion, interview, and document analysis and field observation as methods for data collection. The findings of the study reveal that community participation has improved access, equity and school level disciplinary problems though poverty in the community was a challenge. Comparative study on service delivery of education decentralization was made

by Abdulahi in 2008 in two woredas of Somali and South Nation, Nationalities and People Regions using qualitative multiple case study design. Open-ended questionnaire and document analysis were used as methods of data collection. The findings of this study show that there were differences between studied regions in delivering primary education services because of their difference in capacity and commitment. Moreover, qualitative case study was made in Afar National Regional State on service delivery of decentralized education in 2010 by Thomas. Focus group discussion, in-depth interviews, and observation were data gather methods used for this study. The major finding of the study indicates that the service delivery of decentralized education was unsatisfactory mainly due to shortage of human resource.

With regard to development of primary school curriculum at regional level there are studies in Oromia region by Kebebe (2016) and Shiferaw (2010) on ‘Practice, Opportunities and Challenges of Decentralized Primary School Curriculum Development’ and ‘Primary School Curriculum Development Practice’ respectively. Both studies used qualitative case study design and focus group discussion, interview and document analysis methods to collect the data. The findings of the studies reveal almost similar results. As such the main findings of the studies disclose that there is lack of specialized human resources in curriculum development of primary education in the region. The result also indicated that there was an attempt to participate stakeholders in the curriculum development process in the region.

Study on Primary School Curriculum Planning Process was made in South Nation, Nationalities and People Region by Lemma in 2015. This study used mixed research design. The methods used to gather data were interview, questionnaire and document analysis. The results of the study depict that MoE drafted primary school curricula of the regional state. The drafts were validated by regional representatives when they were invited to participate by MoE. The finding of the study also depicts that the curriculum was planned without need assessment and minor adjustments in sequence of contents were made at the preparation of textbooks on those subjects that were left to the region. The region’s curriculum sections were staffed by subject area graduates who had no training on curriculum design and development.

Hence, as indicated above it can be said that many of studies on education decentralization deal with other functions of education than curriculum. Of course, there are some studies with regard to curriculum decentralization which justify the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs with this regard. For instance, study by Akalewold (2005) entitled as ‘Devolution Rhetoric and Practice of Curriculum Policy Making in Ethiopian Primary Education’. The main purpose of this study was to explore the relationships that exist between MoE and REBs in developing PSC. It used content analysis design and different documents were as sources of data. The author argues that primary school curriculum provisions are still controlled by MoE irrespective of the decentralization policy implementation. MoE dominates primary school curriculum decision making in the name of setting and maintaining standards, provisions of assistance and ensures whether the curriculum is free of gender, cultural and political bias. This study dealt with specific decision making on elements of curriculum (objectives, contents, methods and assessment) and used only documents as source of data.

Thus, as discussed above there is no comprehensive study that explored the implementation of decentralization of PSCD that comprises of the relationships that exist between MoE and REBs, participation of local stakeholders in PSCD decisions and institutional capacity of the REBs to carry out PSCD of their region.

Furthermore, currently in relation to the locus of PSCD decision making in Ethiopia, there are some ambiguities in the existing literature. For example, on the one hand, some scholars such as Oulai et al. (2011) argue that MoE plays decisive role in making decision on PSCD to the extent that it prepares the syllabus in each subjects to be used by the REBs. On the other hand, PSCD decision making is taken as a shared responsibility between MoE and REBs (MoE, 2002a, 2006a; TGE, 1993, 1994). As such the main role and responsibility of MoE is setting curriculum standards to be followed by REBs, guide the practice of REBs and monitors its implementation. Similarly, Jeilu (2006) as cited in Bezabih (2019) explains the PSCD in Ethiopia as the shared responsibility between the central and regional governments. The main roles and responsibilities of MoE are to develop curriculum framework and draft syllabuses for almost all subjects except the

nationality language whereas MoE and REBs develop syllabuses based on nationally drafted once jointly to keep uniformity and standards.

Generally speaking though emphasis has been given to education decentralization reform in general and curriculum decentralization in particular at policy level in Ethiopia, little is known about how curriculum decentralization has been implemented. More specifically, holistic studies on the implementation of decentralization of PSCD are scant. Hence, this lack of knowledge primarily initiated the researcher. It was therefore the main purpose of this study to explore the implementation of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. To do this, the relationships that exist between MoE and REBs in deciding on PSCD processes (needs assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design, textbook development and publication), the participation of local stakeholders on PSCD decision making and REBs' institutional capacity to accomplish PSCD were analyzed exhaustively.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study was to evaluate the implementation of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. Specific objectives of the study were the following:

- To examine Institutional Capacity of regions in relation to institutional arrangements and human power to carryout PSCD;
- To explore the autonomy of the regions in deciding on PSCD processes such as need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design and textbook preparation and publication through identifying the relationships that exist between the centre and regions;
- To assess the local stakeholders' participation in PSCD decision making in the regions.

1.4. The Research Questions

1. What do the Institutional Capacities of regions looks like to carryout PSCD processes decisions?

1.1. Are the regions arranged in such a way that they can develop their PSC?

- 1.2. Do regions have human power that can develop their PSC?
2. How autonomous are the regions to decide on PSCD processes (needs assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design and textbook preparation and publication)?
 - 2.1. What are the roles and responsibilities played by MoE and REBs in deciding on processes of PSCD?
 - 2.2. Is there any experience with regard to bottom up initiation of curriculum revision/change by REBs?
3. How do local stakeholders in the regions have participated in PSC decision making?
 - 3.1. Is there any mechanism in the regions that guide local stakeholders' participation on PSC decision making?
 - 3.2. What is the level of participation of local stakeholders in the regions in PSC decision making?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Education decentralization is a recent phenomenon which has been implemented as one of the basic strategy in almost all countries in the world. Different nations have practiced decentralization of educational functions with various ways based on their context and gained diversified results. For instance, with regard to curriculum development which is one of education functions and assuredly the integral part, some countries still maintain it at central level whereas others have decentralized to local levels (regional, district, or school) with nations distinct rationality.

At rhetoric level PSCD have been devolved to regional level in Ethiopia since 1993. Nevertheless, the relationships that exist between the centre and regions in deciding on PSCD processes, participation of local stakeholders on PSCD decisions and institutional capacity of regions to carry out their PSCD are not yet researched and should deserve attention to be successful in the reform. Hence, studying such basic issue will have the potential to make the policy decision makers to understand the issue critically and rethink to improve in the future. It has also benefit to education stakeholders such as REBs,

WEOs, Schools (teachers and students) and the community as its main purpose to explore the existing reality and recommend alternatives which can improve its implementation. The other essence of this study is, it will help to fill the knowledge gap that exists in the area. As the outcome of education particularly at primary level is the foundational on which the success of further as well as lifelong education will base, understanding the way it has been planned make it paramount important for different stakeholders of education.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. It is bounded in level, content, setting, time and participants of the study. With regard to level, it only deals with primary school. In relation to content, it is solely delineated to curriculum development processes (need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design and textbook development and publication), participation of local stakeholders in PSCD decisions and institutional capacity of REBs (institutional arrangements and human power). In terms of time, it covers PSCD starting from 1993 up to this research was undertaken. This study was made in three regions. In relation to the participants, the study was delimited to MoE and REBs curriculum department heads and curriculum experts who were selected through purposeful and snow ball sampling. In addition, Woreda Education Office representatives and school principals who have long experience working there were selected purposefully to participate in the study.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

One of the main limitations of this study is the absence of documentation on the processes of curriculum development in Ethiopia both at MoE and REBs since 1993. In other words, there is lack of documents on Ethiopian curriculum development process which implies the knowledge gap about the curriculum development process. To overcome this I selected key informants both from MoE and REBs who have served for a long period of time in the institutions.

Some informants at MoE were also very skeptical when they provide information to the extent that they were unwilling to be recorded while interviewed. For this, I tried to capture the essence of the message using field note and triangulate their response with others views.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

2.1. The Concept of Decentralization

The term decentralization is perceived and defined in various ways and hence it is difficult to reach consensus on what it is. Some scholars like Rondinelli and Nellis (1986) perceive decentralization in terms of administrative aspect and define it as:

the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, and the rising and allocation of resources from the central government and its agencies to field units of government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, area-wide, regional or functional authorities, or nongovernmental private or voluntary organizations. (p.13)

Karlsen (2000) sees decentralization from the political view point. He argues that the primary initiation of decentralization is political agenda which becomes global issue currently. To Winkler (1989) decentralization is concerned with providing goods and services basically based on public preferences through market mechanisms.

It is generally, however, argued that decentralization is the transfer of authority, resources and responsibilities from the central to local level governments (region/state, province, district and community) with varying degrees (deconcentration, delegation and devolution) (Karlsen, 2000;Popic & Patel, 2011; Rado, 2010; Ziba, 2011). This shows that there are various ways in which countries use decentralization policy. To this, Popic and Patel (2011) advise countries to analyse the various notions that underpin decentralization prior to formulation of decentralization policy.

Decentralization has become a government initiative both in developed as well as developing countries. It is used as a main policy strategy in various institutions within the public sector, including education where there is a prevalent belief that decentralization will bring about desired large-scale educational reforms (Karlsen, 2000). To Pellini (2007) decentralization is used to bring effectiveness in planning and management, efficiency and good governance with ultimate purpose of sustainable development.

Decentralization in developing countries has emanated mainly because of dissatisfaction with the results of national planning and administration (Pellini, 2007; Rondinelli et al., 1983), and because the underlying rationale of international development strategies changed from central economic planning to meeting basic human needs, growth with equity objectives and participation development during the 1970s. In addition, during this period there was economic crisis because of decreasing levels of exports, rising prices for energy and imported goods, and diminishing foreign assistance in developing countries which led them to search for alternatives i.e. implementing decentralization (Rondinelli et al., 1983).

The initiation for decentralization reform could be internal or external impetus (Sharma, 2004). The internal pressure comes out as the needs of the society arise to have power to decide on its matters and to get quality service whereas the external one is primarily part of an overall package of Structural Adjustment Programs targeted to bring economic development in developing countries. Structural Adjustment Programs are programs which help countries to get a loan from the international organizations such as IMF or the World Bank. The countries should have significant policy reforms as advised by these international organizations as precondition to get the necessary loan (Abugre, 2000 as cited in Oberdabernig, n.d).

Nonetheless, in comparing the two, however, many scholars argue that the external impetus has the dominant role in reforming policies of developing countries. For example, Kamat (2002) remarks that policy reforms in developing nations are imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These organizations, Sharma (2004) argues that “implicitly and explicitly have declared decentralization as their most favored policy prescription especially for the developing world” (p.1).

Similarly, Scott and Rao (2011) highlight the influences of multi- and bi-lateral external actors by providing advice and resources significantly shaped the role of the state in developing countries for good governance for the last decades. In explaining the key roles of external influences, Lugaz and De Grauwe (2010) argue that in many countries the pressure to have participatory decision making at local levels are less powerful and the push of decentralization has been basically from international development agencies and

experts, and domestic political expediency of the particular country where giving public services by government becomes difficult to attain.

To understand the notion of decentralization in plain way, it is very crucial to recognize it first in its different complexity and diversity. As such decentralization can be analyzed in its different dimensions (political, fiscal and administrative), various goals (democracy, stability and economic development), special characteristics (authority, autonomy, accountability and capacity), and different degrees of transfer (deconcentration, delegation and devolution) and at various levels or arenas (state/region, province, woreda, and community). This implies, USAID (2009) argues, that it is difficult to have universal guideline for the concept of decentralization.

To be successful in implementing decentralization in general and educational decentralization in particular needs willingness and commitment from political and administrative parties. The political willingness helps to formulate the workable laws and influence others mainly through negotiation to implement the reform. Commitment is also very important from the political part by guarantying the actors at different levels to exercise their powers to decide on their matters autonomously. McGinn and Welsh (1999) and Urbanovič (2009) underscore that there are two main conditions to be met for the success of implementation of any decentralization reforms: political support for the proposed changes and the capacity of those involved in the reforms. Namukasa and Buye (2007) suggest that there should be experimentation or pilot testing before implementing education decentralization national wide.

There are various factors which can inhibit the implementation of decentralization: Political will, capacity of implementers, central government's trust in the local government and vice versa (Olum, 2014; Urbanovič, 2009; Welsh & McGinn, 1999), institutional mechanisms, creation of spaces for participation, and democratic governance (Olum, 2014). Thus prior to implement decentralization policy, these issues have to be critically analyzed and designed in such a way that success will be gained.

Generally speaking, decentralization in its literal sense implies the moving away of authority, resources and responsibilities from the central government to the local once

(regional/sub-national, province, woreda and community) with varying degrees of transfer (i.e. it could be deconcentration, delegation or devolution). In this study the word decentralization is conceptualized as the transfer of authority and responsibility of PSCD from MoE to REBs in the form of devolution.

2.2. Dimensions of Decentralization

Dimensions of decentralization can be categorized as political, administrative and fiscal USAID (2009). In addition, some scholars such as Hinsz et al. (2006) and Rondinelli (1999) add privatization as one component. To make these concepts clear they are discussed below.

i. Political decentralization

Political decentralization is transferring authority, power and resources from central government to local government (regional, province, district etc) that are elected (Popic & Patel, 2011; Rado, 2010). In other words, political decentralization is the transfer of political authority to elected sub-national governments and it is “the establishment and maintenance of sub-national elections” (Dickovick & Riedl, 2010, p.18). This transfer takes place through constitutional amendments and electoral reforms that create new spaces for the representation of sub-national politics.

The main objective of political decentralization is to make citizens or their elected representatives to decide autonomously in their matters. In other words, it is meant to improve and enhance participation of the local community in political decision-making. It implies that locally elected authorities must bear more responsibility to those who elected them (i.e. local community) and better represent local interests in political decision-making processes (Popic & Patel, 2011).

According to USAID (2009, p.10) “elections for important sub-national offices are the hallmark of political decentralization and the shift from appointed to elected sub-national officials is the most common form taken by decentralization in this dimension”. An election inherently has the possibility to increase the autonomy and accountability of sub-national governments. In a decentralized system, elections are held both to sub-national

executive offices such as mayors, governors, and chief ministers and representative positions like municipal councilors and provincial legislators.

On importance of political decentralization, Ribot (2001, p. V) states that:

Political or 'democratic decentralization' integrates local populations into decision making through better representation, by creating and empowering representative local governments. Democratic decentralization is premised on new local institutions: being representative of and accountable to local populations and having a secure and autonomous domain of powers to make and implement meaningful decisions.

Similarly, Kassahun and Tegegne (2004) note that political decentralization can promote accountability and responsiveness at the local level. To understand accountability, two important issues should be given emphasis: the patterns of accountability and the instruments used to ensure it. The pattern of accountability refers to identifying who is accountable to whom, the direction of accountability, and the legal basis for accountability among actors.

With regards to instruments, in principle there are a range of accountability mechanisms such as administrative processes, consultation with technical staff, reports, formal political processes (e.g. voting in elections), consultation with elected officials, and the use of civic media, namely local press and radio, public forums organized by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, the extent to which competitive/pluralist politics is found at local level is an indicator of transparency and accountability

From the explanation given above on political decentralization, one can argue that at the heart of it there is an election procedure that mandates the local citizens to have decision making power on their concerns directly by themselves or through their representatives. This implies that those who are elected by the citizens are mainly accountable down word to the electorates and of course to their higher supervisors.

Nevertheless, Litvack and Seddon (2002) and Mulugeta (2012) argue that true political decentralization can occur if and only if there is a truly pluralistic politics and representative government. This type of political decentralization encourages the realization of democratization through the influence of local citizens or their representatives in policy formulation and implementation. This in fact, Dickovick and Riedl (2010) argue lacks in many developing regions particularly in Africa because of absence of multi party systems. As such, in many Africa countries, election is manipulated by a single dominant party to control over government positions in maintaining power.

In education context, political decentralization may mean giving citizens or their representatives the power to decide on their educational matters (Fiske, 1996). This can be described as “the devolution of policy and decision making power (such as over content of curricula) to local governments” (Hinsz et al., 2006), mainly with the participation of local stakeholders in the decision making (UNESCO-IBE, 2002). According to ADB (2001) as cited in UNESCO-IBE (2002) this can be performed through a broad-based consultation process which is the basis for curriculum change. It assumes a realignment of the roles of central and local authorities through:

- The participation of the local stakeholders in educational decision making which encourages the collaboration between the local stakeholders and the local education authorities.
- Making the central government to help the local governments by making available laws, policies and guidelines, and also the provision of assistance in generating resources.
- The continuing role of the central authority in monitoring, evaluating, and setting new standards.

ii. Administrative decentralization

Administrative decentralization is the transfer of authority, responsibility, and resources to lower tier administration from the central government (Litvack & Seddon, 2002; Rado, 2010). It is the distribution of managerial responsibilities such as planning,

implementation and evaluation to local level administrative bodies to fulfill public duties. In other words, Fiske (1996) describes it as a management strategy.

With regard to its importance, Mulugeta (2012) argues that it gives mandate to lower government levels to administrate resources (human, material and financial resources) which will make service delivery efficient and effective. Political decentralization could only be effective if authority and power are transferred to the administrators in the lower levels. This implies that officials' election by itself is not enough to be successful in political decentralization without effective way of deploying authority and power to concerned bodies at lower levels.

iii. Fiscal decentralization

Fiscal decentralization refers specifically to the assignment of revenues and the grant mechanisms to local government so that it can discharge its assigned functions. This may result in changes in the share of the public sector in overall governmental funding, in the stability of funding of services, and in changes in the relative funding of specific types of services. These effects may differ between rich and poor geographic areas and may be linked to local revenue raising capacities and the relative provision of funds by central and local government (Mulugeta, 2012).

According to Shah and Thompson (2004) fiscal decentralization makes the elected officials to be more responsible on raising revenues and as well on careful expenditure spending. To be effective in their decentralized functions, local governments should have adequate revenues which are raised locally or transferred from the central government and the authority to make expenditure decisions (Litvack & Seddon, 2002). For these authors one of the characteristics of fiscal decentralization is the local governments' autonomy to allocate their expenditures than executing the central government expenditure.

iv. Privatization

Privatization is the permanent transfer of power and responsibility of functions from the public to the private sector as well as NGOs. At its higher stage usually it is accompanied

by economic liberalization and market development (Agrawal & Ribot, 1999; USAID, 2009). To Litvack and Seddon (2002) privatization is giving private sectors to carry out functions that had previously been monopolized by government. The functions to be transferred could be the provision or management of public services or facilities. Agrawal and Ribot (1999) argue that though privatization is implemented in the name of decentralization, it is not a true form of decentralization. It works in different logic with that of public decentralization.

2.3. Forms of Decentralization

Hanson (1997) generally defines decentralization as the transfer of authority, responsibility and tasks from central level to local levels (state, province, district and community). To make this definition of decentralization clear, Hanson leveled the extent of decentralization into three main categories: deconcentration, delegation and devolution.

Deconcentration, according to Hanson (1997) typically involves the transfer of tasks and work, but not authority to other units in the organization. It is the transfer of planning, decision-making or administrative authority from the central government to sub-national (Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983). To McGinn and Welish (1999) deconcentration is the shift of authority for implementation of rules not for making them. It is considered as the weakest form of decentralization (Rado, 2010). From the above discussion of different scholars, it can be argued that in deconcentration the local level governments have no mandate to perform as they want but based on the will and interests of the central government. In this case, the central government retains the integrity of its authority over state affairs and exercises that authority through the hierarchical channels of the bureaucracy, while the localities carry out the tasks that are given the central. In education context, UNESCO (2007) sees deconcentration as the process through which the Ministry of Education establishes field units, staffing them with its own officers.

Delegation is the advanced way of deconcentration because in delegation it is not only tasks transferred to local levels but also the authority to make decision is transferred. However, the given authority can be withdrawn easily with the decision of the central

government (Hanson, 1997; Rado, 2010; Winkler, 1989). In this process, the center designs the broad management framework and overall policy objectives at the national level, but also appoints local delegates and encourages their participation in making policies for local affairs. Thus, the localities could gain certain degrees of autonomy in deciding what work should be done and how it should be done at the local level. However, in the process of delegation, all work must be completed within the framework set up by the central authority and all decisions must be subject to the national guidelines laid down by the central authority. In this way, the central authority could easily take away local autonomy when there is a need. “Delegation suggests stronger decision-making powers at local levels; however the power mainly remains with the central authority, who can withdraw it at any chosen time without resorting to legislation” (UNESCO, 2007).

Devolution is the highest stage of decentralization where the local level governments have the authority to set rules and implement them with less control from the central government. It refers to the transfer of authority to an autonomous unit that can act independently, or a unit that can act without first asking permission (Hanson, 1997; Rondinelli et al., 1983; Winkler, 1989). Through devolution, the center grants local units genuine authority over their own affairs, and thus, local units gain a great degree of autonomy to perform their own governance. To McGinn as cited in Karlsen (2000) devolution is the real type of decentralization which mandates the local level governments the true autonomy to perform their roles and responsibilities independently. According to UNESCO (2007) devolution gives formal power to local level government to make decisions on its matters where as the main role of the center is gathering information and exchange.

2.4. Rationales of Decentralization

Countries implement decentralization policy for various reasons such as dissatisfaction with service of the central government and the push of International Development Organizations (Ringo & Mollel, 2014), demand for local level democratic control and autonomy, the perceived economic, administrative and political advantages of decentralization, post conflict reconstruction, interests of local and national political

elites, and demand from the World Bank and other donor agencies (Devas & Delay, 2006 as cited in Ringo & Mollel, 2014). Lujan-Hernandez (2016) argues that “Decentralization is a political tool for the host state to gain political legitimacy with its citizens, as well as a political tool for international actors to protect their sphere of influence and economic interest in developing countries” (p. 3). He argues that “Ethiopia utilized decentralization as a means to appease social and political tensions” (p.56).

Many scholars argue that decentralization has brought some positive effects in some countries. However, in most cases the results have not been satisfactory. For example, Ringo and Mollel (2014) note that the expected powers and autonomy which decentralization policy should distribute at local level of governments with downward accountability have not been yet achieved instead retain at the central government. Similarly, Rondinelli et al.(1983) explain that though decentralization has been implemented in many nations, the realization of its purposes was not up to expected i.e. their systems currently remains significantly centralized. Regardless of its failure it continues to be promoted by governments and donor institutions. This in fact tells us that decentralization is aggregated with political objectives such as increased political stability. Hence, the political condition is a sufficient reason to pursue decentralization than the success of administrative and fiscal dimensions.

The success and failure of decentralization can be seen in various ways. In some cases the general view of decentralization of countries shows some success but some specific issues becomes a challenge to be achieved. For instance, Crook and Sverrisson (2001) as cited in Popic and Patel (2011) argue that the most successful decentralization in East-Asia and Pacific cannot maintain the economic and political disparities that have seen within and among groups of the region. Most East-Asia and Pacific governments mainly implement decentralization for political and fiscal reasons though the disparities of economic and political still continue to exist.

Absent of a clear understanding of the host country’s national and local politics and of the import of USAID activities within that political context, decentralization and

democratic local governance programming will undoubtedly be less successful (USAID, 2000).

2.5. Roles and Responsibilities of Central and Local Governments in Decentralized System

The discourse of roles and responsibilities of central and local levels administration is one of the main issues in decentralization reforms. Decentralization of authority alone is not enough without plain classification of roles and responsibilities among different levels of government. For instance, Popic and Patel (2011) argue that clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government is very crucial to be effective in implementing decentralization reforms. They explain it as:

Without a clear definition of function such as who is in charge, who has oversight, how that oversight can be exercised, what the sanctions are if a procedure is violated or a standard is not met, how national funds are to be locally distributed, etc., there would be no clarity on decision-making procedures, and no consistency on policy implementation. (p.16)

This implies that clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different actors in decentralization reform is very important to have clear decision making procedures which will lead to implement the presumed policy accordingly.

In decentralized system, it may seem that the roles and responsibilities of central government are less important. Nevertheless, Popic and Patel (2011) and Ribot (2001) clarify that decentralization does not mean that roles and responsibilities of central authority diminished. Instead the capacity of central government to manage the decentralization process is substantial to the successful implementation of the reform. This considers decentralization as indispensable reform strategy needs collaboration between and among actors within similar and different levels to be successful. Hence, the roles and responsibilities of both central and local government could not be diminished. For this the design of decentralization policy plays pivotal role in carefully analyzing of the services to be decentralized, the characteristics of users, financial and organizational alternatives are substantial for effective implementation of decentralization (Rondinelli et

al, 1989). Similarly, Ribot (2002) pin points that to achieve objectives of decentralization policy reform, the roles and responsibilities of both the central and local governments should be strengthened.

With the prevalence of education decentralization reforms in almost all countries throughout the world, it is common to realize that the reforms are mainly followed by strong control system mechanisms from the centre. In other words, decentralizing education functions to the lower levels of government increases the indirect control of central government. Thus, that is why different scholars argue that this control system particularly in curriculum function has brought decentralized-centralization or recentralization (Karlsen, 2000; Namukasa & Buye, 2007; Qi, 2011; Ye, 2011).

Strengthening sub-national government capacity is very crucial point to make decentralization policy works as intended. Thus, the local governments must get the skills to plan, implement, manage, and evaluate education policies, strategies, and programs. Without the presence of capacity, simply transferring authority and financial resources to local levels to implement decentralized policies will not have the desired impact. The capacity may include human, financial and infrastructure (Weidman & DePietro-Jurand, 2011).

It is logically arguable that in multi ethnic and multi lingual countries like Ethiopia, education system especially general education has to be decentralized to make education congruent with the real existing situation which would improve its relevance and quality. In such a case the central government should critically analyse the preconditions and make decisions on the types of educational functions to be decentralized to appropriate level of government. Furthermore, the central government in this case MoE, must develop systematic regulatory mechanisms such as setting standards to be followed by sub-national governments. Supporting and monitoring the sub-nations while preparing and implementing the reform should be also the core roles and responsibilities of the central government to be successful. Nonetheless, Olum (2014) argues that in almost all developing countries such conditions have been missed from decentralization reforms because of the political agenda and international donors influence.

Here it is important to pinpoint that what is crucial in implementing decentralization policy is not only the authority given to the local government but also equally worth necessary is the willingness of the central officials to make it works. Therefore, in designing decentralization in general and educational decentralization policy in particular there should be mechanisms to monitor and control challenges which are created by central government officials, if not it is what Namukasa and Buye (2007) call “merely rhetoric” than anything else.

In a normative case, Scott and Rao (2011) argue that the relationships between central government and local government as well between tiers in a multi-tier system have to be conducive for the success of the implementation of decentralization. This implies the communication between different government levels should be based on the legal framework than personal intuition. Nonetheless, they indicate that case studies often describe the relationships between central and local government in decentralization reform as problematic. This mainly emanate from the central government unwillingness to transfer the power to the local governments. With this regard, Hanson (1997) states that:

The exercise of power in a large organization brings psychological as well as material rewards that senior officials are often reluctant to give up or share with regional/municipal officials. Consequently, national officials who have extensive experience managing a centralized system are usually not the best candidates to manage a decentralized system.(p.3)

Similarly, “An analysis of the distribution of decision making powers in areas of financing and human resources demonstrates that there is a trend towards decentralization, albeit inconsistent due to obstacles on the level of centralized management” (Urbanovič, 2009, p. 103).

Overlapping and mismatch of functions, decision-making authority and accountability between different tiers of local and central government are common in practice. In some cases responsibilities might be fully transferred to local governments but are not funded and decisions are continued to be made centrally (Popic & Patel, 2011). In such cases,

decentralization policy cannot be implemented as planned and hence it becomes rhetoric than reality.

2.6. Theories Relevant to Decentralization

There are many decentralization related theories as the concept of decentralization is multifaceted. However, for the purpose of this study I used the following four theories related to decentralization: democratic decentralization, power, institutional capacity and participation. Each theory will be discussed below in relation to the concepts that are relevant to the study.

i. Democratic decentralization theory

USAID (2009) clarifies that no matter what form of decentralization takes, toward what goal it is intended, or in what arena it is adopted, all democratic decentralizing initiatives must comprise of the following key characteristics to be successful: authority, autonomy, accountability, and capacity. Authority is the legal framework that gives legal power to local government to decide on certain issues. According to Dickovick and Riedl (2010) authority comprises legally founded functions, mandates, jurisdictions, tasks or responsibilities of an organization. In decentralization context, USAID (2009) pinpoints that authority may mean transferring the power from the central to local government in giving major decisions on revenues, administrative, economic and political issues. Autonomy can be defined as the local government's freedom to exercise their authority/legal power with less interference from central government (USAID, 2009; Lujan-Hernandez, 2016; Stichweh, 1994). Accountability refers to the liability of institution for its decisions that are taken autonomously. Therefore, Stichweh (1994) argues that autonomy of institution must go hand-in-hand with the accountability on the effects of the decisions made. Accountability denotes the dual responsibility of local governments to local stakeholders (citizens and communities) and their higher bodies of government (USAID, 2009). This refers to both downward accountability and upward accountability (Dickovick & Riedl, 2010). Downward accountability refers to the responsibility of local level governments to local stakeholders. The local level governments can be accountable to the local stakeholders in various ways: electoral

mechanisms, being transparent and responsive as well as having appropriate consultations with the local actors. In decentralized system, downward accountability has deserved more emphasis than upper ward accountability (Komatsu, 2011; Naidoo, 2003; Ribot, 2002) because the target of decentralization is mainly to improve active participation of local stakeholders in decision making. This in turn, Manor (2003) and Scott and Rao (2011) argue, makes the government closer to the people and hold the government more accountable and responsive to the needs of civil society. Capacity of an organization and individuals plays key determinant role to achieve the organizational goals.

Democratic decentralization theory suggests balanced relationships between central and local governments (decentralization) as well as between local governments and citizens (democratic local governance) (Barnett, Minis & VanSant, 1997; USAID, 2009). In the former case, Barnett et al. (1997) argue that the relationships should be implemented based on the mandated authority and responsibilities which implies instituting constitutional and legal reforms to devolve power to local structure and increasing local level governments' ability to act. Based on these frameworks, reciprocal type of relations must occur between the central and local level governments. In such cases, the local governments have roles and responsibilities in carrying out activities that are given to them which were previously performed by central government. In addition, the authors suggest that good communication among local level governments has to be maintained to influence the central government which will guarantee them to be autonomous in their given activities. Generally, according to Barnett et al. (1997) and USAID (2009) democratic decentralization theory mandates the power to develop and implement policy to lower levels of government.

The second type of relationship according to democratic decentralization theory is the relationship that exists between the local level governments and local stakeholders such as citizens, community/local stakeholders. This relationship basically named as democratic local governance and shows the existence of democratic relationship between local governments and the local stakeholders at the grass root level. This can be maintained only through active participation of local stakeholders on decision making

process of issues that influence them (Barnett et al., 1997; Ribot, 2002). Ribot (2002) argues that democratic decentralization makes local level governments to be representative of and accountable to local stakeholders while also being secure and autonomous in making decisions. It guarantees local citizens to participate in decision making through representation, by creating and empowering representative local governments.

Agrawal and Ribot (1999) developed the 'Actors-Powers-Accountability' framework which is invaluable to analyse the type and extent of democratic decentralization. This framework considers:

1. the powers, and accompanying resources, actually transferred to lower level actors to determine whether an autonomous domain of decision making actually exists around issues of local significance; and
2. The local- level entities receiving powers and their relation to the population, in order to understand the extent to which these are both representative of and downwardly accountable to local peoples (p.3).

Putting this framework explicitly, Ribot (2001) denotes that:

Local actors involved in decentralization, the powers they hold, and the accountability relations in which they are embedded are the basic elements for analyzing decentralization. Democratic decentralization, for example, involves representative local actors who are entrusted with real public powers and who are downwardly accountable to the local population as a whole. These are also the elements that circumscribe the domain of local autonomy that constitutes decentralization. If there are representative actors who have no public powers, then the institutional arrangement is not decentralization. Perhaps it should be called an advisory group or a 'privy council' as in the colonial times. If there are powers, but the actors receiving them are not representative or downwardly accountable, then perhaps it is privatization or deconcentration. (p.16)

Here it implies that the transfer of authority to local level government by itself is not enough to democratic decentralization. To democratic decentralization to happen the

representativeness of local level government and its autonomy to decide on mandated authority are very decisive factors.

ii. Theory of power relation

The term ‘power’ is so complex that it is difficult to reach consensus on its meaning. Scholars define and perceive it differently based on their own understanding of social, political and economic aspects of a particular society at particular time.

Scholars argue that it is not only the definitions and meanings of power that are conceptualized differently but also its forms and sources are attributed differently. Traditionally, the word ‘power’ is associated with existence of control and oppression between the oppressed and the oppressors. For instance, Marxists explore ‘power’ in relation to labor, class, the economy and the system of capitalism. According to this view the possession of economic power will lead to control over state which in turn makes one to have political and social power (Sergiu, 2010; Murphy, 2007). To Weberian power shows authority and management within bureaucratic state. It is located in state institutions and through it to the society (Murphy, 2007).

However, Nye (2004) classifies power into two main categories: hard and soft. In a hard power relationship, power is the ability of one person or agent to get another person or agent to do something they otherwise would. It is characterized by superior-subordinate relationships and categorized as power over (Woehrle as cited in Ye, 2011) which is coercive power based on superior strength, often in the form of physical strength or superior arms whereas power to which relies on a variety of exchange and reward possibilities (Dugan, 2003; Nye, 2004).

On contrary, soft power, according to Nye (2004), refers to one’s ability to get what one wants through attraction, rather than coercion or payment. Unlike superior-subordinate power relationships, soft power emphasizes a collaborative endeavor which is similar to ‘power with’ (Woehrle as cited in Ye, 2011), and named also as integrative or collaborative power. Similarly, Foucault recognizes that power is derived from the complex network of relations between people and institutions (Murphy, 2007). He maintains that power exists in dual forms to the individual: internal and external. This

implies that relations are developed from forces with an institution and within the individual representing the institution. In addition, “relations are developed through interactions with people inside and outside institution. Power in this sense, is always present in every aspects of social life” (Murphy, 2007) or what Foucault calls immanent (Qi, 2011).

With regard to the type of power relationships between different parties, Dugan (2003) argues that even in competitive power relationships, participants can be equal, with no party being either subordinate or superior; all players can be both influencer and influenced. Integrative power relationships are considered to be based on love, persuasion, integration, cooperation, communication or cooperation. To Foucault, power is not instrument of oppression but it is a strategy that operates in day to day interactions between individuals and institutions. Here, he argues that power is not a possession and it coextensive with resistance, as a productive factor (Sergiu 2010).

Power is a major concern in the field of curriculum, particularly when studying the curriculum development decision-making process. For instance, Scribner and Englert (1977) elucidate that curriculum development processes are always a special cases of political behavior because its activities are concerned with influencing decisions with regard to values. The reason why some people have more power than others; and more people want greater involvement in making curriculum decisions, is nothing but political reality (Phillips & Hawthorne, 1978). Giving more emphasis on who should make curriculum decisions, many authors like Phillips and Hawthorne (1978); Morris (1998) and Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) pose questions such as ‘Who does influence the allocations of values that result in curriculum?’, ‘Who has the power to control the curriculum?’ etc. The importance of ‘who’ is involved in shaping the curriculum is underscored by Schaffarzick et al. as cited in Phillips and Hawthorne (1978) when they state, ... concern “who should make curriculum decisions?” appears to take priority over the question “what should be taught?”

Thus, it shows that the question of ‘who’ in the curriculum decision making is crucial to analyze the power relations that exist between and among different actors in the curriculum development process. As such, Howells (2003) as cited in Ye (2011)

pinpoints that power of curriculum development can be centralized by central curriculum experts or decentralized to local level curriculum developers. Irrespective of the type of framework used, the curriculum development process is political issue associated with who decide on curriculum issues (Taylor, 2004). In other words, curriculum development is seen as one of the area where power relations exist in which one group or individual dominates the development process. However, as indicated by Ye (2011) the Foucauldian scholars suggest emancipation in curriculum development than the traditional bureaucratic approach. Hence, in this study the power relations that exist between MoE and REBs in developing PSC based on decentralization policy was used as a framework for analysis.

iii. Participation theory

Participation is one of the key concepts in this study. To this end concepts and theories related to participation will be dealt in this section. Since the concept of participation can be applied to different practices, there are various concepts and theories related to it. These include theory of political participation, governance/administration and theory of participation in local development, but in this study issue of public decision making will be discussed.

Stakeholders' participation can be perceived in many ways. However, it is generally conceptualized as “people’s involvement in elections, governance and public decision-making processes in local development agendas, from planning to implementation and monitoring of all interventions that affect their lives” (Mulugeta, 2012, p. 49). The term ‘stakeholder’ is used interchangeably with words such as public and citizen by many scholars. Though there are some differences among these words, in this study I used interchangeably for the sake of convenience.

‘Stakeholder’ is defined as “any actor – institution, group or individual – with an interest or a role to play in a societal decision-making process” (OECD, 2015, p.10). This definition is adopted in this study. The word ‘participation’ is also difficult to conceptualize because it is associated with different meanings. World Bank (1996) defines participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and guide

development initiatives and the decision and resources that affect them. In this study it is defined as the involvement of stakeholders in local decision making at various issues that affect their life.

Public/stakeholders' participation can be defined in various ways. For instance, Creighton (2005) defines public participation as:

Public participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in the implementing of programmes, and in efforts to evaluate such programmes. Public participation is the process through which public concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental and corporate decision-making. It is two-way communication and interaction, the overall goal being better decisions that are supported by the public. (p.7)

The author pinpoints that conceptualizing public participation is difficult because the word 'participation' has various meanings. He suggests that public participation is best understood as a continuum that ranges from informing the public, listening to the public, public engagement in problem solving and developing agreements. According to OECD (2015) stakeholders' involvement may take different forms namely sharing information, consulting, dialoguing or deliberating on decisions.

Public participation is considered as a key ingredient for the development of democracy because it enhances stakeholders' involvement in the decision making process that affects them. However, there are two main contrasting arguments of democracy in relation to public participation (Held 2006 as cited in Hosch-Dayican, 2010). These are:

1. Liberal or Representative Democracy: a system of rule embracing elected "officers" who undertake to "represent" the interests and views of the citizens within the framework of "the rule of law".
2. Participatory or Direct Democracy: a system of decision-making about public affairs in which the citizens are directly involved (p. 30).

Liberal theories believe that citizens have low interest and poor knowledge about politics. Hence the citizens have no willingness to participate directly in politics. And therefore

stakeholders' participation in policy making process should be limited to selecting elites who make decision on the behalf of the citizens. Creighton (2005) calls this traditional way of defining democracy which gives citizens the right to select their leaders and the elected officials make invaluable decisions representing their citizens. This is what we call representative democracy.

On the contrary, participatory theories argue that citizens have political interest and knowledge \and they are as well interested to participate in politics actively. Thus, they should be given opportunity to take an active role in decision making that influence them. This implies that participatory democracy is solely characterized by direct participation of citizens in decision making of issues of their concern (Held 2006 as cited in Hosch-Dayican, 2010). The merit of participatory democracy is explained by Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002, p.15) as:

If citizens are involved in the policy development, they will be able to make government officials more accountable for their decisions. Therefore, individuals must be involved in the decision making process because their input can help create useful solutions to problems, such as community housing or education, which are an integral part of their everyday lives.

In sum, liberal theories of democracy give less emphasis to citizen participation in the decision-making process. "It was not desirable for citizens to make use of participation channels which go beyond voting at elections, according to this view" (Hosch-Dayican, 2010, p.41). The reason for this is that citizens' lack of interest to participate and their poor knowledge and skills to make necessary decisions. Nevertheless, this type of thought has been challenged and has given way to the prevalence of participatory democracy. The central argument of participatory democracy in contrast to liberal one is that citizens have interest to participate in politics and they as well have necessary knowledge and skills to make substantial decisions. The only thing citizens need according to this theory is the opportunity to participate actively which can be mediated by the bureaucrats.

Hosch-Dayican (2010) notes that:

...the political culture and constitutional basis of all countries to a varying degree reflect both norms of participatory democracy and competitive elitism [liberal democracy]. Virtually all democracies do encourage some level of citizen participation besides voting, and conversely, no democracy allows citizens to fully participate in the decision-making of the state. (p.41)

The above point illustrate that in a country which advocates democratic governance like Ethiopia both types of theories of democracy do exist though there is variations in its implementation. Based on this premise looking at Ethiopia's experience is very important point. As such since 1991 Ethiopia has made tremendous changes in legal frameworks that include Constitution, policies, guidelines, manuals etc. For instance, the 1995 Constitution of the FDRE provides the legal basis for ensuring Citizens' Voice and participation in socio-economic and political processes. Legal and institutional arrangements aimed at ensuring interface between the government and the Ethiopian public is enshrined in the Constitution. As such, Article 38(1) under sub articles (a) and (b) denotes on public participation as follows:

- a. To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly and through freely chosen representatives;
- b. On the attainment of 18 years of age, to vote in accordance with law.

In more specific terms, Article 43 (sub-article 2) explains that citizens' participation as "Nations have the right to participate in national development and, in particular, to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting their community".

In Education and Training policy of Ethiopia, it is also stipulated that "The evolution of a decentralized, efficient and professionally coordinated participatory system is indicated in respect of administration and management of the education system" (FDRE, 1994, p.5). In the same document under Curriculum strategy (no. 3.1.2) public participation is discussed as "Create a mechanism by which teachers, professionals from major organizations of development, and beneficiaries participate in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum" (p.12).

The importance of active community participation in PSCD in Ethiopia has been given attention and described in MoE (2002, p.49) as follows:

The formulation of academic curriculum and preparation of textbooks through the active participation of the community would help students know and understand the local people's culture, language and norms properly. This in turn enables students to live and work with the community respecting their culture and language. It would also help them to comprehend the root cause of the social problems in their areas and seek a viable solution to the drawbacks accordingly. In general terms, the participation of the community in this regard would help improve the relevance and quality of education.

This implies that decentralization in Ethiopia [and the current policy documents and their derivatives] recognize citizens' [and stakeholders'] active participation in curriculum decision making.

In the same document it is indicated that members of Woreda Education and Training Management Board (WETMB) have given roles and responsibilities in primary school curriculum development. As such it reads as "Provide the necessary support to ensure that the curriculum is prepared in tune with the objective reality of the Woreda" (p.18).

This also tells us that local tier of government WETMB should have participation in curriculum decision making particularly at primary level to make the curriculum relevant to the Woreda context.

Generally from theoretical point of view, it can be argued that in Ethiopia since 1991 public participation in education in general and in curriculum decision making in particular has got more emphasis. Nonetheless, to what extent this policy of public participation has been implemented needs thorough investigation and this is the main focus of this study.

Curriculum development is considered as one of the area where power relations exist as the case in all development processes where one group or individual dominates the process (Taylor, 2004). To this end, the author notes that:

...in recognition of the varying importance and influence of different stakeholders in the curriculum development process, more and more education and training institutions around the world are encouraging participatory curriculum development (PCD) processes, and at the same time building functional linkages with their local communities. PCD approaches create working partnerships between teachers, learners and other stakeholders, and aim to increase ownership of the full learning process, thus improving the potential for effective learning through participation. (pp.2-3)

The main aim of PCD is to get experiences of various stakeholders in an education through their interplay while developing the curriculum. Identifying stakeholders in PCD is a critical element and these may comprise of educationalists, researchers, policy makers, extensionists, foresters and farmers. Stakeholders in PCD should be diversified instead of including only a small selected group of experts. The stakeholders can perform activities such as identifying needs, setting aims and learning objectives, contribute to the development of the subject matter to be taught, and participate in delivery and evaluation of the curriculum. However, Auerbach (1992) as facilitators of adult literacy programmes in the United States recognized that education has not been empowered stakeholders. Morrish (1997) as cited in Taylor (2001) puts the importance of empowerment in curriculum development succinctly as “without a voice, you do not have power. If you are oppressed you do not have a voice. I had forgotten how powerful education is when it works... People only feel powerful when they are able to be partners in the process and are able to see change. This is a participatory process”(p.10).

The merits of PCD as one aspects of decentralized education system can be explained as:

PCD works in a context of real problems. By its nature, it relies on dialogue, on processes, and on building capacity of institutions and individuals to identify strategies and solutions through collaboration, especially in keeping with the trend towards decentralization of education....PCD aims to engage and involve men and women, and helps break down barriers based on age and experience. By enhancing access and involvement of different stakeholders in education and training (through the establishment of platforms for negotiation, dialogue and

collaboration), social background and cultural differences become a force for change rather than remaining a barrier to participation. PCD requires stakeholder involvement in all steps and aspects of the educational process. It is strictly based on the principle of partnership, taking forms appropriate in the local context. (Taylor, 2004, p.12)

Currently, the absence of mechanisms through which different stakeholders can participate in curriculum development rather than simply consulted in a training needs analysis, has been considered as the major challenge (Rudebjer & del Castillo, 1999). To solve this problem, the authors explain the experience of '1st General Meeting of the Southeast Asian Network for Agroforestry Education' in developing forestry curriculum. As such they make clear many activities such as supporting various workshops to raise awareness in PCD. The main purpose of these workshops was to invite key 'insider stakeholders and 'outsider stakeholders. The key outsider stakeholders were so diversified that they included representative stakeholders that came from "Provincial and District level government departments (forestry, agriculture, veterinary), research institutions, schools and mid-level training institutions, community organizations such as the women's union, and from various rural development projects"(p.50).

The existing forestry curriculum was used as bench mark for discussion based on analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The next step in the workshop was a dialogue on competencies that forestry graduates should perform and the participants gave recommendation on the nature of curriculum to be developed. Based on these discussions, strategies how to incorporate stakeholders next were developed. For instance, inviting outsider and insider stakeholders to occasional review meetings at which curriculum development progress reports were presented. The stakeholders had mandated to give direct inputs in the curriculum planning process.

The above discussions tell us the mechanisms through which stakeholders can participate in curriculum development processes and hence using these mechanisms, it is possible to empower the local stakeholders. Thus, the local actors in decentralized education system should devise mechanisms to participate local stakeholders in curriculum development processes based on their real contexts.

To conceptualize the word ‘participation’ in plain way, it is important to look its typologies set by different scholars. In fact, Arnstein’s (1969) ‘ladder of participation’ has dominated the theoretical literature. Arnstein (1969) offers a typology of eight levels of citizens’ participation. The eight rungs of the citizens’ participation ladder are classified in to three main categories (the non participation, degrees of tokenism and degrees of citizen power). The bottom level of the ladder which is the non participation comprises of two levels namely Manipulation and Therapy. The author argues that these levels portray the level of “non-participation”, the illusive participation, which according to the author limits completely the chances of the citizens to participate. Hence, these tactics enable the power holders to “educate” or “cure” the participants.

Within degrees of Tokenism, there are three levels: Informing, Consultation and Placation. Informing and Consultation allow those marginalized or excluded to have a say. Though at these levels citizens have a chance to be heard, the power holders retain the monopoly over the decision-making. Placation is the upper level of tokenism and at this level the citizens can advise the decision-makers. Degrees of citizen power include Partnerships, Delegated Power and Citizen Control. The Partnerships enables the stakeholders to negotiate and engage in decision making with the power holders. At the levels of Delegated Power and Citizen Control, stakeholders maintain majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power. However, the author reminds us that there is no ‘absolute control’ as such instead the categories tell us the redistribution of power between the marginalized group of society and the power holders, the government.

The above ladder of participation is based on the extent of citizens’ power to decide on matters that can affect their life. When one goes from bottom of the ladder (Manipulation) to the upper one (Citizen Control), the participation of the stakeholders increases from passive recipient to active participant in decision making of their concern. In other words, real democratization appears as one climb the ladder. This is what Shaeffer (1994) calls “genuinely participatory development” (p.17). Thus, stakeholders participate to the extent that they:

Choose, cognitively, affectively, and physically, to engage in establishing, implementing, and evaluating both the overall direction of a programme and its

operational details. Choice, in this context, implies not merely an agreement to follow but an active decision to assume responsibility in considering the rationale, implications and potential outcomes of the programme.(Bernard,1990 as cited Shaeffer, 1994, p.17)

Though the author's contention seems rhetoric, it inspires us to raise Fung and Wright (2003) 'Empowered Participatory Governance'. The authors argue that Empowered Participatory Governance can be used in "... facilitating active political involvement of the citizenry, forging political consensus through dialogue, devising and implementing public policies that ground a productive economy and healthy society, and ... assuring that all citizens benefit from the nation's wealth" (p.3).

Here, according to the authors' argument what is important is not only transferring power to the local levels but also empowering them to practice in well organized institutional capacity. In other words, Empowered Participatory Governance suggests for a relocation of the power to the local levels, in terms of the specific variant of decentralization, devolution that helps to empower the stakeholders those affected. It also notes the importance for 'formal linkages' between the local and central levels in order to foster responsibility, accountability, and communication.

In education context, Shaeffer (1994) devises a slightly different ladder for analysis of participation in education sector. These are:

1. the mere use of a service (such as a primary health care facility);
2. involvement through the contribution (or extraction) of resources, materials, and labor;
3. involvement through 'attendance' and the receipt of information (e.g., at parents' meetings at school), implying passive acceptance of decisions made by others;
4. involvement through consultation (or feedback) on a particular issue;
5. participation in the delivery of a service, often as a partner with other actors;
6. participation as implementers of delegated powers; and
7. Participation in real decision-making at every stage: identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation" (p. 16). This level

gives the citizens the authority to initiate action and a capacity to implement confidently.

Shaeffer views involvement as a weaker form of activity than participation commenced three of the four lower rungs on his ladder with the word involvement and only the top rungs with participation. In this study Shaeffer's ladder of participation was used to analyse degrees of participation of local stakeholders in PSCD.

Theoretically as it is discussed above participation goes to the extent that it empowered the stakeholders to decide genuinely on issues that affect them. UNICEF as cited in Russell (2009) states that every person and all peoples have the rights to have active, free and meaningful participation in issues that affect them. Nevertheless, the realization of active participation is not easy as it is presumed. Shaeffer (1991) makes clear that:

Unfortunately, much of what has been written and said about participatory development is more rhetorical than realistic, and so-called 'empowerment of the people' is neither easily achieved nor sustained in the face of political and social oppression or the demands of everyday survival. But despite the vagueness of the rhetoric and the frequent difficulties in implementation, participatory development has become a process of considerable importance in the world. Administrative decentralization, sometimes accompanied by the genuine devolution of political and budgetary authority, is the trend in many countries. Provinces, municipalities, local governments, and the 'civil society' as a whole are gaining further responsibility for social services and local development a responsibility often thrust upon them by increasingly impoverished and impotent State mechanisms. (p. 5)

The author argues, to make participation works as intended, there are conditions to be considered. These include more powerful non-government organizations and community associations, political will which encourages the assessment of local needs and the design, implementation, and evaluation of local development activities. Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002) advise that to influence decision making process different groups or institutions in the community which are interested in the issues should form coalition

and work as a team. “The result of these processes of administrative decentralization and popular mobilization can be the greater participation of people long disadvantaged by class, gender, race, and ethnicity in the institutions, activities, and development processes which affect their lives” (Shaeffer, 1991, p.5).

Active participation of citizens, OECD (2015) notes that has three important merits: Substantive effects which comprise of better, more acceptable choices from the environmental, economic and technical points of view, procedural effects which include better use of information; better conflict management; and increased legitimacy of the decision-making process and contextual effects that incorporate better information to stakeholders and/or the public; improvement of strategic capacity of decision makers; reinforcement of democratic practices; and increased confidence in institutional players. Active participation of stakeholders emanate mainly from democratic decentralization. Hence, if democratic decentralization is implemented properly, Manor (2003) argues that it can encourage greater popular participation, increases transparency and enhances accountability. This means that decentralized system can hold the government accountable to its citizens.

As mentioned above the final destination of public participation is to bring the democratic culture at grass root level and this can be attained mainly through decentralization reform. As Scott and Rao (2011) note the key argument of the proponents of decentralization is that decentralization can enhance local stakeholders’ participation since its main goal is to bring government close to citizens. This in turn empowers the local stakeholders and held the government accountable to them.

If participation is to make its potentially positive effects, it is important that certain conditions be met concerning the design of structures of participation. These are:

1. Institutionalized mechanisms of participation need to be in place: channels of participation in decision making process should not mainly be ad hoc or issue driven but should consist of formalized regular mechanisms.
2. Participation needs to be inclusive: access to participatory mechanisms should be open, equal and transparent for all stakeholders

3. Stakeholder legitimacy: in many decision making processes it is advisable to ensure participation of all stakeholder groups than actively seeking to individual criticizes (Gravingholt et al., 2006).

Seddon (2002) maintains that “participation and decentralization have a symbiotic relationship” (p.15). As such on the one hand, decentralization can only be successful when there is local stakeholders’ active participation. Through active participation of local stakeholders, the local government can easily respond to the needs of the local stakeholders. On the other hand, by its nature decentralization process enhances the opportunities for participation of local stakeholders by transferring power and resources from central to local level of government. In this study local stakeholders refer to the community members which comprises of parents, teachers, school and woreda education office management and social organizations found in woredas such as women and youth association, teacher association and religious institutions.

iv. Institutional capacity

Institutional capacity of local actors in decentralized system is one of the important factors to implement decentralization policy efficiently and effectively. And hence institutional capacity is one of decentralization relevant theories that are used in this study. Before explaining institutional capacity, it is good to look at concepts of institution and capacity separately.

Many scholars argue the challenge of defining the term institution and hence it is defined and interpreted in various ways. For instance, Goldsmith (1993) and Hodgson (2006) argue that institution is considered as basic idea in social science; nevertheless, it is a fuzzy concept. This is because institution is used in different disciplines such as economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, philosophy and geography. As a result the authors conclude that there is no a single accepted definition of the term and it has been used in various ways to refer to a range of different things.

Similarly, Moore (1995) indicates that defining “institution is problematic” since “it is used in English to refer to a range of phenomena” (p.10). In sociology institution can be defined as 'any recurrent pattern of human behavior' (p.10). This definition is too broad

and can mean different things to different individuals. To avoid this confusion, the author argues some theorists added a qualification. As such institution is defined as “recurrent pattern of human behavior that is socially valued” (p.11).

Institution can be defined in economics and sociology as informal or formal communication between people (Alaerts, Hartvelt & Warner, 1997), rules and conventions (Goldsmith, 1992). In political science institution can be defined as the formal and informal rules and practices that are used to translate citizens’ preferences in to public policies (Lipjhart, 1984). Recognizing the complexity of defining institution, Hodgson (2006) forwards that:

...endless disputes over the definitions of key terms such as institution and organization have led some writers to give up matters of definition and to propose getting down somehow to practical matters instead. But it is not possible to carry out any empirical or theoretical analysis of how institutions or organizations work without having some adequate conception of what an institution or an organization is.(p.1)

North (1991) defines institution comprehensively as “humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction” (P. 97). This means that to improve political, social and economic issues human beings have constantly created formal and informal rules in order to reduce uncertainty. The author clarifies that the informal constraints are sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct and formal rules include constitutions, laws, and property rights.

Institution can also be defined by contrasting it with organization. For instance, the World Bank (2000) defines institutions as “the rules of the game that emerge from formal laws, informal norms and practices, and organizational structures in a given setting. Institutions overlap with but are not synonymous with organizations; they are affected by policy design but are broader in scope and less subject to frequent change than most policy frameworks”(p.xii).

Some scholars go further than World Bank and use institution and organizations interchangeably. For example, Uphoff (1986) suggests that institution and organization

are used interchangeably despite of defining institution as a complex of norms and behaviors that persist over time by serving some socially valued purposes and an organization as a structure of recognized and accepted rules. Institution can be organizations and vice versa though not all institutions are organizations. For example, institutions such as taxation, money and law are not organizations. Nevertheless, institutions such as post office, courts and local government agencies are organizations. In this study institution and organization were used interchangeably to avoid the existence confusion.

Capacity is also the basic concept in this study and therefore needs elaboration. The concept capacity can be perceived in different ways. To Dickovick and Riedl (2010) capacity is the availability of resources and human skills necessary to perform the assigned duties. Resources in this case imply financial as well as material which are important for the success of the planned decentralization policy strategy. UNDP (1997, 1998, 2009) perceives capacity broadly as institutional capacity that comprises of capacity at different levels namely system, organization and individual levels. Similarly, Linnell (2003) describes capacity as the ability of organization to achieve its mission to survive and individual skills and capabilities to perform organizational activities.

The above definitions tell us that capacity includes both individuals and organizational ability to perform organizational mandated activities in such a way that organizational mission can be achieved. This implies that capacity is outcome focused. The incongruence between the stated mandates of the organization and the ability of individuals and the organization leads to ineffectiveness and inefficiencies.

Similar to ‘capacity’ organizational capacity can be defined in various ways. For instance, Ker (2003) defines organizational capacity as “ability to successfully apply its skills and resources to accomplish its goals and satisfy its stakeholders’ expectations” (p.6). The skills and resources can comprise staffing, infrastructure, technology, financial resources, strategic leadership, process management, networks and linkages with other organizations and groups. According to Segnestam, Persson, Nilsson, Arvidsson and Ijjasz (2003) organizational/institutional capacity consists of empowerment, social

capital, an enabling environment, culture, values and power relations that influence the performance of the institution.

Capacity of an organization can include governance, leadership, mission and strategy, administration (including human resources, financial management, and legal matters), programme development and implementation, fundraising and income generation, diversity, partnerships and collaboration, evaluation, advocacy and policy change, marketing, positioning, planning (Linnell, 2003); strategic leadership, organizational structure, human resources, financial management, infrastructure, programme and service management, process management, and inter-organizational linkages (Lusthaus, Anderson & Murphy, 1995).

Organizational capacity should consider both internal and external environments to be successful. For example, the internal environment of organizational may include individual capacity that is related to leadership, advocacy skills, training/speaking abilities, technical skills, organizing skills, and other areas of personal and professional effectiveness (Linnell, 2003). At organizational level the internal environment of an organization consists of the internal structure, policies and procedures that determine an organization's effectiveness (UNDP, 1997; 2009). On the importance of external environment of organization, Eade (2007) notes that the capacity of an organization cannot be understood separately since it is deeply rooted in the social, economic and political environment in which it operates. This environment may consist of the administrative and legal systems, policies and laws, the cultural context and the general political stability of a country. Thus, to assess the capacity of an organization, understanding both the internal and external environments are very crucial to be successful.

Many organizations and scholars have developed institutional capacity assessment frameworks that usually consist of three levels of institutional capacity. For instance, UNDP (1997, 2009) identifies three levels of institutional capacity where capacity is built and measured: in an enabling environment, in organizations and within individuals.

The enabling environment is the broad social system within which people and organizations work. It comprises of the rules, laws, policies, power relations and social norms that govern the organization in general and the staff members in particular. The organizational level includes the internal structure, policies and procedures that determine an organization's effectiveness. It is in this level that the environmental factors interact with the real conditions in the organization. If the organization is well resourced and the enabling environment is conducive, the potential of the institution will rise to implement its stated targets. The individual level refers to the skills, experience and knowledge that allow each person to perform. These can be acquired mainly through formal education and training as well as informally by doing and observing. Individual capacity development is influenced by the organizational and environmental factors which in turn can be affected by the capacity of each individual.

The capacity of an organization exists at three levels (DFID, 2006; SIDA, 2005). These are Micro, Meso, and Macro levels. The micro level refers to personnel skills as demonstrated by the staff. It also gives emphasis to team work, information building and sharing. The meso level refers to organizational level. This includes the organizational structure, definition of roles and responsibilities, leadership, attitudes and incentives, appraisal procedures, budgetary allocations for various tasks, facilities, access to information, infrastructure and technology, and communication within the organization. The macro level is mainly related to the broad context or the external factors that have impact on the organization performance. This comprises of the political will, stakeholders dealing directly or indirectly with the said organization, policies, networks and partnerships, and budgets from the parent institutions or ministries.

Based on institutional capacity assessment framework of Segnestam et al. (2003) and Willems and Baumert (2003) classify institutional capacity in to three levels: the individual, the organization and the broader context. The individual level implies the skills and performance of the staff members. The performance of individuals in their roles and responsibilities is the foundation for the success of the goals of the institution. To this end, the motivation, a job with clear mission, skills correspond to individual job, availability of training and right incentives are very important factors. Unless individuals

have been capacitated in such a way, good reforms programs which are formulated in details will never be implemented as intended. This implies that individual capacity is very essential to make policy be implemented as stated. The organization level refers to the performance of the organization. It is mainly demonstrated as the management capacity. This includes understanding what motivates the stakeholders, the incentive structure, having clear missions, clear roles and responsibilities to each staff members and resources to carry out the functions. Furthermore, the extent the higher management is well informed by technical staffs and in turns the supports that are given to technical staffs by the higher management (Willems & Baumert, 2003). They further divided the broad context in to three sub levels (Society: norms, values and practices, Public governance and Network of organizations).

The effectiveness of organization is also mainly dependent on the broad institutional setting of the country, which is represented by the next three levels of institutional capacity. These include social norms, values and practices, public governance and network of organizations. Social norms, values and practices imply the broader cultural, economic and social environment, within which the organization is situated. Government's actions by themselves are not enough without citizen's acceptance of the government's legislations and policies. Hence, understanding the social norms, values and practices in which the organization operates and adjust organization's plan accordingly will help more to be successful (Willems & Baumert, 2003).

Public governance is one of the key external factors for the success of the organization in carrying out its functions. Though there are different dimensions of public governance, the following are more relevant to discuss institutional capacity. These are the political economy this means the way governments are selected, monitored and replaced, as well as the way political institutions take decisions on policy issues, the ability of citizens, groups and associations to make their voice heard, monitor government's actions and participate in the decision making process is increasingly seen as essential for good governance. In turn, this ability depends on the availability of political rights and civil liberties, including media independence, as well as on the ability of government to

provide transparent information and finally the quality of the civil service and its overall ability to implement sound and coherent policies forms

As has been discussed above, there are different ways of explaining institutional capacity. However, it seems that all reached an agreement that institutional capacity is mainly conceptualized in three levels: the external environment, the organizational level and the individual level. Therefore, in this study to examine the institutional capacity of regions to carry out PSCD, the organizational and individual levels were used as framework for assessment. This will be made specific in the conceptual framework of this study.

2.7. Overview of Decentralization of Different Countries

Decentralization has become one of the major policy reform strategies almost in all countries in the world. With this regard, Manor (1999, p.1) explains in depth as:

Decentralization has quietly become a fashion of our time. It is being considered or attempted in an astonishing diversity of developing and transitional countries ... by solvent and insolvent regimes, by democracies (both mature and emergent) and autocracies, by regimes making the transition to democracy and by others seeking to avoid that transition, by regimes with various colonial inheritances and by those with none. It is being attempted where civil society is strong, and where it is weak. It appeals to people of the left, the centre and the right, and to groups which disagree with each other on a number of other issues.

This shows that decentralization as one of the policy strategic reforms has been practiced almost in all countries throughout the world irrespective of political, social and economic development of countries. Indeed the rationales, success and failure stories of the countries in implementing decentralization reform differ in one way or another. In this part the rationales behind the decentralization policy of countries will be discussed below.

In many countries decentralization has been implemented to transfer the authority and responsibilities from central to local government mainly to improve the participation of local stakeholders in decision making which affects their life. For instance, Indian decentralization was enacted as the result of an evolutionary process which encourages

the participation of the public in development and governance (Mathew & Mathew, 2003). Decentralization reform in Sierra Leone was developed to make elected district and urban councils on some transferred responsibilities such as primary services, local investment and financial resources by building the administrative infrastructure and capacity of the local councils (Zhou, 2009). Decentralization in Bolivian is targeted to improve citizens' quality of life through representative democracy. In the UK, the main aim of decentralization is to transfer the centralized government to a more democratic, decentralized, plural state which can balance power between citizen and government (Faguet, 2011). Brazil's decentralization was part and parcel of the democratization process (Melo & Rezende, 2004).

Other countries were motivated to implement decentralization to solve more specific governance challenges. In Spain, for instance, the strategy of devolution was adopted in order to alleviate the historical tensions between the Spanish state and its ethno-regions (Chernyha & Burg, 2008). Decentralization in Colombia was designed mainly as a response to alleviate violence in the country through elected local governments which give citizens more voice in public affairs, and so can improve the then violent condition. South Africa's decentralization was aimed to transfer the country from apartheid to democracy as demanded by a white National Party (USAID, 2009). In 1990's in Argentina administrative responsibilities were transferred from central government to provinces to reduce the burden of central government in spending by transferring it to the provinces (Faletti, 2004).

Nonetheless, different scholars argue that implementation of decentralization policies have not been well going as expected. For example, Olum (2014, p. 23) pinpoints that "decentralization has been implemented and is being implemented in many developing countries without much success". He argues that preconditions namely the establishment of institutional mechanisms, the creation of spaces for citizens' participation, political will and civil will, capacity development at the local level, careful implementation, and democratic governance have been missed in many developing countries which are critical issues in order to make decentralization reform successful.

Research made in ten African countries sponsored by USAID, Dickovick and Riedl (2010) compare the results of the countries to draw lessons. They used authority, autonomy, accountability and capacity as theoretical framework to gather the necessary data for the study. The findings of the study assert that within last two decades promising achievements have been gained in political decentralization, sub-national elections. As such all the studied countries have developed system of regular elections at sub-national level. In administrative decentralization success has been gained in the devolution of planning for local development. The study also reveals that budgeting and managing resources for the public service delivery have also improved due to administrative decentralization. The practice of fiscal decentralization in these studied African countries is mainly based on the decentralization of revenues and expenditure responsibilities. This means almost all the studied countries on the revenue aspect receive transfers from the central government based on formulas not on central government discretion. The countries have also many responsibilities on expenditure in many areas.

Generally, the authors argue that African decentralization has been successful in establishing decentralization framework laws in the political, fiscal, and administrative dimensions of decentralization which devolve authority and responsibilities to sub-national governments. Nevertheless, changes in autonomy, accountability and capacity have had less positive impacts. In many studied African countries autonomy at sub-national level has been lacking because of central governments' and the dominant political parties' strict control. The downward accountability of sub-national governments to local stakeholders has only been seen in sub-national elections whereas the up-ward accountability of sub-nations to central government is high. Fiscal realities in each country shows that the sub-national governments are mainly depend on revenue transfer of the central government that thrust them to be more accountable to the center. Finally, capacity at all levels of government unlikely improved to implement decentralization policy successfully.

It can be understandable as stated above that countries have diversified aims in implementing decentralization as strategic reform. As such decentralization has been implemented to improve the participation of local stakeholders, to reduce the conflict

among different ethnics and to lessen the burden of central government by transferring responsibilities to the local government. However, evidences have shown that there are discrepancies between the policies and practices which implies that the implementation of decentralization has not been successful as expected.

2.8. Education Decentralization

i. Meanings of education decentralization

Decentralization in education is a complex process as it comprises various levels of local government, sub sectors of education system and components or functions of each sub sectors. It is therefore substantial to pose questions to understand how far decision making should be decentralized for each sub-sectors of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) across different levels (i.e. region, zone, woreda and school community) with what responsibilities of specific educational functions (educational management, teacher training, designing curriculum etc.) of a particular level of government (UNESCO, 2005).The transfer of authority to regional, provincial and/or woreda education office levels in a decentralized education system can include wider sharing of educational management and governance functions, broader participation in decision-making processes and increased local autonomy in certain policy or management aspects.

In some cases, this trend has led to significant modifications in the organizational structure of ministries of education. For example, decentralization may imply the devolution of administrative functions from central to regional, provincial, Woreda or Kebele levels.

Additionally, with respect to curriculum, there is a trend towards the development of localized curricula that is sensitive to the cultural and socio-economic diversity of local communities. However, the nation-state retains a degree of normative control, mitigating these tendencies and fostering equity as differences implemented at the local levels can potentially result in greater inequality between regions (UNESCO-IBE, 2003).

To understand decentralization in education sector, it is crucial to break the broad sector in to sub-sectors such as preprimary, primary, secondary and tertiary. Within each sub-

sector there are functions or components which demand critical analysis to have clear understanding about decentralization of particular function.

There are different educational functions in each sub-sector. These functions can be classified in different ways by different scholars as school organization, curriculum, finance, teacher recruitment and equity (Winker, 1989), mission, operations, personnel, client and finance (David, 1994 as cited in McGinn & Welsh,1999); organization of instruction, personnel management, planning and structures and resources (Winkler & Gershber,2000), organization of teaching, personnel, planning and structures, student progression, ensuring quality and ensuring financial resources (Halasz, Garami, Havas & Vago, 2001) and school organization, curriculum and teaching methods, examinations and supervision, teacher recruitment and compensation, finance of recurrent costs, school construction and finance (Winkler,2001 as cited in Rado, 2010).

According to Aitchison (2006) the educational functions that can be decentralized can be categorized in to two major areas namely Administrative and Curricular. Administrative aspect can include personnel management, financial management, sites and resources, management information systems, planning and structures, monitoring and evaluation whereas the curricular one comprises of issues such as organization of curriculum and instruction, curriculum development, materials, curriculum monitoring and evaluation.

On issue of locus of decision making of educational functions; Winkler (1989) advises that different educational functions in different sub-sectors should be decided at different levels of governmental structures. As such, decentralization of finance and teacher recruitment at local level, school organization and curriculum at regional level and central government grants should be used towards problems of inequity and inefficiency which would occur as a result of decentralization. In his justification, the author's main argument is that decentralization of education can be a solution to shift the burden of financing to the local community. To this effect, he asserts the community must be self motivated and self reliance to perform its educational activities.

Education system which is decentralized can be described as follows:

A decentralized system is characterized by the exercise of substantial power at the local level on many aspects of primary education, subject to some limited control by the central government. Responsibility may be decentralized to a region, a province, a district, a town, or an individual school or a group of schools....Planners involved in a decentralizing reform must identify which components of the system are more appropriately managed at the central level and which at the local level, given the country's particular circumstances and the objectives of reform. (Florestal & Cooper, 1997, p.1)

The argument of these authors suggests that before deciding the roles and responsibilities of different levels of education system, caution has to be made on type of education functions to be decentralized based on the real situations of the country in general and a given institution in particular. This is in fact the key issue to be successful in its implementation.

McGinn and Welsh (1999) on their part advice that:

Decision makers and managers do not have to maintain a single approach over time, but instead can vary where decisions are made according to the current situations of the organizations. A strategic approach would define the principles that guide choices in situations, rather than specify the fixed structural changes to be made (p.58).

The degree to which a particular function of education is centralized or decentralized is measured by the actual distribution of decision-making authorities among the different levels of government. In this case Rado (2010, p.45) points out that “by mapping out decision-making assignments, the weight of different actors can be assessed and the skeleton of the whole of governance and management can be described”.

Here the author’s argument shows only the theoretical assumptions to be met in order for decentralization policy to happen i.e. the existence of authority as a precondition for decentralization to happen. Nevertheless, to examine the success of educational

functions' decentralization there is criteria to be met in addition to the presence of legal framework. These could be the extent to which the local actors which mandated authority can exercise their mandate autonomously without interference of the central government. To be effective the exercise of the autonomy of the local actors should be accompanied by downward accountability, accountable to the local stakeholders directly or indirectly. The exercise of autonomy and being accountable to local stakeholders of the local actors can only be successful if they have institutional capacity. Hence the focus of this study is to critically analyse the implementation of PSCD at regional level. To do this the relationships between the MoE and REBS, the relationships between REBs and local stakeholders and the institutional capacity of REBs to develop primary school curriculum were critically examined.

ii. Experiences of education decentralization of selected countries

Educational decentralization has been implemented in almost all countries in the world with various rationales. For instance, Hanson (1997) explains the existence of education decentralization policy in different countries in the following manner:

Educational decentralization has become a worldwide phenomena that can be found in federal systems of government (e.g., United States, Argentina, India, Nigeria) as well as unitary systems (e.g., Pakistan, Colombia, Papua New Guinea), in large countries (e.g., Canada, Australia, Spain) as well as small (e.g., Zaire, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Malta). (p. 1).

Astiz, Wiseman and Baker (2002) also observe that “over the past several decades, there has been a preoccupation with decentralization in the policy discourse about education, particularly among the developing nations of Latin America, South Asia, and Eastern Europe and among international development agencies” (p.70).

The sub-sectors and its functions to be decentralized and to which levels of government, and with what degree of decentralization all differs in countries both developing as well as developed. For instance, United Kingdom has decentralized its preprimary and primary education sub-sectors with all their functions like school organization and management, financing etc. but retain curriculum decision making at central (Mulwa,

Kimiti, Kituka & Muema, 2011; UNESCO, 2007) whereas in United States of America almost all functions of education system are decentralized to individual states and districts by developing systematic regulatory mechanisms (UNESCO, 2007).

In Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico education decentralization reforms the Ministries of Education have retained centralized authority over national policy, curriculum frameworks (but not specific content or materials), information generation and management, academic evaluation, and specialized training (Hanson,1997). In Argentina, the provincial governments have the role and responsibility to finance and render basic education where as the central government responsibility is to give support for educational reform than oversight and control. In Mexico, the major roles of Ministry of Education are setting national norms and standards and establishing the national curriculum and approve regional curricula (Gershberg & Meade, 2003; Winkler & Gershberg, 2003).

In East Asian and Pacific countries, Popic and Patel (2011) point out that the content of the national education curriculum is centrally controlled to ascertain national unity as well as decisions on instruction time, teachers' salaries, and resource allocation are the responsibilities of central government. On the other hand, empowering local governments to make decision on issues like hire and fire teachers, and language of instruction in the early grades of primary school according to local conditions, is linked with improved teacher and student attendance and performance.

In Kenya the secondary education decentralization which was enacted in 2005, has mandated district and school levels governance to decide on day-to-day operations, local supervision and resource mobilization to support education and training whereas decisions with regard to policy development, quality assurance and standards, curriculum design and overall responsibility falls under the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2005b). Similarly, in Uganda education system Namukasa and Buye (2007) pinpoint that curriculum design, assessment, teacher development and higher education are the functions that are strongly regulated centrally.

The aforementioned experience of different countries tells us that there is no one way of implementing educational decentralization and hence countries have a number of policy options to decentralize their education system. This is because of the fact that education system is complex in relation to the existence of various sub-sectors of education, actors at different levels, different types of functions of education etc. That is why; McGinn and Welsh (1999) argue that to measure education decentralization is difficult because of its multitude unit of analysis. However, it seems that most countries have decentralized preprimary and primary sub-sectors with almost its human and financial functions to somewhere at local level governments.

There are various rationales why a particular country has devoted to decentralize its education policy. For instance, Florestal and Cooper (1997) pinpoint that countries decentralize their education to maintain efficiency by transferring responsibilities to local levels of government. The goals for education decentralization according to Hanson (1997) could be: economic development; increasing management efficiency; giving financial responsibility to local levels, promoting democratization; increasing local control through deregulation; introducing market-based education; neutralizing competing centers of power such as teachers unions and political parties; and enhancing the quality of education by reducing dropout rates or increasing learning. The reasons for educational decentralization tend to be associated with four distinct objectives; democratization, regional or ethnic pressures, improved efficiency and enhanced quality of schooling (Mulwa et al., 2011).

More specifically, some of the main reasons for education decentralization in developing countries could be: lack of resources of national government, to reduce ethnic and regional tensions and to encourage political democratization (Bray, 2007 as cited in Lugaz & De Grauwe, 2010). The author argues that the rationale for education decentralization in Ethiopian case is to defuse ethnic and regional tensions that existed before 1991. It is “a means to appease social and political tensions” (Lujan-Hernandez, 2016, p. 32). But in reality education decentralization of countries including Ethiopia has essence in addition to political purpose such as maintain quality education through localizing the content of the curriculum.

Similarly, Lugaz and De Grauwe (2010, p.22) describe rationales of education decentralization of different countries as follows:

Argentina decentralized education system to provincial governments in order to lessen the federal government's financial burden and Spain decentralized education to regional governments to accommodate the demands of different ethnic language groups. Similarly, in Ghana, education decentralization is meant to improve efficiency and accountability of the local, district level of government in making decisions about education.

The essence of education decentralization according to Winkler (1989) could be summarized in to three main categories: educational finance, efficiency and effectiveness, and redistribution of power. These different categories can have interconnections; for instance, the redistribution of power can be aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the education, or the redistribution of power can be aimed at changing the financing of the educational sector. The redistribution of power has often been seen as a way to include marginalized groups in the society. By moving power to the lower levels of government, marginalized groups shall be given better possibilities to influence education in order to address their requirements.

Educational decentralization in Ethiopia, Philippines, Spain, and Sudan was politically driven. For instance, in Ethiopia educational decentralization was implemented after end of the civil war and served to bring different ethnic groups in a position to have their own voice in education. In this case, decentralization to the regions is preferable because the regional states were formed by taking ethno-linguistic groups as the main criterion (Bray, 2003; Gershberg & Winkler, 2003).

To UNESCO-IBE (2003) decentralization of educational management and governance has three dimensions: technical, pedagogical and political. The technical dimension is about managerial efficiency which deals to decentralized administrative management. The pedagogical rationale is related to relevance and quality of learning which can be achieved through localized curriculum. The political aspect is important in legitimacy of educational content and processes which can be attained by broader stakeholders'

involvement particularly in policy making. This can consist of broader consultation (views/opinions) and decentralization of decision making.

As discussed above, there are other issues what enforce education decentralization rather than enhancement of the school conditions. That is why, Weidman and DePietro-Jurand (2011) perceive it as “decentralization is not a panacea for improving educational quality and outcomes and these factors may not even be driving decentralization efforts”. Based on this point, Lugaz and De Grauwe (2010) underscore that many countries decentralize their education system for other purposes such as political, social and economical than to improve schooling.

Generally speaking whether one likes or not decentralization has become the ‘Motto’ of the time and there is no way to escape. There are many conditions which thrust the country to implement decentralization as the main reform strategy of government. External factors of the international donors like World Bank and IMF on the one hand and the internal situations of a country being diversified in geographical location, ethnicity, linguistic, culture etc on the other hand are the motives. In fact many scholars like Scott and Rao (2011) argue that the former has more potential power to influence in developing countries.

To be successful in implementing decentralization policy as planned there are issues to be considered. For instance, Winker (1989) argues that bottom-up initiation is crucial. Specific to education effective decentralization requires the following:

- Involvement of all the education stakeholders, with parties held accountable for outcomes
- Changes in roles, responsibilities and administrative behavior at all levels
- Institutional framework based on empowering the participation of communities and officials at all levels.
- Restructuration of national and/or regional departments of education to take on new functions to support sub-national entities and sites
- Officials, principals and community members at the lower levels with the capacity to implement improvements in the particular educational environment

- Authorities and officials working in genuine partnerships with civil society and community stakeholders with capacity to support, train and partner with local community members
- The recognition that community support is a process, not an event and that it takes time (Aitchison, 2006).

Whatever the rationales behind educational decentralization, a number of specific reforms typically accompany education decentralization (Weidman & DePietro-Jurand, 2011). These include creating an enabling political and legal framework, reducing the power of the central education Ministry, strengthening sub-national government capacity, supporting stakeholder participation, and balancing autonomy with accountability.

Enabling political and legal framework includes the efficient division of responsibilities among different levels of government. This requires explicit and transparent rules defining who has authority and who will be held accountable. Legislation needs to describe the role and tasks at each level of government; set limits on the authority and responsibilities at each level; and specify coordination mechanisms among the different levels to facilitate decentralized decision making.

Supporting stakeholder participation is one of the pillars of educational decentralization. It is empowering citizens in educational matters. That is enhancing the autonomy of the local stakeholders' participation in education to improve quality of education.

Balancing autonomy with accountability implies autonomy cannot exist without accountability. They can be expressed as different faces of the same coin. Hence to improve the performance of decentralized education systems, autonomy and accountability should go together. For education decentralization to work, each level of the system must be accountable to those who fund its programs and activities and to those who benefit from them. In other words, there must be a reliable system of accountability at each decentralized level for all stakeholders.

Reducing the central education administration helps to eliminate extra layers of bureaucracy by moving decision making and resources to local governments and/or schools. This implies the role of central government is changed from implementer to

facilitator, providing timely support such as targeted technical assistance, data analysis, strategic planning, etc. to local governments.

There have been different studies on education decentralization in different countries. For instance, study by Naidoo (2002) on education decentralization in six sub-Saharan African countries (Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) reveals that in all these countries decisions on curriculum, routine school management, and organizational matters were not decentralized to improve local community involvement in decision making. In addition, it is shown in this study that the suitable structures and frameworks which encourage education decentralization are lacking.

Namukasa and Buye (2007) based on decentralization literature review conclude the situations of Uganda's education decentralization as it was mainly derived by political motive without considering the existing reality for practice. The main problem, they observed was: "Decentralization laws preceded workable models of decentralization. Although phasing in decentralization allows for experimentation and the possibility of revisions, Uganda chose the all-at-once strategy. All districts took responsibility of their education systems, whether they were ready or not" (p.99). Similarly, Indriyanto (2005) argues that the Indonesian education decentralization policy which was introduced in 1974 is not successfully implemented as it is "merely rhetoric" (p. 90).

Research in ten developing and developed countries on level of education decision making by McGinn and Welsh (1999) reveals that:

The countries range from the most to the few proportion of the decisions made at the central level. The results indicate the variety of arrangements for sharing authority for decisions about education. In the five of the countries (Zimbabwe, Senegal, Malaysia, France and Namibia) central and district or local organizations make most of the decisions about education. In three countries authority is shared primarily between central and regional (state) organizations (Mexico, Nigeria and India). In the United Kingdom, decisions about curriculum are made by the central government, while in the USA they are shared between the state and district organizations. (pp. 53-54)

The authors have shown the various ways of education decentralization in different countries. The finding reveals that the central government had some sort of authority over education in all studied countries. The result of the study also shows that there is no country which totally centralized its education system i.e. where only the central government had authority over education. The allocation of authority to the different levels of education basically varies in each country. Generally, the authors argue that the central governments in all countries have shared responsibility with the lower level of governments. The study also confirms that educational decentralization cannot be realized alone but it corresponds with the political reality of each studied country.

Weiler (1990) as cited in Karlsen (2000) by studying different educational systems concludes that “there is tension between decentralization efforts and the need for central control”. This implies, the author argues decentralization rarely occurs rather it seems absorbed in to the existing centralized or semi-centralized structure of educational governance. Regardless of its inability to be successful, decentralization of education continues to be considered as an important strategy for the governments as a means to compensate ‘compensatory legitimization’. Still, he sees decentralization as important as a way to manage conflict and to give what is called ‘compensatory legitimization’. That is the modern governments use decentralization to compensate the erosion of legitimacy and hence decentralization rhetoric is used to enhance legitimacy of governments in order to retain their power.

Sijabat’s (2015) undertook an analysis of the implementation of educational decentralization in Bantul District of Indonesia. The main purpose of the study was to analysis the implementation of educational decentralization at a local level based on 1999 decentralization policy of the country. The study used qualitative study method. In depth interview was used to gather data from the purposefully selected participants. The researcher identified three themes namely Education Management, Curriculum Development, and Stakeholders’ Participation. The findings of the study reveal that though local government has authority and responsibilities to decide on education matters of the local stakeholders, MoE has still retained greater power on curriculum decision making. The result of the study also confirms that stakeholders’ participation in education

has been improved since the implementation of decentralization policy. Stakeholders have participated in education through different mechanisms such as financial involvement, member of school board, participation in curriculum development through public consultations and direct participation in school activities.

Khan and Mirza (2011) made study on educational decentralization of Pakistan. The main objective of the study was to explore the implementation of devolved educational decentralization. Document analysis was used to gather data. The finding of the study shows that powers were devolved from provincial to district government, however, most of powers of academic administrative and financial have remained centralized.

2.9. Curriculum: Concepts and Development

i. Conceptions of curriculum

Many scholars of education argue that the word ‘curriculum’ is derived from Latin word ‘currere’ which means ‘racecourse’ (Marsh, 2004, 2009; Ross, 2000). The origin of the word curriculum is Latin which means, a racing chariot, from which is derived a racetrack, or a course to be run, and from this, a course of study (Ross, 2000). Indeed, according to Marsh (2004) for many students, the school curriculum is a race to be run, a series of obstacles or hurdles (subjects) to be passed. However, curriculum is conceptualized in various ways by different scholars in different periods. Previously the word ‘curriculum’ was more related with textbook, but now the reality is that many pioneer scholars of the field have reached the agreement that curriculum is more complex and variegated concept.

The word curriculum has been used historically to describe the subjects taught during the classical period of Greek civilization. However, the interpretation of the word curriculum broadened in the twentieth century to include subjects other than the classics. Today, school documents, newspaper articles, committee reports, and many academic textbooks refer to any and all subjects offered or prescribed as ‘the curriculum of the school’ (Marsh, 2009, p. 4).

Nunan (1988) argues that traditionally curriculum is taken to refer to a statements of intent that ‘what should be’ of a course of study. However, he rather explains it in

different perspectives. As such curriculum is seen in terms of what teachers actually do, that is in terms of 'what is' rather than 'what should be'. This view of the curriculum reminds us that there are different levels of curriculum namely the official curriculum/the planned curriculum, the enacted or implemented curriculum and the learned or experienced curriculum (Marsh & Willis, 2007) and these levels are used, the authors argue as starting point while studying curriculum. The planned curriculum is all about what knowledge is of most worth. It deals basically with important goals and objectives. The enacted curriculum is about professional judgments, the type of curriculum to be implemented and evaluated. In this case teachers have to judge the appropriate pedagogical knowledge to use. The experienced curriculum is what the student practices in dealing with learning teaching process. This can be performed within or outside the classroom. In this study curriculum refers to the official/planned curriculum.

ii. Curriculum development: Centralization vs. decentralization

The concept of curriculum development can be viewed in various ways. For instance, to language curriculum scholar Recharads (2001), curriculum development comprises of planning and implementation processes which are used to develop or renew curriculum. These elements of the processes are need analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching and evaluation and thus they are understood as network which makes the system function. As such the change in one part of the system can have the impact on the other parts of the system. This suggests that the curriculum planners should consider all parts in changing a single part to make the system function effectively. Similarly, according to Marsh (2009) curriculum development processes include planning, designing, producing, implementing and evaluation of a set of materials.

Comprehensive explanation of curriculum development is given by Thijs and Akker (2009, p.15) as follows:

Curriculum development often starts with an analysis of the existing setting and the formulation of intentions for the proposed change or innovation. Important activities in this phase include a problem analysis, a context analysis, a needs

analysis, and an analysis of the knowledge base. Based on these activities, first design guidelines are drawn up. The design requirements are carefully developed, tested and refined into a relevant and usable product. Evaluation plays an important role in this process. Evaluation activities cast light on the users' wishes and possibilities in their practical context and reveal the best way to attune the product to the practical setting.

These authors explain the whole processes through which curriculum development processes pass. They see analysis and evaluation as hallmark of the curriculum development processes to attain quality product. In fact they are right because without depth understanding of the situation through analysis and evaluate each activity in the processes it is unthinkable to get quality product which can be realized as intended.

According to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) curriculum development consists of "how a curriculum is planned, implemented and evaluated, as well as what people, processes and procedures are involved" (p.15). These authors view curriculum development not only as 'how' question but also give emphasis to 'who' question. As such they argue that in developing new curriculum the 'who' questions are important and this will be discussed later in the next section.

To make us understand, Short (1983, p. 47) describes curriculum development by comparing it with curriculum policy. As such he clarifies that:

Curriculum policy making is primarily a controlling activity that involves specification of such thing as kind, structure and intent of the curriculum deemed desirable to be developed, enacted and realized where as curriculum development is a technical process involving translation of curriculum policy in to educational programs.

Generally speaking curriculum development process can be conceptualized narrowly as developing a curricular product or as comprehensive and ongoing improvement broadly (Van den Akker, Fasoglio & Mulder, 2010). In order to successfully address tasks of curriculum decision-making and enactment, a broader description of curriculum development is often most appropriate: usually a long and cyclic process with many

stakeholders participation, in which motives and needs for changing the curriculum are formulated, ideas are specified in programs and materials, and efforts are made to realize the intended changes in practice.

This study used Short's (1983) definition of curriculum development which states curriculum development as "the processes of translating curriculum policy in to educational programs" (p.47). This process comprises of need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design and textbook production and publication.

Based on the various definitions and meanings of curriculum, there can be two main models of curriculum development decision-making: centralized and decentralized decision making power among different levels of curriculum stakeholders. Hence, to identify whether the curriculum development processes is centralized or decentralized the question "Who decides on curriculum development processes" is important. These processes of curriculum development are made by central government in centralized curriculum development and by local level governments/schools in decentralized once.

Curriculum centralization, Florestal and Cooper (1997) describe as curriculum decisions that are made at central by senior personnel about what is to be taught, and often how it is to be taught and assessed. In case of such condition, the authors maintain that the central government, MoE has various activities to perform such as issues related to students, teachers, funding, facilities, and policy setting and performs management functions, such as paying teachers, and providing pre-service and in-service instruction. The main role of the local level management particularly of school is restricted to day to day routine activities and left with limited access for innovation. Centralized curriculum has some merits such as it encourages uniform delivery to all through standard curricula, easy and efficient to develop and manage because it avoids detailed analysis of individual regions, province or schools needs.

This implies that centralized curriculum is more structured and orderly and it is more likely to ensure uniformity and a standard approach to teaching and learning irrespective of the local variations. This means that it is less sensitive to local needs. In this case the central government normally MoE has authority to plan and control the curricula than

any other bodies involved in educational arena. Almost all decisions about curriculum are made at central with little participation of the stakeholders and if any without power to decide. Brennen (2002, p. 1) puts this as “this central body has complete power over all resources: money, information, people, and technology. It decides the content of curriculum; controls the budget, is responsible for employment, the building of educational facilities, discipline policies, etc”. The main roles and responsibilities of local educational offices at different levels are to implement the program as intended with the instruction of the central authority and report to the authority its implementation.

In contrary ‘curriculum decentralization’ refers to the development of curriculum at local levels (regional, province, district or school) based on the standard of central government. Karlsen (2000) and Ziba (2011) on their part argue that decentralization in education is related with the balance between standardization and diversity of school content and curriculum. This implies that in decentralized education system in relation to curriculum, the central government sets standard to be followed by local governments which will yield varieties of school curriculum. Thus, the balance can be maintained through monitoring school curriculum based on the standard.

Now day curriculum decentralization is advocated in literature because according to UNESCO-IBE (2003) it gives opportunity to inculcate the local needs and interests through encouraging the active participation of local stakeholders in the process. However, curriculum decentralization has risks in relation to fragmentation and its inability to pursue national goals and priorities in a consistent way. If system is devise to reduce these risks, it has the potential to democratize education by giving autonomy to local stakeholders to participate in curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.

In decentralized education system, it is assumed that the roles of local stakeholders extend to participation in decision making not only in administrative activities but also in academic area such as having voice in content of the curriculum (Goldring, 1994). Deciding on curriculum locally with participation of different local stakeholders, which is one of the characteristics of decentralization, has various merits: it enables local level governments to respond to their environment through sharing decision-making power

with local stakeholders who in turn encourage the local stakeholders to have positive outlook and implement accordingly. For instance, the author pinpoints that there are different ways through which local stakeholders (teachers, parents and community) can participate in education such as by being volunteer, financial assistance, decision maker. Out of these and other typologies of local stakeholders' participation in education the participation in curriculum decision making transcends all and hence participation of local stakeholders in curriculum decisions is used to bring quality learning when there is congruence among school, home and community.

According to Behrman, Deolalikar and Soon (2002) curriculum decentralization has positive impact on efficiency and distribution perspectives. It can bring more general management decentralization as well as permit accommodation of local stakeholders' preferences. Nevertheless, tensions may emerge when it is not implemented as planned. This can happen first when local authorities give more emphasis to local conditions by belittling the national and international realities which can impede students not to be competent in the global markets. Second adapting local curriculum and testing standards may create regional differences since there are regional variations in many respects which have big implication to quality education. This may mean students in poor and minority municipalities and communities can be disadvantages. The authors suggest that to implement curriculum decentralization effectively the role of central government is tremendously important. As such they maintain that:

The national government should take on a regulatory role to ensure that students from all municipalities and communities meet at least some basic learning and skills standards. Indeed, it could be argued that the regulatory role of the national government in setting and enforcing minimum education standards is even more important in a decentralized than centralized education system.

Generally speaking curriculum decentralization has many advantages especially it enhances the participation of local stakeholders in curricula decision making which is the core objective of decentralization strategy. This in turn leads to democratization through downward accountability of the local government to local communities.

iii. Experiences of selected countries on curriculum decentralization

With prevalence of decentralization as main policy reform strategy, many countries have experienced devolving curriculum development to different levels of local governments. China has implemented curriculum decentralization policy since 2001 (MoE, 2001 as cited in Qi, 2011). As such three different tiers of education have been participating in curriculum development: central state, province and school within which the MoE maintains control over 80% of school curriculum, but allows local education departments and schools to innovate on 20 % of courses. The importance of such curriculum design, Qi (2011, p. 5) puts succinctly as “undoubtedly, the new Chinese curriculum system constructed in the reform has begun to tolerate more local inputs and diversities”.

Similarly, according to Osei and Brock (2006) and Bjork (2003, 2004) in Ghana and Indonesia respectively there has been curriculum decentralization to school level. In these countries, there is curriculum policy named as ‘Local Content Curriculum’ in which the school teachers can have mandate to inculcate 20% of instructional time with local contents.

In some countries, local authorities, schools, and teachers can have their contribution in developing curriculum. For instance, local content is allowed in Indonesia (20%), Lao PDR (10%), and Vietnam (15%). In Australia and New Zealand, teachers develop their own content within centrally developed curriculum frameworks (National Institute for Educational Research of Japan, 1999). McGinn and Welsh (1999) and (UNESCO, 2007) pin point that curriculum decision making is shared between state and district educational levels in USA.

Thus, the experiences of different countries with regard to curriculum decentralization show variations based on the contexts of each country.

There are some studies made on implementation of curriculum decentralization. For instance, Qi (2011) use pragmatic approach and logic-based reasoning design to study curriculum decentralization of China. The data were collected using literature review, previous studies on Chinese education reform, government documents, laws and

regulations related to current Chinese curriculum reform. The finding of the study reveals that the curriculum reform in China is in the process of ‘centralized decentralization’. It only transfers work not real authority to the local levels. The study also confirms that “centralized decentralization is taken as a strategic imperative by the state to avoid loss of control over school curriculum that carries particular social and political significance for China in a transitional period” (p. iv).

In the same country, Ye (2011) also studies on curriculum decentralization in Moral Education. The study used multiple case studies design in three schools. The researcher used observation, interview, questionnaire, and document review as data collection instruments. The main purpose of the study was to analyze ‘how power relationships have evolved in School Based Curriculum Development in Moral Education. The result of the study reveals that the school has semi-emancipatory relationship in shaping School Based Curriculum Development in Moral Education. The finding also confirms that the schools have some power to negotiate for more influence mainly to respond to the local level needs through collaboration with other external forces.

Bjork (2003) studies on the Local Content Curriculum (LCC) which is one of educational decentralized aspects in Indonesia using ethnographic study design in six schools to analyse how LCC has been implemented at local levels, the schools. Observation and interview were the main data collection instruments. The finding of the study discloses that the actions and attitudes of educators in Indonesia are influenced by the state. This implies that LCC was not practiced as intended because of the radical change of teachers’ role and lack of support from the central government, MoE.

Similarly, there is study made in Ghana on LCC by Osei and Brock (2006). This study used historical and ethnographic framework. Data were collected using field notes from participant observation in community and school settings, unstructured and semi-structured interviews with consultants, government officials, administrators, head-teachers, teachers and community leaders, questionnaires with secondary school students, and school documents. The results of the study depict that the state has more influence on the actions and attitude of teachers in contrary to the policy. The finding of the study also

shows “how the lethargy of local actors is bound to deeply engrained views about the role of Ghanaian teachers in school and in society” (p. 437).

Realizing these experiences of different countries on curriculum decentralization, this study examined the Ethiopian case based on the following conceptual framework.

2.10. Overview of Ethiopian Modern Education Context

Modern Ethiopian education has started in the beginning of 1900s. Since then it has passed through different historical development as described below.

2.10.1. The Centralized Education System in Ethiopia(1908-1991)

i. The French period (1908-1935)

Modern education system in Ethiopia has counted more than a century. The first modern (Western) school was established in 1908 in Addis Ababa with the name of the then Emperor, Menelik II school (Pankhurst, 1968; Teshome, 1979). Since then the issue of education in general and curriculum concerns in particular have been given attention from governments of different regimes with different purposes. For instance, at onset of the modern and the first in its kind of education, the main purpose was to make the young citizens more competent in foreign languages through the training of interpreters for international communication (Teshome, 1979).

There was a need to have human resource in foreign languages in response to the growing need for diplomatic relations of the country. Consequently, the curriculum included such languages as French, Italian, English, Arabic and Amharic. It is therefore one can confidently speak that the school curriculums of the time were mainly based on foreign languages curricula. However, as Adane (1993) as cited in Alemayehu and Lasser (2012) states, later on some additional courses such as religion, mathematics, law and calligraphy were offered in this school.

Education during this period was alien to Ethiopian situation because according to Alemayehu and Lasser (2012) education system and its curricular (objectives of education, contents or courses to be taught, organization of a school and its management, and the method of evaluation) were mainly based on the French education system. The

selection and organization of content were determined by the headmasters and teachers from France, and French was used in Ethiopia as medium of instruction up to 1935.

ii. The Italian period (1936-1941)

The invasion of Italy (1936-1941) is considered as dark period for the development of modern Ethiopia education (Seyoum, 1996; Tekeste, 1990) because schools were either closed or used for military camps and the educated few were either eliminated or joined the guerrilla fighters of the country. For instance, Tekste (1990) argues that the major aim of education was to create citizens that would be loyal to Italy. The content of education focused on reading, writing and simple arithmetic, semi-vocational skill training and internalizing fascist values to promote loyalty to the regime.

However, there were attempts made to educate the young (Tekste, 1990; Teshome, 1979). Moreover, there was an attempt to teach using different local languages at a time such as Amharic, Afaan Oromo, and Tigrigna (Adane, 1993).

iii. The British period (1942-1947)

After the end of Italian occupation, the fate of Ethiopian education system was on the hand of British government. The British government interested to help Ethiopia to improve the existing conditions. Nevertheless similar to the French period, the education system was dominated by British experts' experiences leaving no room to Ethiopian real existing situations (Seyum, 1996). Desta (1979, p.41) puts this condition as "A British representative at the Ministry of Education, Mr. E. R. J. Hussey, ensured that curricula, textbooks, and some of the teachers and the school principals were imported either from England or Canada or from the British colonies and protectorates, namely, India, Sudan, the Middle East, etc".

Similarly, Alemayehu and Lasser (2012) describe the condition during this period as education system did not reflect the cultural, social and economic situation of the country, because it was dominated by the British education system. According to Ministry of Education and Fine Art (MoEFA) as cited in Wube (2005) the curricula came from abroad and prepared by foreign advisors and teachers particularly British scholars.

The head masters and teachers of each school prepared their own curricula guidelines and consult MoEFA for its approval. Tekste (2006) also comments on education of this period as the curriculum was alien and left on the hands of foreigners who came from different countries. He argues that there was no coherent strategy by the government of Ethiopia.

iv. The American period (1950-1974)

In an attempt to make the curricula the same throughout the country, primary school curricula were developed in Ethiopia for the first time in 1947 (Teshome, 1979; MoEFA as cited in Wube,2005). This curriculum was designed for grades 1-6, which covered a wide range of subjects and was improved in 1949 to include grades 7 and 8 to primary level. The subjects offered at this level were Amharic, English, science, art, geography, history, arithmetic, music, handicraft, and physical education.

In the mid 1950s there was discontent among Ethiopian stakeholders with the implemented curricula assuming that the curriculum did not reflect the economic, social and cultural realities of Ethiopia but it was based on other developed countries particularly that of USA. This condition led MoEFA to establish Long Term Planning Committee in 1955 under the chairmanship of the Vice-Minister of MoEFA (Alemayehu & Lasser, 2012; Ayalew, 1964; Teshome, 1979).This committee initiated the "Third Curriculum"(Experimental Curriculum), which was highly influenced by the Americans. It was recommended by the committee that the fundamental principles for developing and implementing a national school curriculum must be based on a careful assessment of the needs of the people with respect to cultural, social and environmental characteristics. In addition, it was decided to try out the curriculum guidelines first before large-scale implementation.

The long term planning committee gave some important recommendations particularly on basic education (Tekste, 1990). The first recommendation was the introduction of community schools for basic education. The curriculum should be designed to fit the student for better life in his community was the second recommendation. Thirdly, the educational objectives should be geared to the quickest possible spread of universal

fundamental education and the last recommendation was students should display effective command of communication in Amharic. To this end, five schools were selected for experimental purpose.

Martin (1962) a Philippian consultant came to Ethiopia by invitation of the then UNESCO's Director-General of Program and Planning comments on experimental curriculum of Ethiopia based on his own country's experiences of primary education. He appreciated on the idea of the committee's on primary community school curriculum and shared his country's experiences. This tells us how much the experimental curriculum co-ordinating body committed and inspired to make curriculum relevant to the Ethiopian reality based on the experiences of other developing country, Philippines. Nevertheless, Ayalew (1964) argues that the curriculum was more theoretical and inappropriate for the level of children in Ethiopia. Martin (1962) comments subjects to be taught at primary level such as African geography and history as well as World geography and history. It is therefore seems as Ayalew (1964) argues the subjects were difficult in such conditions of Ethiopia at that time.

After the trial of Experimental Curriculum was over, the forth curriculum was implemented in 1963. Amharic became medium of instruction for primary level (1-6) for the first time. The subjects of this level were divided in to academic subjects (Amharic, English, arithmetic, social studies, natural science and health) and the non-academic subjects (morals, agriculture, arts and crafts, home makings, physical training and games and music) (Teshome,1979).

There were many measures taken to improve the conditions of education in Ethiopia in the Imperial period particularly to make the curriculum relevant to the country's needs. Nonetheless, the education system at that period was criticized because of the incongruent of the objectives and content to the real situations of the country (Teshome, 1979). The then educational problems was also explained by Desta (1979) as: "Yet, despite the numerous educational initiatives introduced in the country, we observed that these were largely ineffective in either providing equal educational opportunity for the school age children or in creating productive employment opportunities for the graduates" (pp.82-83).

Thus, the aforementioned challenges to Ethiopian education system in Imperial period were forced the government in late 1960s to search for solutions. To this end, the government took the first measure by establishing the National Commission on Education in 1969. The commission was given to formulate an overall prospectus for Ethiopian education. Based on its given responsibility, the commission conducted hearings with different stakeholders; though there was no fruitful results attained (Teshome, 1979). Hence, the government decided to review the whole system of education comprehensively named as Education Sector Review (ESR) which started in 1971 by establishing committee which comprises of 81 members of whom fifty one were Ethiopians and the rest, 30 were foreigners (Tekste, 2006; Teshome, 1979).

The committee had two main tasks (Tekste, 2006). The first task was to control the entry to secondary education to reduce the number of unemployment. Targeting the rural population was the second duty. Finally the committee came with various recommendations such as to Ethiopianize the content of education; to make Amharic the medium of instruction at the higher level, and to give practical orientation to instruction at all levels; to create an integrated society by drawing upon the diverse cultural and linguistic elements and creating the condition for the formation of a truly national culture etc (MoE, 1972 as cited in Alemayehu & Lasser, 2012). However, the results of the sector review were not implemented because of different reasons and ended up with change of government (Tekste, 2006; Wube, 2005).

v. The socialist government (1974-1991)

The change in government in 1974 in Ethiopia brought radical changes in political, social and economic of the country. Education sector was one of the sectors where many reforms were taking place. The new government declared socialism as the solely philosophical orientation that guides the reforms in all aspects of the society (Gumbel, Nyström & Samuelsson, 1983; Tekste, 2006). The main policy guideline of education system at the Socialist Government period was the Programme of the National Democratic Revolution of April 1976. It reads as:

There will be an educational programme that will provide free education, step by step, to the broad masses. Such a programme will aim at intensifying the struggle

against feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism. All necessary measures to eliminate illiteracy will be undertaken. All necessary encouragement will be given for the development of science, technology, the arts and literature. All necessary effort will be made to free the diversified cultures of Ethiopia from imperialist cultural domination and from their own reactionary characteristics. Opportunities will be provided to allow them to develop, advance and grow with the aid of modern means and resources. (Ministry of Education, 1981, p 7 as cited in Gumbel et al., 1983, p. 20)

According to the above stated policy of education, the main aim of education in this period was to inculcate young generation with the Marxist-Leninist ideology. It also intended that knowledge of the students would develop in science and technology, in the new culture and arts, and to integrate and coordinate research with production to enable the revolution to move forward and to secure a productive citizenry. Tekeste (1990) confirms that the Socialist Government education objectives were later summarized into three slogans, namely, Education for production, for scientific research, and for political consciousness. The author also argues that the Socialist Government conceptualized education than any other time governments in Ethiopia to secure its political power. To this effect, “the curriculum during this period was highly politicized that students were required to take courses in political education” (p.20).

In addition, Proclamation No. 103 of 1976 which is Education Proclamation for Administration and Control of the Schools by the People gave school management committees in charge of schools at local level. It was believed that decentralization of administration of schools to local level (parents and communities) will yield good results (Gumbel et al., 1983).

To implement the intended objectives of educational policy which emphasized on socialist ideology, a task force was formed to develop curriculum which align with this ideology. The new curriculum was named as the Transitional (Ordinary) Curriculum (Wube, 2005). It consisted of academic, vocational and technical subjects. Although the development of curriculum during this period was centralized, there were evidences that teachers of different educational levels (primary, secondary, college and university) took

part in the preparation of the curriculum (curriculum evaluation and education research division, 1987 as cited in Wube, 2005). The same source assured that the curriculum department of the Ministry of Education developed all curricular materials; a new curriculum, developed new textbooks, teachers' guides, and other materials (Tekeste,1990) for nearly all subjects and grades of the regular schools.

According to Feleke (1990) as cited in Wube (2005) underscores that the curriculum development of this time was not procedural. It neither followed the sets of procedures nor was based on the pre curriculum evaluation. It was fundamentally characterized by exclusion of the previous and inclusion of the current ideology as content of the curriculum.

There were various attempts to make the transitional curriculum congruent with the philosophy of the day, socialism. Nonetheless, after sometime it was decided to make complete change of the existed curriculum. To this end, the New Educational Objectives and Directives for Ethiopia were adopted in 1980 (Wube, 2005). It explained issues related with objectives, content and structure of the new education of Ethiopia (MoE, 1980 as cited in Wube, 2005). The New Educational Objectives and Directives for Ethiopia comprises of the following:

3. The general objectives of education should focus on education for production, education for scientific research and education for socialist consciousness.
4. The content of education should be connected with polytechnic education that emphasizes practice, production, the objective reality of the society.
5. The structure of education 6-2-4 has to be changed to 8-2-2. The profile of students at each level should be worked out; to this end a curriculum package should be prepared and implemented. But this new structure was not implemented.

Curriculum development procedures were described in this document as:

The elaboration of a new curriculum is receiving great attention. It will largely contribute to make education more relevant to those going to school and to

prepare students to participate fully in the development process and to meet the ideological needs of the nation. The new curriculum, and aspects like class -size, language of instruction, teaching load, etc, is tried out in 70 selected schools all over the country. For the development of the curriculum for each grade, a three - year programme has been designed. The first year is used for experimentation, the second for evaluation and the third for preparation. The programme started with the experimentation of grade 1 curriculum in 1981/82 and is supposed to go on grade by grade and year by year until all twelve grades of the formal system have been covered. (Gumbel et al., 1983, pp.58-59)

This shows that the new policy was not implemented immediately because it had been tried out before implementation.

Wube (2005) denotes that the new program was based on model of German Democratic Republic. The author justifies that there was no preliminary studies and participation of public and academic in this program. From his own lived experience as a member of Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR) at the time, the author comments that there was lack of coordination even between MoE and ICDR and the responsibility of the program was considered by MoE as solely duty of ICDR.

MoE decided to conduct an evaluative research called the ‘Evaluative Research on the General Education System of Ethiopia’ (ERGESE) in 1983 after the adoption of the new educational objectives and directives in 1980. This research was initiated because of the existing constraints such as the expansion of secondary education beyond the capacity of the country’s economy which led to unemployment, the deterioration of quality of education, lack of educational resources, shortage of qualified teachers and the like (Seyoum,1996).

This study came up with the following findings: textbooks do not reflect national educational objectives and most of them pay attention to the teaching rather than learning; Amharic as medium of instruction in primary school (1-6) has created difficulties for students whose mother tongue is not Amharic; using English as medium of instruction from grade seven onwards created difficulties for both teachers and

students; the structure of education at different levels were not integrated and coordinated accordingly; there was lack of laboratory and finally teachers were not competent on the level they supposed to teach (Seyoum,1996; Tekste, 1990).

The ten year plan (1984-1994) was formulated to alleviate challenges gained through the study. It was intended to promote polytechnic education; to make the curriculum relevant; to intensify the eradication of illiteracy; to strengthen Amharic as a medium of instruction at primary level; to improve teacher education; to update teaching profession, and to provide education to the physically and mentally handicapped (Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia's Analysis as cited in Seyoum,1996). This plan "had not come to effect" because of the change in government in 1991(Wube, 2005).

As its predecessor education system during the Socialist Government was also influenced by different countries those with the ideology of socialism such as East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Cuba, Russia, etc. Scholars from these countries served the Ethiopian government as policy advisors. Hence, the education system of Ethiopia was highly influenced by Eastern European to the extent that the aims, content, and materials of education were designed in alignment with socialist principles which were similar with those countries (Zewdie as cited in Wube, 2005)

Generally speaking the modern Ethiopian educational system has passed through various profound changes. However, the development of modern education in Ethiopia has not been without its pitfalls. The main challenge to the sector is its inability to be in the context of the real situations of the country. At different period of governments in Ethiopia, there have been different influences on the education of the country from various countries. Desta (1979) associates this educational influence with the economic support. He explains as follows:

Like the economy, in the 40's and the first quarter of the 50's the major educational reforms introduced into the country were British-oriented. For the last two decades, the curricula and teaching materials were basically U.S. imports. Depending on the economic interest of their country and their educational

exposure, the American advisers imposed enumerable educational packages upon the Ethiopian scene. (Desta, 1979, p.54)

Similarly, as already discussed above in the Socialist Government the education system was alien to the country reality because it was mainly focused on ideology imported from the socialist countries. It is therefore very crucial to realize that to make education a cure to ills of the society; it should be designed and implemented according to the real situations of the country.

In all these periods education in Ethiopia was so centralized that almost all educational functions including curriculum at all sub-sectors were decided at the center, MoE. This created, as explained in TGE (1994), problems related to access, equity, relevance and quality. Hence, post 1991 education was assumed to be a panacea for these ills by implementing decentralization reform as main strategic instrument. The context in which this decentralization reform strategy has been implemented is discussed below.

2.10.2. The post 1991 Decentralized Education System in Ethiopia

i. The Political Context

The fall of the Socialist Government in 1991 was resulted in radical changes in political, economic and social contexts of the country with the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) as ruling coalition. On coming to power, EPRDF decided to change the political and administrative structure of the country by first establishing the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) in 1991 with a transitional Charter. As such it created national and regional governments mainly based on ethno-linguistic criteria.

According to Keller and Smith (2005) TGE devoted to introduce the multi-party system which never existed before. This can be seen as the starting point to have democratically elected government realizing the existing diversity through constitutional guaranty (Dickovick & Wunsch, 2014). This, according to Bahiru (2002) help to give recognition for Ethiopia's diverse ethnicities which in turn is important to have the solidarity administrative, political and fiscal abilities.

EPRDF saw decentralization in terms ethnic federalism to demonstrate the regime's commitment to social equity and democracy. Democratic principles were eventually

enshrined in a well-crafted national constitution of 1995. In addition to the formulation of a constitution that included the principles and institutions of democracy, the new regime introduced public policies designed to devolve administrative authority from the center to regional states. The intention of the new regime was to use a form of ethnic federalism to attempt both to reduce ethno-regional inequalities and to provide an enabling environment for democracy (TGE, 1991).

The Ethnic Federalism which was established in Ethiopia became the basis for the introduction of decentralization of authority to sub-governments in two phases. The first phase was implemented since 1992 which deals with the regional decentralization and the district level decentralization was enacted in 2002. Hence, decentralization has been seen as main policy strategic reform of the federal government. Ethiopian decentralization reforms have been codified in laws through different documents. These were passed through a series of legal frameworks such as Proclamation No. 7/1992 (TGE, 1992A) that established national-regional self-government, Proclamation No. 33/1992 (TGE, 1992B) which identified the sharing of revenue between the national/central government and the national/regional self-government, Proclamation No. 41/1993 (TGE, 1993) which defined the powers, duties and responsibilities of the central and regional executive organs.

Constitution of 1995 of Ethiopia has also strengthened the issue of decentralization giving rise to the federal system of administration. It is indicated in the constitution of the country, which is the supreme law of the land, that the need for decentralization in the country is targeted to cure the ills of the previous governments through democratization (FDRE, 1995). The main purpose of the constitution, according to Gulyani et al. (2001) is to bring government closer to the people through a process of decentralization intended to increase public participation and responsiveness to local needs. By doing so, the authors argue that each ethnic group is represented in the country's political and resource allocation processes.

Similarly, Tegegne and Kassahun (2004) underscore that decentralization reform in Ethiopia was meant to bring political stability and contribute to democratic governance, improve service delivery and attain equity. In the same way, at its Fourth Party Congress EPRDF in 2001 also responded how to improve democracy in the country as:

We need an organizational structure...so that government bodies at all levels receive competent professional and political leadership. Our party must be enabled to give a more refined and stronger political leadership than ever before. That, nonetheless, must be done separated from government work and in accordance with government rules and regulations. The conditions necessary for the separation of the civil service structure from that of the political leadership must be created....not only at the federal government level, but at all levels...We must also ensure the separation and clearing of the powers of the legislative and the executive bodies of government and thereby translate into action the democratic principles of checks and balances...at the federal, regional and other levels...We must facilitate the conditions necessary for the full participation of all Ethiopians in all discussions to be held on issues pertaining to our development and democratization efforts. (p. 47)

The intention of the party was to bring radical change of governance in the country through transforming the relationship between government, ruling party and citizens which are the hallmarks of democracy (Lee, 2013).

Despite the existence of legal frameworks including the constitution that promote empowerment of citizens, many scholars working on decentralization agreed that devolution of power in Ethiopia has not been implemented successfully because of partisan realities (Keller, 2002; Keller & Smith, 2005; Merera, 2007). These scholars argue that the EPRDF single party dominance blocked the idea of democratic federalism. For instance, Merera (2007) argues that democratization and decentralization which were initiated at the top were not successfully implemented in Ethiopia. Rather the intention is to institutionalize the hegemonic control of ruling party instead of real sharing of power between the center and the local authorities and emancipates the local stakeholders that are what genuine democratization and decentralization require to be successful. This contradiction between rhetoric and practice of decentralization and democratization because of the hegemonic interest of the dominant forces which generally favor central control than realization of local emancipation which finally leads to a situation Illy (1995, p.10) calls 'decentralization with centralization'. Similarly, Yilmaz and Venugopai

(2008) indicate as there is a gap between the policy of decentralization as justified in constitution and its practice in Ethiopia. As such, though multi party system is allowed in constitution, the ruling party controls executive and legislative branches both at national and local governments. The domination of one party in Ethiopia is explained by Lee (2013, p.10) as:

While the Ethiopian political system nominally guarantees considerable autonomy to the sub-national levels, this formal autonomy is offset by the dominance of the EPRDF party, which overshadows politics at all levels. This dominance up and down the system may have the positive effect of facilitating communication vertically but it also presents an unofficial mechanism through which national-level leaders can exert influence over decision-making at sub-national levels-political autonomy is circumscribed by the informal logic of party control.

Supporting the above idea, in his article entitled ‘the politics of sub-national constitutions and local governments in Ethiopia’; Zemelak (2014) concludes the impact of one party system in Ethiopia in the following manner:

...all levels of government in Ethiopia are controlled, directly or indirectly, by one party; the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Party (EPRDF). Not only does it control all levels of government, the party has a highly centralised decision-making system founded on the principle of ‘democratic centralism’. Under this system, the party’s regional and local structures, which also control government institutions at those levels, are involved only in the execution of decisions passed by the centre. Given such a context, the establishment and empowerment of local government – which took place in two phases were driven from the centre. The process of establishing local government was influenced by the political exigencies the ruling party faced at particular times and the choices it made in reaction to them. This has undermined the role of the regional states and the relevance of their constitutions in creating local government systems appropriate to their circumstances. (p.90)

It was a natural response to demands for regional autonomy, a means to decrease ethnic tensions and create a democratic framework in which the government can respond effectively to the local needs. However, its shortcomings and failure to achieve its goals indicates that decentralization has not been pursued fully or has become a tool of exploitation and means to maintain political and economic dominance of one party (Lujan-Hernandez, 2015).

As discussed aforementioned, there is a gap between the theory and practice of decentralization in Ethiopia. There is decentralization policy at rhetoric level, however, the realization of this policy seems untouched because of the political situation which mainly deals with ‘partisan’. It is within these contexts that education decentralization in Ethiopia has been implemented.

ii. Educational System

The establishment of federalism in Ethiopia in the early 1990s has brought radical changes at policy level in all public sectors including education. Accordingly, the education system has been organized in consistent with the Federal Government’s State Structure. To this end, each of the nine Regional States and the two City Administrations has its own bureau of education responsible for administrating and managing the educational system (TGE, 1993; MoE, 2002a, 2006a). The structure ranges to Zonal Educational Departments, Woreda Education Office (WEO) and the schools. Each Regional State Education Bureaus is both administratively and financially responsible with substantial subsidy from the Federal Government for the general education, technical and vocational training and teacher training colleges that operate in their respective States (MoE, 2002a, 2006a).

Education in Ethiopia has been decentralized through formulations of two main policy documents: Proclamation No. 41 of 1993 and Education and Training Policy of 1994. The proclamation defines the powers and duties of Ministry of Education (MoE) and Regional Education Bureaus (REBs). As such the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs are indicated as follows. Accordingly, the federal MoE’s roles and responsibilities are:

- formulating national education policy;

- setting education and training standards at all levels of education;
- monitoring implementation and ensuring that standards are respected;
- Formulating the general framework of curricula of education and training.

The REB has the following major responsibilities:

- ensure the quality of education in the region
- prepare and implement the curriculum of the primary education
- provide textbooks and other learning teaching materials appropriately prepared for the primary education in the region
- regulate and issue licenses to those who want to establish non-government schools
- render special support to minority nationalities and other disadvantaged groups in the provision of education
- Support the education of the region by the use of mass media
- conduct studies to improve the quality of education in the region
- Coordinate the community in its initiative and effort to participate in the educational activities.

The aforementioned roles and responsibilities of MoE and REB can tell us how Ethiopian education system has been decentralized. As such MoE's roles and responsibilities are mainly to develop education policy; set standards and monitor the implementation of the standards. Many educational functions of primary education level have been devolved to the REBs. One of these functions which is the focus of this study is curriculum development. This suggests that each region has mandate and opportunity to decide on its primary school curriculum matters based on the MoE standards. This opportunity for sure gives regions to incorporate their indigenous knowledge and culture which can encourage the local stakeholders' participation in education issues.

Similar to Proc. No. 41/1993, Proc. No. 47/2005 (Article 10:3279) stipulates MoE's powers and duties as follows:

1. set education and training standards, and ensure the implementation of the same;
2. without prejudice to the generality of Sub-Article (1) of this Article,
 - a. formulate a general framework of curricula for education;
 - b. set minimum educational qualification requirements for primary and secondary school teachers;
 - c. set standards for vocational and technical training and certification;
 - d. set minimum standards for higher education institution.
3. establish, expand and accredit higher education institutions; and ensure that they offer quality and relevant education;
4. Undertake national popularization programs on education and training.

Specific to PSCD, the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs are stated in MoE (2006, p.15) as below:

Roles and responsibilities of MoE are:

- Analyzing government policy documents and incorporating these objectives in to curricula
- Discussing local, national and international values and reach consensus with concerned bodies to be incorporated in the curriculum
- Developing and promulgating curriculum framework and guidelines to the REBs
- Responsible for developing the textbooks for English language at primary and secondary schools, and textbooks for all subjects of secondary school [except mother tongue]
- Evaluates the quality of textbooks and other teaching learning materials being produced and used by REB

Roles and responsibilities of REBs

- Adapting the national curriculum to regions realities and needs. Each region will need to analyze their specific realities and needs and so that the curriculum and the textbooks are relevant to the life needs of the learners
- Developing, publishing and distributing textbooks

One important question to be raised here is that ‘to what extent MoE and REBs have been implementing their legally mandated roles and responsibilities particularly on PSCD’? One of the main aim of this study is to answer this question.

With regard to the relationships that exist between MoE and REBs, Oulai et al. (2011, p.21) state that “the educational administration at each level is politically accountable to its government and technically to the upper level of administration”. Nevertheless, the relationship between each administrative level is not hierarchical: “accordingly, the Ministry of Education has no direct line authority over the Regional Bureaus of Education” (MoE, 2006, p.5).

WEO is the primary educational authorities responsible for the establishment and implementation of all educational activities at primary, secondary and TVET levels. They monitor the delivery of instruction in schools and mobilize resources for the operation of schools. “The WEO is administratively subordinated to the Woreda Council, and also professionally and technically answerable to the REB [the WEO is also answerable to zonal education office both administratively and technically]” (Oulai et al, 2011, p.21).

The Ministry of Education Guideline (MoE, 2002a) provides a comprehensive and ambitious institutional blueprint for MoE, REBs, WEO and the schools. Besides, Woreda and Kebele education and training boards were also established to govern schools.

iii. Development Process of Education and Training Policy of 1994

Education and Training Policy of 1994 of Ethiopia was adopted to address the multi-faceted problems that existed in the previous education system of the country (FDRE, 1994; MoE, 2002b). One of the main reasons that initiated the education and training policy of 1994 of Ethiopia was the change in government in 1991. This change of government, MoE (2008) maintains that liberated Ethiopian people from the previously

long existing oppression and brought a new order of national equality, freedom, development, and democracy. Therefore, it was mandatory to change the old educational system to the new one to attain the new orders.

To substantiate the then political, social and economic changes of the country, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia formed a task force in 1992 under patronage of the Prime Minister's office to coordinate and oversee the study and prepare a draft education policy of the country based on the results of the study. All of the taskforce committee members were Ethiopian educators who served in various committees and contributed to the drafting of the policy (MoE, 2002). The aim of the study was "to formulate a comprehensive and coherent education policy that would be in the service of development and democracy, to assess the problems of modern education in Ethiopia, to recommend solutions, and to broadly analyze all education related issues" (p. 4).

Solomon (2008) classifies the taskforce into three levels namely the national taskforce, national technical committee and sub-taskforces. The national task force consisted of thirteen (13). The chair person of the taskforce was from Prime Minister's office, four members from MoE including the Minister, five members from AAU, two members from the council of Ministers' and one member from Ministry of Agriculture. The national taskforce was classified and formed a technical committee accountable to the MoE. In addition, six sub-taskforces were formed headed by one or two members from the technical committee. These sub-taskforces were accountable to only to the technical committee and have neither horizontal nor vertical relationships among them.

Accordingly, the following six sub-taskforces of experts formulated the draft education policy (MoE, 2002b; Solomon, 2008). These were:

1. Sub-taskforce for Curriculum and Teachers Affairs (four members out of eight were AAU and three from MoE)
2. Sub-taskforce for Education and Assessment (three members from the MoE and two members from AAU)
3. Sub-taskforce for Education and Language (two members from AAU, one from the MoE and one member from Minister of Culture)

4. Sub-taskforce for Educational Organization and Finance (four members from AAU and four members from MoE out of ten members)
5. Sub-taskforce for Educational Logistics and issues of support (five members exclusively from MoE) and
6. Sub-taskforce for Integration of Education, Training, Development, and Research (only one representative from each AAU and the MoE out of ten members).

The members of the taskforce committee who were participated in these studies and drafting the policy were twenty-two government institutions and sixty-two experts from Addis Ababa University [and MoE] (MoE, 2002b; Solomon,2008). Siyoum (2005) explains the committee members who drafted the education and training policy in the following manner:

The overwhelming majority were drawn from the Ministry of Education, and from Addis Ababa University. The rest were from the Ministries of Culture, Agriculture, Industry, and Health, as well as, from the Science and Technology Commission, and the Institute of Agricultural Research. Besides, there were representatives of about 22 government organizations that participated in the study. (p.23)

Similarly, Solomon (2008) puts this specifically as:

The overwhelming majority of the experts of the main and sub taskforces were drawn from Addis Ababa University (31%) and the Ministry of Education (38%). Hence, it can be said that our policy is a policy [which was] developed by experts of AAU and MoE. Some experts were also drawn from the Ministries of Culture, Industry, and Health, from the Science and Technology Commission and from the Institute of Agricultural Research. (p. 73)

This implies that representatives from regional bureaus in general and REBs in particular were not participated in study for formulation of education and training policy. All representatives were from central government and Addis Ababa University. As indicated above majority of the participants were from MoE. Solomon (2008, p.185) states the absence of regional representatives from the education policy formulation succinctly as “surprisingly, the then transitional government did not invite regional governments to be

represented in the taskforce. The taskforce constituted dominantly experts from the MoE and AAU”.

However, Siyoum (2005) argues that since the main aim of education policy is to bring development, all stakeholders such as teachers, parents, employers etc should participate in the designing of the policy that affects them.

After once the draft of education and training policy was completed, there were discussions of different stakeholders on the draft policy. MoE (2002, p.5) explains the process of the then participation of different stakeholders in the following manner:

The first of such forums was held from June 11-15, 1993 at the Debrezeit Management Institute. Close to 78 professionals from various Universities, Colleges, Ministries, and public figures as well as regional education officers attended the seminar. Through Regional Education Bureaus, subsequent regional level discussions involving teachers and other bodies were held on the educational system: objectives, strategy, teachers’ affair, language and education organization management, and education finance. Many ideas were compiled from these discussions that enriched the draft.

MoE in collaboration with AACAEB had organized major discussion forums. For instance, fifty-five elementary schools and twenty-five high schools of AACA teachers were participated in discussions at different periods such as on July 18, 25, 27, 1993 and August 23, 1993. Furthermore, based on announcement through the national mass media various stakeholders from AACA were participated in the discussion forum which was held in the main hall of the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2002). The topics discussed in those sessions were:

1. Education in Ethiopia in the past and the present
2. The teaching profession and the condition of teachers in Ethiopia
3. Educational management and organization
4. General conception of the draft educational policy

It seems that since various stakeholders were participated in the discussions of the draft policy and hence it is logical to argue that the discussions were participatory which gave the participants the chance to raise essential issues to be improved. With this regard, it is indicated that:

The public forums in which numerous suggestions were made and researched papers were submitted had greatly helped a great deal of people to grasp the spirit of the policy and had immeasurably contributed to the development and improvement of the policy itself. Efforts were indeed made to create forums in which the full spectrum of ideas and opinions of the society as well as the views of the professional community on the draft policy were gathered before the final and improved version was made public. (MoE, 2002, p.6)

Nevertheless, the extent of stakeholders' participation in the discussions has become point of departure between MoE and scholars. For example, Siyoum (2005) argues that though it was reported by MoE that teachers of different regions had the opportunity to participate in discussions of the policy draft, it seems that the given opinions were mainly endorsed the draft policy than enrichment it that raises the motives of the discussion in to question. Similarly, "...as a close examination of these comments and suggestions reveal they were within the framework of the draft policy. In other words, there were neither novel suggestions nor constructive critical comments" (Siyoum, 1996, p. 24). The author argues saying that the government's assertion about the active participation of the public remains suspect and hence it seems that education and training policy of the Transitional Government was top-down reform similar to its predecessors.

In response to the above criticisms, in MoE (2002) it is explicitly stated that:

Contrary to what certain people and groups allege, the process of formulating the education and training policy was not shrouded in secrecy. It was rather conducted in a transparent fashion where the draft proposal was openly submitted for the consideration of representatives of a wide sector of the society. Framed by a process in which a wide circle of people took active part, the policy indeed rectifies the problems of the old system. It is a policy that, through numerous democratic public discussions, involved various segments of the

society to contribute to the formulation of the final version by retaining in the draft what they liked and rejecting what they did not. The process of formulation of the policy to some extent was transparent, participatory and democratic (p.6).

Here it can be said that the above two views are contradictory to each other and suggests further study. However, it can be argued that the change of government from totalitarian to democratic system needs time which may not be easy to have it on short period of time. In other words, the discussions of forum of education and training policy draft were undertaken as soon as the change of the so called ‘Totalitarian’ of Derge regime the Socialist Government to the ‘Democratic’ of EPRDF. In such cases, it is too early to expect dramatic changes from the government to make active participation of stakeholders and accept comments accordingly.

The study that was undertaken mainly for the purpose of the formulation of education and training policy of Ethiopia reveals that the previous education system of the country had long standing problems such as limited and inequitable access, lack of quality and relevance, and continuous decline in quality and standard (MoE, 2002).

Similarly, the problems of education system of the period are indicated in TGE (1994) as the following:

To date, it is known that our country's education is entangled with complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity. The objectives of education do not take cognizance of the society's needs and do not adequately indicate future direction. The absence of interrelated contents and mode of presentation that can develop student's knowledge, cognitive abilities and behavioral change by level, to adequately enrich problem-solving ability and attitude, are some of the major problems of our education system (p.2).

Thus, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia formulated education and training policy in 1994 in order to solve the existing multifaceted problems of the education system such as relevance, quality, accessibility and equity (TGE, 1994). The policy has been implemented “ever since with a clear objective of making education an instrument of development and democracy” (MoE, 2002, p.5).

The Education and Training policy of 1994 of Ethiopia comprises of overall and specific objectives, implementation strategies such as Curriculum, educational structure, educational measurement and examination, teachers, languages and education, nexus between education, training, research and, development, educational support inputs, educational organization and management and educational finance. Furthermore, it includes areas of special attention and action priority namely change of curriculum and preparation of education materials accordingly, focus on teacher training and overall professional development of teachers and other personnel and change of educational organization and management.

The language decision that was made by the council of representatives of the transitional government of Ethiopia in 1991 was so decisive and the essence of having such policy is described in education and training policy as “Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages” (TGE, 1994, p.23).

To realize this policy, the education sector strategy was formulated in 1994. It focuses on seven major areas such as:

A curriculum change in line with the policy education objectives and to make education more relevant to the demands of the community; the expansion of primary education as well as vocational and technical education and training; restructuring the organization and administrative of education system in accordance with the devolution of power to the regional states; human resource development; improving the quality of education throughout the system; supporting the research on curriculum development, teaching methods and evaluation techniques; an increase in public spending for education. (UNESCO-IBE, 2010, p.3)

The basis of the Ethiopian education sector reform is the Education and Training Policy (ETP), enacted in 1994. The Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) was planned afterwards to realize ETP. It is a comprehensive intervention package formulated

to sustain public investment program through the mobilization of the national and international resources in order to enhance the performance of education system (MoE, 1999).

The Government of Ethiopia launched the first five year Education Sector Development Program (ESDP I) in 1997 as part of a twenty-year education sector plan which has been translated in to series of national ESDPs. The main thrust of ESDP I (one) is to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency, equity and expand access to education with special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas. Furthermore, it also targets to promote education for girls as a first step to achieve universal primary education by 2015 (MoE, 2005, 2008).

The first ESDP (1997/98-2001/02) derived its goals and strategies directly from education and training policy of 1994. Subsequently, the government developed a second comprehensive five years education program (2000/01-2004/05). The process of ESDP II development builds on the technical and organizational experience gained through the development and implementation of ESDP I. The goals and strategies of ESDP II emanate directly from the Government's Second Five-Year Education Program which was prepared through a participatory process involving Federal and all Regional governments. ESDP III is a comprehensive intervention package initiated and owned by the government of Ethiopia and has mobilized national and international efforts to boost the performance in terms of enrolments at all levels especially in the primary education sub-sector (MoE, 2006b).

Although there was significant progress in increasing access and coverage for primary education during implementation of ESDP I and II, the availability and quality of education have not been kept pace with this expansion. For instance, in relation to this problem, Girma and Raysarkar (2017) claim that "Students from the poorest sections of society, girls, and school-goers from pastoral areas face socio-cultural barriers and financial constraints that prevent them from enrolling or finishing in school"(p. ix). This implies the need to intervene these challenges to improve access and quality of education.

The problems of quality education were addressed in the needs assessment carried out by the General Education Curriculum Framework Development Department (GECFDD) in 2007. The main findings of the study reveal that there were constraints with regard to teacher education, schools, curriculum and textbooks etc. For example, teacher candidates were not screened based on the interests and competencies as well as education and training of teachers lack vision, mission and standards. Similarly, there were many challenges in the schools which hindered the quality of education directly or indirectly such as lack of qualified teachers, absence of committed leadership who worked for the improvement of students' achievement, the lack of facilities in the schools (toilet, clean water etc) and lack of education inputs (MoE, 2007).

To bridge this quality gap, the Ethiopian government developed the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP I) which became effective in June 2009 (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017), within the framework of ESDP III which gives high priority to quality improvement at all levels of the education system. This was based on recommendation of the education sector Annual Review Meeting (ARM) of 2007. The recommendation justified that MoE and Development Partners should work together to implement the GEQIP through a pooled funding mechanism (MoE, 2010).

ESDP III was launched between 2005/06 to 2009/10 with its overall goals which in line with the priorities of SDPRP and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (MoE, 2005, 2008). These goals include:

Good quality universal primary education by 2015, meeting qualitative and quantitative demand for manpower, etc. Hence, the overall mission of all educational institutions in the country is to produce good citizens who respect and defend the rights and responsibilities stated in the constitution, build the capacity to solve problems, train in various professions and skills so as to participate in the economic development of the society, with positive outlook for the expansion and dissemination of science and technology. (MoE, 2005, p. 33)

GEQIP I comprises of the following six pillars named as 'Package of Educational Quality'. These are: (i) textbook and curriculum development and a mechanism of assessment; (ii) a teacher development program; (iii) School Improvement Programme;

(iv)strengthening management and administrative systems; (v) and Civic and Ethical Education and (vi) Information Communications Technology (MoE, 2008; Girma & Raysarkar, 2017).

ESDP IV which took place from 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 focused on to improve the challenges observed during ESDP III related to school environment, completion of basic education for the disadvantaged, adult education, capacity of knowledge creation and educational administration (MoE, 2010).

ESDP V has also been implemented since 2015 with six priority programmes such as capacity development for improved management, general education: quality, general education: access, equity and internal efficiency, adult and non-formal education, technical and vocational education and training and higher education (MoE, 2015). These priority programs should integrate cross cutting issues like gender; special needs and inclusive education; HIV/AIDS; education in emergencies; school health and nutrition; drug and substance abuse prevention; water, sanitation and hygiene to each subsector of education.

iv. Overview of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1991

Before 1991, almost all educational functions in Ethiopia at all levels were decided at the centre for long period of time. This type of highly centralized education system management, according Siyoum (1996) hindered local initiative and flexibility and hence made important decision making on educational functions such as curriculum design, personnel matters, purchase and distribution of supplies, budget preparation and allocations so centralized that has negative influence in the system in particular and in the development of democracy in general. Realizing these problems, the change of government in the country in 1991 has brought radical shift in the management of education system.

a. The Curriculum Translation Period

On coming to power, EPRDF decided to change the political and administrative structure of the country by first establishing the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) in 1991 with Charter (TGE, 1991). As such, Peace, Stability, Democratization and

Liberalization of the economy were the main changes that had been emphasized by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (EHRC, 2003). To this end, a policy guideline produced based on the Transitional Charter which was adopted by the Peace and Democracy conference that took place in Addis Ababa from July two to six in 1991. The Charter mandated the right of nationalities to “develop their history, culture and use and nurture their languages.”(p. 11). Based on this, the council representatives issued a policy guideline on the use of national languages as medium of instruction. As such the policy guideline stipulates that:

- Amharic as medium of instruction would continue in the areas where it is the mother tongue
- Oromigna, Sidamigna, Wolayitigna and Tigirigna would be used as medium of instruction as 1991/1992
- Studies would be carried out on the use of other nationality languages as medium of instruction as soon as possible, while in the mean time, education would be offered as in the past
- English would continue serving as the medium of instruction for junior and secondary schools, and that it would be taught as a subject as of grade one (EHRC, 2003, p. 27).

Furthermore, the various ethnic groups were given the right to choose the scripts in which their respective languages were to be written. Accordingly, the Geez script was retained for Amharic and Tigirigna, while the Latin script was chosen for Oromigna, Sidamigna and Wolayitigna.

Based on this guideline in the summer of 1991, the Socialist Government Amharic curriculum materials of grades 1-6 were translated to Oromigna, Sidamigna, Wolayitigna and Tigirigna mother tongue languages. The then ICDR took the responsibility of organizing and coordinating the task of this translation. As such, a total number of 197 subject specialists from ICDR and different regions were participated in translation of these curriculum materials (EHRC, 2003).

EHRC has two arguments on this activity of the Transitional Government. First, the decision made on choosing Latin script for these languages has made many people not to

be benefited from the literacy that they gained from the campaigns during the Socialist Government. Second, “though curriculum development and textbook writing need scientific work that has to be performed phase by phase after a thorough study of a specific situation, the translation work was carried out without any prior investigation of the constraints that were to be encountered during implementation”(p.28). The translation was performed out for all grades at the same time with great deal of haste. Tekste (1996) describes the conditions of the time as:

...the speed in which Oromiffa, Walayitta and Sidama languages were made to become languages of instruction for the entire primary education programme ... strongly indicates the latent interest that remained buried as well as the work already done on these languages during the Dergue period. However, the transition would have been less chaotic and more economical if the central government had been in a position to introduce this new input stage by stage (p.82).

Hence, the time to plan and implement the curriculum transition was too short and the participation of the stakeholders with this regard was minimal. So, it can be said that it was the top-down decision by the then transitional government of Ethiopia.

b. PSCD in Ethiopia from 1994-1998

Based on the 1994 formulated Education and Training Policy, the previous curriculum was replaced by the new one that includes the new educational assumptions and content. The replacement was carried out in different phases with piloting basis from Grade 1 to 8 in 1994 to 1998 (EHRC, 2003; ICDR, 2002; MoE, 2002b). The main target of the then curriculum reform, UNESCO-IBE (2010) maintains that to improve the problem solving capacity of students that help them to be productive members of the society that respect human rights and democratic values.

In 1994, the ICDR developed short term plan for developing and implementing the new curriculum. The short term plan comprises of period allotment and content selection criteria. Furthermore, the plan under the title ‘Available and required man power for

formal education curriculum during 1994 to 1998’ states that “ currently there are thirty nine (39) experts directly engaged as permanent staff in designing and preparing curricula materials for grades KG-12. In the coming five years, it is estimated five (5) additional experts will be required to carry out the task of curriculum development in the formal education sector at central level” (ICDR, 1994, p. 45). According to this plan five additional curriculum experts were required. As such, three permanent staffs and two foreign consultants were to be recruited.

Although Noon (1995) as cited in EHRC (2003) states that the roles of MoE have been down scaled both in size and authority since 1994, the number of staffs in ICDR at the centre increased than decreased. For instance, “the man power in the MoE was reduced to about 220 from a peak of some 800” (EHRC, 2003, p. 12) whereas there was a plan to increase the number of curriculum experts at the centre from thirty nine (39) to forty four (44) who undertook designing and preparing curricula materials for grades KG to grade 12 within five years (1994 to 1998) as explained above (ICDR, 1994).

Based on the framework of the decentralization of education to the regions in accordance with specific local conditions, seventeen (17) curricular packages subject area curriculum materials (syllabi, textbooks and teachers’ guide) were developed, tried out and implemented from 1994-1998 based on the objectives of Education and Training Policy (ICDR,1994). The procedure and schedule in the preparation of the new curriculum materials can be summarized in the following four steps for the different grades. These four steps are:

Step 1: Preparation of grade 1 and 5 curriculum materials starting in April 1994

Step 2: Preparation of grades 2 and 6 curriculum materials starting in October 1994

Step 3: Preparation of grades 3 and 7 curriculum materials starting in October 1995

Step 4: Preparation of grades 4 and 8 curriculum materials starting in October 1996

The textbooks prepared in these steps were tried out in pilot schools for a year by respective regions themselves. The ICDR had the responsibility of under taking the content analysis for formative evaluation. Based on the findings of this study, REBs revised and published the textbooks of their regions. The main roles and responsibilities of REBs at the time were developing, publishing and distributing curriculum materials to

the schools (EHRC, 2003). The schedule for the preparation, try out and implementation of the new curriculum materials are summarized as follows:

Table 1: Schedule for the preparation, try out and implementation of the new curriculum materials

Grade level	Preparation	Try out	Implementation
Grade 1 and 5	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
Grade 2 and 6	1994/95	1995/1996	1996/97
Grade 3 and 7	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98
Grade 4 and 8	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99

Source: EHRC (2003, p. 22)

As indicated in the aforementioned table the preparation, try out and implementation of the textbooks for both primary cycles (first and second) education was going hand in hand as for Grades 1 and 5, Grades 2 and 6, Grades 3 and 7, and Grades 4 and 8 during the years indicated.

The general purpose and process of the trial out of primary school curriculum at the time is summarized by MoE (2002b) as follows:

The purpose of the trial run was to identify the strong and weak points of the new curriculum and make improvements before it is introduced in all the schools. The main reason for this approach is not only because the central government no longer directs primary education; it is also because the medium of instruction is in the different languages of the various nations and nationalities. As such, all the necessary training and materials were given to educators in the various Regions and 106 schools were assessed as a result. The sample textbooks that had been distributed to the trial (experimental) schools were reviewed and improved on the basis of the results of the evaluation. They were then applied in all the schools in the various Regions (p.46).

Formative evaluation had been conducted on primary school curriculum materials inputs for four consecutive years (1994-1998) and the findings of the study during the tryout

showed many positive results. However, it is important and mandatory to undertake summative evaluation to examine the extent of student behavioral profiles gained in the primary level (ICDR, 2002: ii).

The summative evaluation was made to assess to what extent the objectives of primary education program were achieved in view of the lessons learnt and recommendations put forward during the four years (1994-1998) of curriculum tryout and implementation (ICDR, 2002; MoE, 2002b). This means that the evaluation was undertaken to examine the degree of appropriateness and quality of the new curriculum and hence tried to improve the curriculum materials, the management, and the administration of education (MoE, 2002b).

More specifically, ICDR (2002) indicates activities of the summative evaluation as follows:

...attempts were also made to specifically look into school organization, teachers' professional competence, the type and quality of training offered to them, quality and supply of teaching-learning materials, the integrated teaching approach as opposed to the linear one, self contained classroom management, gender balance, students behavioral changes, their capacity of solving their own problems, and problems of their community, as well as the level of self confidence they have developed as the result of the implementation of the new curriculum (p. ii).

Thus, the study tried to touch various educational functions that can have profound effect on the achievement of educational quality.

This summative study used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Out of 1055 (1-8) schools in Ethiopia at that time, 15% of the schools were taken as sample schools. The sources of the data were principals, teachers, students, parents, regional, zonal and woreda education heads and experts. Moreover, rosters and other school documents were also used as source of data for the study. The data for this study were collected through various instruments such as interview, questionnaire, and classroom and school observation and document analysis, as well (ICDR, 2002).

Although it is indicated in the document of ICDR of 2002 that different organizations and individuals were participated in the summative evaluation, the roles they played were not mentioned explicitly. Basic Education System Overhaul (BESO) project, REBs, Regional Culture Bureau, Zonal Department of Education, WEO etc were some of the participants. ICDR thanked all these for their contribution to the success of the Summative Evaluation. This implies that REBs which have mandate to develop and implement primary school of their regions had no special roles and responsibilities in this case rather than participating like other stakeholders.

The elements that this summative evaluation gave focus are the general school situation, financial source of the schools, quality and supply of students' textbooks, human power, students access to education and enrollment, their level of participation in community affairs, gender equity, self-contained classroom management, continuous assessment, level of participation of community in educational affairs, educational follow up and monitoring, as well as scholastic performance and results of the students.(ICDR, 2002).

The findings of the study show that in most studied schools there were lack of science facilities (chemicals, lab manuals, etc.), desks and chairs, budget, textbooks, qualified teachers for the second cycle (5-8) and there were problems of water and latrine in schools. Furthermore, the language and the contents used in the textbooks were not properly used and organized.

Specific to textbooks the finding of the study discloses that:

Most of the textbooks designed for majority of the schools were prepared not in clear and simple, straight forward language, failing to take into account of basic educational and pedagogical principles during the process of determining subject area contents, exercises and setting of questions from simple to complex and from the known to the unknown as well as from the concrete to the abstract. (ICDR, 2002, p. iv)

In developing countries like Ethiopia textbooks are the main curriculum materials that are used by students and teachers, however, the quality of textbooks as indicated by the summative study was below standard. It is surprising enough that the studied textbooks

have problems in language, contents and organization of contents. Hence, caution must be taken in preparing textbooks by giving training to the professionals.

The results of the study also reveal that the self-contained policy was not implemented in most schools, the concept of continuous assessment was not implemented as intended and the participation of the community in education was not sufficient.

c. PSC Revision from 2003-2005

Based on the findings of summative evaluation, the revision of curriculum was embarked from 2003-2005. The revision of curriculum during this period was mainly focused on re-arranging the content and addressing current issues of concern such as civics and ethical education, gender, HIV/AIDS education, and other government policies and strategies. (MoE, 2008, p. 9)

The problems of quality education were addressed in the needs analysis carried out by the General Education Curriculum Framework Development Department (GECFDD) in 2007. The main findings of the study reveal that there were constraints with regard to teacher education, schools, curriculum and textbooks etc. With regard to curriculum, this study shows the problems in relation to relevance, methodology, continuous assessment, and quantity and difficulty level of contents and localization of contents to the existing contexts (MoE, 2007; 2009; 2010).

d. PSCD in Ethiopia from 2008-2009

Based on needs assessment carried out by GECFDD in 2007, MoE drafted General Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education (KG to Grade 12) in 2007 which was published in 2010. Based on this curriculum framework, basic curriculum documents were revised in line with the Competence Based Approach that comprises of Minimum Learning Competence materials (MLC) for pre-primary, primary and secondary education, content flow charts, syllabuses and quality text books for all subjects. Furthermore, strategic documents such as strategy and guidelines for Early Childhood Curriculum Education (ECCE), strategy and implementation guidelines for science and

mathematics education, strategy and syllabi for Adult Basic Education (ABE) were prepared (MoE, 2010).

The main focus of the new curriculum was to address the overload and sequence of contents, active learning methodologies, international economic realities, national democracy and gender equity. The revised curriculum documents for the Grades 1–12 such as curriculum framework, syllabuses, content flow charts and minimum learning competencies were approved in 2008. The review and reform of these curriculum documents were taken place within short period of time that participation of the stakeholders was not as wide as would normally be expected (MoE, 2008, p. 9).

Based on the development of the draft of this Curriculum Framework 2007, PS syllabi were developed in 2008 and 2009 at national level in response to the study of GECFDD in 2007 that depicts the curriculum of the time as irrelevant, absence of active learning and lack of continuous assessment implementation. Furthermore, textbooks' contents were found highly overloaded and advanced conceptually. To this end, Girma and Raysarkar (2017) state that the new curriculum gave emphasis to improve the existing problems. Moreover, it formed the basis for developing tailor-made textbooks and teaching guides for each subject in primary and secondary education.

Girma and Raysarkar (2017, p. 12) explain specifically conditions before the implementation of GEQIP I budget that initiated MoE to centralize primary school textbooks development, publication and distribution in four major languages as:

In Ethiopia, prior to GEQIP I, the MoE Institute of Curriculum Development and Research retained responsibility for developing secondary grade textbooks, and REBs managed primary grade textbooks using their own staff or private authors. Prior to GEQIP I, both the MoE and REBs depended solely on the MoE administered Ethiopian [Education] Materials Production and Distribution Agency and a few local printers for printing and distribution. These arrangements, while failing to provide sufficient numbers of textbooks with internationally competitive content, pedagogical methods, and illustrations, also failed to provide them on time to schools. State provision of teaching learning materials (TLMs)

was constrained by the limited local textbook-writing and publishing skills, the lack of modern technology to manufacture textbooks locally, insufficient funding and incentives, inefficient management, and other factors.

Hence, the existence of the aforementioned problems of textbook development, publication and distribution initiated MoE to decide to adopt a new approach to procuring textbooks and teacher guides in departure from the previous one by centralizing the regional mandate. To this end, MoE decided in 2009 to give textbooks development, publication and distribution for international private publishing agencies with support from the World Bank and other development partners under GEQIP 1 (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017).

GEQIP I provided primary school textbooks in the four major languages used by 75 % of the population (Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af-Somali, and Tigrigna). This means that GEQIP I mainly assisted on the provision of textbooks and teaching guides. Furthermore, the support of GEQIP I extended to the provision of supplementary materials by subject and grade, copies of the national curriculum framework and all relevant syllabi, content flow charts, and minimum learning competencies in each school for reference by teachers.

Hence, using GEQIP school grants schools had the mandate to procure supplementary teaching learning materials such as reading books, dictionaries, atlases, reference and school library books, science equipment and supplies.

Based on the decision made by MoE to procure textbooks development, publication and distribution to use International Competitive Private Publishing Agencies, international tenders have been announced for the development, printing and distribution of textbooks and teacher guides conforming to the requirements of the new curriculum. Procurement was organized in ‘packages’ by cycle series. As such, the packages were organized by subject for secondary education and by subject and language of instruction for primary (MoE, 2008).

The importance of using international tenders and its process are specified by Girma and Raysarkar (2017) as follows:

The MoE decided to use a competitive international procurement process to seek commercial publishers to develop primary school textbooks and teaching guides in the four major languages [Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af-Somali, and Tigrigna] and secondary school textbooks in English. The production of primary school textbooks and teaching guides in the languages of instruction required by smaller populations was supported directly by the MoE, because the seller print runs would not attract large commercial publishers (p. 3).

International tenders for textbooks' development and publication has been preferred by MoE for the following importance:

MoE believes that choice and competition are vital to the development of high quality textbooks that meet the needs of school and students. Private sector publishing houses will be responsible for the development of textbooks for primary and secondary schools, with the exception of subjects considered to be of critical national importance such as civic education. (Smart & Alebachew, 2006, p. 3)

It seems that it was MoE which had interest to recentralize the development and publication of primary textbooks by giving to private publishing agencies.

ESDP III urges further participation of professional publishers. As such it is indicated as the following:

Textbooks shall be improved to the highest quality possible since they are one of the most important inputs for achieving quality education. Adequate textbook management system will be put in place in order to improve the efficiency of the procurement, distribution and logistics of textbooks and supplementary reading materials. Appropriate policy which will attract the participation of the private sector in publishing and distribution of textbooks and supplementary learning materials shall be adopted. (MoE, 2005, p. 39)

To advance the choice and competition of private publishing agencies in textbook development, publication and distribution, MoE developed textbook policy and strategy and established new structure under curriculum development and implementation directorate that is named as ‘Textbook Preparation Coordinator Office’.

A textbook policy and strategy were developed to deal with the issues of textbook quality and availability and to make clear the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders such as MoE, REBs, Zonal Education Department, Woreda Education Office and the community (Smart & Alebachew, 2006, p. 16). For instance, the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs are provide publishers with copies of curriculum framework, develop criteria for the evaluation of textbooks submitted by publishers, announce tenders for the submission of textbooks for evaluation and approval (including the evaluation criteria), approve textbooks that meet minimum pedagogical and technical standards, establish production specification that will improve the durability and printing quality textbooks and supplementary materials and develop operational guidelines for the quality control of the textbook specifications and carry out sample inspections of all stock delivered by publishers before delivery to the schools.

Here it seems that MoE and REBs have equal and collaborative roles and responsibilities in making the private agencies to develop and publish quality textbooks, but it is worth noting that to what extent they have exercised the given mandates.

REBs will require publishers of approved primary school textbooks to grant the REB the right to translate, adapt and publish the content of any textbook approved for that region in other specified languages as long as the number of copies to be printed each year does not exceed a specified quantity. Such agreement will be covered by contracts between REBs and publishers and will form part of the tender (Smart & Alebachew, 2006).

Textbook Preparation Coordination Office of MoE works mainly as coordinator of financing of textbooks teachers guide and supplementary materials development, publication and distribution. In addition, Smart and Alebachew (2006) state that textbook coordination office should ensures that the textbooks are not overloaded with content while developing evaluation criteria. It also assists the REBs to develop criteria for

evaluation of textbooks that fulfills the needs of students by contextualizing the curriculum.

Here based on the above discussion it can be argued that the main argument of MoE in regaining of textbooks' development, publication and distribution autonomy to the centre was to improve the quality of textbooks. What does quality mean in this case? Is it external, physical aspect of the textbooks or the internal one which comprises of the 'what' and 'how' of the contents if so how quality can be maintained even without pilot testing? It seems paradoxical that MoE has taken the development, publication and distribution of primary school textbooks in four mother tongues (Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af-Somali and Tigiregna) to maintain quality since 2009.

Nevertheless, there has not been pilot testing of the newly developed primary school curriculum materials which were supported by GEQIP I. Moreover, there has not been necessary stakeholders' participation especially in the validation of the newly developed textbooks before their publication.

e. PSCD in Ethiopia since 2010

The MoE in collaboration with the Organization for Examinations and National Agency for Examinations (OENAE) carried out a number of National Learning Assessment (NLA) to obtain information about the overall learning achievement and to identify the major factors that influence the educational performance of children at the end of each cycle of primary school i.e. for grades 4 and 8 since 2000 (MoE, 2008; USAID/Ethiopia, 2010 and UNICEF/Ethiopia, 2015). The NLA was under taken for grades 4 and 8 in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012. In grade 4 the assessment was made on reading, mathematics, and English and Environmental science where as for grade 8 Mathematics, English, Biology, Chemistry and Physics were assessed (MoE, 2010).

Based on the poor achievement results of NLA of different periods, MoE in collaboration with different organizations such as the Ethiopian Education Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA) and partnering with RTI initiated EGRA in 2010. This implies that MoE's interest in ensuring the quality of primary education across Ethiopia has led to an exploration of the means by which the quality of early grade reading can be assessed. The

main objective of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was to obtain in-depth information based on NLA results to inform the attempts in the area of education quality (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010).

In responding to the request of MoE, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized an EGRA in 2010, which was conducted by an outside implementer with the Improving Quality in Primary Education Program (IQPEP) and the MOE. This followed on recommendations from GEQIP of the need for more comprehensive assessment of pupil learning in primary schools.

EGRA was undertaken in eight regions in Ethiopia. It was collaboration among the MoE, Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International, the Ethiopia Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA), IQPEP, several core processes, and other stakeholders (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010). The assessment was developed for six (6) languages in Ethiopia, such that Grade 2 and Grade 3 students were assessed in Tigrinya, Afaan Oromo, Amharic, Af-Somali, Sidama Afoo, and Harari. The assessments included a variety of subtasks, including letter (or fidel) sound fluency, phonemic awareness, word naming fluency, unfamiliar word naming fluency, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. The assessments were leveled according to the MOE's Minimum Learning Competencies (USAID, 2013 and MoE, 2014).

RTI International was tasked with development of this assessment and the administration of EGRA in eight regions, encompassing almost 96% of Ethiopia's population. This report presents the findings from this assessment data to allow the MoE to unpack the variety of impediments to early grade literacy acquisition and inform the development of interventions to improve the quality of early reading teaching and learning (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010).

The sampling included 338 schools and 13,079 students assessed by RTI and the IQPEP with the MoE. The purpose was to investigate the children's reading skills in the context of the GEQIP and the rapidly changing primary school environment in Ethiopia. In addition to student literacy assessments, a family background questionnaire was administered to students, and head teacher and teacher questionnaires at the school level.

School level and teacher level data were matched with student achievement data to determine how student background, the classroom environment, and community factors were correlated with student outcomes (USAID, 2013).

The findings of the study reveal that most of children who attend school for two or three years are illiterate. When asked to read a simple passage at a Grade Two level, fewer than five percent of the pupils met the benchmark. In the category of reading comprehension, scores are extremely low with more than 50 percent of the children in most regions unable to answer a single simple comprehension question. These shocking results provoked MoE to prioritize early grade literacy as a country development objective in collaboration with USAID and the GEQIP partners (USAID, 2013).

The MoE has been leading a nationwide innovative program, designed with USAID, to transform the ways in which literacy is addressed in grades 1-4, nationwide. To this end, Ethiopia revised its entire language curriculum in order to make it a reading curriculum. The new curriculum materials were designed by regional experts in reading, language and pedagogy. The new language curriculum materials illustrated and adapted to regional and cultural references, and aligned to the new curriculum framework for grades 1-4. The international community provided technical expertise to the Regions to ensure the new curriculum and texts reflect the best possible learning techniques for each language (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010).

2.11. Conceptual Framework for the Study

This section introduces the conceptual framework used to analysis decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. To this end, literature was reviewed on historical and current contexts of Ethiopian modern education, concepts of decentralization, theories related to decentralization and practices of decentralization. Concepts, rationales and practices of educational decentralization were also reviewed based on experiences of different nations. Furthermore, curriculum decentralization concepts, rationales, practices and power and curriculum were reviewed in the literature.

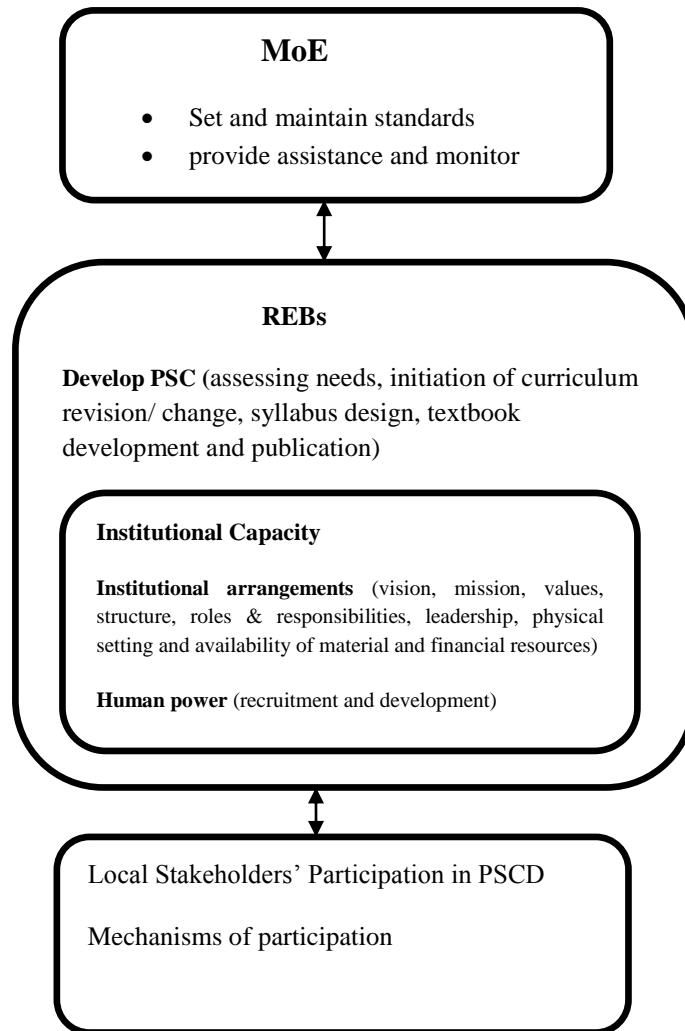
As have been discussed in this paper, decentralization in general and educational decentralization in particular is a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia. With change of

government in 1991, decentralization as main policy strategic reform has come to being and codified in laws through a series of legal frameworks such as Constitution, Proclamations and Policies. The issue of educational decentralization is one of the focus areas of this decentralization reform. As such educational decentralization was enacted in different legal frameworks as well.

To implement decentralization of PSCD as planned at regional level, strengths of institution (institutional arrangements and human power), proper transfer of decision making power and active participation of local stakeholders are paramount important.

Thus, based on the above mentioned review literature, which sets the theoretical framework of the study; the following conceptual framework (figure 1) was developed and used in gathering empirical evidences for better understanding of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the relationships that exist between educational actors at different levels in decentralized system



This conceptual framework portrays key education actors' relationships in relation to PSCD. It shows REBs dual reciprocal relationships with MoE and local stakeholders in developing PSC. As such MoE and REBs have shared responsibilities in PSC. MoE set and maintain standards, provide assistance to REBs in developing PSC and monitor the implementation of PSCD where as REBs decide on PSCD processes (assessing needs, designing syllabus and developing and publishing textbooks) based on stated standard of MoE.

To decide autonomously on PSCD processes according to mandated authority, the REBs should have conducive institutional arrangements and human power trained to carry out PSCD. The institutional arrangements include the presence of vision, mission, values, structures, roles and responsibilities, democratic leadership style, the rapport between the top management and experts, the physical setting, availability of material resources (desks, tables, computers, printers, paper etc) and finance.

Moreover, this framework indicates the downward accountability of REBs to local stakeholders which can be measured through participation of the local stakeholders in PSCD decision making. This means that the voices of the local stakeholders are considered in developing PSC. To this end, there should be mechanisms to make local stakeholders participate in PSCD.

Chapter Three: The Research Methodology

In the previous chapter, the available literature on decentralization, theories related to decentralization, education decentralization and curriculum decentralization were discussed and conceptual framework was developed to study decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia. This chapter outlines the methods used to develop a database to address the research questions posed for the study. It first discusses why to choose qualitative approach in general and qualitative multiple case study design in particular. The chapter then explains how cases and participants were selected. It also introduces sources of data, the tools used to collect data, procedures in data collection and analysis, trustworthiness of the study and ethical issues.

3.1. Qualitative Research Approach: A Choice for this Study

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. To this end, qualitative research approach was used. Qualitative research, according to Shavelson and Towne (2002) is used when the intention of the study is to produce descriptive knowledge in answering questions about “what is happening?” and “why or how it is happening?” Since qualitative research is an umbrella term comprising of many types of designs, in this study qualitative multiple case study design was used.

3.2. Research Design

Qualitative multiple case study design which is descriptive and exploratory was employed in this study. Case study in qualitative research approach can be described in different ways. For instance, to Yin (2003) it is an empirical inquiry, which is used to study contemporary issues within the natural setting. It is seen as an interesting story of cases of individuals, organization and process (Neale, Thapa, & Boyce, 2006). Stake (1995) explains it as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection” (p.5). It is an investigation of

a bounded system over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell, 2007).

As described above, although the authors explained qualitative case study in various ways, their issues of concern are similar. As such, qualitative case study is a type of study of bounded system be it individual, activity, program, process or organization using multiple data collection instruments to get thick description of information which help the audience to understand the holistic nature of the case under study.

Multiple case study (Yin, 2003) and collective study (Stake, 1995) mean the same thing and it is the study of more than one cases at a time. The essence of multiple case study over single case study is advocated by different scholars (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Patton, 1990; Ye, 2011) focusing on different viewpoints. Patton (1990) and Ye (2011) argue on its representativeness and Baxter and Jack (2008) give more emphasis on its importance when the researcher wants to analyze within and across settings. They all generally argue on compelling evidence of multiple case studies when compared with the single once. Similarly, there is an agreement that multiple case study can be considered as comprehensive and complete approach than single case study research due to the triangulation of evidence (Stake 1995).

3.3. Cases and participants Selection

Purposeful sampling is the method of choice for qualitative case study design in order to yield the most information about the research problem (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). As the main purpose of qualitative study is to explore the phenomenon in depth not to generalize about the population (Patton,2002); purposeful sampling both for cases and participants selection is appropriate strategy to get in depth information (Creswell, 2012). Merriam (1998) associates the reason behind using purposeful sampling in qualitative research with the intention of the researcher. As such, the researcher in qualitative case study mainly focuses to understand the case which in turn needs the case with ample information. “Information rich,” Patton (1990, 2002) argues, is the main criteria to select participants and cases in qualitative study. In other words, in

qualitative case study the researcher pursues for the cases and participants samples that can have potential information to be examined to get thick information.

Currently in Ethiopia there are nine regions and two City administrations. The nine regions can further be categorized as moderate and emerging regions based on the availability of infrastructure and human capital of the regions. Hence, for the purpose of representation, two regions and one City Administration from each category were selected purposefully based on principle of maximum variation sampling to capture differences across the regions.

Accordingly, one City Administration (Addis Ababa) and two regions, one from emerging (Gambella) and the other from moderate (Oromia) were selected as cases of this study. They were used as instrumental through which issues such as PSCD processes, institutional capacity (institutional arrangements and human power) and local stakeholders' participation were examined. The main rationale behind selecting these cases out of the existing ones is basically their proximity to the researcher and accessibility to get in-depth information. For the sake of convenience, I used region for both regions and City administration throughout the study.

The intention to select cases from different categories is meant to have representatives of the regions though the results of the study are not generalized. Hence, using such kind of representatives can be helpful to get in depth understanding in relation to the decentralization of PSCD in the country.

The participants for the study were selected purposefully. In addition, snow ball/ chain referral sampling, which is one type of purposeful sampling techniques, was used to get appropriate participants who were working at MoE and REBs through the help of the participants as well as other individuals.

3.4. Sources of Data

Actors from different levels of educational structure were used as the sources of data for this study. Previous and current curriculum heads both at MoE and REBs, experienced curriculum experts from MoE and REBs who have been working since 1990s, experts at

textbook preparation coordinator office at MoE, textbook writers, sub-city/woreda education representative and primary school principals at each region were participated in the study.

Table 2: Participants of the study

Participant	Levels of Educational Structure							Total
	MoE	REBs			Sub-city/WEO			
		AACEB	GREB	OREB	AACA	GRS	ORS	
Curriculum Head/leader	2	1	1	2				6
Curriculum Expert	4	3	3	5	2	1	1	19
School principal					1	1	1	3
Textbook Development Coordinator	1							1
Textbook Writer		1	2	1				4
Total	7	5	6	8	3	2	2	<u>33</u>

In addition to the above participants, various documents such as education and training policy, need assessment studies, different educational guidelines and manuals, educational plans at regional level, curriculum framework, primary school syllabuses and table of period allotment were used as sources of data. The importance of using documents as source of data in studies of education decentralization is described by Winker (1989) as examination of different educational acts, regulations, proclamations, educational plans and operational guidelines of MoE can be used to identify whether educational function (school organization, curriculum, financing, school construction etc)

is decentralized or not. Setting of physical environments of the sample regions' REBs were also used as a source of data.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

One of the main features of qualitative case study research is the use of multiple data collection sources, a strategy which also enhances data credibility (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003). According to Merriam (1998) to understand the case in its totality through the intensive, holistic description and analyze characteristic of a case study, it demands in depth data collection. Qualitative case study research employs multiple methods of data collection and triangulation in order to get an in-depth understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009). Thus, this study employed data collection methods namely, semi-structured interview, document analysis and observation. Each of these data collection instruments are described as follows.

i. Interview

Interviews in qualitative study, according to Johnson and Christensen (2012) and Patton (2002) are depth enough which help to obtain in depth information about a participant's thought, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations and feelings about the topic. The in-depth interview assumes the participants as experts of the phenomenon and used to get in-depth information from the experts (Darlington & Scott, 2002). Best and Kahn (1986) argue that interviews are more relevant to get in-depth information than other methods. This is because; the authors argue that usually individuals want to talk more than write.

Based on the aforementioned premises, to yield the necessary data for this study, the interview method was designed and employed. To do this, semi-structured interview was used. Semi-structured interview combines structured questions with open-ended questions allowing the researcher to be informal and to follow-up by being responsive to the answers given by the interviewees (Merriam, 1998). Dawson (2002) argues that using a semi-structured interview can assist the researcher to compare and contrast the information gained from different interviewees. Because of its essence, Flick (2009) claims that semi-structured interviews have got prominence and used by many researchers.

In this study the semi-structured interview was used as the main data collection instrument and therefore the designing and implementation of the instrument was made carefully. To collect data through interview, I prepared interview guide guided by the research questions. Different interview guides were prepared to different participants (MoE, REBs, Woreda education representative, and school principals). For instance, the interview guide for MoE and REBs participants mainly focuses on to explore the roles and responsibilities that exist between MoE and REBs in developing PSC. In addition, the REBs informants' interview guide questions were used to examine the institutional capacity (institutional arrangements and human power) and the local participation in PSCD decision making. The main objective of the interview guide for local stakeholders (school principals and woreda education representatives) was to explore the local stakeholders' participation in PSCD.

As such, I prepared different interview guidelines for different participants which comprise of issues raised in research questions. This interview guideline helped me to cover the same general questions with all the interviewees.

ii. Document analysis

Document analysis is important data collection method which was used in this study to gather data from different documents. It is “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic material” (Bowen, 2009, p.27). According to Marshall and Rossman (1995) data from documents produced in the course of events can supplement observation and interviews. Accordingly, various documents such as education and training policy, need assessment studies, different educational guidelines and manuals, educational plans at regional level, curriculum framework, primary school syllabuses and table of period allotment were used as sources of data. These documents were used to examine the roles and responsibilities that exist between MoE and REBs in PSCD decision making and also to gather data about institutional arrangements and human power. They were re-read and data were coded based on themes formed from interview data.

iii. Observation

Irrespective of the problem raised, observation is at the heart of every case study (Cohen & Manion, 1985). Observation in case study can allow the researcher to develop a more intimate and informal relationship. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2006) observation of the research setting by the researcher is a common source of information in case study. Observation is considered as an important qualitative evaluation method to obtain first hand information (Patton, 1990). Thus, in this study observation was used to understand the reality that exists in sample regions education bureaus with regard to availability of material resources that help to develop PSC. For this purpose observation checklist was developed and used to examine the physical setting of the offices (especially curriculum department office) and identify the presence or absence of necessary material resources. Emotional feeling of the participants was also observed while interviewing.

3.6. Procedures in Data Collection

To get access to the sites of the study, I got letter from Addis Ababa University, College of Education, specifically from the Department of Curriculum and Teacher Education. The letter was given to vice head of the bureau of education in the first site, head of bureau of education in second site and to process owner in the third site. In case of MoE, the director of curriculum development and implementation was contacted. Furthermore, head of woreda education office and school principals were initially communicated through the letter. After getting permission from the higher officials, I tried to get the appropriate informants who have rich experience through insider gatekeepers especially at central and regional levels.

After the participants were identified in this way, I communicated with them at individual base to know their willingness to participate in this study. Following this the purpose of the study was explained to the participants. Furthermore, the issue of confidentiality of information that was gained from participants was made clear. Then took an appointment with the participants (time was decided by the participants) whereas the interview was

undertaken in the natural setting of the participants (in their offices or somewhere in the organization campus) though there was some inconveniences with this regard.

To get rich information, I repeatedly visited the participants (at least two times) to have informal and good rapport with the participants. During interviewing, I became flexible to entertain the opinions of different participants. Based on the permission of the participants, I recorded the interview using audio recorder not to miss important information but two participants at MoE were not voluntary to be recorded and in this case I took field note. To facilitate communication in order to get in-depth data from the participants, Afaan Oromo and Amharic languages were used for the interviewing purpose based on the interest of the participants.

Furthermore, based on the interviewees' ideas and interest the interview guideline was modified and re-modified. In other words, the interview guideline as the main data collection instrument in the study was flexible to entertain the beliefs and opinions of the participants. In the interviewing process I was alert enough to understand the participants' perspectives by giving attention to multi-sensory channels other than verbal expression of the participants such as non-verbal expressions. Generally, I tried to be good listener to what the participants were saying and prompt the participants when there was a need to get additional input from the participants. The interview session took a minimum of twenty (20) minutes to one (one) hour depending on the availability of time for the interviewee and the quantity and the depth of the information provided and the views expressed by the interviewee. In addition to this, I took field note on basic points raised by participants and from my own observations.

When document analysis is supplementary to other data collection such as interview, Bowen (2009) suggests using predefined codes of the interview. Hence, in this study the data of the documents were gathered based on the themes previously formed from interview. As such, codes and the themes generated from different documents were used to substantiate the interview codes and themes.

3.7. Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis in qualitative case study comprises of description of the setting and context of the cases as well as thematic analysis for interview or document analysis (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995). As such, the setting and contexts of the cases were described through analyzing different documents. Data which were gathered through interview used to answer the research questions were organized in such a way that they were ready to be analyzed. Each case data were kept in different folders ready for this purpose. To this end, the tape recorded data were organized by participant, site and location. The transcription was done by me to keep the confidentiality of the participants. To do this, I listened to the audiotape recordings repeatedly and transcribed verbatim. Since the interview had been undertaken using ‘Afaan Oromoo’ and ‘Amharic’ languages, the transcribed data were translated in to English language with the help of my colleague who was PhD candidate then in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

In this study, I adopted the strategy of deductive thematic analysis which is suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). This strategy has six steps: familiarizing yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and producing the report. Qualitative data analysis entails understanding how to make sense of text to search answers to your research questions (Creswell, 2012). Hence, in this study the transcribed data were read and re-read to understand the message of the data. In doing so, some important ideas were underlined and memos were written in the margins of field notes or transcripts. The transcribed data were coded deductively i.e. based pre-stated research questions. The codes were categorized to form sub-themes which in turn became themes. The field notes which were gathered through observation method were transcribed to form texts and used to supplement the interview data.

The analysis of data in this study was performed manually because of my skill gap in a qualitative computer software program. But more importantly my interest to feel a hands-on by analyzing manually than using machine justified my preference.

3.8.Trustworthiness of the Study

One of the main issues that is considered paramount important in research work is maintaining its quality. This can be achieved through validity, reliability and generalizability in positivist and post positivist paradigms and credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability in constructivist (Loh, 2013). The author argues that in qualitative research the classical work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) that is naturalistic inquiry framework is more effective to maintain quality. The naturalistic inquiry is used to ensure trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability) which is alternative to the positivist terms of validity, reliability and generalizability, for those qualitative works residing within the constructivist paradigm.

In this study to maintain the quality, I used different mechanisms. For instance, credibility which means trustfulness or believability of data was maintained through prolonged engagement and triangulation of data sources. I stayed with the participants for a long period of time before and during data collection periods. Before beginning data collection, I requested the authorities of the institution for permission to get access to the participants. After I got permission from concerned bodies, I looked for informants with the help of some volunteers who worked there.

Introducing myself to the participants, I gave them orientations with regard to the main purpose of the study. With the consent of the participants, I made an appointment when and how to communicate with them. To do these activities, it took me from two to three days and within these days I tried to have good rapport with the participants which in turn helped me to get invaluable information from the participants. Furthermore, triangulation which involves using multiple data sources and data collection instruments in an investigation to produce understanding can also be important. Hence, in this study I used different data sources and data collection methods. As such former and current leaders of curriculum department and curriculum experts at MoE and REBs, curriculum experts at WEO and school principals and various educational documents were used as sources of data for this study as well data collection instruments such as interview, document analysis and observation were used.

Transferability is one of the main issues to be considered in qualitative research. It is used, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue to achieve a type of external validity through describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail. As such thick description of data analysis followed by thick data gathering was performed.

At the analysis stage, the consistency of the findings or “dependability” of the data were promoted a process of double coding where a set of data were coded, and then after a period of time I recoded the same data set and compared the differences.

3.9. Ethical Issues

Ethics in research may mean the concerns, dilemmas and conflicts that arise over the proper way to conduct research (Neuman, 2007). It helps to identify the dos and don'ts while undertaking the study in relation to the participants' right. Flick (2009) states that ethics in research are established to guide the researcher how to communicate with the participants of the study with their natural setting and protect the data gained from them. The author explains it as “Codes of ethics are formulated to regulate that researchers avoid harming participants involved in the process by respecting and taking relations of researcher's to the people and fields they intend to study. Principles of research ethics ask into account their needs and interests” (Flick, 2009, p. 37).

This shows that the researcher has accountability to secure the participants' views not to be used inappropriately which could have danger for the participants. Thus, there are some important issues that the researcher should do to be an ethical researcher: informed and voluntary consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Informed and voluntary consent means the participant of the study has the right to decide to participate or not. Furthermore, there is full freedom to quit after being participated in the study. It is considered as a fundamental ethical principle of social science, Neuman (2007) and participation must be voluntary at all times without coercion. In this case the participant has full right to know what they are being asked to participate in so that they can make an informed decision. Therefore, the researcher must ensure that the participants are provided with sufficient information about the study and the procedures during interview.

Ethical issues in regard to participants are an important issue in any study. It is therefore; in this study I have responsibility to protect the privacy and rights of any participants. To do this, I first communicated with the participants and gave them full information about my study purpose. Then I asked their permission to participate in my study. Lastly, I made the information of the participants confidential by using pseudonyms. In addition to this, I transcribed the audio interview data to make the information confidential.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Empirical Results of Addis Ababa City Administration (AACCA)

4.1. Context

Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia. It covers about 540 Km squares. It has population of 2,112,737 in 1994 and 2,738,248 in 2007 (CSA, 2007) and six (6) Zones, 28 Woredas and 328 Kebeles. The city council comprises of 18 bureaus, offices and authorities. Amharic is the working language of the city administration (FDRE, 2018).

Addis Ababa is the Diplomatic capital of Africa. There are more than 92 Embassies and Consular representatives in this city. Furthermore, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa have their headquarters here (FDRE, 2018). However, Addis Ababa City is, Meheret (1999) maintains, “a fast growing urban center that is beset with problems afflicting most cities in the developing world, including extensive urban poverty, joblessness, inadequate housing, severe overcrowding and congestion and under developed physical infrastructure”(p.2). This implies that there is a need to work hard from City Administration part to make Addis Ababa conducive for its residences.

There are 1168 preprimary (925 private, 239 government and 2 public), 806 primary (583 private, 221 government and 2 public) and 217 secondary (115 private, 66 government and 1 public) schools in AACCA (AACCAEB, 2018). This implies that in AACCA the role of private sector in education is high. In the same document, 172,716 pre-primary, 515,785 primary and 150,372 secondary students were enrolled which implies 79.53%, 92.48% and 64.12% Net Growth Enrollment respectively. Out of 64,745 grade 8 students who sat for examination in 2015/16, 45,754 students promoted (71%) to the next grade (MoE, 2017).

In AACCA five subjects are taught in first cycle primary education namely Amharic, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics. In second cycle primary education, there are generally twelve (12) subjects that are taught. These are Amharic, English, Mathematics, Social Science, Integrated Science, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, Civic and Ethical Education, Biology, Chemistry and

Physics. Out of these subjects Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music are only taught in grades 5 and 6 where as Biology, Chemistry and Physics are taught only in grades 7 and 8. Although 30 periods per week are allotted to both cycles of primary in curriculum framework of 2010, AACAEB adjusted the periods to 35 per week. This of course shows the autonomy of the region to make some adjustment in primary education as mandated by legislation. Specific analysis of periods allotment of primary education in AACA will be made by comparing it with the periods allotment in curriculum framework in the following table 3.

Table 3: Primary School Education Subjects and their Period Allotment in AACA

Subject	Grades and their period allotment							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Amharic	6	6	6	6	4	4	5	5
English	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6
Mathematics	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6
Environmental Science	9	9	9	9				
Arts and physical education	6	6	6	6				
Integrated Science					4	4		
Social studies					3	3	4	4
Civic and Ethical Education					3	3	3	3
Physical Education					3	3	2	2
Arts					3	3		
Music					3	3		
Biology							3	3
Chemistry							3	3
Physics							3	3
Total Periods	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35

Source: AACAEB

Similar to curriculum framework of 2010, in AACA five subjects are taught in first cycle primary education namely Amharic as Mother Tongue, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics. According to the curriculum framework the number of periods allocated to each subject per week in Grades 1-4 is 30 periods/week, but in AACA the periods per week are 35 by adding some periods on some subjects more than what is in the policy. For instance, as the curriculum framework five periods are assigned to mother tongue language of grade 1-4 but it is six periods in case of AACA to Amharic language. Six periods are assigned to grade 1 and 2 Arts and Physical Education and four periods to grade 3 and 4 in the curriculum framework.

However, in AACA six periods are allocated to all grades of first cycle primary education. For English language six periods are allocated to grades 1 and 2 and five periods to grade 3 and 4 in the curriculum framework whereas AACAEB allocated seven periods to all grades of first cycle primary education. In case of Mathematics, six periods are allocated in the curriculum framework to all grades of first cycle primary education but seven periods are assigned by AACAEB to all grades of 1-4. Seven periods are given to Environmental Science of grades 1-4 in the curriculum framework; however, in practice nine periods are allocated to the subject by AACAEB. This shows that AACAEB has used its mandate to allocate the periods to subjects of grades 1-4 based on its own context rather than following totally what is indicated in the curriculum framework of 2010.

In second cycle primary education, there are generally twelve (12) subjects that are taught. These are Amharic, English, Mathematics, Social Science, Integrated Science, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, Civic and Ethical Education, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Out of these subjects Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music are only taught in grades 5 and 6 where as Biology, Chemistry and Physics are taught only in grades 7 and 8.

Similarly to first cycle primary education, though 30 periods per week are allocated to subjects of second cycle primary education, in practice in AACA the periods per week are 35. For instance, in the curriculum framework the periods allotted to mother tongue languages of second cycle of primary education is three periods to all grades of 5-8 where

as four periods to grades 5 and 6 and five periods to grades 7 and 8 are allocated to Amharic language which is used as mother tongue in AACA. In the curriculum framework five periods are allocated to English language of grades 5-8 but in AACA six periods are allocated to English language of all grades of second cycle primary education. In case of Mathematics subject similar to English language, five periods are allocated to all grades of 5-8 in the curriculum framework and six periods are allocated to it according to AACA. For Social Science subject, three periods to grades 5 and 6 and two periods to grades 7 and 8 are allocated in the curriculum framework but AACAEB allocated three periods to grades 5 and 6 which is similar to the curriculum framework but four periods to grades 7 and 8 which exceeds by two periods from the allocation of curriculum framework. The period's allocation for Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6 is four both in the curriculum framework and AACA. In curriculum framework Visual Arts and Music of second cycle primary education are indicated as integrated and two periods to grades 5 and 6 and one period to grade 7 and 8 are allocated. However, they are separated in AACA and only given to grades 5 and 6 and three periods are allocated to both subjects in both grades (5 and 6). Two periods are allocated to Physical Education of grades 5 -8 in the curriculum framework but three periods for grades 5 and 6 and two periods to grades 7 and 8 are allocated by AACAEB. The same periods are allocated for Civic and Ethical Education by the curriculum framework and AACAEB to grades 5-8 i.e. three periods. Two periods are allocated to both Biology and Chemistry of grades 7 and 8 in the curriculum framework but AACAEB assigned three periods for both subjects in both grade levels. The same periods are allocated to Physics of grades 7 and 8 by curriculum framework and AACAEB.

Generally, the analysis of period's allotment of primary education in AACA indicates that AACAEB has autonomy in allocating the periods based on its own contexts. AACAEB adds on curriculum framework one period to many subjects and two periods to Social Science of grades 7 and 8. The fundamental variation, however, in this case is the splitting of the integrated subject 'Visual Arts and Music' of grades 5-8 into separate subjects by reducing the levels only to grades to 5 and 6. Hence it can be argued that AACAEB exercised its autonomy in primary school curriculum in relation to the

allotment of periods to subjects rather than following restrictively the centrally developed curriculum framework of 2010.

Amharic is used as medium of instruction in AACA in the first cycle primary education and taught as subject starting from grade 1 where as the medium of instruction in second cycle primary education is English. It is taught as subject as of grade 1

4.2. Institutional Capacity

Capacity of an institution is the most important ingredient that helps for the success of institutional goals in both centralized and decentralized systems. To achieve the stated goals of institution, there must be capacity to carry out the mandate accordingly. Hence, under this topic the capacity of AACAEB to develop PSC of the city administration as mandated by legislation is treated broadly under subtitles the institutional arrangements and human resource management.

4.2.1. Institutional arrangements

For the successful implementation of decentralization policy, the decentralized institutions should be arranged in such a way that it can carry out its newly emerged mandates. Based on this premise, this section examined the internal arrangements of AACAEB to develop its PSC as mandated by the legislation. To this end, the existence of vision, mission, values, organizational structure, division of roles and responsibilities, appropriate leadership style and the availability of facilities are discussed here.

i. Vision, mission and values

AACAEB has vision, mission and values to be followed in performing the activities of the institution. The vision is “to build effective educational system and competitive world class educational institutions in Addis Ababa city by 2012 E.C and produce citizens who play key role in realizing democracy, good government and development”. In the same document, the Mission is stated as:

Mobilize and enable the entire community to lead education with sense of ownership, provide technical and professional support to partners, ensure

equitable quality education with concerted effort of stakeholder, develop curriculum that meets national and international standards relevant to city context and deliver it with appropriate technology through convenient provision materials.

The main intention of vision of AACAEB is to have citizens who are responsible to bring democracy, good governance and development by building effective system of education and competitive educational institutions though the targeted year is questioned. The mission deals with two main issues: the transfer of educational leadership to the local stakeholders by providing necessary support and develop curriculum and implement accordingly using technology.

To realize the above stated vision and mission of the institution, the following values are stated: Accountability, Transparency, We are enthusiastic to change, We lead with knowledge and conviction, We provide quality service, Quality education is our service, We provide citizens endowed with proper ethics, Research and investigation is our focus and Team work is the way to success.

Thus, AACAEB has vision, mission and values that help the institution to have strategic direction.

ii. Structure and division of work

According to information gained from AACAEB Human Resource Personnel Office, currently the bureau has two hundred nineteen (219) workers of which eighty seven (87) are females. According to the new structure of the bureau there are seventy eight (78) vacant positions. The structure of the bureau consists of three vice-heads lead by the head, eleven (11) directorates and six units. The eleven directorates are teachers' professional development, professional licensing, preparation of examination, planning and budget follow up, finance, audit, communication affairs, human resource personnel, procurement, material administration and curriculum development and implementation. The six units are general service office, reform office, general radio education, gender affair office, information technology and communication office and building service administration office.

Roles and responsibilities are assigned to employees of the institution based on their position in the structure. For example, curriculum department has the following roles and responsibilities as indicated in BPR document (AACAEB, 2009) “developing primary school curriculum according to regional contexts based on the Ethiopian education and training policy, publishing textbooks and monitoring the accessibility of educational materials in the school”(p. 25).

At rhetoric level AACAEB has planned to develop its PSC based on the existing City Administration contexts. To what extent this plan has been implemented will be discussed in subsequent major theme (i.e. the practice of PSCD).

iii. Leaders as a political appointee

To attain the desired goals of institution the role of leader is prominent in making the work done by the employees. However, many scholars argue that there is a gap in the works of the leader in most developing countries. In supporting this view, subject curriculum expert (SCE) 2 of AACAEB maintains that curriculum leaders in AACAEB have been assigned by their political affiliation. As such he continues that they are “political appointee and therefore the heads’ main role is political agenda than curriculum work. The absence of curriculum experts from the office for curriculum work is headache to the heads” (interviewed on March 15, 2018). The participant argues that this has created many problems to the institution to be successful as planned.

During my fieldwork I understood that the follow up of curriculum experts at curriculum development and implementation office was not only by the director but also by the Deputy Head of the Bureau. As such there was sudden attendance at any time by the Deputy Head to check whether all curriculum experts were present or not. As some of the participants at this office informed me, there is strict follow up and monitoring from high official not mainly for the work of curriculum but more for experts’ presence or not to take action. Here what I observed was there is a big gap between the higher official and the curriculum experts of the bureau. When the boss entered to curriculum department office, all experts preferred to be silent. They responded only when their name were called for attendance.

iv. Availability of physical facilities

The physical structure of this office is well organized and there is sufficient space in the curriculum department office where the curriculum experts can perform their activities. All curriculum experts and the curriculum leader share one office. All the curriculum experts have desk top computer and internet access. In addition to these there are different textbooks and newspaper put at the corner of the office.

4.2.2. Human power

Individual capacity is one of the key to successfully achieve organizational goals. The curriculum development and implementation directorate office has twenty three workers of which twenty two are curriculum experts and one secretary. All the staff members shared one office. Nine (9) of the curriculum experts have second degree qualification and the rest; thirteen of them have qualification of first degree. The secretary has diploma in secretarial science.

i. Recruitment and development procedures

With regard to the recruitment of the curriculum experts one of the informants describes in the following way:

...professionals have been recruited by vacancy announcement according to Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) structure. We announced the vacancy based on BPR structure which invites the specific subject specialists to the post (AACAEB CL1, July 11th 2018).

The participant mentioned that though curriculum experts have been recruited based set criteria, they lack experiences and competencies of how to develop curriculum. Thus, to improve the existing condition, the participant continues:

To bridge this gap the only thing that we did was that we invited experts from MoE and gave our experts Training on curriculum components. This created good thing in our work. It also included how to evaluate textbooks. Based on this MoE training, we tried to Cascade it to sub-cities (AACAEB CL1, July 11th 2018).

Nonetheless, another experienced curriculum expert opposes the above idea of the existence of training to AACAEB curriculum experts to improve their knowledge about curriculum, saying that “there have not been such trainings for curriculum experts of AACAEB. There has not been agenda of developing competence. I have worked here for long period of time, but I haven’t got any training. The current system doesn’t give attention to curriculum issues”(AACAEB, SCE 2, interviewed on March 15, 2018).

We can understand from the opposing views of the above participants that there is no consensus between curriculum experts in relation to the practice the bureau has used to develop the capacity of its staff. This implies that there is no clear guideline to direct the human development of curriculum department.

There is some sort of confusion with regard to the roles and responsibilities of developing the capacity of regional curriculum experts. In most cases regions expect something to happen from the central government. Nonetheless, AACAEB CL1 remarks that “Staff development should be developed by regions itself than blaming MoE. We have to know that we are weak because we have given our mandate of PSCD to MoE. In this case we have full mandate but we miss it because of our problem” (interviewed on July 11th 2018).

Of course, the participant is right in that the AACAEB can capacitate its curriculum experts based on the roles and responsibilities of the position. This mainly needs to have strategic plan to make the institution successful. AACAEB can perform this because it can get competent professionals to recruit in temporary or permanent base to train its curriculum experts instead of waiting for MoE.

4.3. The Practice of PSCD

PSCD have been devolved to all nine regional states and two city administrations in Ethiopia by Proclamation No. 41/1993. When system of governance changed from centralization to decentralization, the roles and responsibilities of the central government and local government are also changed. In such cases, the central government shares or distributes the roles and responsibilities that were performed by central government to local/decentralized institution.

Hence, it is the main purpose of this study to explore how PSC have been developed based on decentralization framework during these periods. To this end, in this part of the study PSCD in AACA is presented mainly based on the curriculum development processes namely needs assessment, syllabus design and textbook preparation and publication as follows

4.3.1. Controlled needs assessment

Needs assessment is considered as one of essential curriculum development processes. It is used to identify the gaps between the expected 'what ought to be' and the reality 'what is'. In Ethiopia, there are such needs assessments that were taken place since 1991 which ends up with curriculum revision or change. Since at policy level PSCD have been devolved to the REBs, it is expected from them to play crucial role and responsibility in assessing the needs of their respective region to improve the existing situation. With this regard, one of the participants from AACAEB explains the collaboration activities performed between AACAEB and MoE in needs assessment of primary school education as follows:

In need assessment, regions have worked as team members. For instance, in doing formative and summative assessments, each region had representatives. We facilitated conditions for MoE experts such as taking team of MoE where they wanted to gather information. Team of MoE assesses everything up to school level. Even we can do sometimes and give the data to MoE. MoE analysis the data and use it. In this case regions did in collaboration with MoE (AACAEB CL1, July 11th 2018).

Similarly, another participant who has rich experience in this institution says that “REBs have roles and responsibilities of needs assessment, data gathering, analyzing data and interpreting and suggesting the way the curriculum is to be improved” (AACAEB, SCE 3 interviewed on March 24, 2018).

AACAEB SCE 1 also confirms that “In the PSCD process there is common needs assessment and interpretation both by MoE and REBs” (interviewed on March 13, 2018). AACAEB SCE 2 on his part pinpoints the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs in

needs assessment as “Needs assessment was done in collaboration with MoE. The assessment instrument was prepared by MoE... the data were analysed and reported to MoE by AACAEB (interviewed on March 15, 2018).

These views of the above participants indicate that the roles and responsibilities of MoE and AACAEB in needs assessment are more of collaboration. This means that they worked in each activity of the needs assessment in the city administration with negotiation. However, AACAEB had no participation in needs assessment for the formulation of education and training policy of 1994. This is of course can be attributed to its early establishment in 1993.

Furthermore, there are indications that AACAEB had less participation in the summative evaluations of 2002 and analysis research of 2007 where both were initiated at the centre. The summative evaluations was made by ICDR in 2002 to assess to what extent the objectives of primary education program were achieved in view of the lessons learnt and recommendations put forward during the four years (1994-1998) of curriculum try out and implementation. In the same token, analysis of research was carried out by GECFDD in 2007 to examine the effectiveness of the primary school curriculum.

The EGRA of 2010 also shows similar trend as the above studies in that it was the central government that coordinated and organized the assessment with collaboration of other stakeholders than REBs. The following excerpt substantiates the EGRA case:

The EGRA was collaboration among the Ministry of Education (MoE), RTI International, the Ethiopia Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA), the Improving Quality in Primary Education Program (IQPEP), several core processes, and other stakeholders, and was a study of the reading skills in Ethiopia in a variety of areas. Due to the efforts of the MoE, and the generous funding of United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Washington and USAID/Ethiopia, this EGRA study is the largest of almost 50 performed. (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010, p.1)

As can be seen from the above quotation, the EGRA was initiated by MoE and the work was done with collaboration of different stakeholders. However, what is surprising here is

that even the name of the REBs was not cited as stakeholders. EGRA dealt with primary school curriculum study where preparing and developing primary school curriculum has been granted to REBs. So, EGRA should be considered as part and parcel of primary school curriculum development. If it is so the main role and responsibility of EGRA resides on shoulder of REBs not MoE. MoE can support and monitor the work of REBs than taking every activity to the centre contradictory to curriculum decentralization policy.

In contrary to the above, one of the participants explains the roles and responsibilities of AACAEB in needs assessment and initiating curriculum revision/change of mother tongue language of 2013 as:

... based on our [AACAEB] study findings, we asked MoE on what to do especially things to be solved. We all regions reported at different times about the existing problems. Based on the request of the regions, finally the MoE decided to develop framework which will be used to all regions to avoid the variation of students' knowledge after primary (AACAEB SCE 1, 13/03/2018).

Here it seems that as if the primary school mother tongue language curriculum change of 2013 was mainly based on the influence of AACAEB on MoE. Nevertheless, the change was basically initiated by EGRA results which was planned and decided by MoE and USAID (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010). The roles and responsibilities of AACAEB were similar to that of other stakeholders i.e. participated when invited by MoE.

MoE initiated EGRA based on the findings of National Learning Assessments (NLA) of Ethiopia at different periods. The MoE collaboration with the Organization for Examinations and National Agency for Examinations (OENAE) carried out a number of NLA to obtain information about the overall learning achievement and to identify the major factors that influence the educational performance of children at the end of each cycle of primary school since 2000 (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010 and UNICEF/Ethiopia, 2015).

Thus, it can be said that though AACAEB had worked some activities during needs assessment as reflected by all participants with the leadership of MoE, most of the

decisions with this regard starting from its ‘inception’ i.e. initiation were made mainly by MoE. It seems that the main role and responsibility of AACAEB was supportive than making decisions on needs assessment of their region.

4.3.2. Top-down initiation of PSC revision/change

In a devolved decentralized education system of governance, initiations of needs assessment as well as that of curriculum revision or change are assumed mainly as the roles and responsibilities of the local government with support and monitoring of central government. In contrary to this logic, initiation of curriculum revision/change is considered as the main role of the MoE by many participants. On this issue AACAEB CL1 pinpoints that:

Curriculum revision particularly textbook and supplementary materials are national issue. AACAEB provides inputs which are gained from teachers, textbook evaluation results and information of other stakeholders. In curriculum revision/change we regions have our contributions but most of such revisions/changes’ guidelines, directions and what is to be revised/changed are treated by central government, MoE. Based on such framework we support for national team assessments (AACAEB CL1, July 11th 2018).

Supporting the above view, AACAEB SCE 2 interviewed on 7th March 2018 on his part claims that “When there is a need to change the curriculum, it is initiated at national level not regional level” (interviewed on March 13, 2018)

It can be said here that it is MoE which has played in initiating curriculum revision/change in AACA and AACAEB has mainly worked as supporter when it is asked to do so. This implies that there has not been yet bottom-up initiation of curriculum revision/change irrespective of the decentralization policy which encourages bottom-up initiation in the City Administration.

4.3.3. Centrally monopolized curriculum

At policy level PSCD have been devolved to REBs since 1993 in Ethiopia, however, many participants of AACAEB argue that MoE monopolizes PSCD irrespective of the

authority given to REBs. They substantiated their argument by saying that REBs lack freedom to do what they want in developing their own curriculum. For instance, AACAEB Ex-CE clarifies that:

MoE holds primary school curriculum by monopoly. Both in finance and knowledge, we regions are dominated [by MoE]. Regions have participated less in curriculum development. Syllabuses were developed by ICDR and approved by regional subject curriculum experts who were sent to MoE by requesting REBs. The REBs [AACAEB] took these syllabi from MoE and prepared textbooks using human power mainly from their regions based on their own criteria to select textbook writers and publishing organizations. Actually I don't mean the role of MoE has to be totally omitted but the MoE should enhance regions power in terms of knowledge and capacity in curriculum development (interviewed on March 24, 2018).

Similarly, AACAEB SCE 1 on her part explains the roles and responsibilities of REBs in general and AACAEB in particular in PSCD in the following way:

Currently the region has no much role in syllabus design. Almost all subjects' syllabus are developed at MoE level. In this case the region's subject experts have been participated with the other regions experts. The main role at our region is to incorporate of local content to subjects like Amharic and Civic and Ethical education (interviewed on March 7th, 2018).

The opinion of AACAEB CL1 with this regard also reads as follows:

...generally I think in primary school curriculum development regions are not free to do what they want. Hence, national level [MoE] is more responsible than the regions in developing curriculum. Our [REBs] role is more of minor adaptation to local conditions (on July 11th 2018).

From the above participants' views it can be said that much roles and responsibilities have been played by MoE in centrally designed syllabuses and hence AACAEB had minimal role in making decisions. It seems that the main role and responsibility of

AACAEB is to adapt the centrally developed syllabuses to the City Administration. In doing so, the bureau incorporated some local contents to the curriculum.

The procedures in adapting the curriculum is explained by AACAEB-Ex-CE in the following manner as “The curriculum was contextualized to AACA context by making names of mountains, rivers, and places etc that are found in Addis Ababa city. In addition problems peculiar to Addis Ababa City have been incorporated to the textbook like road traffic problem etc.

One of the key participant views the improvement of participation of regions in the mother tongue language curriculum development of 2013 as compared to the previous times. As such he elaborates:

The recent language syllabus design was highly participatory relatively because we [AACAEB] had participation when compared with the previous curriculum development which was more centralized. Our main role was to validate syllabus that were developed centrally. For the technical purpose/work, MoE requested us by letter to send teachers who have experiences. The main role of AACAEB in this case is to send teachers to MoE to participate in the discussion of syllabuses design. Usually such kinds of activities are highly dominated by MoE. Our role is simple duties. There was no strong argument between MoE and us in developing the syllabus (AACAEB CL1 July 11th 2018).

Here it seems that the participation of AACAEB in centrally designed language syllabus was improved recently when compared with the previous one. In language syllabus design of 2013, curriculum expert were stayed at the centre where as in the previous case experts had participated only in approval of the syllabus. Of course, this can be seen as a positive change from the previous where REBs curriculum experts were called to validate on what had done by MoE curriculum experts. However, being there as a team member by itself couldn't guarantee participatory unless there is the role in decision making.

It is also indicated that in most cases representatives who were sent to MoE to participate in syllabus design had less role in making curriculum decisions. Furthermore, even in the conditions when the AACAEB wants to make its own curriculum based on the standards,

MoE has no positive attitude for such changes. There was time when MoE and AACAEB disagreed on the processes of PSCD.

One informant who is subject curriculum expert at AACAEB complains the mandate of regions to develop primary school mother tongue curriculum because the participant argues that it was not successful which could be evidenced in achievements of students in all the regions. As such almost all results of students of 1st cycle primary school were poor in all subjects which presumably be the effect of the language of instruction/mother tongue. The participant rather suggests that:

I don't think that effective curriculum can be developed at regional level [AACAEB]. It is good to recognize that knowledge can be gained in multi-direction. As we narrow things, knowledge might become shallow. I mean curriculum that is developed at regions may lack experiences. In fact if we get direction from MoE, we can develop our own curriculum but it might not be fruitful because of skill gaps. So it is good to develop all together [all regions] to get better knowledge (AACAEB SCE 1, 13/03/2018).

Supporting the above view, ACAEB SCE 1 argues that PSC should be developed centrally to maintain National Unity and to assess national assessment which otherwise impossible to happen. With this regard, MoE CL1 states that the current curriculum decentralization in Ethiopia is not a threat to nation building as long as it is based on the framework of the constitution which grants regions the mandate to advance their culture and history. He continues saying that “there are many national organizing principles in the country such as constitution, flag, foreign affairs, defense Ministry, federal currency etc. So with the existence of these federal principles, how could decentralization of curriculum be a threat to national building? This is over statement/exaggeration” (interviewed on April 10, 2019).

Here it is surprising that the curriculum expert at City Administration level argues in such a way that the given authority on PSCD should be taken back to the centre because of mainly absence of competent human power. This implies that there has been still lack of awareness and understanding among some regional experts ‘why’ and ‘how’ to

implement curriculum decentralization and hence within this mental set of regional curriculum experts implementing the curriculum decentralization policy is challenging.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the above view the name of AACAEB's curriculum department office is 'Curriculum Development and Implementation Directorate'. This office lists down its major roles and responsibilities as curriculum development, supplementary books and laboratory manual development and textbook development and publication though the level of education is not specified. Furthermore, one of the roles and responsibilities of AACAEB as it is stipulated in Proclamation No.35/2012 of Addis Ababa City Administration is to:

Prepare elementary level curriculum, publish books and ensure the availability of teaching aid materials in compliance with the national education policy, strategy and standard and in consideration of the prevailing situation of the City Government; Prepare standard for the construction of schools in the City in accordance with the national requirements and implement the same upon approval (p.23).

Here it seems clear that there is a gap between what is written on paper and the perception of the experts. Hence, to implement any reform including education decentralization consensus should be reached between actors within each level and at different levels.

The other participant who has long years of experience at AACAEB (i.e. since 1994) and participated in PS syllabus design at different periods at MoE indicates that PSCD has not been yet developed AACAEB alone. In the first case he was surprised by my question that says 'How AACAEB has developed its primary school curriculum since 1994?' saying that:

First of all, our education bureau [AACAEB] couldn't prepare or develop any primary school curriculum alone. We have developed the curriculum with other regions education bureau. Subject specialists of all regions and city administration came together and make decisions on curriculum issues. Almost all activities were

performed at this level. At this level the only work we did was adapting the centrally developed syllabuses by incorporating some contents while developing the curriculum materials. At this level no need to form committee because many roles were accomplished at MoE level. AACAEB has no special plan with regard to curriculum development because AACAEB implements what was planned at national level (AACAEB SCE2 interviewed on March 7th, 2018).

This shows that syllabus design was done at the centre with participation of AACAEB curriculum experts. It seems that the main role and responsibility of the bureau is developing curriculum materials.

Primary school curricula of Ethiopia were revised from 2003 to 2005 based on the Summative Evaluation of ICDR in 2002. The main focus of this revision was on re-arranging the content and including current issues of concern such as civics and ethical education, gender, HIV/AIDS education, and other government policies and strategies (ICDR, 2002). The role of AACAEB during this revision according to interviewee AACAEB CL1 who participated in revision of mother tongue Language curriculum indicates “The primary school language curriculum revision was made by team members from regional education bureau and the team was led by MoE. MoE gave themes of contents to be included in the curriculum as standard and it was the obligation of the regions to incorporate the given standards” (11th July 2018). Confirming the existence of influence of MoE in syllabus design of this time, AACAEB SCE 2 describes the situation as “during syllabus design the influence in decision making is based on competence of the participants. The experience one has determined the influence one has over others” (interviewed on March 7, 2018).

This implies that what matters is the experience one has rather than being simply participant. Thus, ICDR curriculum experts who have experience in developing curriculum centrally and can influence regional participants in making curricula decisions. However, MoE SCE 4 argues that the work of syllabus design is a collaborative task between MoE and REBs where regions sent subject professional to participate in syllabus design which was held at MoE.

It is assumed that while working on syllabus design all together explicitly or implicitly, an individual or a group has more influence on the curriculum decisions because of the position or the experience. With this regard one participant explains the pitfall of centrally designed syllabus as:

There is lack of equal participation among regions in syllabus design. Sometimes regions sent professionals who have no experience and they didn't participate actively in the discussion. Since the incentive was not encouraging, professionals from remote regions lack interest to participate. For example, in 2009 in social studies syllabus design, Amhara and Tigray regions didn't participate (AACAEB SCE 2 interviewed on March 7, 2018).

Though it is always argued by MoE that syllabuses have been designed and approved with the participation of REBs representatives, in reality it seems that REBs have not participated equally in all subjects particularly on centrally designed syllabuses of 2008 and 2009.

The analyses of centrally designed primary school syllabus documents of 2008 and 2009 reveal that there were big variations among regions participation on syllabus work at MoE. As such it was only AACAEB that had representatives in all primary education syllabuses design. However when compared with MoE, the number of AACAEB curriculum experts who participated in all syllabuses design were only twenty four (24) where as forty five (45) experts were participated from MoE.

4.3.4. Recentralization of PS Textbooks Preparation and Publication

Although AACAEB has started to prepare and publish almost all of its primary school textbooks after the implementation of education and training policy 1994, MoE has recentralized some of the primary school textbooks' preparation and publication over time. As such, preparation and publication of textbooks of Civic and Ethical education of grades 5-8 and English language starting from grade one have been recentralized since 2003 and 2005 respectively. This means that the 'same' textbooks have been used throughout the country irrespective of the variations exist among regions.

There are different arguments for the recentralization of these subjects. The assumption for recentralization of textbook of these subjects is explained by one interviewee in the following manner:

The reasons for national textbooks development for primary school English and civic and ethical education could be the assumption that regions were not ready to prepare such textbooks by their own because I think related to capacity and to have common/national values that abide together the nations (AACAEB CL1, 11th July 2018).

Here the lack of human power at regional level and fear of absence of common values are seen as main reasons to take the autonomy back to the centre.

Specific to recentralization of Civic and Ethical Education textbooks development and publication of grades 5 to 8, AACAEB CL1 sees it as “civic and ethical education is recentralized because it contains political issue. Unless each issue is critically worked out here, there will be mess in the country” (interviewed on July 11, 2018). Here it seems that civic and ethical education curriculum is considered as political instrument through which the central government controls the contents of the subject.

Similarly, one of the regional curriculum experts has the following to say about the reason for recentralization of primary school Civic and Ethical education curriculum as:

... the MoE does not want to give civic and ethical education to the regions because the subject has political implication to the government. To avoid the complain in this case, MoE has made the regional curriculum experts and teachers to participate in the development. By doing so the textbooks of civic and ethical education [grades 5-8] became one and similar. The central government worked on the development and publication of the textbooks representing the regions (AACAEB SCE 2 interviewed on March 07-, 2018).

The above view of interviewee indicates that the central government has much interest on civic and ethical education to maintain its political system. It implies that the will of MoE

can determine whether to decentralize or recentralize curriculum particularly that of civic and ethical education.

The above views in relation to civic and ethical education is become evidence in MoE (2006 b) in document of civic and ethical education and training guideline. In this document it is indicated that:

Civic education for primary level has started as subject to be studied (above 5th) because of different factors the subject didn't bring behavioral changes as expected. Realizing this problem the government made change in civic and ethical education starting from 2003. By giving attention to this the body/ institution which controlled the education was established (p.5).

The main message of this document is that regionally developed civic and ethical education curricula didn't bring what the government expected from them and hence this condition initiated the central government to improve the said problems.

To this end, MoE established body that controls civic and ethical education tried to assess needs and identified eleven common values to be implemented in primary and secondary schools. These values are developing democratic system, the rule of the law, equality, justice, loving country, be responsible, culture of commitment, be self reliance, culture of saving, active public participation and wishing knowledge (MoE, 2006b). Each of these values have been made chapter of the subject and textbooks for grades 5-12 were prepared in Amharic at the centre. It was recommended that REBs can use the centrally prepared textbooks as it is or can translate to their medium of instruction used in the region. Accordingly, AACAEb translated the centrally prepared textbooks of grades 5-8 to English language and implemented since 2004.

The previous experience and current situation with regard to primary school English language textbook development and publication in AACAEb is sated by one informant that:

Previously all regions [including AACAEb] developed their English textbooks for primary school but it was assumed that there were differences among regions in entering 9th grade. Hence it was a solution to have standardized English starting

from lower grade level because it is the medium of instruction after primary level (AACAEB CL1, 11th July 2018).

This shows that primary school English textbook development and publication was taken by MoE to solve problems associated with regional variations and to make it standardized.

One participant from MoE justifies the reason behind recentralization of primary school English language textbook preparation and publication in the following manner:

The reason for recentralization of primary school English language curriculum development by MoE to have the same textbooks emanates from the request of REBs. Each region developed its own primary school English textbooks until 2005, but the quality of textbooks in some regions deteriorated which should be improved. There were also lack of human power in English language at REBs' level to develop the curriculum and this forced REBs to delegate MoE to develop uniform English language curriculum throughout the country. However, the participant confirms that currently REBs are not contented with this uniform curriculum and complain for its improvement (MoE SCE 4 interviewed on March 26, 2018).

The response of the above participant shows that primary school English textbooks preparation and publication have been recentralized because of the regional inability to maintain the required quality. Nonetheless, the regions have not been contented with the existing reality. For instance, AACAEB CL1 states the then complains in the following manner:

In recentralizing English language curriculum development beginning from grade one; there have been complaints and the decision was not accepted by some regions. As such, representatives of regional education bureaus of Addis Ababa, Tigray, Oromia, and Amhara were arguing that it was good to have their own textbooks in English language though it was not accepted positively by the central government, MoE(interviewed on 11th July 2018).

Specifically, the participant justifies that AACAEB argues that recentralizing English textbooks was not appropriate for AACAEB because conditions that exist in AACAEB are quite different from other regions. This recentralization didn't consider the students' profile differences across regions. For example, AACAEB CL1 maintains that:

In Addis Ababa context there are KG children in their 3rd year. These children know contents more than simple alphabet letters and it is difficult for them to start from A, B, C,...Z at their 1st grade. So such kind of profile has to be identified and used in curriculum development but now English curriculum is centralized starting from grade one which says 'English for Ethiopia.' (Interviewed on 11th July 2018).

Thus, to solve this problem AACAEB proposed two options to MoE in opposing the same English textbook for all regions beginning from grade one. These alternative proposals are: To make grade two English for grade one. But the problem here is what will be grade 8 English or AACAEB wanted to develop its own English textbooks. Unfortunately these two options were failed by MoE and finally agreement was reached between AACAEB and MoE to assess zero (0) classes in the regions to develop grade one English language textbooks.

The above view of the participant indicates that primary school English language textbooks development and publication was recentralized by MoE rejecting the regional curriculum experts' arguments. So, where is the autonomy of AACAEB if they can't decide on their PSC based on their real context? Where is negotiation which is advocated in decentralization than domination?

It appears more of speculation that there was no time that all regions requested MoE to have centrally developed primary school English language curriculum. However, it is plain that there are regions differences in their institutional capacity in general and human power in particular. Hence, MoE should identify regions based on their capacity and support and monitor them accordingly.

Nevertheless, one participant supports the recentralization of primary school English language curriculum by arguing as English language is not regional language but

international language which preferably implemented by developing the curriculum centrally. AACAEB SCE 2 concludes it as:

There is no such difference between Addis Ababa English, Amhara English, Oromia English, Tigray English etc. Hence, it is good to have the ‘same curriculum and textbooks’ in English which will help to develop equal English language competences throughout the primary schools of the nation. There was Addis Ababa primary school English language textbooks previously. But if we think for the country, it is good to make all generation to get equal quality education that could be implemented by developing the curriculum and textbooks centrally. This is the logic behind the primary school English language textbooks that were developed centrally (interviewed on March 07, 2018).

Here the above response implies that quality education in primary school English language can be assured only through centrally developed textbooks which of course contrary to the policy. Surprisingly enough, the perception of the above respondent towards primary school English language is confusing and contradictory with the principles of decentralization policy. Though the participant has long experience as regional curriculum expert, his understanding with decentralization of curriculum in general and that of English language in particular is problematic. It is obvious that English language is international language but it does not mean that its curriculum can’t be developed locally. Using the local, national and international contents, it is possible to develop English language curriculum at local level of government. Based on this premise, regions can develop their English language curriculum based on mainly standards of MoE.

With regard to recentralization of primary school textbooks preparation and publication, there is an argument that goes as follows from AACAEB CL1 on the freedom of REBs on their mandated activities. As such he explains that:

Regions have to be seen differently based on their real conditions. AACAEB has different capacity from other regions such as Afar, Gambella, Somalia etc. So the Ministry should make us [AACAEB] more flexible and give us freedom to do by

ourselves. Those regions with less capacity have to get more support individually and in groups from MoE. Now emerging regions have directorate in MoE to follow and support regions. However, developed regions such as AACCA, Dire Dawa, etc should get freedom. It is good if these regions work based on the framework of MoE and develop their curriculum by widening the mandate (interviewed on July 11th 2018).

The above idea of the respondent implies that in Ethiopia context there are variations among the regions in many ways such as socially, economically and politically. Hence, it is difficult to implement policies in similar fashion in all regions. So, the implementation of policies should consider these differences and act accordingly. In other words, the central government should set standards to be followed by the regions. Based on these standards regions which can perform their mandated roles and responsibilities must have freedom to exercise their power under the monitoring of the central government. If the regions can't do as the standards, the central government must support and capacitate the regions till they can perform.

4.3.5. GEQIP I budget as an instrument to recentralize preparation, publication and distribution of PS curriculum materials

The Ethiopian government developed the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP I) which became effective in June 2009 (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017), within the framework of ESDP III which gives high priority to quality improvement at all levels of the education system. This was based on recommendation of the education sector Annual Review Meeting (ARM) of 2007. The recommendation justified that MoE and Development Partners should work together to implement the GEQIP I budget through a pooled funding mechanism (MoE, 2010).

Though it was not satisfactory, REBs participated in centrally designed syllabuses of PS prior to the implementation of GEQIP I budget. Furthermore, they had more roles and responsibilities in preparing and publishing most of their own PS textbooks. Since 2009 with the implementation of GEQIP I budget, however, these conditions have been changed. As such, there has been a tendency to develop similar primary school textbooks

in the country by restricting the roles and responsibilities of REBs [AACAEB]. The opinion of MoE SCE 4 justifies this reality. He describes that the number of chapters and the sequences of the chapters should be similar in all regions but what varies is the language only. In other words, the breadth, depth, contents and nomenclature should be maintained the same in all regions.

Here the responses of the above participants clearly show that how curriculum contents are controlled at the central level. In this case, MoE decided on the contents to be included in PS curriculum without much argument with the REBs.

In addition primary school textbooks preparation, publication and distribution of almost all subjects in the region have been recentralized since 2009. AACAEB prepares only text books of Environmental Science of grade 1-4 and Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6. AACAEB developed textbooks of these subjects at a time not because of mainly its mandate to do so rather according to Girma and Raysarkar (2017) because textbooks in subjects such as primary environment science and integrated science, with low print runs, “failed to attract qualified bidders so the MoE and REBs decided to develop them internally using their own resources” (p. 5).

At this period, primary school curricula development direction was changed because of mainly the implementation of GEQIP 1 budget. Accordingly, syllabuses were designed at the centre with the presence of some regional representatives in some subjects based on quota system decided by MoE.

All participants at MoE and AACAEB agree that the implementation of GEQIP I budget in Ethiopia since 2009 has brought change in roles and responsibilities of REBs. For instance, AACAEB-SCE 2 maintains that with the implementation of GEQIP I budget development, publication and distribution of textbooks have been done centrally at MoE. Since then textbooks have been prepared, published and distributed by Private Publishing Agencies with the follow up and monitoring of MoE. The main role and responsibility of REBs including AACAEB is to evaluate textbooks that have been prepared by private agencies based on the criteria that was developed by MoE.

This shows that AACAEB's roles and responsibilities in textbooks preparation and publication are minimal. It is simply editing and commenting on what has been done. What makes this type of evaluation worst is that only three or four professionals were participated for a couple of days not more than four days. Furthermore, it is MoE that developed the criteria for the evaluation implying that REBs have no participation in setting these criteria.

Primary school textbooks in four mother tongue languages (Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af-Somali and Tigrigna) were prepared, published and distributed centrally by private agencies. Only Environmental Science textbooks of grade 1-4 and grade 5-6 Integrated Science textbooks were developed at REBs level (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017). Even the development of these subjects at regional level is seen not as the authority of the region instead it is considered as a gift by some participants. The response of one informant confirms it as "by chance some textbooks were prepared by AACAEB" (AACAEB SCE 2 interviewed on March 07, 2018).

AACAEB SCE 2 argues that designing syllabuses of primary school centrally at MoE doesn't contradict with the idea of regional autonomy as REBs can give comments on what should be included in the curriculum while discussing on the issue with MoE. Nevertheless, mere comment does not represent regional autonomy in decentralized system. In other words, the decentralized institution, REBs, should have power to decide on their matter with the framework of the given mandates than simply giving comment on other works.

The textbooks preparation process in the region before the implementation of GEQIP I budget is described by the participant who was working as regional curriculum expert in the following manner:

Prior 2008 textbooks were prepared by experts of the region, university professionals, and college teacher educators. Text books that were prepared in this way were edited by other professionals. Then textbook developers, editors and regional experts reached an agreement. Finally, decision was made by concerned bodies. After tryout was taken place on sample schools, the textbooks were

published by AACAEB in Birhan and Selam publishing agency (AACAEB CL1 interviewed on March 13, 2018).

This shows that during this period AACAEB had autonomy to develop its primary school curriculum materials without interference through participation of different stakeholders which were selected based on its own criteria. There was trial of the newly developed textbooks at school level by the regional education bureau. The region also published its textbooks.

Generally, AACAEB had roles and responsibilities of coordinating, organizing and supervising each activity of textbooks preparation process. However, these roles and responsibilities of AACAEB in textbooks preparation, publication and distribution have been overtaken by central government since 2009. For example, AACAEB-SCE 2 maintains that with the implementation of GEQIP I budget in 2009 the activities of textbooks such as textbooks development, publication and distribution have been recentralized and done by Private Publishing Agencies with agreement made between MoE and the agencies. The main role and responsibility AACAEB has been reduced to validate textbooks that have been prepared by private agencies based on the criteria that was developed by MoE.

Similarly, with regard to the dominance of MoE in textbooks development, publication and distribution and its flaws, AACAEB CE also maintains that “I think from 2008 onwards textbooks preparation and publication have been taken by MoE and there has not been tryout stage and that is why some subjects become so bulk and couldn’t be managed” (interviewed on 11/07/2018).

The view of this participant shows that recentralizing preparation and publication of textbooks to the centre has negative impact on the quality of textbooks because of the absence of tryout in this case.

Furthermore, the implementation of GEQIP I budget in 2009 has its own influence on the preparation, publication and distribution of textbooks. One of its influences according to AACAEB CL1 was that it made textbooks preparation and publication more centralized. The informant continues saying that:

Because when huge amount of money came, MoE did not want to distribute to regions instead interested to hold the budget centrally. This created to gather stakeholders from different regions at the centre and design syllabuses and prepares textbooks centrally. Representative of some of REBs were gathered at MoE and designed the syllabuses. Nevertheless, there was condition when MoE prepared textbooks without our region interest and awareness and published accordingly. Even, sometimes when we wanted to publish textbooks by ourselves, it difficult for us to get the softcopy of camera ready. Instead MoE has mainly interested to make International Bid which was complex to have textbooks according to our needs (interviewed on July 11, 2018).

This shows that MoE holds budget at the centre and reduced the roles and responsibilities of AACAEB which it had on textbooks preparation and publication. It seems that MoE had no negotiation with AACAEB with regard to the decisions made.

Hence, the main role and responsibility of AACAEB in this case was explained by one participant as “...after textbooks were prepared by private publishing agencies, the City Administration curriculum experts evaluated the materials based on the criteria set by MoE. It is after this evaluation that the prepared textbooks were published by the agencies” (AACAEB-SCE 2, 14/5/2018).

Though there was participation of REBs’ curriculum experts and professionals, the reality is that as stated by other participants it was MoE that requested the AACAEB to send their representatives based on MoE criteria. There was no any negotiation between MoE and AACAEB on who should participate in syllabus design. Furthermore, AACAEB had less role and responsibility on setting the criteria of text book evaluation and on decision of who should evaluate. It was again MoE that played major roles and responsibilities. Therefore, where is the collaboration between MoE and AACAEB both in centrally developed syllabus as well as on evaluation of textbooks prepared by Private Publishing Agencies?

This implies that many roles and responsibilities in syllabus design as well as preparation of textbooks process were MoE's. This type of curriculum development process is in fact deviate from what the policy of decentralization supposed to do.

With regard to the impact of centrally prepared textbooks on REBs, AACAEB CL1 puts explicitly by comparing centrally developed textbooks with that of regionally developed once as follows:

Textbooks preparation participation can vary when the materials are prepared centrally by MoE and regionally by REBs. When the textbooks are developed by the region, the subject specialists at regional level are responsible to coordinate the work. For instance, experts at the regional level communicate with sub-cities to get subject teachers based on regionally developed criteria for selection. Based on the directions given from MoE, these professionals participated to prepare textbooks. However, when the textbooks are developed at MoE, our bureau [AACAEB] role is diminished to screen and send experts and subject teachers based on the criteria set by MoE. In fact, there is sometimes handpicking without the awareness of the bureau. Some experts from MoE have picked up experts from the regions based on their informal communication (July 11th 2018).

This shows that when textbooks are prepared at regional level, AACAEB has some major roles and responsibilities namely coordinating the process and setting criteria to select the textbook writers based on MoE's standards where as in recentralizing textbooks preparation all these activities have been taken by MoE. And the main role and responsibility of AACAEB here is responding to the request of MoE. It seems that the quality of selecting textbook writers was declined in centrally prepared textbooks because of the informal communication between MoE and AACAEB's curriculum experts without awareness of AACAEB. In other words, AACAEB has no role to control and decide even on the quality of textbook writers.

This generally implies that MoE has taken AACAEB's mandated authority without any change of legislation simply by its hierarchical nature of structure which does not rule in decentralized system.

This implies that the trend of PS textbooks preparation and publication have gone from some sort of decentralization to recentralization without any change of legislation by concerned bodies. Of course, as described in many places in this study the recentralization of primary school textbook preparation and publication is associated with the implementation of GEQIP I budget.

Some argue that GEQIP I budget has good incentive to professionals those who participated in curriculum development process. However, this incentive has brought discomfort and conflict among experts as well as it has strengthened informal communication among experts at MoE and AACAEB. For instance, AACAEB CL1 depicts that:

... the incentive was high and there was discomfort among experts when they didn't participate after once they knew the incentive. For instance, one expert at AACAEB who was participating at different periods in centrally designed syllabuses sobbed when he was replaced by another expert. Thus, it was known lately that there was subjectivity (informal communication) between some curriculum experts of AACAEB and MoE in the participation of centrally designed syllabuses. I think there were no clear set criteria to make AACAEB curriculum experts to participate in centrally designed syllabuses (July 11th 2018).

Financial assistance with the name of GEQIP I has challenged the implementation of curriculum decentralization in Ethiopia. There has been complaining why and how GEQIP I budget has been implemented particularly in textbook development and publication. One of the informants of this study explains the conditions as:

In GEQIP I budget what is recommended as MoE argues is that international bid. As such there is something that is gained from this bid procedures. We regions [including AACAEB] have blamed these procedures be it right or wrong. MoE has experienced to get some advantages from this bid and that is why the Ministry has been doing this. Though GEQIP I have brought many changes by allocating sufficient finance, it has negative impact on PSCD by centralizing it. In other

words, for the sake of money everything of the PSCD has been taken to the centre CL1 AACAEB July 11th 2018).

More specifically the implementation of GEQIP I budget “has created mess in curriculum development activities such as need assessment, syllabus design, textbook preparation, publication and distribution because all these activities have been given to the international organization than performed by the regions” (AACAEB CL1 July 11th 2018).

This implies that GEQIP I budget has made curriculum development processes more centralized specially textbooks preparation and publication.

Currently AACDEB is striving to maintain its authority of developing its own primary school curriculum. The institution has started to argue with MoE though such kind of argument is rare until recently. “In fact it is a recent phenomenon to get such opportunity to think in once own regional context” (AACAEB CL1, 11th July 2018).

This shows that there was no enabling environment for AACAEB to argue with MoE because of the political context in the country. Thus, MoE has decided in most PSCD processes even without the presence of the regional representatives. Though in most cases, AACAEB have had representatives than any other regions.

Generally though PSCD have been devolved to REBs since 1993 in Ethiopia, the evidences gained from data of this region show that the authority has not been transferred yet to AACAEB to be autonomous institution. Almost all processes of PSCD such as need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change and syllabus design and textbooks preparation and publication have been performed by MoE.

In 1994-1998 and 2003-2005 primary school curriculum change and revision respectively, AACAEB had power to develop, publish and distribute all primary school subjects’ textbook. However, primary school textbooks development and publication of Civic and Ethical education of grades 5 -8 and English language beginning from grade one have been recentralized since 2003 and 2005 respectively. Moreover, with the implementation of GEQIP I budget since 2009, the development, publication and

distribution of primary school textbooks of the City Administration except environmental science of 1-4 and integrated science of 5 and 6 have been recentralized to the centre.

4.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD in AACA

The main rationale behind education decentralization is that it can bring education decision making close to the local stakeholders which is considered as a key ingredient for the development of democracy (Komatsu, 2011; Naidoo, 2003; Ribot, 2002). Accordingly in Ethiopia there are different education functions that have been decentralized to different tiers of education system. As such, PSCD have been devolved to REBs since 1993 by legislation. Therefore, under this theme how local stakeholders in the region have participated in PSC decision making will be discussed below.

4.4.1. Importance of local stakeholders' participation in curriculum decision making

Local stakeholders' participation in curriculum development has been advocated as it has importance to improve the quality of education in general and curriculum materials in particular. Taylor (2000) indicates the merits of participatory curriculum development (PCD) as one aspects of decentralized education system.

One of the regional curriculum experts also remarks the advantage of stakeholders' participation in curriculum development succinctly as "When you try to participate different stakeholders [in curriculum decision making], you can get different issues to incorporate in the curriculum. Through participation of stakeholders, you can broaden your way of looking at different issues"(AACAEB CL 1, July 11th 2018).

This shows that developing curriculum with local stakeholders' participation can improve the quality of curriculum as well as the relationship between different stakeholders which is one way of improving ownership of the curriculum can be attained. In other words, voices of all can be heard which can have potential to improve the life of all.

However, the problem in trying to make stakeholders participate in AACA context, as AACAEB SCE 2 pinpoints is that "we called for the participation institutions not

individuals and hence those who came representing the institution determines the quality of discussion which in turn has impact on the quality of the materials”. But here it is possible to get competent participants by setting standards and calling by strictly following the standards.

Generally, in line with curriculum decentralization policy of Ethiopia, many educational documents advocate the participation of local stakeholders on PSC decisions (MoE, 2002a, 2006a; TGE, 1994). Though there were some trials to participate different stakeholders particularly in textbook validation in AACA, there has not been yet mechanisms to be followed regularly in communicating with the local stakeholders’ in curriculum decision making.

In AACA different stakeholders participated in curriculum development differently. For instance, teachers, students and parents have participated in responding to questions of the need analysis though this can’t empower them to make decision of curriculum. Moreover, regional curriculum experts, primary school teachers and professionals in different subjects have participated in PSCD. The participation could be regional curriculum experts or teachers’ participation at centrally developed syllabuses which mainly seems involvement through attendance and receipt information and teacher educators and other professionals’ participation in textbooks development.

The participation of different stakeholders in textbook validation could be seen as good exemplary in this City Administration. As it has been said by some participants, this gives the chance to improve the communication of the AACAEB and the stakeholders which can be seen as one pillar of democratization.

4.4.2. Different participation of local stakeholders in PSCD

As local stakeholders are varied in education, there are various ways of stakeholders’ participation in curriculum development. These can be participation in need analysis, syllabus design, textbook development and textbook validation. As such, AACAEB CL1 explains the various ways of stakeholders’ participation in the curriculum development in the region as follows:

I think teachers' participation in curriculum development can be considered as highest level of participation. Teachers have opportunities to participate in textbook preparation. They can also participate in syllabus design at MoE. Educational leaders and the community all in all have their say during data collection. This is represented by parent-teachers Association (PTA). PTA has participated through responding to questionnaire of the need assessment. At the end, the school leaders and stakeholders at Woreda level participate in curriculum validation (AACAEB CL 1 interviewed on July 11, 2018).

This implies that different stakeholders participated in different activities /tasks of curriculum development. For instance, teachers participated on centrally deigned syllabuses and textbook preparation, PTA and school administration on need assessment and school leaders and stakeholders at woreda level on validation of textbooks. PTA and school administrators' participation in need assessment is simply responding to the prepared instruments of data collection prepared at the centre.

4.4.3. Textbook validation as major means of local stakeholders' participation

Though there are different ways through which local stakeholders participate in PSCD, textbook validation has been used as a major means of participation. Textbook validation is the process of presenting the newly developed textbooks to public before their publication. If it is implemented properly, it has the potential to incorporate the voices of the stakeholders and encourages democratic practices between the REB and the local stakeholders. With regard to the process of textbook validation in the region, AACAEB SCE 1 pin points that:

Textbook validation has been taking place at regional level after presented to top level management of the institution including education bureau manager. Comments that have been given during validation will be incorporated starting from the cover page and throughout the textbook including pictures, illustrations, and texts etc.

In textbooks Validation of AACCA, different stakeholders have been participated from various institutions and concerned bodies to approve the materials after discussion. They can include Culture and Tourism Office, Health Bureau, Agriculture Bureau, Industry, Special Needs Office, Women and Children Office, Environmental Protection Office, Workers and Social Affairs, clean administrative agency, subject teachers, teacher association, parent-teacher association and religious representatives etc.

Moreover, for textbooks validation, specific organizations/institutions are invited to participate when there are issues related to the organization. In addition, experts of education bureau visit the organizations to get necessary information which will help to understand the issue in depth. For instance, to incorporate culture topics in the curriculum, experts from culture and tourism office are invited to participate in validation of textbooks and also experts of education bureau visit the office to get firsthand data from the office.

With regard to the participation of schools in textbook validation one of AACCA School Principal states that “I don’t know how the REB [AACCAEB] has assessed the needs but in textbook validation we participated to some extent. AACCAEB presented us the draft textbooks and we gave comments on the presented draft to be added or deleted” (interviewed on June 14, 2019).

Nevertheless, woreda and sub-city curriculum experts state that there has no participation of woreda education office and sub-city education office participation in validation of textbooks at education bureau level. For instance, AA Woreda curriculum expert confirms that:

With regard to textbook development, we don’t give any input to the bureau. There has not been textbook validation before publication. The woreda education administration has many roles such as classroom observation, to make learning teaching process in schools democratic, administer schools grant, issues of teachers’ discipline, teachers career structure, resources etc. the role of this administration in curriculum is more on implementation...specially to make textbooks accessible to all students (interviewed on June 14, 2019).

It seems that the main role and responsibility of WEO was mainly the administration of implementation of the newly developed text books than participating in their validation.

In addition to the above stakeholders, AACAEB has curriculum board which plays its part in newly developed textbooks. The main role of the board is giving comments when new textbooks are prepared. The education bureau head is the chair person of the board. The board members were called to comment on the newly prepared textbooks but their comments are not strong. AACAEB CL1 explains the case as “in fact since the members of the board are all managers, they focus on a political issue of the curriculum” (July 11th 2018). In this case the role of curriculum department of [AACAEB] is to prepare reports which will be presented to the board by regional education bureau head. The board members organizations can be participated in groups or individually based on the issue of concern. The curriculum board members have roles in making decision on curriculum contents.

The process of the participation of different stakeholders in curriculum decision making especially in textbook validation is described by one informant as“...any way different issues were raised. Different thoughts have been heard. Based on voices of different stakeholders and political decision, the curriculum to be used will be decided. So the management based on the political situation can decide on the curriculum to be taught” (AACAEB CL 1 interviewed on July 11, 2018).

From the response of the above participant it seems that different stakeholders have participation in validating textbook in AACA but it is the politicians who finally decided on contents of the curriculum. This implies that the stakeholders have no active participation.

Chapter Five: Presentation of Empirical Results of Gambella Regional State (GRS)

5.1. The Context

The Gambella Regional State (GRS) is one of the nine member states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It is located in South-western lowlands of Ethiopia. Its distance is approximately 777 kilometers to the west of Addis Ababa. It shares border with Oromia regional state to the north and northeast and Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP) region to the south and southeast. The region also shares an international boundary with South Sudan to the west. Gambella is comprised of three administrative zones (Anyuak, Nuer and Majang) and 13 woredas, one special woreda and one city administration. There are a total number of 262 kebeles in the region (UNICEF Ethiopia, 2016).

Gambela region has 307,096 number of population of which 159,787 are men and 147,309 are women. The region has 29,782.82 square kilometers area (CSA, 2007). Based on this census, the population of the region was projected to be 396,000 in 2014. The Gambella Regional State is predominantly inhabited by five indigenous ethnic groups, namely the Anywa, Nuer, Majang, Opo and Kumo (UNICEF Ethiopia, 2016).

The climate of Gambella region is hot and humid and its temperatures range from 21.1⁰C to 35.9⁰C. The main economic activities of the region are animal husbandry, subsistence farming, fishing, hunting and gathering. It has also potential for irrigation based agriculture, commercial and small-scale farming (UNICEF Ethiopia, 2016).

There are 292 primary and 54 high schools in Gambella regional state in 2016/17 (GRSEB, 2017). In the same year, 115,761 primary and 24,752 secondary school students were enrolled. In academic year of 2017 out of 13,069 grade 8 students who sat for examination only 8,753 students got pass mark. The pass mark (cut-off point) decided at regional level in consideration of various parameters. In the same year, out of 9928 total number of students who sat for grade 10 examination only 5303 students got above Grade Point Average 2.00. Similarly, out of 2667 total number of students who sat for grade 12 examinations, only 641 students got passing mark to university.

In GRS five subjects are taught in 1st and 2nd grades namely Mother Tongue, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics. In this region Amharic language is started as subject of study from grade three which makes the subjects to be studied in grades 3 and 4 six in the region.

There are nine subjects to be taught in grades 5 and 6 as of the curriculum framework. These are Mother Tongue, Amharic, English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music, Physical Education and Civic and Ethical Education. For grades 7 and 8, there are eleven subjects to be taught as indicated in the curriculum framework as well as GRS such as Civics and Ethical Education, Mother Tongue, Visual Arts and Music, Amharic, Physical Education, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Specific analysis of periods' allotment of subjects that are taught in Anguwa language of primary education in the region will be made by comparing it with the periods allotment in curriculum framework in the following table 4.

Table 4: Primary school education subjects and their period allotment in GRS

Subject	Grades and their period allotment							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mother Tongue	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3
English	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
Environmental Science	7	7	7	7				
Arts and physical education	6	6	4	4				
Amharic			3	3	3	3	2	2
Integrated Science					4	4		
Social studies					3	3	2	2
Civic and Ethical Education					3	3	3	3
Visual Arts and Music					2	2	1	1
Physical education					2	2	2	2
Biology							2	2
Chemistry							2	2
Physics							3	3
Total Periods	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: GRSEB

As indicated in curriculum framework of 2010, in GRS five subjects are taught in 1st and 2nd grades namely mother tongue, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics. In this region Amharic language is started as subject of study

from grade three as of the curriculum framework which makes the subjects to be studied in grades 3 and 4 six in the region.

According to the curriculum framework the number of periods allocated to each subject per week in Grades 1-4 is 30 periods/week. Similarly, in GRS 30 periods are allocated to grades 1-4. The period allotment of all subjects of first cycle primary school is the same to the curriculum frame work. As such five, six and seven periods are allotted to Mother tongue language, mathematics and environmental science subjects respectively. Three periods are allotted to Amharic subjects of grades 3 and 4. With regard to English language, six periods for grades one and two and five periods for grades three and four are allocated. Six periods for grade one and two and four periods for grades three and four are allocated to Arts and physical education subject.

There are nine subjects to be taught in grades 5 and 6 as of the curriculum framework. These are Mother Tongue, Amharic, English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music, Physical Education and Civic and Ethical Education. GRS uses these subjects and the period allotment as indicated in curriculum framework. Three periods are allotted to Mother tongue, Amharic, Civic and ethical education and social studies of grades 5 and 6 in both curriculum framework and GRS. Similarly, five periods are allotted to English language and Mathematics in both curriculum framework and GRS. In GRS four periods are allotted to integrated science of grade 5 and 6 which is the same to curriculum framework. For physical education and visual arts and music of grade 5 and 6 two periods are assigned in both curriculum framework and GRS.

For grades 7 and 8, there are eleven subjects to be taught as indicated in the curriculum framework as well as GRS such as Civics and Ethical Education, Mother Tongue, Visual Arts and Music, Amharic, Physical Education, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The period allotment for these subjects in GRS is the same to curriculum framework which accounts totally 30 periods per week.

Generally it can be said that GRS allocated 30 periods to grades 1-8 which is the same as that of curriculum framework of 2010.

Currently in Gambella region, there are six languages used as Medium of Instruction (MoI) in the 1st cycle of primary schooling (1-4) namely Nuer, Anguwa, Mezheng, Opo, Kumo and Amharic. Furthermore, these languages are taught as subject in both first and second cycles of primary education.

English language is used as medium of instruction as of grade 5. Accordingly, first cycle primary teacher education is given by one of the five local languages indicated above where as English language is used as medium of instruction for second cycle primary teacher education. English language is also taught as subject starting from grade 1. Though the policy advocates mother tongue as medium of instruction up to grade 8, in Gambella region it has been implemented up to grade 4.

5.2. Institutional Capacity of GRSEB

Capacity of an institution is the most important ingredient that helps for the success of institutional goals in both centralized and decentralized systems. To achieve the stated goals of institution, there must be capacity to carry out the mandate accordingly. Hence, under this topic the capacity of GRSEB to develop PSC of the city administration as mandated by legislation is treated broadly under subtitles enabling environment, the institutional arrangements and human resource management.

5.2.1. The institutional arrangements

For the successful implementation of decentralization policy, the decentralized institutions should be arranged in such a way that it can carry out its newly emerged mandates. Based on this premise, this section examined the internal arrangements of GRSEB to develop its PSC as mandated by the legislation. To this end, the existence of vision, mission, values, division of roles and responsibilities, appropriate leadership style and the availability of physical facilities are discussed here.

i. Vision, mission and values

GRSEB has vision, mission and values to be followed in performing the activities of the institution. As indicated in GRSEB (2012) document, the Vision of GRSEB is to have education system that enables the citizens to create job opportunities and develop

democratic values which help to yield good governance. The mission is stated as to give professional and technical support to actors of education at various levels to lead their education which encourage them to have sense of ownership through which educational access can be maintained.

Here the vision of GRSEB deals mainly with the development of quality citizens who transform the region by creating work opportunities to its people, practice democratic values and bring good governance where as the mission is all about the transfer of education leadership to education stakeholders by providing necessary professional and technical support.

ii. Structure and division of work

According to information gained from GREB Human Resource Personnel Office and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) document of 2012, in 2018 GRSEB has one hundred eight (108) workers under four core process owners, four supportive process owners, and seven units. The four core processes comprise of Curriculum and Learning-Teaching which is divided in to two sub processes namely Curriculum Development and Education Materials Delivery and Learning-Teaching and Assessment, Teachers' and Educational Institution Administration Development, Education Institutions Licensing, Quality Audit and Inspection, and Teachers' and Educational Institution Administration Professional Competence Licensing.

The four supportive process owners include information communication technology, procurement, Finance and material resource administration, human resource personnel and educational work administration document, planning and resource gathering.

The seven units are civil service improvement program, Human Immunity Virus (HIV) protection, gender affairs, legal service, government communication, radio and plasma education distribution and internal audit and follow up.

Roles and responsibilities are assigned to the structure indicated above. For instance, one of the duties of GRSEB (GRSEB, 2012) is stated as “develop and implement primary school curriculum based on education and training policy”. In the same document it is

stated that the regional curriculum department has the following roles and responsibilities:

Develop regional primary school curriculum based on centrally approved syllabuses through the guidance of regional curriculum council. Based on centrally approved syllabuses, develop or coordinate primary school textbooks development as well as coordinate the publication and distribution of the prepared textbooks. For these purpose, the experts should undertake need analysis, plan and make the budget to be approved. Furthermore, select individuals or organizations for textbook preparation, monitor the prepared draft textbooks, announce and select organizations for publication and distribution of textbooks.

This implies that the way regional curriculum experts have been assigned in the region and their roles and responsibilities are not compatible to each other because the assignment has more of political base where as the roles and responsibilities need competent professionals to develop or coordinate the work of textbooks preparation, publication as well as distribution. Furthermore, here curriculum development is reduced to textbook preparation and publication.

iii. Political appointee of head as main cause for lack of good governance

Leadership is one of the most determinants of the institution activities to be successful. However, irrespective of this, participants of the study in GREB state difficulties in relation to leadership. As such, GRSEB SCE 1 points out the following:

In most cases the heads are not education professionals but political appointee from any field of study. They don't make us to work professional works that have payment instead give to those who have relationship [with head] informally. Furthermore, there is informal communication even in the curriculum and implementation department. There is no time when we as professional gave initiative opinion but what works more is the informal relationship related to the incentive. Hence, there is broadly problem of leadership. Leaders have no confident in their work (interviewed on Sep. 19th, 2018).

The response of the above participant shows that there are administrative problems in GRSEB which have hampered the moral of the experts as a result of informal communication.

Informal communication is one of the leadership styles if it is used properly by leaders to have necessary information that can help to improve the activities of the institution. Nevertheless, informal communication which leads to bias creates the absence of good governance which is one pillar of decentralization policy.

With this regard, the same participant pinpoints the governance of his institution as:

There is lack of good governance in our region [education bureau]. In the first case there is no fairness because the head communicates more informally especially with relatives than the workers. Hence, though curriculum is pillar of education, those who have been assigned to this bureau have not this much knowledgeable about the issue because many of them are not education professionals.

These problems associated to leadership have negative impact on the performance of the employees in general and curriculum experts in particular by lessening the motivation and initiation of employees. GREB SCE 1 pinpoints the impact of lack of good governance in the institution on the initiation and performance of professionals as:

Competent experts have no initiation to work here because of lack of good governance. Now curriculum becomes means to get money. Budget that is assigned to curriculum department is not implemented properly. For instance, when textbook is prepared there is condition when real writer gets small amount of money and others who didn't work get more money. Because of such unfair work, some competent and qualified experts preferred to be silent than try to work. You know you can observe someone when he/she gets good incentive without competence and qualification. This makes the competent experts demoralize (interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

Here it seems that there is unfairness in getting what one deserves to get. If someone gets incentive without working, this will create negative attitude in those who have commitment and never get incentives. This lead to lack of motivation in employees because of poor leadership and this in turn hurt the performance of the institution. Therefore, the leader should work to create fair ground to all employees where they can play equally and compete one another to get incentive. This can motivate employees and encourage them to have commitment. In normative sense, leadership is a science that can have the potential to motivate and encourage the employees to perform up to their potential.

Communication between the top management and employees is one of the critical issues to attain the goals of the institution. Thus, it should be based on democratic way that encourages participatory decision making. The communication between the top management and experts in GRSEB is stated in the following way by GRSEB CL2 as:

The relationship between the top management and the curriculum experts was mainly political oriented i.e. implementing what was given by the regional government. The education bureau head most of the time gathered the members of the top management and oriented them what had been transmitted from the regional government and how it could be implemented. The curriculum department had no role to make any decision or couldn't influence the top management but do what our boss instructed us (interviewed on May, 30, 2019).

It seems that the GRSEB has been more influenced by the external environment (government) and less committed to perform according to its vision and mission. Moreover, the decision making was not participatory or two way but top-down to the experts which discourage the initiation of the employees.

iv. Availability of resources (physical and financial)

The curriculum experts in the region have offices by two or three and all have desk top computer. There are different textbooks and other books put in each corner. There is internet access in the offices of the curriculum department.

Transfer of authority from central to somewhere to local level of government can be effectively and efficiently implemented if it is with fiscal decentralization. However, almost all of the participants at regional level emphasis the bottleneck of the resources (financial and materials) to undertake their roles and responsibilities. As such, GREB SCE 3 explains the criticalness of lack of resources in the region as:

The lack of budget hinders and demoralizes us not to perform our work properly. Because of absence of budget, we couldn't work what we want to work. Even there is lack of printer in our office ['as you can see' this was expressed physically]. It is difficult! If you want to print in other office, they raise problem of printer... and paper... Furthermore, because of shortage of budget, it is difficult to evaluate textbooks as scheduled (interviewed on Sep.21, 2018).

Similarly, the experienced curriculum expert in the region raises the constraint of budget as the main obstacle to evaluate and improve the regional curriculum. As such he has the following to say:

After once textbooks are prepared and implemented, we couldn't evaluate the textbooks to examine their problems because of shortage of budget. Some textbooks are criticized by the society and teachers because of their poor quality. This criticism is especially for mother tongue language for those who have not enough human power. To solve this problem there is no budget for this in our region. Budget which is assigned for this purpose is minimal (GREB SCE 2 interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

Here it appears that financial and material resources are the main constraints to the curriculum department to perform its roles and responsibilities accordingly. Curriculum development is a continuous process that needs assessment at every time to improve the curriculum based on the needs and interests of the society. To do this, the regional experts who have mandate of developing primary school curriculum should have reasonable budget especially from the regional council to research and work on curriculum issues. It is through doing this that quality of education can be maintained.

There is also lack of budget for Training and in most cases budget for training was from NGOs in the region. With this regard, the same participant blames MoE not supporting the region financial in the following manner “Even for training most of the time, we get budget from NGOs. There is no especial support given for us from federal [MoE] on this case. MoE invites us to participate when there is workshop, but it doesn’t give us any support with regard to curriculum financing”.

This suggests that there should be support from concerned bodies in relation budget to the regional education to have quality education in general and curriculum materials in particular.

5.2.2. The Human Power

The Curriculum Development and Education Materials Distribution sub-core process of GRSEB has twenty (20) curriculum experts in 2018. Sixteen first degree holders of which fourteen are males and two females and four male experts who have masters degree.

i. Quota assignment of workers as means of recruitment

Human power is an important asset for an institution to achieve its stated goals both in centralized as well as decentralized governance systems. Thus, the competence of the employee is crucial and can be acquired through proper recruitment, development and appraisal based on the respective positions. However, there are conditions when this is not the case. With this regard, GREB SCE 1 has the following to say “The assignment of workers to this bureau has no quality. Even though some of them have first degree; they are not competent enough to work as curriculum experts...there is quota assignment of workers to this bureau. Generally, there is influence in this department [curriculum department]” (interviewed on Sep. 19th 2018).

Similarly, GRSEB SCE 2 explains the problems associated with how employees have been recruited in education bureau and its impact on the overall activities of the institution as the following:

In our region I don’t know how human power has been recruited. Sometimes those who left power have been sent to our bureau and most of the time

individuals who came in this manner have no knowledge in education. Here there is corrupted work... [In addition] there is sort of bringing once own relative informally and recruiting by clan...leaders collect their own individuals. There have not been clear criteria to recruit professional and no announcement to recruit professionals through competition. Thus, it is difficult to get competent professional (on Sep. 19th, 2018).

Here based on the aforementioned responses, it can be argued that the way GRSEB has recruited employees has a big problem. There has been lack of awareness in the part of the experts on how employees have been recruited. It seems that the head plays prominent role in this regard. He can decide who should be recruited not the criteria. In fact, this might emanate because the head has been assigned to the position based on his affiliation not on competence. In such cases, it is true that the head does what the politicians order him to do rather than on the vision and mission of the institution.

Furthermore, it is prevalent that the leader has recruited his close relatives and friends forgetting the goals of the institution why it was established. In relation to this, Hague, Harrop, and Breslin (1992, p. 362) explain that “In many developing countries where family and kinship relationships still influence recruitment decisions, civil servants, politicians and military officials are expected to use their positions to assist or repay their families by recruiting them in to government organizations”.

This shows that there is no accountability specially the down ward accountability which is praised in decentralization policy. This practice of recruiting employees without clear set criteria violate the democratic values particularly justice and rule of the law.

Specific to regional curriculum experts, there is no announcement officially for recruitment because the curriculum expert of each mother tongue language is assigned mainly from the zone or woreda in which the language is used as medium of instruction. The assignment is made by agreement of the zone/woreda with the regional education bureau. With this regard, GREB CL2 has to say the role of the curriculum department as “the [curriculum] department had no much role in recruiting experts because experts were

directly sent by the zone/woreda where the language is used as medium of instruction” (interviewed on May 30, 2019).

This shows that the assignment was not meritorious but has political implication. Hence, to get competent experts is difficult which in turn has negative effect on the work of the department.

ii. Access to Training

After once employee is recruited, development through short term and long term training are very important to have competent and updated human power who can perform his/her roles and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The participants have almost agreed on the existence of training in the region. The participant who has long experience in this bureau as curriculum experts says that “personally, I have got short term training in curriculum development issues such as how to design syllabus, how to develop textbooks etc” (GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018). These trainings were given by the NGOs in the region.

Similarly, GRSEB CL1 appreciated the way training has been given in the region particularly to the regional curriculum experts by different NGOs such as USAID, UNICEF etc. These organizations assessed needs of the region and discussed with top management of education bureau and give support accordingly. Thus, they have given different trainings to all levels of education management. They have strong relationship with the top management of education bureau and can have influence in planning and support its implementation. The participant states that “...here in our region, there are ample trainings on how to contextualize the centrally developed syllabuses to the regional contexts and how to translate the syllabuses in to the textbooks of the region. The training was given to curriculum experts and textbooks writers in the region” (interviewed on May 30, 2019).

Contrary to the above response, the teacher educator who recently prepared textbook, GRSEB TBW2 describes the absence of training to prepare textbook succinctly as “I didn’t get any training to prepare textbook. I prepared [textbook] by reading different

materials and looking at previously developed curriculum materials” (interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

Though the opinions of the above respondents seem contradictory, there might be time reference differences. This means that the previous textbook writers might get training and the recent once might not.

Generally with regard to training in the region, it can be said that there have been enough trainings to regional curriculum experts and as well to textbook writers in the region. But to implement the training accordingly having competent professionals at recruitment stage is mandatory. If the experts are not competent enough, they will not implement the training and hence the training becomes fruitless. Therefore, the top management of education bureau of the region should realize this to have quality education in its region.

iii. Genuine selection of textbook writers

In Gambella region most of the time textbooks have been prepared by professional teacher educators who work at Teacher Training College because their experience in module writing has helped them to win the competition. The process of selecting textbook writers in the region is described by GRSEB SCE 1 as follows “we have posted announcement and recruited those teachers who have experience in the area. We have selected based on criteria set...the criteria mainly include to have bachelor degree and previous experience”(interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018). The curriculum department selects the text writers based on the preset criteria and monitors and follows up the work of textbooks up to their publication.

One of the teacher educators who prepared textbook in the region also confirms the reality in selecting textbook writer in the region. As such he maintains that “GRSEB made us to compete and select based on set criteria” (GRSEB TBW 2 interviewed on Sep. 21, 2018).

The above participants agree that there are criteria that GRSEB used to select textbook writers from applicants. Here it seems that the curriculum department has relative freedom to select the textbook writers based on the set criteria. Furthermore, the

department is autonomous to organize and coordinate the publication and distribution of first cycle curriculum materials.

But there is complain from regional curriculum experts those who monitor and follow up the development process of the textbooks. For instance, GRSEB SCE 2 interviewed on Sep 20, 2018 clarifies that there have been challenges to make the textbook writers submit the textbooks on time. Though there is an agreement between GRSEB and the textbook writers on date of submission, sometimes it didn't work because of administration problems. In other words, the administration of the bureau sometimes paid the textbook writers before the submission of the textbooks by influencing the curriculum experts of the region. In such cases, it is difficult to get the curriculum materials on time.

Here clearly it indicates that the leadership has problem to work according to the agreement. The implication is that the agreement has no value unless it is for the sake of formality and the regional curriculum experts have been under the influence of the head. This confirms the previous discussed issue of leadership obstacle of the institution. Hence, GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep.19, 2018 is true in saying "all problems have been occurred [in GRSEB] mainly because of politics". He argues that there is no good governance in the institution because leaders are politically appointed they have manipulated everything not as the rules and regulation but as guided by politicians who appointed them.

Generally, GRSEB has vision, mission and roles and responsibilities to be performed by the employees at different departments. However, there are many problems that hinder to attain the stated goals related to leadership, staff recruitment, development and appraisal, qualified human power, shortage of finance etc. In the first place the bureau head has been appointed politically. It seems that there is no leadership style that encourages the success of the institutional goals. In other words there is no motivating environment in the institution for the experts implying that lack of fair and equal treatments by the leaders to the employees.

There is no clear set criterion to recruit staff and thus it is mainly made through instruction of the higher officials. Some staffs have been assigned to the institution based on quota

systems of the regional ethnics and others those who left the positions as a means of gaining of salary without having any competence to work in the institution. There have been sufficient short term trainings specially related to issues of curriculum development (i.e. textbook development). But no timely and well structured appraisal that motivate or punish the employees. There are lack of qualified human power and finance in the region to perform the primary school curriculum development.

5.3. The Practice of PSCD

When system of governance changed from centralization to decentralization, the roles and responsibilities of the central government and local government should be also changed. In such cases, the central government shares or distributes the roles and responsibilities that were performed previously by central government to local/decentralized institution. Balanced relationship between the central and local governments is a fertile ground to the success of implementation of decentralization.

Hence, under this theme the roles and responsibilities of MoE and GRSEB in developing primary school curriculum of the region since 1994 are explained mainly based on the responses of the curriculum leaders and experts of the institutions on sub-themes namely need assessment; syllabus design and textbook preparation and publication were treated here.

5.3.1. MoE as a sole need assessor of the region

Needs assessment is considered as one of essential curriculum development processes since it is used to identify the gaps between the expected 'what ought to be' and the reality 'what is'. The quality of the will be revised or changed curriculum depend on the quality of the assessed needs. If worked properly, it can tell us gaps to be fulfilled in the oncoming curriculum. For this it sounds perfect if the institution which develops the curriculum can assess its needs.

On this issue, the participant who has rich experience in the institution elaborates the way need assessment has been made in the region in the following manner:

I have worked here since 1994. Since then there was no time when our region has assessed its needs and reported to other bodies. It is only MoE curriculum experts who have assessed our regional needs. After they had assessed, they used it as benchmark to design the syllabuses and then they called us to discuss about the benchmark based on the need assessment (GRSEB SCE 1 on Sep. 19, 2018).

Similarly, the interviewee who works here, GRSEB SCE 2 also proves the lack of participation of the region in need assessment clearly in the following manner:

Our region has not yet initiated and worked on needs assessment. But it has been initiated by MoE with some sort of regional experts' participation. With this regard, MoE has reported to regional experts about the experiences it took from abroad to the stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents. MoE reported to us [REBs' curriculum experts] every procedure in developing the curriculum by inviting us to the workshop (interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

The responses of the above participants show that it is MoE which performed almost all activities of needs assessment of the region. The main role of regional curriculum experts seems participating on workshop organized by MoE to report the results of the needs assessment.

Needs assessments of two different periods in the country also support the views of the participants. As such, the summative evaluations was made by ICDR in 2002 to assess to what extent the objectives of primary education program were achieved in view of the lessons learnt and recommendations put forward during the four years (1994-1998) of curriculum try out and implementation. GECFDD also carried out research in 2007 to examine the effectiveness of the primary school curriculum. Here in both studies the main actors were the centre though there might be some sort of participation of GRSEB's curriculum experts in the process.

Logically speaking, it is GRSEB that knows the reality in the region and hence appropriate actor to assess the needs of its region than MoE. Especially with the existence of curriculum decentralization framework in the country, the REB should have authority to assess its region needs and set priority.

The process of need assessment in the region has not been clear even to some of the regional curriculum experts who are responsible for the activities. For example, GRSEB SCE 2 is in some sort of suspicion even about the presence of educational need assessment in the region. As such he claims that “I think MoE before designing the syllabuses draft undertook some studies. The main role and responsibility of regional curriculum experts is to give comment and some sort of correction if any. For this MoE has invited our region and we with other REBs curriculum experts give our opinion on draft syllabuses”.

Though REBs have been mandated to develop their primary school curriculum based on standards of MoE, the above view of the participant shows that the regional education bureau has less information about how and when the need assessment of the region has been taken place. Nevertheless, according to the decentralization theory it is the decentralized institution, GRSEB which should search for its regional needs with the active participation of the local stakeholders where as the central government supports and monitors its implementation.

In this region it seems that the regional curriculum experts are reluctant to use their authority and instead perform activities that have been given by MoE. The relationships that exist between MoE and the regional education bureau seem more of hierarchical than reciprocal. The regional curriculum experts have accepted the report of their region from MoE without questioning by assuming that MoE has the mandates to do so because of its hierarchical structure.

On the other hand, GRSEB SCE 1 criticizes GRSEB leaders for the inability of region to assess its needs. Our REB couldn't able to assess its needs to develop its PSC because of leadership problems. This participant argues that the major problem in this institution is mainly the leadership. Most of the heads are not professional in education and that is why they don't have knowledge and competence to lead education institution.

The argument of the above participant is convincing in that if leaders have the competency and commitment to improve their education through assessing the real problem; I don't think that anyone can hinder them. The problem might be there if the

leaders are unable to plan strategically and implement accordingly. As opinions of most of the regional participants show the leaders in this institution have devoted their time on politics which assigned them as a head rather than issues of institutional performance. In addition the leadership is very crucial to improve the performance of institutions not only by planning strategically but also coordinating and organizing resources of the institution such as human, material and financial collaboratively. Particularly the way human resource is recruited, developed and appraised have big implication for the success of the institution.

5.3.2. Adaptation of centrally developed syllabuses to regional contexts

In this part the roles and responsibilities of GRSEB in PSCD are described based on the perception of mainly the regional curriculum experts. Since 1994 there have been trails by REBs to develop their own primary school curriculum as of proclamation no.41/1993. As such, GRSEB has been also working to have its PSC. For instance, from 1994-1998 MoE invited representatives of regional curriculum experts to approve the nationally developed syllabuses by the then ICDR. With this regard, GRSEB SCE 1 on Sep. 19th 2018 has the following to say:

[In 1994-1998] MoE had prepared draft syllabuses basically through Foreigner consultants and invited the regions [regional curriculum experts] to participate in the approval. MoE asked regional curriculum experts ‘how the developed materials are? We debated on the materials and finally agreed and approved the syllabuses...After the syllabuses were approved with the participation of regional curriculum experts; we took and developed our textbooks.

This period was almost the beginning of establishment of GRSEB, but there was trail in the MoE part to make the GRSEB participate in the approval of the syllabuses and prepare and publish their own curriculum materials. This of course, can be seen as a good start to decentralize primary school curriculum development for the MoE which had experience of making curricular decisions at the centre for a long period, its inception.

Many participants at the regional level argue that their institution had no role in deciding on who should participate, when and how. It was MoE’s curriculum experts who

decided on who participated in the workshop and when the workshop was taken place. In relation to this, GRSEB SCE 2 says “in most cases, MoE requests our institution professionals to participate in the syllabuses approval workshop based on its own criteria. Hence, our role is to send curriculum experts based on the MoE question”.

The participation of GRSEB curriculum experts in PSCD is illustrated by one of the regional participants as:

Until now curriculum flow chart and syllabus have been developed at central level and we [GRSEB] have taken these centrally developed materials and contextualize to our regional reality. We have worked as such because syllabus has not been yet developed regionally. However, we translated the centrally designed syllabuses to our regional mother tongue languages. We develop textbooks for primary school based on the centrally developed syllabuses. We contextualized according to our conditions. We contextualize the textbooks replacing nationally [developed] syllabuses’ contents such as River, Mountains etc by regional contents. Since grades 1_4 should be based on the region’s environment, we adapted as such. Starting from grade five, we have tried to make the content national and international (GRSEB SCE 1interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

Similarly, GRSEB SCE 2 pinpoints the role and responsibility of GRSEB in PSCD as follows:

Syllabuses have been developed at MoE and were sent to us. After we have taken the syllabuses from MoE, we adapted to our regional mother tongue languages and contents while developing textbooks. In translating centrally developed syllabuses to textbooks in our region, objectives are as it is but what are contextualized to the region are contents. For example, if the content in syllabus is River, we changed it to Rivers in the Gambella region. Illustrations [in the textbooks] in most cases are about the region. Since there are no criteria, you can make all contents about the region. But in our region, we have made all curricula in different mother tongue languages the same except languages difference. For

example, we decided to make similar contents for Agnuwak and Nuer curricula (interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

Similarly, one of the participant who is teacher educator and participated in approval of centrally developed syllabus and prepared textbooks for the region explains the process of contextualization of curriculum to region as “ to adapt the textbook to regional context, we were oriented to use regional contents. Hence, we used only regional animals, for example” (GRSEB TBW 1 interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

As indicated by the above respondents, it seems that MoE has lion share in developing the flow chart and syllabuses of primary curriculum. As such the main role and responsibility of GRSEB in relation to this is adapting the centrally designed syllabuses to the regional contexts. Basically this adaptation comprises of linguistic and contents.

Based on the centrally designed syllabuses which have been approved with participation of REBs’ curriculum experts, GRSEB developed, published and distributed all primary school textbooks until 2008 except Civic and Ethical Education (5-8) and English language (1-8) which has been recentralized since 2003 and 2005 respectively. This trend has been changed with the implementation of GEQIP I budget since 2009.

Thus, since then GRSEB has developed and published only first cycle primary school (1-4) textbooks, integrated science subjects of grades 5 and 6 and mother tongue languages. All the rest PSC materials have been developed and published by federal government (MoE).

In Gambella region, there have been six languages (Anguak, Nuer, Mezhenger, Opo, Komo and Amharic) that are used as medium of instruction as well as subjects to be taught in first cycle primary school (1-4). In addition Anguak and Nuer mother tongue languages are taught as subjects of study up to secondary school. The medium of instruction in grades 5-8 is English language.

In PSCD of 1994-1998 only Anguak and Nuer mother tongue languages were tried out where as the three mother tongue languages such as Mezhenger, Opo and Komo were suspended because of shortage of human power in these languages in the region. The

process of the pilot testing of Anguak and Nuer mother tongue languages at that time is explained by GRSEB SCE1 as the following:

The PSC were tried out in two languages (Anguak and Nuer) in 1994/95 [for grades 1st and 5th]. The curriculum in Nuer language was failed in try out stage because of the shortage of human power. During this period only curriculum in Anguak language was tried out and implemented accordingly. The curriculum in Nuer medium of instruction was implemented after one year delay. In 1999 the curriculum in Mezhenger was implemented. The curriculum in Komo and Opo have been implemented since 2012 (interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

This implies that the five mother tongue languages as medium of instruction in the region have been implemented not all at once instead turn by turn because of mainly the shortage of human power in these mother tongue languages.

PSC were revised between 2003-2005 in the region. This revision was initiated based on ‘Summative Evaluation’ of ICDR in 2002 and the results reveal that in most schools studied there were lack of science facilities (chemicals, manuals etc), small class size, lack of desks and chairs, problem of water and latrine, lack of budget, lack of textbooks and poor textbooks quality, lack of qualified teachers for the second cycle (5-8), problems of the approach of the curriculum materials, the language used in most textbooks were not clear and responsive to the level of students, the contents and exercises of the textbooks were not organized from simple to complex and as well as not from known to unknown.

To this end, PSC were revised between 2003-2005 mainly focused on re-arranging the content and including current issues of concern such as civics and ethical education, gender, HIV/AIDS education, and other government policies and strategies (MoE, 2010). The role and responsibility of GRSEB in this revision was explained by one of the curriculum experts of the region as usual GRSEB participated in approval of centrally developed syllabuses and took these syllabuses to develop its regional textbooks of grades 1-4 by translating in to the mother tongue languages (GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

Primary school curricula were changed in 2008-2009 based on study of GECFDD in 2007 which addressed the problems of education quality and the results of the study reveal that there were constraints with regard to teacher education, schools, curriculum and textbooks etc. To this end, primary school syllabuses of most subjects were developed between 2008-2009 centrally.

Though it is always argued by MoE that syllabuses have been designed and approved with the participation of REBs representatives, in reality it has been shown that REBs have not been participated equally in all subjects. The analyses of centrally designed primary school syllabus documents of 2008-2009 reveal that there were big variations among regional participation in centrally designed syllabuses. For instance, GRSEB had representatives in three syllabuses development out of nine during this period.

This shows that though MoE defends itself as if centrally designed syllabuses have been done with the active participation of REBs' curriculum experts, the reality is that GRSEB curriculum experts or professionals didn't participate in most of primary school syllabuses development of 2008-2009.

GEQIP I budget was designed to improve quality of general education in Ethiopia. However, as one of the regional participants indicates, the budget for this has been retained at the center. As such, he explains as:

Our GEQIP budget has been used by MoE to prepare and publish our textbooks. We planned to use GEQIP budget, but in practice MoE has not sent it but used there...the GEQIP budget is used only for training purpose in our region. Textbooks of grades 1-4 preparation and publication have been worked in our regional budget (GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

In contrary to the above respondent, GRSEB CL2 remarks that GEQIP I budget has been used in the region for different purposes. It has been used to textbooks publication. Furthermore, it was allocated as school grant for each student. The problem, however, the participant argues is that it's poor implementation at different levels of educational structure.

5.3.3. Textbooks preparation, publication, distribution and evaluation in the region

Based on the authority given by legislation, GRSEB developed, published and distributed primary school textbooks until the implementation of GEQIP in 2009 except English language which has been centralized since 2005. However, since 2009 GRSEB has only developed and published textbooks of grades 1-4, Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6 and mother tongue languages.

To develop and publish textbooks at regional level, there have been many activities that the GRSEB has performed. As such, the process that the bureau has undertaken while developing textbooks can be described by GRSEB SCE 2 in the following manner:

Syllabuses have been developed at MoE and sent to REBs. After we have taken the syllabuses from MoE, we adapted to our regional mother tongue languages and contents while developing textbooks. To do this, we have announced for those who can develop textbooks using the mother tongue languages. In case we couldn't get professionals based on our criteria, we have invited even those who have less competence because of lack of human power in some mother tongue languages (interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

Here translating Amharic or English syllabuses that have been developed centrally in to mother tongue languages of medium of instruction and replacing national contents by regional one is the major activities of textbook writers of the region. Based on these competencies' clear set criteria, GRSEB has announced officially to get textbook writers. Of course, it is clear that there is lack of human power in some mother tongue languages that directly influenced the quality of the prepared textbooks.

Similarly, GRSEB TBW 2 has the following to say on the process of textbook development in the region:

We developed textbook based on syllabuses that are developed by MoE. GRSEB made us to compete and select based on set criteria. The centrally developed syllabuses can be in Amharic or English language and we can use one of them to

write textbook [in our mother tongue languages]. In our region there have not been designed or translated syllabuses. But by using central syllabus, we can adapt to regional context (interviewed on Sep. 21, 2018).

As mentioned previously the selection of textbook writers have been done through competition based on the regionally set criteria. The textbooks development has been monitored by department of curriculum at regional level.

After textbooks were prepared in the region, there were some procedures to be followed before their submission for publication. For instance, GRSEB SCE 2 interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018 points out that “after the textbooks were developed by those who won the competition, those who prepared the textbooks and editors signed in each page for their consensus as approval. Then after, the textbooks were published by the regional education bureau. There has not been yet additional validation work in the region”.

Similarly, another participant who is curriculum expert at regional level confirms that:

...after once the textbook is prepared [by textbook writers], there are editors who approved the textbooks. When consensus is reached between textbook developers and editors, both signed their agreement and the approved textbooks were submitted for publication [to regional education bureau]. The editors include professionals of language, pedagogy and subject matter (GRSEB SCE1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018).

As the above opinions of participants indicate there were clear procedures in the region in selecting the textbook writers and monitoring the process of textbook development.

GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018) also clearly justifies that the absence of textbook validation in the sense of stakeholders’ participation in the following way: “there is no textbook validation but only editors approved the quality of the textbooks. There has not been other stakeholders’ participation in validating textbooks. No such kind of culture in our region”.

In developing quality regional textbooks, some participants expect more support from MoE. They suggest that GRSEB has much autonomy in developing and publishing

textbooks of its region without having necessary institutional capacity to perform these activities. This in turn will bring danger to the quality of education in the country. Hence, MoE should support the regional education bureau technically. Of course, granting autonomy by itself is not sufficient but MoE should support and monitor its implementation. To do this, MoE added to its structure directorate which supposed to support emerging regions like Gambella in education, however, there has not been yet any significant assistance from the directorate office especially with regard to curriculum issues.

Payment for textbook writers and editors has been made based on the decision of the top management. It is calculated per page. GRSEB SCE 2 says the following in relation to the process of payment decision making:

With regard to payment of textbook writers, our management decides and writes in the minute and sign on it. Except issue related to payment, there is no other agendas that our department [curriculum department] propose to the top management to be decided. Payment for writers, editors and secretary are the main issue of discussion. Until now we have not prepared our curriculum and propose to top management for approval (Sep.20, 2018).

It seems that the main agenda that regional curriculum experts discuss with top management is the payment issue and this implies there is not set standard in this regard and the top management has autonomy to make decision. But to avoid some sort of bias, it is good to have some standard for payment of textbook writers and editors.

There was experience of textbook evaluation in the region. This was taken through two means: bureau's announcement to compete teachers for textbook evaluation at regional level and each teacher at school level were requested to evaluate their subjects. The bureau undertook the evaluation of textbook to see the quality of the textbook and made decision based the result of evaluation. Similarly, teachers were asked to evaluate textbooks as one of their role in their teaching career. Teachers evaluated textbooks based on given standard and reported to their department. The department compiled and reported to school. The schools reported the results to WEO and the WEO reported to

zonal education department and finally the zonal education department reported to the regional education bureau. The regional education bureau used the reported results as input when the curriculum was revised or changed in the country.

In summary though PSCD have been devolved to REBs since 1994 in Ethiopia, the evidences gained from data of this region show that the authority has not been transferred to make GRSEB autonomous institution. Most activities of PSCD such as need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change and syllabus design have been performed by MoE. For instance, regional need assessment and initiation of curriculum revision/ change of the region have exclusively made by MoE with little awareness of the GRSEB. If participated, the regional experts served as guider to the wanted place and as interpreter to enhance communication between MoE experts and the local stakeholders.

All syllabuses of primary school have been developed centrally with mere participation of the regional experts. This of course, is based on the will of MoE. The main role and responsibility of GREB is to prepare, publish and distribute first cycle (1-4) primary school textbooks of the region. But textbooks preparation, publication and distribution of grades 5 to 8 have been taken by MoE since 2009 except Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6 and mother tongues which are prepared at the regional level.

5.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in the PSCD in GRS

The main rationale behind education decentralization is that it can bring education decision making close to the local stakeholders which is considered as a key ingredient for the development of democracy (Komatsu, 2011; Naidoo, 2003; Ribot, 2002). Accordingly in Ethiopia there are different education functions that have been decentralized to different tiers of education system. As such, PSCD have been devolved to REBs since 1993 by legislation. Therefore, under this theme how local stakeholders in the region have participated in PSC decision making will be discussed below.

The local stakeholders' participation in curriculum decision making in the region is described by one of the participant from the region as "Woreda and Kebele education and training board members have no role in curriculum decision making. No public hearings on the curriculum of the region. Even at regional level, the issue of curriculum is mainly

known by curriculum department experts” (GRSEB SCE 2 interviewed on Sep. 20, 2018).

Likewise, GRSEB CL2 remarks that the local stakeholders at Woreda and Kebele levels have no role in curriculum decision making instead they mainly have participation in giving support in financial, material and administrative wise than having role in making decision in curriculum. They didn’t participate in the development process of curriculum. Their main role in this regard is participation on implementation of curriculum related to teachers, students and schools.

With regard to PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) participation in curriculum decision making, GRSEB SCE 2 maintains that “from my previous experience, it is good if we don’t talk about PTA. PTA members came to school when there was agenda in school that needs decision. At no time we never discussed with PTA about curriculum issues”. Moreover, participants from woreda and school levels also confirm that the local stakeholders in the region have no participation in curriculum decision making. They participated only in implementation of curriculum.

Supporting the above views of the participants, GRSEB SCE 1 interviewed on Sep. 19, 2018 also clearly justifies that the absence of textbook validation in the sense of stakeholders’ participation in the following way: “there is no textbook validation but only editors approved the quality of the textbooks. There has not been other stakeholders’ participation in validating textbooks. No such kind of culture in our region”.

Here it seems that there has not been local stakeholders’ participation in primary school curriculum decision making. However, local stakeholders have mainly participated in administration of education than on curriculum decision making.

Generally speaking many educational documents advocate the participation of local stakeholders in PSC decisions (TGE, 1994; MoE, 2002a; 2006a). Nevertheless, the empirical evidences reveal that there is less awareness and practice of local stakeholders’ participation in PSC decisions in the region. Furthermore, there has not been yet a mechanism that assists GRSEB and local stakeholders to communicate when PSC is revised or changed.

This implies the absence of democratic local level governance. In other words, GRSEB is not accountable to local stakeholders in developing PSC. In the region only regional curriculum experts, primary school teachers, teacher educators and professionals in different subjects have participated in PSCD. The participation could be regional curriculum experts or teachers' participation at centrally developed syllabuses. Furthermore, teacher educators and other professionals' have participated in textbooks development. It is also worth mentioning here that there seems participation of local stakeholders such as students, teachers and parents involvement through consultation to respond to questionnaires and interview guidelines during need analysis.

In summary, one of the promises of decentralization in the form of devolution is to hear the voices of local stakeholders i.e. to encourage participation of local stakeholders in decision making that affect them. However, the data of this study reveal that in reality it can be said that there is no local stakeholders' participation in primary school curriculum decisions. Only professionals (teachers, curriculum experts etc) have participation in preparation and edition of textbooks.

Thus, it can be generally argued that the local stakeholders represented by woreda and kebele education and training board members have not been yet participated in primary school curriculum decision making implying that democratic local governance is not maintained in the region in relation to PSCD participation.

Chapter Six: Presentation of Empirical Results of Oromia Regional State (ORS)

6.1. The Context

Oromia regional state is one of the nine regional states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It is the largest region which shares borders with all the regions of the country except Tigray region. It also has a boundary with the neighboring countries such as Sudan and Kenya (UNICEF, 2016). The projected total population of Oromia is nearly 33 million (CSA, 2007) where over 87 per cent of which live in rural areas. It covers a land area of 363,375 square kilometers.

The regional government of Oromia comprises of 53 budgetary institutions: 44 sector offices, the regional Auditor General, the Regional Council, and a number of autonomous government agencies (World Bank, 2015). Based on the latest restructure, the Oromia region is divided into 20 administrative zones and eight town administrations and 333 woredas of which 287 rural and 46 towns (UNICEF, 2016).

The majority population of Oromia is engaged in agriculture with its crop production accounting for roughly 50 per cent of total national production. The region accounts for a large proportion of Ethiopian agricultural exports such as coffee, hides and skins, pulses, and oil seeds. However, currently agricultural productivity is challenged by several factors such as traditional farming methods and rapid population growth. The regional growth of population at alarming rate has caused reduction of farm sizes and contributing to natural resource degradation. Furthermore, livestock and livestock products are used as main means of living for people in pastoral and agro pastoral areas (UNICEF, 2016).

There are 14,309 primary and 1367 high schools in Oromia regional state in 2016/17 (MoE, 2017). In the same year, 8,027,171 primary and 807,783 secondary school students were enrolled to schools. In academic year of 2015/16 out of 358,342 grade 8 students who sat for examination 338,690 of them which is 95% got pass mark in the region.

In ORS five subjects are taught in first cycle primary education namely Afaan Oromo as mother tongue, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics whereas nine subjects Such as Mother Tongue (Afaan Oromo), Amharic, English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music, Physical Education

and Civic and Ethical Education are taught in grades 5 and 6. For grades 7 and 8, there are eleven subjects taught in this region. These subjects are Civics and Ethical Education, Afaan Oromo (Mother Tongue), Visual Arts and Music, Amharic, Physical Education, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Period allotment of primary education of the region is indicated below in table 5 and will be analyzed by comparing with curriculum framework of 2010.

Table 5: Primary school education subjects and their period's allotment in ORS

Subjects	Grades and their period allotment							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Afaan Oromo	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3
English	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
Environmental Science	7	7	7	7				
Arts and physical education	6	6	6	6				
Amharic					3	3	2	2
Integrated Science					4	4		
Social studies					3	3	2	2
Civic and Ethical Education					3	3	3	3
Physical Education					2	2	2	2
Arts and Music					2	2	1	1
Biology							2	2
Chemistry							2	2
Physics							3	3
Total Periods	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: Woreda Education Office

As indicated in the curriculum framework of 2010, in ORS five subjects are taught in first cycle primary education namely Afaan Oromo as mother tongue, Arts and Physical Education, English, Environmental Science and Mathematics. The number of periods allocated to each subject per week in this cycle is 30 periods/week. The period allotment of Afaan Oromo as mother tongue and Environmental Science of grades 1-4 which have

five and seven periods respectively is congruent to the curriculum framework of 2010. English language period allotment of grades 3 and 4 is five in curriculum framework but six as of the Oromia region indicating that an increase of one period for each grade level. According to curriculum framework, the periods for grades 1-4 Mathematics are six but reduced in to five periods in ORS. The periods of Arts and Physical education of grades 3 and 4 are four in curriculum framework but increased to six in the region.

There are nine subjects that are taught in grades 5 and 6 as of the curriculum framework and as well ORS. These are Mother Tongue (Afaan Oromo), Amharic, English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Visual Arts and Music, Physical Education and Civic and Ethical Education. In addition the periods allotted to each subject in both curriculum framework and ORS is the same. This implies there was no adjustment made by the region.

For grades 7 and 8, there are eleven subjects taught as indicated in the curriculum framework as well as in ORS. These subjects are Civics and Ethical Education, Afaan Oromo (Mother Tongue), Visual Arts and Music, Amharic, Physical Education, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The period allotted in ORS to each subjects in these grades is as indicated in the curriculum framework.

Generally it can be said that ORSEB allocated 30 periods/week to grades 1-8 which is almost similar as indicated in the curriculum framework of 2010. Of course, there are some variations in allocating periods to particular subjects in form of adding or reducing to the given once. For example, Mathematics periods of grades 1-4 are reduced from six in curriculum framework to five in the region. However, one period is added to grades 3 and 4 English language subject periods which increased from five to six. In the same token, ORSEB allocated six periods to Arts and physical education of grades 3 and 4 which is four in the curriculum framework. The allotment of periods to each subject to grades 5-8 is the same as that of curriculum framework.

Here it is clear that ORSEB allocated total periods/week and periods to each subject in primary education is as indicated in the curriculum framework. This implies that the

region did not adjust or try to adjust what was given from the centre and hence uses as it is.

Afaan Oromo and Amharic languages are used as medium of instruction for primary level (1-8) education but teacher education in the region is undertaken in Afaan Oromo languages for all subjects except English language courses. Afaan Oromo language is taught as subject beginning from grade 1 where as Amharic language is taught as subject as of grade 5 though it is indicated in the policy that Amharic language is started from grade 3 in the regions where it is not mother tongue.

6.2. Institutional Capacity

Capacity of an institution is the most important ingredient that helps for the success of institutional goals in both centralized and decentralized systems. To achieve the stated goals of institution, there must be capacity to carry out the mandate accordingly. Hence, under this topic the capacity of ORSEB to develop PSC of the city administration as mandated by legislation is treated broadly under subtitles the institutional arrangements and human resource management.

6.2.1. The institutional arrangements

For the successful implementation of decentralization policy, the decentralized institutions should be arranged in such a way that it can carry out its newly emerged mandates. Based on this premise, this section examined the internal arrangements of ORSEB to develop its PSC as mandated by the legislation. To this end, the existence of vision, mission, values, division of roles and responsibilities, appropriate leadership style and the availability of facilities are discussed here.

i. Vision, mission and values

ORSEB has vision, mission and values to be followed in performing the activities of the institution. The Vision emphasises to deliver equity and quality education through expanding formal and non formal educational institutions. In addition, it is indicated that in the educational institutions to develop democratic culture and good governance to cultivate educated human power to eliminate poverty where as the Mission is to get

educated citizen who will continue the already started renaissance to bring our country to the middle income groups.

The main intention of vision of ORSEB is to eliminate poverty by delivering equity and quality education to the citizens. This can be attained by having educational institutions that can develop democratic values and good governance. The mission shows to have quality citizens who can transform the country to development.

It is indicated that to achieve the goals of second Plan of Development and Transformation of ORSEB, all levels of educational structure in the region should have the following values: responsibility, commitment, participatory, competence and usefulness, quality, exemplary, transparency, justice and respect rule of law and encouraging science and innovation.

ii. Structure and division of work

According to information gained from the planning office in 2018, ORSEB has 241 workers in 18 departments. It has six process owners namely Government Communication, Education of Information Technology Communication, Planning and Project, Procurement and Finance Administration, Auditing, Support, Monitoring and Internal Audit, Support for Administration of Workers, Teachers and Education Management. It has also six directorates such as Curriculum and Assessment of Education, Teacher and Principal Development, Non formal and Community Development Education, School Improvement, Inspection of General Education, Delivery and Renew of Educational Professional and Administration, Unit of Ethics and Gender Issue.

Roles and responsibilities are assigned to all based on structure of the institution. For instance, the department of curriculum has the following duties:

Planning activities of curriculum department, assess the society needs to design and revise syllabuses based on regional, national and international contexts, develop, implement, evaluate, give feedback and revise regional curriculum, develop textbook administration guideline, give training to concerned bodies and follow up its implementation, develop and implement standardized criteria for

textbook development and publication, develop, revise, publish and distribute primary school syllabuses and textbooks, set criteria to select private agencies for textbook publication and distribution, evaluate and revise the implemented textbooks and give orientation for teachers for newly prepared textbooks (ORSEB, 2017).

Here it seems that the regional curriculum experts are expected to perform all activities related to PSCD which shows the regional autonomy as mandated. However, in reality the regional curriculum experts were not actively participated in many of the decisions. This implies the gap between theory and practice.

iii. Head's role as political appointee

The issue of leadership is very critical in realization of vision and mission of institutions whether in centralized or decentralized system of governance. With regard to the quality of leadership of ORSEB, one of the experienced curriculum experts says the following:

If there is leadership which gives direction, quality work can be done and without good leadership it is impossible to get quality work. Now I have some expectation from current management members that they will bring improvement on the existed challenges of the curriculum development. The conditions we are in now give us a sort of expectation to change. If the ORSEB higher officials will continue as it is now, we can use our mandate to prepare quality PSC which is based on our regional contexts. The previous problem such as taking the regional mandate by MoE was mainly created by the gap in leadership. Most leaders of ORSEB give less attention to curriculum issue and more attention to the politics. Nevertheless, curriculum is backbone of the development of the country (ORSEB SCE 5 interviewed on June 5, 2018).

This shows that for the success of institutional goals, leadership plays prominent roles. In other words, without good governance in the institution, the attainment of its goals is unthinkable. Nevertheless, many scholars doubt the existence of these conditions in

developing countries. For instance, with regard to the problem of leadership in ORSEB, one participant narrates as:

At its establishment period, the environment in the ORSEB was good. In fact there was differences among leaders...up to sometime ORSEB was considered as exemplary. But this condition was not seen as positive especially by higher government officials [basically the politicians].The government brought head [head of ORSEB] from higher institution to weaken the existing initiation. The first step that the head took was to discard or dilute curriculum experts of the region. After firing many professionals, the head reported to MoE that the bureau can't prepare its curriculum and needs help from MoE (ORSEB CL1 interviewed on May 6, 2018).

This shows that how an individual who was assigned as a head can influence the performance of the institution negatively by frustrating the employees.

ORSEB SCE 2 on her part states the condition of leadership of the bureau by comparing the previous and the current one in the following manner:

The present condition of our bureau is somehow good when compared to the previous one. However, the working environment is not conducive especially the works of experts are not given value to the upper body. No discussion and negotiation between the higher officials and experts on what the roles and responsibilities of the experts and how these are going on. No culture of argument between experts and higher officials. Instead accept what I said was prevalent on the top management part. This has brought problem to get quality work. We experts have no power. No attention was given for us. The experts did what the boss told them to do. In this institution experts are considered as symbol. Our decision power is too weak (interviewed on June 05, 2018).

Though two way communication is advocated to achieve the goals of the institution, it seems in this case that the communication between top management and the curriculum experts at the region is not two way instead it flows from one direction i.e. from top management to the experts.

It seems that the responses of the above participants have some contradictory views. This of course emanates mainly from the experience they had in the bureau. As such ORSEB CL1 had experience when the bureau was first established where as ORSEB SCE 2 was recruited lately.

Similarly, another participant also raises the problem of leadership in the bureau by comparing the previous with the current one as:

The support of top management is mixed. There is time when they supported us in our work but not sufficient. Currently there is an improvement. Previously the main role of experts was doing what the boss ordered them to do. No arguments between the higher officials and the experts. Sometimes the higher officials block the experts' idea (ORSEB SCE 3 on May 9, 2018).

Although there are some relative comparing of the situation of leadership in the bureau with time reference, generally based on the aforementioned responses of the participants it can be said that there is problem in ORSEB's leadership.

The bureau's leadership problem is mainly associated with the appointment of the heads where political affiliation takes the lead. In other words, all heads of ORSEB have been politically assigned and thus it seems that there is less or no down ward accountability in what they have done but only to their masters who assigned them to the position. Here it is also possible to conclude that it is the personality trait of the leader that determines the effectiveness of internal condition of institution not rules and regulations. It is not exaggerating that bosses at this bureau are masters who can do what they want with less fear. Even it is almost impossible to get in to their office for ordinary man like me because of the bosses unwillingness as well as the involuntariness of the secretary.

Furthermore, the boss has recruited or transferred someone based on his/her political affiliation from anyplace without any legal basis. For instance, those who left position whatever the fault he/she did, get prior chance to be transferred to the college without any transferring procedures where most teacher educators prefer to join there, Sebeta Teachers College. Many teacher educators from different corner of teacher colleges of Oromia have applied to get transfer to Sebeta Teachers College based on the transfer

criteria set by bureau, but they have got the chance if the position is not occupied by the previous ‘Cabinets’.

Informal communication is one of the important components of management skill if it used properly but if it is used otherwise to unfairness and hurt those who have caliber for which the institution has not established, it is disastrous for the survival of the institution. Informal communication with the boss especially based on once political affiliation seems institutionalized in government institution in this region. The issue of ‘attitudinal problem’ called ‘rakkoo ilalchaa’ in Afaan Oromo has been common in this region and many of the senior experts were fired from their jobs by their nearest boss because of their political outlook. As ORSEB CL1 says “in any system of government you have to decide first to work according to the system whatever the system is. You know it becomes discontent. One individual after diluting the curriculum department [senior staffs], communicate to MoE and sent the ministry the report the region in PSCD”.

Here it shows that the leader of educational institution can act contrary to the rules and regulations set by the central as well as regional government. The boss can do what he wants to do irrespective of the existing rules and regulations. Because the assignment usually is political, the heads accountability is mainly to the politician than to the local stakeholders.

Competence of the employees whatever the position is very determinant to be successful to the institution and should be encouraged and have value in motivating the employees. On contrary, ORSEB SCE 4 discloses the conditions of ORSEB in relation to this as:

There is time when educational qualification has no value. For instance, the process owners who have B.A/B.SC, M.A/M.SC and PhD have got equal salary. Similarly, higher level experts who have competence in their work get equal with any experts. Hence having competence and high level of educational qualification in this bureau has no value. Our administrators need competent experts when there is difficult works and in this situation they establish committee. There is assumption that committee can perform than individual expert. If they give to the owner of the work, the work might not be done effectively. So they mixed and

formed committee of three or four to get the work done. There is nothing which attracts experts in the bureau (interviewed on May, 29, 2018).

It seems that instead of having high academic qualification, it is good to have position in the bureau get advantage. Of course, to be assigned in any position one has to be first the member of governing party Oromo People Democratic Organization (OPDO) and shows the membership through commitment that is given by the politicians.

One of the participants pinpoints the condition as “... taking the regional mandate by MoE was mainly created by the gap in leadership. Most leaders of ORSEB give less attention to curriculum issue and more attention to the politics” (ORSEB SCE 5 interviewed on June5, 2018).

ORSEB CL1 on his part maintains that there has been lack of good governance in ORSEB because of the politically appointed leaders (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

The data which were gained through observation also confirm the above participants’ views of political influence in the institution. As such, on the tables of curriculum department head and most of the curriculum experts there was OPDO’s flag. Moreover, the responses of all of the curriculum experts of the region indicate that there have not been short and long term trainings on curriculum issues in the region where as there has been regular meetings in the institution organized as one to five to discuss basically the ruling party politics. With this regard, ORSEB SCE 4 states that “...there is no training to capacitate experts on how to develop curriculum. The trainings that have been given may be out of this [political]” (interviewed on May 29, 2018).

Therefore, from the above evidences it can be said that there is no conducive institutional arrangements to implement decentralization of PSCD in ORS as stated in the policy because of the interference of politics on internal activities of the regional education bureau.

iv. Availability of physical facilities

All the curriculum experts share one medium class office and each of them own desk top computer. The office is overcrowded to the extent that it is difficult to pass through.

There are different textbooks and materials in the office which have their own contribution to narrow the room. There is internet access in the office. On the table of most of the experts there is 'OPDO's flag to indicate the experts membership of the ruling party if not it is impossible to survive because as one participant says "you surely miss many opportunities..."(ORSEB CE 5 June 5, 2018). Nevertheless, if there is good leadership the physical facilities are enough to lead PSC in this region.

6.2.2. The Human Power

The curriculum department of ORSEB has 19 workers in 2018 of which 18 are professionals and one supportive staff, the secretary. Three of the curriculum experts/professionals have Masters Degree and the rest (15) of them have first degree. The secretary has diploma in secretarial science (Planning Office, on June 5, 2018).

i. Recruitment and development

To recruit professionals temporary or at permanent bases, there should be clear set criteria to be used. This could serve mainly to get competent candidates who can give quality service to the public. Furthermore, when there is clear set criteria to be followed, there will not be much complain from the public which in turn increase accreditation of the institution. Nevertheless, it has been thought as natural to observe recruiting professionals with some set of criteria with less value to get competent candidates.

ORSEB SCE 4 pinpoints that:

OREB has recruited experts in the existing structure. There was no problem in this case. The issue who were recruited? Did these experts fit with the position? Was there competence? In answering these questions, there was a big problem... the access to train in our region is close and it is not attractive...there is no training to capacitate experts on how to develop curriculum (interviewed May 29, 2018).

ORSEB SCE 4 says that there was no one standardized mechanism set to select experts to prepare textbooks by ORSEB. At the beginning there was nomination of professionals basically based on experiences one has. In addition to this, there were official

announcement and as well as picking up through informal communication. In comparing previous and current selection, the participant has the following to say:

Previously, when there was less money experts those were assumed competent were nominated and assigned to develop the curriculum [prepare textbook] to the extent that subject specialists out of curriculum department could also be participated. Whereas when huge money came by USAID to develop curriculum [textbook] particularly after EGRA, everything was calculated and those who didn't deserve was participated in the curriculum development of Afaan Oromo language (interviewed on May, 29, 2018).

This participant who participated in previous syllabus design and textbook writing is discontented in the current reality saying that “though curriculum is and will be open to change as change in social, political and economic of the society, now everything became money oriented and politicized”. Here the implication is that there were biases and unfairness in selection of textbook writers in the region.

ii. Access to training

Short and long term training to employees are very crucial to be successful in their assigned roles and responsibilities of the institution. But in most cases training is lacking in the institution. The view of the curriculum experts at ORSEB reveals this reality. As such, the participant states as:

There have been no trails to develop capacity of curriculum experts in this region. There is no chance to update. Even to perform my regular roles, there is no training given for us. There is no direction given to you when you became members of the bureau. You work as it seems good for you. Thanks to the previous curriculum materials and internet access that helped me to perform my roles rather than training on my position (ORSEB SCE 2 on June 05, 2018).

In the same way, ORSEB SCE 3 pinpoints the total absence of training of curriculum experts at the regional level in this manner:

There are criteria such as experience to recruit subject curriculum experts but there is no training and experience sharing after once the experts was recruited. There has not been training given for us to capacitate us especially in how to develop curriculum. I think there is no such problem with regard to budget in curriculum development but there is big problem in capacity building. There are criteria such as experience to recruit subject curriculum experts but there is no training and experience sharing after once the experts was recruited. There is totally no capacity development in our institution particularly in our department. I personally didn't get training in my work. All experts performed based on once own experience or as it seems good for them (interviewed on May 9, 2018).

Here it seems that the work of curriculum development is performed by intuition not professionally because of lack of awareness about the curriculum development process for subject professional that were recruited based on subject matter.

Curriculum experts at regional level have been recruited based on the Commission for Personnel Administration (CPA) criteria which in fact might not have direct relation with the work of curriculum development. Hence, it is logical to capacitate the newly recruited experts to perform his/her newly assigned roles and responsibilities. Without full filling the knowledge and skill gap of the regional curriculum experts, it is imaginary to attain the goals of the institution.

Many participants agree that there has not been training in this institution with regard to curriculum development issues instead they argue that seasonal trainings which have no relation to their professional development have been given to them. To explain how much ORSEB gives less value to training of experts to perform their roles and responsibilities, ORSEB SCE 4 pinpoints that:

ORSEB has recruited experts in the existing structure. There was no problem in this case. The issue who were recruited? Did these experts fit with the position? Was there competence? In answering these questions, there was a big problem... the access to train in our region is close and it is not attractive...there is no training to capacitate experts on how to develop curriculum. The trainings that

have been given may be out of this. Many competent experts left this bureau because there has not been encouraging situations in the institution (interviewed on May, 29, 2018).

This shows the experience that is announced to fill vacancy position with curriculum experts at REBs is not related to curriculum development issues but it is solely the work experience one has. In addition, it can be deduced that the institution gives more emphasis to training of the ideology of government particularly the ruling party system.

Thus, if the recruited experts had no experience of curriculum development at beginning [entering to REBs] and don't get any training on curriculum development so where is the competence for coordinating and organizing curriculum development? This is critical problem of the institution to develop its primary school curriculum as has been mandated.

ORSEB SCE 5 believes that there is lack of competence of regional curriculum experts at a regional and comments on the role and responsibility of the experts. As such curriculum experts at regional level are focal person and they are not the developer of curriculum by themselves. Previously, they were coordinator of the work of curriculum development processes when textbooks were prepared and published at the region level with participation of different stakeholders both inside and outside the bureau.

Though it is true that regional curriculum experts are not the curriculum developers by themselves, it is very crucial to have the knowledge and skills of the curriculum development processes. It is only then that they can organize and coordinate the work of other curriculum developers. In addition, as a professional they can also have the right to participate in the development of curriculum through competition.

The evidence for the absence of long term training for the curriculum experts of ORSEB is also substantiated by comparing the previous and the current curriculum department human power in the institution. To this end, the study by Palme, Kilborn, Stroud and Popov (1996) indicates that in 1996 ORSEB had fourteen (14) curriculum department human powers. Though the region has shortage of teachers, instructors and curriculum developers in Music, Arts and Sport, it was fairly well provided in Social and Natural Sciences. In language education, the curriculum department employed three full time

staffs, one for Afaan Oromo language, one for Amharic and one for English language all with BA academic qualification. The social science panel comprises of four staff members, one with MA degree in History, two with BA degrees in the same discipline and one with a BA in Geography. In Arts, the department has one staff with graduate examination from the Arts school, in Music one qualified Musician and one Teacher Training Institute graduate, and in Physical education one graduate from a Teacher Training College. The science and Mathematics panel consists of four regular staff members, two with MSC degrees in Chemistry and Biology and two with a BSC in Mathematics and Physics.

In 2018 the curriculum department which is administered by directorate has 19 workers of which 18 are professionals and one supportive staff, the secretary. Three of the curriculum experts/professionals have Masters Degree and the rest (15) of them have first degree. The secretary has diploma in secretarial science (Planning Office, on June 5, 2018). ORSEB has curriculum experts in the following subjects: Afaan Oromo language, English language, Amharic language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Civic and Ethical Education, Physical education, Music, Art, Special Needs Education and Information and Communication Technology. Except in Afaan Oromo language which has two experts, in all subjects there is only one expert. In addition there is director of Curriculum Development and Implementation and team leader of curriculum development and implementation.

This shows that at early period of its establishment, in 1996 curriculum department of ORSEB had two certificate, one diploma, eight first degree and three second degree professionals. Totally there were fourteen human powers in the department. Currently after two decades, the total number of curriculum department staff members of ORSEB is eighteen (18) out of which only three of them have second degree and the rest have first degree. Hence it can be said that after this long period of time, the change in capacitating the professionals in the region is insignificant. In other words, in 2018 ORSEB has equal second degree qualified curriculum experts with that of 1996. This implies there has not been enough training access to experts or those who have relative qualification don't want to stay there because of different inconvenient.

The communication between the top management and the employees at this institution is not democratic rather all decisions are made centrally (top-down) and expected to be performed by experts. The experts are expected to perform what is instructed by the boss without questioning. ORSEB CL1 says succinctly the existence of this condition as “Do what the boss says!” All the participants indicate that they have no much roles in making decisions about what they are working and as well no interest to stay in the bureau because of the poor governance of their bureau. It is the political outlook that has more credit to experts to get some advantages than qualification and competencies they have.

Furthermore, there has not been clear human resource management in ORSEB. Though there is recruitment criteria, curriculum experts can be entered in to the bureau through different mechanisms rather than the set criteria such as suggestion by the bureau head. Short and long term trainings for regional curriculum experts are lacking. There are some curriculum experts in the bureau who have not got access to improve their knowledge and skills and thus work business as usual. Paradoxically, there have been periodical trainings to almost all employees including curriculum experts who are members of OPDO without which it is difficult to survive here. In other words, being member of OPDO is considered as main criteria to work and get full right as staff members.

Therefore, it can be argued that there are not conducive institutional arrangements for curriculum experts in the region to perform their roles and responsibilities as stipulated in different documents of the institution. It is the politicians through the head that guide the institution not its pre-stated vision, mission and values. It seems that there is lack of institutional leaders who plan strategically to improve the performance of the institution.

6.3. The Practice of PSCD

When system of governance changed from centralization to decentralization, the roles and responsibilities of the central government and local government should be also changed. In such cases, the central government shares or distributes the roles and responsibilities that were performed previously by central government to local/decentralized institution. Balanced relationship between the central and local governments is a fertile ground to the success of implementation of decentralization.

However, Scott and Rao (2011) note that this relationship hardly exist in practice because of unwillingness of the central government to transfer the authority.

Hence, under this theme the roles and responsibilities of MoE and ORSEB in developing primary school curriculum of the region since 1994 are explained mainly based on the responses of the curriculum leaders and experts of the institutions on sub-themes namely need assessment; syllabus design and textbook preparation and publication were treated here.

6.3.1. MoE's supremacy in regional need assessment and initiation of curriculum revision/change

Needs assessment is considered as one of essential curriculum development processes since it is used to identify the gaps between the expected 'what ought to be' and the reality' what is'. The quality of the will be revised or changed curriculum dependence on the quality of the assessed needs. If worked properly, it can tell us gaps to be fulfilled in the oncoming curriculum. For this it sounds perfect if the institution which develops the curriculum can assess its needs, there will be quality curriculum that can solve the existing problems.

The roles and responsibilities of ORSEB in needs assessment of the region are described by one regional participant as:

The role of ORSEB in need assessment case was participating on what MoE was working. When the MoE assessed needs, the regional curriculum experts were participating mainly as data collector for MoE. Thus, the regional curriculum experts helped the MoE curriculum experts since they know the language and culture of the region (interviewed on April 14, 2018).

Here as indicated above, it seems that MoE is more responsible in need assessment of the region and the regional education bureau give support as mediator between MoE and local stakeholders in interpreting the languages.

However, in 1990s ORSEB made its own need assessment to adapt the curriculum to the regional contexts. As such the procedures to adapt the curriculum during this period are explained by ORSEB CL1 as:

In our case previously (1994-1998) based on syllabuses of MoE [ICDR] especially on subjects like Afaan Oromo, environmental science, culture and music adapted in our contexts...we consulted stakeholders and we sent it to different institution to comment on it. Teachers of the 26 schools where the curriculum was piloted gave information on the curriculum. Then by developing questionnaire data were gathered from supervisors and teachers and students were interviewed (interviewed on June, 05, 2018).

The two need assessments which were made in 2002 and 2007 support the view of the above participant. As such, the summative evaluations was made by ICDR in 2002 to assess to what extent the objectives of primary education program were achieved in view of the lessons learnt and recommendations put forward during the four years (1994-1998) of curriculum try out and implementation. Similarly, GECFDD made analysis of research in 2007 to examine the effectiveness of the primary school curriculum.

Both studies indicated above were undertaken by the central government, MoE which implies the role of REBs in general and ORSEB in particular in the studies was minimal.

The EGRA of 2010 also shows similar trend as the above studies in that it was the central government that coordinated and organized the assessment with collaboration of other stakeholders than REBs. The following excerpt substantiates the EGRA case as:

The EGRA was collaboration among the Ministry of Education (MOE), RTI International, the Ethiopia Training Quality Assurance Agency (ETQAA), the Improving Quality in Primary Education Program (IQPEP), several core processes, and other stakeholders, and was a study of the reading skills in Ethiopia in a variety of areas. Due to the efforts of the MoE, and the generous funding of United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Washington and USAID/Ethiopia, this EGRA study is the largest of almost 50 performed (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010, p.1).

As can be seen from the above quotation, EGRA was initiated by MoE and the work was done with collaboration of different stakeholders. However, what is surprising here is that even the name of the REBs was not cited as stakeholders. EGRA dealt with primary school curriculum study where preparing and developing primary school curriculum has been granted to REBs. So, EGRA should be considered as part and parcel of primary school curriculum development. If it is so the main role and responsibility of EGRA resides on shoulder of REBs not MoE. MoE can support and monitor the work of REBs than taking every activity to the centre contradictory to curriculum decentralization policy.

Nevertheless, one of the roles and responsibilities of curriculum department of ORSEB is indicated in the plan document of the bureau as assessing the needs of the society to develop and revise the curriculum based on regional, national and international contexts.

6.3.2. Centrally controlled curriculum

Here the responses of regional curriculum experts on PS syllabus design process in the region since 1994 were reported.

PSC were developed in 1994 -1998 in Ethiopia based on education and training policy of 1994. At this early period of establishment of REBs, the roles and responsibilities of designing of PS syllabuses were solely rested on the shoulder of the then ICDR. Accordingly, ICDR curriculum experts designed syllabuses of all subjects except mother tongues language curriculum and called the regional curriculum experts to validate the already developed syllabuses. Thus, the role and responsibility of curriculum experts at ORSEB was participating on three days' workshop for approval of syllabuses at the centre. Primary school subject teachers were also participated in this syllabus approval.

One of the regional senior curriculum experts described language syllabus design at the centre in early 1990's in the following manner:

...then we took syllabuses [Amharic syllabuses developed at the centre] and translated in to Afaan Oromo language. At regional level [ORSEB] different subject specialists came from different places [of Oromia] through nomination

mainly based on the prior experiences the experts had. Based on the syllabus, we developed textbooks of primary school....first we experts decided on the [number of] chapters and contents to be included and then one expert did on one or two chapters. After finishing the given chapters, we exchanged each other to cross check how it is organized and commented on one another. Finally, the editors evaluated the curriculum materials and we improved based on the comments and submitted the materials to bureau for publication (ORSEB SCE 4 interviewed on May 29, 2018).

Similarly, another participant who was working there at that time elaborates the bureau's activities as follows:

In our case previously based on syllabuses of MoE [ICDR] especially on subjects like Afaan Oromo, environmental science, culture and music adapted in our contexts. Then we consulted stakeholders and we sent it to different institution to comment on it. After these processes, teachers and other concerned bodies worked for ten days to validate syllabuses and textbooks. Then we piloted it in 26 schools. Teachers of the 26 schools where the curriculum was piloted gave information on the curriculum. Then by developing questionnaire data were gathered from supervisors and teachers and students were interviewed. After all these the piloted textbooks were improved. The improved textbooks were published and teachers were trained accordingly (ORSEB CL1, interviewed on June, 05, 2018).

The responses of the above participants indicate that the role and responsibility of ORSEB during this period were adaptation of the centrally developed syllabuses to the regional contexts through participation of different stakeholders. Generally, these all activities of the ORSEB can tell us that ORSEB at that time had some sort of autonomy to decide particularly on textbook development and publication of textbooks. Thus, this in turn can have the potential to improve the quality of the prepared materials.

ORSEB CL1 was enthusiastic enough and felt deeply concerned on how the curriculum development of the country has been going on by concluding it as “theory on paper and

the practice of curriculum development are quite contradictory”. He criticizes the centrally developed syllabuses by saying “if syllabus is developed at the center, everything is in that syllabus such as objectives, contents, learning-teaching methods and evaluation mechanisms. In validating the syllabuses most of the time the voices of the regions which disagreed with the work of the centre were diluted” (ORSEB CL1, on June, 05, 2018). The participant argues that everything is decided and controlled at the centre and validation of short period of time can’t improve it.

He adds that after officially encouraging REBs to adapt PSC to their real context, MoE denied the practice of adaptation. With this regard, ORSEB CL 1 has the following to say:

In critically arguing and when there was disagreement on the syllabuses, MoE argues saying that the regions can adapt and improve according to their contexts and sent the syllabuses to the regions. However, if you didn’t follow the original document, MoE criticized the regions by raising the issue of quality education. Furthermore, the Ministry condemned the regions for the deviation from the agreed document (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

However, this participant concludes that though it was so tight the region [ORSEB] had tried to contextualize the curricula based on framework of education and training of 1994 than the syllabuses that were developed centrally. He argues that even this contextualization was not easy because “what you do from the beginning and what is given to you tightly are quite different”. He generally describes the process of PSCD in the region not as decentralization but more of centralization by saying the following:

As Oromia region we tried to modify and contextualize the curriculum. However, the process was not decentralization rather it was centralization. Once syllabus was developed, everything was finished. Because the centrally developed syllabus is the government document and difficult to deviate from it and the MoE used it to manipulate you. First of all our region adapt sometimes by doing out of the document because we know the policy and we have the right to do so and we know the laws. On our work most of the time, MoE criticized us by not following

its document as it is. But we argued by raising experiences of America and Australia that give freedom to the states (ORSEB CL1 on June 5, 2018).

The respondent make clear that the adaptation of central developed syllabuses was so controlled and it was difficult to adapt them since everything is decided in syllabus design and he sees the centrally developed syllabus as threat for contextualization because it is a government document that one must follow after once approved.

PSC were revised between 2003-2005. This revision was initiated based on findings of ‘Summative Evaluation’ of ICDR in 2002. The findings of the study reveal that in most schools studied there were lack of science facilities (chemicals, manuals etc), lack of textbooks and as well poor textbooks quality, problems of the approach of the curriculum materials, the language used in most textbooks were not clear and responsive to the level of students, the contents and exercises of the textbooks were not organized from simple to complex and as well as not from known to unknown (ICDR, 2002).

This revision mainly focused on re-arranging the content and including current issues of concern such as civics and ethical education, gender, HIV/AIDS education, and other government policies and strategies (MoE, 2010). The role of ORSEB in this revision was explained by one regional curriculum experts as:

... MoE prepared syllabuses and as usual the regional [curriculum] experts were participated to comment on the syllabuses developed by MoE and approved the syllabuses. The approved syllabuses were sent to regions to be used. In adapting the syllabuses in our case we tried to use study in our region as input. The study in our region was based on content analysis of curriculum materials. Based on the syllabus of MoE and our study, syllabus was translated in to Afaan Oromo language by subject professionals, regional curriculum experts, primary school teachers, collage teachers. The syllabus was prepared by organizing workshop at regional level i.e. in groups not individually as before. Lastly, by participating three to four professionals, textbooks were prepared and then implemented. (ORSEB SCE 1 interviewed on April 24, 2018).

In this case the region made its own study which helped the region to contextualize its curriculum to its real context. As indicated in the study of ICDR the main problem of the previous curriculum materials were their voluminous to the extent that it was difficult for students to carry them. To improve these flaws according to ORSEB, college teacher educators, experts at regional level and subject teachers came together and revised the volume accordingly and incorporated the commented contents properly. This revision was also based on subject teachers 'evaluation of textbook. The culture of textbook evaluation by subject teachers and how the region used to revise its curriculum is explained by ORSEB SCE 5 as:

There has been culture of textbook evaluation by subject teachers at school level. They have made analysis on what lacks in each chapter whether it is spelling error, use of words, or arrangements etc. in this case teachers criticized and evaluated and sent to concerned bodies. School teachers sent the result of the evaluation to woreda education office and woreda education office organized and sent to zone education office. And finally the zone education office organized and sent to ORSEB. Experts at the regional level organized the comments of the subject teachers and use them as input when the textbooks are revised and reprinted (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

During this period ORSEB adjusted the centrally developed syllabuses by communicating with MoE. The response of one ORSEB subject curriculum expert on freedom of the region to reshuffle the curriculum reads as:

During revision of curriculum [2003-2005], we deleted what seemed unnecessary for us. For instance, grades 1-4 curricula instructed the Ethiopian Anthem in Amharic language. But children in our region can't perform this because they can't Amharic language. Hence, we argued with MoE and left the Anthem and took only its message...so unless we become silent knowingly, the MoE doesn't influence us so much. (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 24, 2018).

Here the region can have some level of power to determine its curriculum contents though it needs critical argument with MoE. This means that the regional curriculum

experts should argue based on evidence and this in fact needs experience and support from the top management of the institution.

Furthermore, during this period, Afaan Oromo language curriculum was developed at regional level [ORSEB]. Different parties namely Afaan Oromo professionals, regional curriculum experts, collage teacher educators, and primary school teachers were participated in the development.

It can be said that ORSEB had freedom in determining the contents of its curriculum especially in Afaan Oromo language in both periods of curriculum development (1994-1998 & 2003-2005). With this regard one subject curriculum expert at the region level has the following to say:

In these two periods [1994-1998 & 2003-2005], the role of MoE in Afaan Oromo language curriculum development was minimal. Probably the MoE might develop syllabus for language in general which may help Afaan Oromo curriculum developers as reference to be used while developing the curriculum. Nevertheless, contents of Afaan Oromo curriculum were decided by region not by MoE (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 24, 2018).

Thus, during these two periods ORSEB had some degrees of freedom to contextualize centrally developed syllabuses according to its real condition through participation of different stakeholders for the approval. Furthermore, the region had autonomy to develop and publish its textbooks and distribute to the schools. Though still the region didn't use its autonomy as stated in the policy that has granted full autonomy to develop its primary curricula, it can be said that it was a good beginning for a country which had experienced centralized curriculum development for more than half a century.

The overall relationship between MoE and ORSEB is elaborated by one of the curriculum expert participant who has experience in region as:

MoE instructs us and when MoE called ORSEB head to do some activities, most of the time the head accepted it as it is without any hesitation. MoE commands us and our relationship is hierarchical not parallel. It is experts of MoE that decide

who and when experts from each region participate on the curriculum development process (ORSEB SCE 5 interviewed on June5, 2018).

Explicitly, this participant puts the relationship between MoE and REBs [ORSEB] on regional curriculum experts' participation at the centre as follows:

Most of the time, MoE requested regional curriculum experts by name and sometimes it requested those who have participated many times. Curriculum development and implementation directorate at MoE directly communicate to regional curriculum development and implementation department to send them curriculum experts as it decided there to participate in curriculum development [mostly on syllabus design/approval]. For instance, MoE requested professional by identifying the subjects and levels. We regional education bureau send them based on their request. There has not been discussion between MoE and REBs on who participate and what numbers of professional to participate. Sometimes experts at MoE send letter by name to participate. By the way MoE commands us.

Here it shows that the role and responsibility of ORSEB is mainly responding to the request of MoE than deciding by itself.

Moreover, one of the participants portrays the contribution of the donor organizations to this dominance of MoE's with regard to curriculum as "donor organizations drive the change of curriculum as they want, but not as we want. Within this MoE has manipulated the curriculum for two reasons such as MoE holds money there that is life and it controls everything at centre to make it centralism. Paradoxically, it is the role of MoE to make decentralization policy works".

Generally speaking there is common sense consensus on saying of 'teacher teaches, the way he/she was taught'. This has analogy with 'experts who worked in the previous regime might not able to adjust themselves to the new environments. With this regard, ORSEB CL1 puts clearly and precisely as "they [experts who worked in the previous regime] speak theoretically the current policy but practically their mind perform as the previous one".

All the participants at MoE level still consider their main role and responsibility as designing syllabus instead of supporting the regional experts and monitor the regions performance. This might be because of the fact that many of the senior staffs who are working in MoE now were the members of the previous ICDR. The main role and responsibility of ICDR in addition to designing the syllabuses was developing and publishing the same textbooks which served to all nation and nationalities of Ethiopia. It is with this experience that these experts have been made to perform the new role and responsibility in decentralization policy.

At policy level PSCD have been devolved to REBs in Ethiopia since 1993, however, from the practical point of view many participants question the realization of this policy and forced to conclude it as a 'fake decentralization'. For instance, one participant explains his suspicion as:

Decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia is fake decentralization. How dare it is to collect data with three or four days? How dare it is possible to reach consensus in three/four days [workshop]? You have to get references first by consulting the society then assess needs and after that you develop framework. The experts should have their own regions needs. They have to know their preferences...however; in this case [centrally designed syllabuses] the experts came without having their own needs. The needs were already there at MoE. That is fake. It is here that make curriculum development fake. MoE has done this system to be out of accountability if any problem happens (ORSEB CL 1 May 6, 2018).

As have been discussed above, in most cases it is MoE which has gathered, analysed and interpreted the data of need analysis. The role and responsibility of regional curriculum experts may be guiding and helping the MoE main data collectors. Furthermore, regional curriculum experts who have been invited to attend the syllabus approval/design with the will of MoE curriculum experts might not have information about the issue before hand. They in most cases participated as a guest without having anything to give but wait to take from experts at MoE.

6.3.3. The recentralization of curriculum materials development in the region

Relatively, ORSEB had autonomy in developing its PSC in the previous periods (1994-1998 & 2003-2005). At least the regional curriculum experts were participated in the approval of centrally developed syllabuses. Moreover, the region developed, published and distributed textbooks of all subjects during these periods. However, this condition has been changed since 2003 for some subjects. For example, Civic and Ethical Education textbooks of grades 5-8 have been recentralized since 2003.

MoE (2006b) denotes the main reason for taking of civic and ethical education to the centre as:

Civic education for primary level has started as subject to be studied (above 5th) because of different factors the subject didn't bring behavioral changes as expected. Realizing this problem the government made change in civic and ethical education starting from 2003. By giving attention to this the body/ institution which controlled the education was established (p.5).

The body that MoE established to control civic and ethical education made need assessment and identified eleven common values to be implemented in primary and secondary schools. These values are developing democratic system, the rule of the law, equality, justice, loving once own country, be responsible, culture of commitment, be self reliance, culture of saving, active public participation and wishing knowledge. Each of this value has been made chapter of the subject and textbooks for grades 5-12 which were prepared in Amharic at the centre. It was recommended that REBs can use the centrally prepared textbooks as it is or can translate to their medium of instruction used in the region. To this end, ORSEB translated the centrally prepared textbooks of grades 5-8 and implemented since 2004.

Similarly, primary school English language curriculum development has been recentralized since 2005. As such the same English language textbook is used throughout the country starting from grade one. The guideline for the recentralization of primary

school English language textbook was developed in 2006 after the same textbook has been implemented throughout the country since 2005. As such it reads as “The GECFDD is responsible for developing the textbooks for English language at primary and secondary school levels, and for all secondary school textbooks [except mother tongue]” (MoE, 2006a, p.78).

This totally contradicts with the essence proclamation No. 41/1993 which gives REBs the right to:

Prepare and implement, following the education policy and standard of the country and having regard to the specific situations of the regions, the curriculum of elementary and junior secondary schools of the regions....Provide textbooks and other learning teaching materials appropriately prepared for the primary education in the region (p.78).

The role of MoE in primary school English language curriculum recentralization is explained by ORSEB CL1 as:

In case of primary school English language curriculum development, MoE has taken over the mandate of the regions and prepared it by itself to the extent of [the same] textbook preparation. The issue of English language is nothing but the four skills to be taught as any language. The other thing in English language is you have to inculcate the culture of the region. But MoE took the mandate forcefully. The regions didn't agree on this case (on June 5th, 2018).

Here it seems that REBs especially those which have human power like ORSEB have complains with the recentralization of the development of primary school English language textbooks. Hence, this implies that the recentralization has been made without negotiation.

However, one of MoE subject curriculum expert's argument on why the development of Primary school English language curriculum has been taken to the centre reads as follows:

The reason for recentralization of primary school English language textbook by MoE to have the same textbooks emanates from the request of REBs....each region developed its own primary school English textbooks until 2005, but the quality of textbooks in some regions deteriorated which should be improved. Furthermore, it is possible to teach common values when the textbooks are prepared by MoE. There were also lack of human power in English language at REBs' level to develop the curriculum and this forced REBs to delegate MoE to develop uniform English language textbooks throughout the country. However, the participant confirms that currently REBs are not contented with this uniform curriculum and complain for its improvement (MoE SCE 4 interviewed on March 26, 2018).

From the response of the above participant, it is clearly indicated that the lack of quality, common values and human power forced MoE to recentralize English textbooks' of primary school.

Nevertheless, many of regional curriculum experts disagree with MoE's argument because there was no time that all regions requested MoE to have centrally developed primary school English language textbooks and instead they argue that some regions have even more human power than MoE. In relation to this view, ORSEB CL1 has the following to say:

At a time the professionals in ORSEB were exceeding that of MoE. I am not boosting myself but the professionals in our case were holders of Bachelor degrees and Masters Degrees at a time. Most of them were teachers of Teachers' Training Institute (TTI) who are well experienced. It was only Music subject professional who holds diploma. Surprisingly enough it was only ORSEB that had diploma Music professional in the country at a time. Hence, there was nothing that hinders us from preparing textbooks (interviewed on May6, 2018).

The evidence for this, the participant argues that even ORSEB developed Afaan Oromo curriculum for first degree level that started at Haromaya and Jimma Universities for the first time. The curriculum was validated by inviting stakeholders and organizing

workshop at Adama town. Hence, with having these professionals MoE argument that says regions lack human capacity to develop their PSC is not convincing.

The study by Palme et al.(1996) explain the then (in 1996) human power of curriculum department of ORSEB as follows. Though the region has shortage of teachers, instructors and curriculum developers in Music, Arts and Sport, it was fairly well provided in Social and Natural Sciences. In language education, the curriculum department employed three full time staffs, one for Afaan Oromo language, one for Amharic and one for English language all with BA academic qualification. The social science panel comprises of four staff members, one with MA degree in History, two with BA degrees in the same discipline and one with a BA in Geography. In Arts, the department has one staff with graduate examination from the Arts school, in Music one qualified Musician and one Teacher Training Institute graduate, and in Physical education one graduate from a Teacher Training College. The science and Mathematics panel consists of four regular staff members, two with MSC degrees in Chemistry and Biology and two with a BSC in Mathematics and Physics.

This shows that at early period of its establishment in 1996 curriculum department of ORSEB had two certificate, one diploma, eight first degree and three second degree professionals. Totally there were fourteen human powers in the department. Currently after more than two decades, the total number of curriculum department staff members of ORSEB is eighteen (18) out of which only three of them have second degree and the rest have first degree. Hence it can be said that after this long period of time, the change in capacitating the professionals in the region is insignificant.

The same participant continues saying that currently there are professionals who study in Afaan Oromo to higher level, professionals in different subjects who have Ph.D and there are universities that were established in each region. Thus, he argues that textbooks preparation at regional level is not this much problematic. However, he asks MoE question which reads as “why not give freedom for those which can do and take or support to those unable to prepare by themselves?”

Here the question of the participant to MoE seems convincing in that it is not democratic way to generalize all regions condition as if they are similar. MoE should identify problems of each region and negotiate with REBs to solve the problems on individual bases by supporting them when the needs arise. But in practice it seems MoE retains the authority of ORSEB to solve specific regional cases by generalizing as if REBs have not human capacity. Of course there are variations in REBs context be it in human capacity or other aspects.

Therefore, from the participant's response and the document analyzed, it can be argued that the lack of human capacity was not a big deal in ORSEB to the extent of recentralizing the previously decentralized curriculum materials. Here if it is necessary what was expected from MoE is giving training on curriculum development to ORSEB curriculum experts rather than taking the development of curriculum materials to the centre particularly for those regions which have human power not less than that of MoE.

There was time that because of the implementation of education decentralization policy in our country, ORSEB prepared and published its primary school textbooks. Nevertheless, these practices of the region instead of improving through time by giving the region to decide on its curriculum matters, it has been gone back to the previous condition, recentralized since 2009.

The reason for this recentralization of almost all primary school textbooks development and publication after once they were decentralized is described by one of the senior staff, ORSEB SCE 5 as:

Since the coming of EPDRF, PSCD has been decentralized to regions [REBs]. PSC was developed by regions between 1994-1998 and revised [by regions] between 2003-2005. Since 2008 though it was expected from the regions to revise their curriculum, the MoE played the role of regions in developing PSC. In fact, MoE didn't develop by itself instead it has invited regional experts. The overtaking of the role of regions by MoE in developing curriculum of primary school was emanated from existence of GEQIP I budget...the MoE didn't have interest to decentralize this budget and it has held the budget there. Textbook

preparation, publication and distribution have also been owned by MoE (June5, 2018).

This shows that the will that MoE has on GEQIP I budget is the main cause to recentralize textbook development, publication and distribution. Here it seems that what is important to perform once own activities is not the policy we have in our hand but the interests and will of central government. Though it is assumed in decentralized system that the role and responsibility of central government changes from decision maker and controller to supporter and monitor, in reality it is more of rhetorical than practical.

6.3.4. Quota system participation in centrally designed PS syllabuses

Though PSCD have been devolved to REBs at policy level since 1993, there was no time that Syllabuses of PSC have been developed at REBs level without MoE's first prescription of flowchart and syllabuses. In other words, MoE uses centrally developed syllabuses as standard to control the regional curriculum. Hence, it should be clear that in such cases the participation of all REBs representatives is very crucial at least to have some say in the decision making. Contrary to this logic, participation of REBs representatives in centrally developed syllabus has been left to bias and mainly decided by MoE without any negotiation with REBs. One of the subject curriculum experts at the regional level explains this situation as follows:

There has been participation of regional curriculum experts when the syllabuses have been prepared at MoE. But there is no full participation in all subjects i.e. a region couldn't participate in all subjects' syllabuses development. For instance, if our region participated in Mathematics and Chemistry syllabuses development other regions would participate in Biology etc. which regions participate on which subjects' syllabus development was decided by curriculum experts at MoE. The main role of the regions is to participate on which the MoE invited us to participate...MoE has made as it wants in the participation of curriculum experts in syllabus development. If it wants, it makes regions to participate or leave it (ORSEB SCE 3 on May 9, 2018).

The above view of the participant helps us to understand that every decision in relation to participation of regional curriculum experts in centrally developed syllabus is based on the will of MoE. It seems that there have not been clearly set criteria and negotiation with ORSEB to decide on the participation of the regional curriculum experts on syllabuses design and hence ORSEB has waited for instruction that has been given from MoE and responds to it accordingly. Knowingly or unknowingly the ORSEB top management has not opposed the work of MoE when it has made decision to include or exclude regions in syllabuses design.

One of the regional curriculum experts puts this condition succinctly as “When all these have been done, there was no complain from the region”(ORSEB SCE 5 interviewed on June 5, 2018). He makes clear that complain with regard to curriculum mandate has begun in the region after realization of problems of Afaan Oromo language curricula of 1-4 which were implemented since 2015 and was complained after one year of implementation.

This shows that there is something which hinders ORSEB to argue to use its mandates accordingly. This might be as discussed under institutional strengths emanate from the problem associated with leadership. Almost all ORSEB heads and curriculum development and implementation directors have been appointed because of their political affiliation and hence have done what are given to them than working by themselves. They lack to organize and coordinate the activities of the institution based on strategic planning.

Though it is always argued by MoE that syllabuses have been designed and approved with the participation of REBs representatives, in reality it has been shown that REBs have not participated equally in all subjects. This may be because of the quota system of MoE or problems associated with the REBs. Moreover, the competence of some participants from the regions is questionable. It seems that there are no clear set criteria to participate in syllabus development at the centre.

The analyses of centrally designed primary school syllabus documents of 2008-2009 reveal that there were big variations among regions participation of syllabuses at MoE.

For instance, ORSEB had representatives only in five subjects' syllabus development out of nine and there was one individual participation in four subjects' syllabus design and two in one subjects.

This shows that though MoE defends itself as if centrally designed syllabuses have been done with the active participation of REBs' curriculum experts, the reality is that ORSEB curriculum experts or professionals didn't participate in some of primary school syllabus development of 2008-2009 because of the quota assignment of MoE to the region.

So it is important here to raise two questions with this regard: What is the implication here? And where is the autonomy of ORSEB at least in participating at centrally developed syllabus? Since it is MoE that can decide which region should participate in what subjects, it seems that MoE might decide to exclude some regions from participation of some subjects intentionally. What makes here the work of MoE crude is there is no mechanism to assign regions to participate in syllabus development and it is open to bias.

Totally the work of MoE to participate REBs in the syllabus development on the quota base deprived ORSEB its autonomy it has mandated in PSCD. Hence, MoE should rethink its dominance on PSCD and also REBs should strive for their mandates if they want to have quality education.

The reasons for the absence of all REBs representatives from syllabus design of 2008 and 2009 at MoE are explained by MoE SCE 4 as:

...we give them [REBs] quota. Based on this all regions were included but this doesn't mean that all regions participate in all subjects' syllabus design. Each region can only participate in some subjects. If we want to participate all regions in all subjects' syllabus design, there are no enough budget and places (rooms) to accommodate in the MoE. Therefore, if some regions participate in English [syllabus design], others participate in Mathematics, for example (March 26, 2018).

This means that all regions can't participate in all subjects' syllabuses design but only in some subjects based on the will of MoE. As stated anywhere in this paper, REBs have given legal mandate to prepare their PSC in Ethiopia since 1993. Nevertheless, in practice there has been situation in which REBs' representatives might not participate at centrally developed syllabuses. So, with absence of even single representative of ORSEB on syllabuses design or approval, how dare it is to say that the syllabuses have been designed or approved with the active participation of regional representatives?

This implies that contrary to the policy, ORSEB was not in a position to develop their own primary education syllabuses instead MoE has performed many activities in this regard. Though MoE argues that all REBs have active participation in centrally developed syllabuses of primary education, in reality it is more of rhetoric. As such, ORSEB CL1 explains the influence of MoE on ORSEB and asks MoE question which reads as **“why not give freedom for those which can do and take or support to those unable to prepare by themselves?”** Supporting the above participant's idea, ORSEB SCE 5 states that “... MoE should leave the right given to the regions, if it needs to implement genuine decentralization. MoE instructs us and when MoE called on to ORSEB head to do some activities, most of the time the head accepted it as it is without any hesitation. MoE commands us and our relationship is hierarchical not parallel” (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

In fact even participation of curriculum experts or professional teachers from the regions may not necessarily mean they have active roles and responsibilities. Some participants comment on participation regional representatives on syllabus design as a mere participation. In other words, in most cases representatives from the regions are passive listeners because of their competence or virtue of hierarchical differences with that of MoE experts.

6.3.5. Maintaining quality as main cause for recentralization of PSCD

To mitigate the criticism on quality of general education, the government of Ethiopia changed the curricula from 2008-2009. The initiation for this change was the research

findings of GECFDD in 2007 which reveal that the curriculum of the time lacks relevance, dominated by passive learning teaching process than active method which has been advocated in the policy and continuous assessment has not been implemented as intended. In addition, contents of the curriculum materials are conceptually difficult to students of the respective level.

Based on the recommendations of this study, what was assumed to be performed first was the development of Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian General Education (KG to grade 12). Believing that the curriculum should be up to the standard, MoE prepared this Curriculum Framework and syllabuses with some sort of the participation of REBs' curriculum experts, subject teachers and professionals. Based on these curriculum framework and syllabuses, textbooks and teachers guide have been developed and published at MoE by private publishing agencies. The recentralization of textbook development is actually associated with the prevalence of GEQIP I budget since 2009.

Almost all participants from this region agree that the main purpose of the recentralizing textbook development and publication was the interest of MoE to control GEQIP I budget to manipulate regions than for the purpose of quality. Therefore, from this time onwards, MoE plays major role in deciding the contents of the PSC by developing syllabuses at the centre. One participant from the region pinpoints the situation of PSCD since 2009 as follows "There is direction that was given by MoE which clarifies that curricula content of different regions will be similar. Even though it has been said that the regions can adapt to their regional contexts, the reality is more of translating to mother tongue than adapt" (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 14, 2018).

The implication is that ORSEB lost its relative power to decide on the contents of the curriculum and prepared its own textbooks based on its contexts because of the implementation of GEQIP I budget which advocates quality as the sole pillar. In other words, MoE has controlled the syllabus design at central level and oriented REBs to use it as standard without much deviation.

Many of the regional curriculum experts argue that there has been a dramatic change of curriculum development process from the implementation of GEQIP I budget onwards.

As such the roles and responsibilities of ORSEB have been changed. ORSEB SCE 1 expressed this change as:

The main change of curriculum development of this period was that [primary school] textbooks preparation and publication were not the roles and responsibilities of ORSEB as before but has become the work of Private Publishing Agencies. It is MoE that announces the bid and competition among the private agencies to prepare and publish textbooks (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 14, 2018).

Similarly, Pre and post 2008 PSCD in Ethiopia are clearly justified by ORSEB SCE 3 as:

Before 2008 except English and Civic and Ethical education, PSCD were the role and responsibility of our bureau. Flowchart and syllabuses were developed by MoE using English or Amharic language. Based on these [mother documents], we developed syllabuses and textbooks using our mother tongue language. However, role and responsibility of PSCD particularly in textbooks development and publication have been taken from us to the centre since 2008[9]. This was decided related to GEQIP I budget (ORSEB SCE 3 on May 9, 2018).

The aforementioned quotations tell us that how primary textbooks preparation and publication have been taken from ORSEB to the centre. The participants argue that the main reason for this recentralization was the GEQIP I budget.

Almost all activities of PSCD including the previously decentralized once have been taken to the centre since 2008. This practice of MoE contradicts with the education decentralization policy which has granted PSCD to the REBs. To this end, MoE has recentralized the authority to develop, publish and distribute primary school textbooks in four languages (Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Tigrigna and Af-Somali) at central level by announcing international bid. As some argue there have been some problems on textbook development and publication based on this international bid. In the first case it is the private agency that won the international bid competition that has developed the textbooks by recruiting professionals mainly based on unclear criteria.

To advance the work of Private Publishing Agencies in textbook development and publication, MoE developed textbook development and publication guideline and formed new structure under curriculum development and implementation directorate that is named as 'Textbook Preparation Office'. As one officer of this office says, the main role of the office is to coordinate the activities particularly related to the financial issues for textbook development, publication and distribution (on July 3, 2018).

There is ambiguity on why primary school textbooks preparation, publication and distribution have been taken from REBs even by the regional curriculum experts. ORSEB SCE 1 participant describes the condition as:

The overtaking of textbook preparation and publication from REBs by MoE was associated with GEQIP [I] budget. Though I am not sure, it has been said that GEQIP I budget can only be implemented by central government because the regions can't communicate with international donor organizations. So, that the mandate to communicate with donors to use the budget is mainly the sole responsibility of MoE. However, MoE convinced the REBs' heads first this logic. As I heard from someone who participated in this discussion, our head and some REBs' heads at a time opposed the process and finally by voting system, the MoE won the opposition (interviewed on April 24, 2018).

The above participant's opinion tells us that there was no orientation given to the regional curriculum experts about why and how of the implementation of GEQIP I budget, although, the activities of GEQIP I are mainly the roles and responsibilities of the regional curriculum experts. This shows that there was a gap between the experts and the leaders of the institution because as a regional expert everybody should know what is going on in his/her institution.

The absence of having detail information about the works of once own institution violates the institution's guiding value which says 'Transparency'. Transparency is written as one of the nine ORSEB's guiding values. These values are written in different documents of the institution. For instance, in ORSEB's web site and they appear also in front of

ORSEB building on the main gate. Almost all the institution's departments have posted in front of their office where it can be seen to everybody.

ORSEB SCE 3 who participated with the then bureau head of the region on the discussion of how to use GEQIP I budget at MoE describes the essence of the argument between MoE representatives and REBs heads as follows:

MoE argues that the GEQIP I budget which is funded by World Bank is huge enough and it will be difficult to manage the budget at regional level and hence it is fruitful and efficient to develop and publish text books at the centre. Whereas REB heads particularly the then ORSEB head argues that our region [ORSEB] has the capacity and experience in implementing Plasma program and textbooks development and publication and hence ORSEB can do the same for GEQIP I budget. Finally, the then representative of MoE (MoE 'Deata') didn't accept it and voting system was used to decide. Accordingly, MoE representatives and most of REB heads voted in favor of the MoE argument (interviewed on May 9, 2018).

Contrary to the above arguments with the role of the then ORSEB head, ORSEB CL1 states that "the Ministry took mandate of the regions in GEQIP I budget. To facilitate the condition the central government assigned individual [bureau head] who did what they want especially as head of the ORSEB communicating with the regional government" (on June 5, 2018). This implies the political influence on the internal activities of the ORSEB.

Though MoE won the battle to recentralize the development, publication and distribution of primary school textbooks, its argument is not convincing because REBs implemented GEQIP I budget related to Teacher Development Program (TDP), School Improvement Program (SIP)...so what is special with 'Curriculum Materials Development' budget? In fact, I am not saying all REBs are equally competent enough but the regions should have freedom to decide on their matters based on their real conditions. And if necessary, MoE can support the needy REBs. Looking all regions through '**one lens**' can hamper the performance of the regions and as well it deprives the regions the mandate they

guaranteed by legislation. This is as ORSEB SCE 3 says MoE manipulates regions using GEQIP I budget based on its inconvincible arguments.

The main argument of MoE in taking textbooks' development and publication to centre was to improve the quality of textbooks. What does quality mean in this case? Is it external, physical aspect of the textbooks or the internal one which comprises of the 'what' and 'how' of the contents if so how quality can be maintained even without pilot testing? It seems paradoxical that MoE has taken the development and publication of primary school to maintain quality of textbooks since 2009. Nevertheless, there has not been pilot testing of the newly developed curriculum materials in this region since then. Moreover, there has not been stakeholders' participation especially in the validation of the newly developed textbooks before their publication. For instance, one of the main criticisms in Afaan Oromoo Language curriculum of 1-4 which was implemented in 2015 was the absence of stakeholders' participation in its validation.

Thus, it can be argued that the MoE's argument for quality textbooks by recentralizing the development and publication seems the external quality of the textbooks such as the quality of cover pages and the paper quality of the textbooks than the issue of worth of the contents and pedagogical approaches and their organizations. It is clearly indicated that the guiding principle of the MoE's argument was the market issue as shown in the following excerpt:

A policy of offering a single textbook (title) for core subjects helped to achieve economies of scale, and the larger print runs reduced textbook unit costs. Effective and fair mechanisms like international competitive bidding helped to locate the most economical bidders. Bundling development, printing, and distribution of textbooks helped create a linear production process. Finally, clear quality specifications and high production values for learning materials increased their lifespan and helped to reduce recurrent production costs (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017, p. IX).

Thus, the above argument of MoE gives more emphasis to least unit costs and the quality of physical curriculum materials than the internal issue of curriculum such as how contents are selected and organized and materials are developed.

6.3.6. Fake participation on selection of the private publishing agencies and textbook validation

As has been said many times in this study, PSCD processes such as preparation and publication of primary school textbooks have been recentralized with the implementation of GEQIP I budget in Ethiopia. To participate in these activities in 2009, the Private Publishing Agencies brought sample of textbooks both in soft and hard copy based on criteria of MoE which have been announced in the bid. The criteria include issues of contents, language and methodology. The samples were evaluated and given points to each and the winner agencies were selected. The participation of ORSEB in selecting the Private Publishing Agencies was minimal. One of the participants in the region describes their participation with this regard as:

To some extent we participated in the Private Publishing Agencies evaluation but after some time we were absent from the evaluation because of different factors. Our regional curriculum experts were participated first in the screening of Private Publishing Agencies and evaluation of the works of the winner agencies. Our role was to evaluate based on the criteria developed by MoE (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 14, 2018).

Similarly, another SCE in the region discussed the procedure of how the Private Publishing Agencies were screened in the following manner:

...we made four institutions to compete for textbook preparation. However, we didn't know how the institution won and took an agreement. Our role was simply to select institution which was relatively good. We didn't know the criteria and with whom the institution made an agreement. We experts have no power. No attention was given for us. The experts did what the boss told them to do. In this institution experts are considered as symbol. Our decision power is too weak. If

experts have the power to select the institutions that prepared textbooks, the problems that exist now could be minimized (ORSEB SCE 2 on June 05, 2018).

Here it seems plain that the participation of ORSEB in selection of the Private Publishing Agencies was not significant. When and how ORSEB's curriculum experts did participate in this selection was solely decided by MoE without any input from the OREB. Though the work is ORSEB mandate, it was deprived to decide on its matters. Thus, it can be argued that MoE developed the selection criteria and decided the winner agencies almost without the participation of ORSEB. Put differently, MoE has taken the authority of ORSEB that it has on textbook development and publication not by legislation but by symbolic hierarchical structure which does not work in decentralization policy.

The quality of textbook writers is very crucial to have quality textbooks and hence the selection of textbook writers based on clear set criteria is mandatory. With this regard, ORSEB SCE 3 explains the selection of textbook writers after textbooks development and publication have been taken to the centre as:

To prepare textbooks there was announcement in our institution...there were college teacher educators who gained the chance to prepare textbook and there were [also] individuals who prepared textbooks without competition through informal communication...in contrary there were individuals who were discarded from the preparation [of textbooks] by unknown reasons. With this regard, there was administration gap. Practically, by informal communication, with the experts without the awareness of MoE or REBs management (interviewed on May 29, 2018).

Similarly, the procedure of textbook writers' selection of this time was stated by ORSEB CL1 as "the Private Publishing Agencies can give textbooks preparation to whom they want. They can give to anyone by calling from street. No criteria were set clearly" (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

It seems that there was no clear set criterion to select textbook writers. The role and responsibility of ORSEB and the Private Publishing Agencies in selecting textbook

writers was vague and open to bias which hamper the quality of the textbooks. This condition, ORSEB SCE 5 argues, created dispute between the agencies and ORSEB that the bureau refused to accept the practices of the agencies by arguing that the bureau should assign the experts those who develop textbooks of the region based on its criteria.

Dissatisfied with centrally developed and published PSC materials of the region, ORSEB CL2 argues “MoE has tacit intention to make the curriculum more central. This can be viewed starting from cover page because the cover page of current curriculum materials carries national values than regional one. It forgets the regional values” (interviewed on May 9, 2018).

This shows that the role of ORSEB even in designing the cover pages of the textbooks of primary education is minimal. This can be evidenced from the analysis of almost all textbooks of primary education of the region which have been developed since 2009 where the cover pages of the textbooks are dominantly designed by national contents than the regional.

The winner Private Publishing Agencies prepared the textbooks based on agreed sample. At this stage the agencies prepared the whole textbooks and made to be approved by concerned bodies before submission for publication. In validating the newly developed textbooks, different professionals in the region participated to see the contents, methodology and the language. The evaluation at this level is not to reject the work of the agencies but to look whether the textbooks were prepared up to the standard. In the evaluation different comments were given to be improved.

One regional subject curriculum expert who participated on screening the Private Publishing Agencies and evaluation of the prepared textbooks says the following with regard to the lack quality of the evaluation:

I and a teacher of subject matter were participated in the evaluation of the samples that were presented by agencies. Out of many samples we selected one sample that has 24 pages and commented on the areas to be improved. Textbooks were prepared based on the sample that won. After the textbooks were prepared at the end of the day, these prepared textbooks were evaluated by regional experts. In

fact, it was not evaluation of the prepared textbook but it was sort of edition because these textbooks had many problems and we tried to improve huge amount of issues (ORSEB SCE 3 on May 9, 2018).

The criteria to select Private Publishing Agencies and textbooks validation were developed by MoE. The main role and responsibility of ORSEB was to participate in screening of agencies and textbook validation based on MoE program. This implies that REBs have no decision making power because it was MoE which approved the winner agencies and final textbooks through its office named as ‘Textbook Preparation Office’ structured under Curriculum Development and Implementation Directorate. This implies that there was lack of transparency in the criteria to screen the Private Publishing Agencies and their textbook validation. But ‘transparency’ as one means of democratic values is stipulated in many of MoE documents as well as posted everywhere in the organization.

Furthermore, in relation to the quality of textbooks validation, it seems that the validation of textbooks at this period seems it is simply editing some words or analyzing the congruence between the stated objectives and the contents because the evaluators didn’t stay with the materials for ample time.

Comparing the previous and current textbooks validation mechanisms, the ORSEB CL1 justifies that:

Previously ORSEB invited different regions to workshop of textbooks validation in addition to the participation of different stakeholders where as currently [after implementation of GEQIP I budget] the textbooks have been prepared by someone who has been selected by the Private Publishing Agencies without clear set criteria and the prepared textbooks have been validated by calling three or four professionals mainly from the respective regional teacher training colleges, subject teachers or regional curriculum experts (interviewed on June 5, 2018).

Supporting the above view, for instance, ORSEB SCE 3 confirms that only one subject teacher and he were participated from the region both in selection of Private Publishing Agencies and textbook evaluation that was prepared by the winner agency.

Thus, it implies that there was no local stakeholders' participation to validate textbooks that were developed by private agencies at the centre.

6.3.7. The politics of PS Afaan Oromo language curriculum development

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia developed a policy guideline based on the Transitional Charter which mandated the right of nationalities to “develop their history, culture and use and nurture their languages.”(EHRC, 2003, p.11).Based on this, the council representatives issued a policy guideline on the use of national languages as medium of instruction. As such the policy guideline stipulates that Oromigna, Sidamigna, Wolayitigna and Tigrigna would be used as medium of instruction as 1991/1992.

More specifically, the use of mother tongue other than Amharic as medium of instruction is also indicated in Education and Training Policy of 1994 as “Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages” (TGE, 1994, p.23). Following this formulation of the language use policy, each region has given the opportunity to use mother tongue as medium of instruction and subject of study at preprimary and primary education level. As a result, different regions have implemented their mother tongue languages as medium of instruction and subject of study at preprimary and primary education level nearly for the past two decades.

Accordingly, Afaan Oromo language has been used as medium of instruction and subject of study for preprimary and primary levels in Oromia Region since 1991/92. To this end, the curricula materials of grades 1-6 of Dergue regime were translated in to Afaan Oromo Language in summer of 1991 and implemented beginning from September 1991. For the first time Afaan Oromo language curriculum has been started as one of subject of study in 1992.

One of the participants who had involvement in the process describes the procedures of the curriculum development of Afaan Oromoo of the time as:

The process of curriculum development was coordinated by ICDR/MoE in summer of 1991. As such experts from different regions were called at the centre to develop mother tongue language flow chart and then syllabus in Amharic language. The Amharic syllabus was then sent to the region and translated to Afaan Oromoo language. At regional level [ORSEB] different subject specialists came from different places [of Oromia] through nomination mainly based on the prior experiences the experts had. Based on the syllabus, we developed textbooks of primary school curriculum by looking to the previous Amharic and English textbooks because Afaan Oromo language curriculum was the first of its type. First we experts decided on the [number of] chapters and contents to be included and then one expert did on one or two chapters. After finishing the given chapters, we exchanged each other to cross check how it is organized and commented on one another. Finally, the editors evaluated the curriculum materials and we improved based on the comments and submitted the materials to bureau for publication (ORSEB SCE 4 on May 29, 2018).

This shows that ORSEB curriculum experts at this period had some autonomy to decide on Afaan Oromo language curriculum issues guided by centrally designed mother document of mother tongue.

Similarly, the same participant pin points that during PSC revision of 2003-2005, Afaan Oromo language curriculum was developed at regional level [ORSEB]. Different parties namely Afaan Oromo professionals, regional curriculum experts, collage teacher educators, and primary school teachers were participated in the development.

With this regard another subject curriculum expert at the region has the following to say:

In these two periods [1994-1998 & 2003-2005], the role of MoE in Afaan Oromo language curriculum development was minimal. Probably the MoE might develop syllabus for language in general which may help Afaan Oromo curriculum developers as reference to be used while developing the curriculum. Nevertheless, contents of Afaan Oromo curriculum were decided by region not by MoE (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 24, 2018).

It can be said that ORSEB relatively had freedom in determining the contents of its curriculum particularly in Afaan Oromo curriculum language in both periods of curriculum development (1994-1998 & 2003-2005).

However, this condition has been changed since the implementation of the results of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) of 2010.

EGRA which was made by MoE in collaboration with USAID in 2010 approved that mother tongue languages teaching in Ethiopia including Afaan Oromoo were inadequate i.e. children at grade 1-4 were unable to read and write despite the opportunity they have in learning in their mother tongue (USAID/Ethiopia,2010).

To improve this condition the first initiative was taken by USAID to prepare and give training for teachers especially on how to teach reading and writing. In addition the government decided to change mother tongue curriculum with the support of the international donor organizations. To do this under USAID international bill was announced for competition. As a result, Research Triangle Institute (RTI) won the competition and initiated the preparation of textbooks where as MoE played coordinator role in the process.

To this end, Ethiopia revised its entire language curriculum in order to make it a 'Reading Curriculum'. The new curriculum materials were designed by regional experts in reading, language and pedagogy and they were illustrated and adapted to regional and cultural references, and aligned to the new curriculum framework for grades 1-4 (USAID/Ethiopia, 2010).

Consequently, the new Afaan Oromo language curriculum materials of grades 1-4 were prepared, published and distributed centrally. Early grade teachers have got training on the new materials and the changed curriculum was implemented in 2015. Despite of all these efforts made, the newly implemented curriculum had been a subject of vigorous public debate for sometimes.

The process of this new Afaan Oromo language curricula development is criticized by OREB CL1 as:

The practice of current curriculum development related to EGRA is centralization in which MoE controls everything at the centre. What I want to tell you is that MoE against decentralization principle wants regions to implement what the Ministry gave to them. The regions implement it through their leaders. The government knows less about the issue where as educators know the issue but you afraid for your life (interviewed on May 6, 2018).

Here it appears that there was domination of MoE to decide on Afaan Oromoo language curriculum which was developed based on the analysis of EGRA results. ORSEB's curriculum experts had no freedom to perform their professional work because of the influence of the leadership with this regard.

The participant opposes the change of alphabet in 1st grade from letter 'A' to letter 'L' and he argues that the change had no scientific reasoning. He concludes the condition in this case saying that "it was the work of MoE, OREB didn't know what was going on in the change".

Nevertheless, another participant from the region argues against the above participant by saying the following:

The change of alphabet was based on research finding that letter 'L' frequency is high in Afaan Oromo language. In reality ORSEB sent experts to MoE by reaching consensus. The 'task force' was established at ORSEB to follow and monitor the preparation of the textbooks and finally to validate. In fact, members of the 'task force' were both the Afaan Oromo experts and those know nothing about the issue. Even though I was not the member of the task force committee, sometimes I was ordered to participate in discussion. However, comments that seem out of domain were not welcomed and those experts that made profound comments for the improvement of the materials were discarded or excluded from the member (ORSEB SCE 4 interviewed on May 29, 2018).

Here the view of the participant shows that it is not the problem of participation in relation to ORSEB's part but the role and responsibilities that were played by experts at

regional level in decisions that were made at central level. With this regard, ORSEB CL1 argues that:

Most of the time, MoE invites regional curriculum experts those who don't oppose the idea of the centre and take their per diem and work laissez-fairly. MoE sends letter to such individuals. Especially if the financing system is donors', the experts prefer to keep quite by getting good per diem which can improve his/her life than to work for the improvement the curriculum professionally(May 6, 2018).

One of the main reasons for the protest of Afaan Oromo language curriculum of grades 1-4 by public in 2015 was the absence of stakeholders' participation in its development process. ORSEB SCE 5 articulates this lack of participation of stakeholders in the following manner:

Even the top management didn't know the process. The bureau sent only experts when requested by MoE to participate in the syllabus design or textbook preparation. And there was no feedback given to ORSEB by the experts. The process of curriculum development [Afaan Oromoo] was not presented and discussed at regional level by concerned bodies such as curriculum experts at regional level, top management etc. There was no decision made at regional level with regard to Afaan Oromo curriculum of primary school which was developed based on EGRA. MoE developed the curriculum with only the participation of some experts from the region. The preparation and publication of textbooks were also made there [MoE] without much involvement of the region (June5, 2018).

From the arguments of the above participants, it is possible to say that the problem in Afaan Oromoo language curriculum development was not basically the absence of the ORSEB curriculum experts from the participation but the role and responsibility they played in the participation. It seems that there was no clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities between MoE and ORSEB in the development of Afaan Oromo language curriculum initiated by EGRA 2010. Almost all activities of the then primary school Afaan Oromo language curriculum development were performed by MoE. As such, MoE

coordinated and organized the need assessment, initiated the new reading curriculum, coordinated and decided in syllabus design and textbook development and publication.

So, where is the issue of regional autonomy in developing even its PS mother tongue curriculum? It is rather as ORSEB CL 1 says is clearly ‘centralization’. This implies that the power relation between MoE and REBs was hierarchical not supportive, or cooperative that contradicts with decentralization policy framework.

Furthermore, it is argued by regional participants of the study that members of the task force established at the regional level and other stakeholders who participated in the discussion were not free to carry out their professional work. It can be said therefore that Afaan Oromo curricula which were developed based on EGRA results were initiated by the government at top level and also decided and developed centrally where the role and responsibility of ORSEB in this regard was minimal. It seems that ORSEB had no influence in the prepared materials, because the budget was on the hands of MoE. MoE invited regional curriculum experts by its own decision without any negotiation with ORSEB and with no clear criteria.

Surprisingly enough still now after the curriculum was omitted from primary school curriculum by Oromia regional state decision because of public protest, there is no consensus between participants why the curriculum was opposed publically. Of course, many argue that the problem is the change of alphabet from ‘A, B, C, D...’ to ‘L, G, M...’ at overt level. Nevertheless, the argument goes beyond this to some participants.

One of the senior curriculum experts of the region explains the reasons for the protest of Afaan Oromo language curriculum by public as:

I think one of the main problems that were publicized is the arrangement of alphabetical letters which begins from letter ‘L’. This is overt agenda..., however, there are some hidden issues that were not publicized such as the presence of MoE’s ‘LOGO’ and other symbols on the cover page of the textbooks. The implication behind this is the curriculum is so centralized which doesn’t consider the context of the region (ORSEB SCE 4 interviewed on May 29, 2018).

Truly as stated above, the Afaan Oromo language textbooks of 1-4 of the time consist of various issues such as Ethiopia and Oromia regional state flags and MoE's Logo on their cover pages, acknowledgements to different donor organizations on next page to cover page which have no relation with the said curriculum.

There is also another argument in relation to Afaan Oromo language curriculum debate that goes as the internal conflicts of scholars in the region especially who participated in the first grade curriculum development. There were two groups who argue pro and con of the addition of A, B, C, D...at the first page of the new material. The first group argues to add the alphabet where as the second group argues that addition of one page at the beginning of would make the volume huge.

Here it is important to raise question like 'why MoE wanted to hold Afaan Oromo language curriculum development of grades 1-4 at the centre?' It was mysterious because ORSEB has human power to do this and had access to get more qualified professionals in this subject than MoE. No one can tell you why it was so and MoE and ORSEB complain one another for the problem created latter to the extent of the exclusion of the curriculum.

Generally, it can be said that the Afaan Oromo language curriculum development initiated by EGRA of 2010 was started at the centre and finished there in the closed door without making public or with its mystery. The whole processes were organized and coordinated by MoE where as RTI supported technically and USAID gave financial support.

6.3.8. Back to the previous slogan

In Ethiopian current situation, developing PSC at regional level doesn't need any permission because REBs have been guaranteed the authority by legislation. However, it seems that REBs have not used the opportunity that has been given to them that is why many participants argue to get their legal power back. This view can be understood by analyzing the following excerpts by the participants at regional level. For instance, ORSEB SCE 1 points out that "The preparation of primary school textbooks should be back to the region. Regions have to work independently by themselves. The budget

should be decentralized to regions. I think regions can do this” (interviewed on April 14, 2018).

Similarly, one of the experienced regional curriculum experts explains the importance of regaining autonomy of developing curriculum materials in the following manner:

... MoE should leave the right given to the regions. If MoE implements genuine decentralization, the existing conditions will be improved. Currently our top management is trying to bring back our legal mandate that has been taken by central government through communicating with MoE higher officials... the argument of ORSEB is that the region has human power and can develop textbook by assessing regional needs, involvement of top management and different stakeholders’ participation (ORSEB SCE 5 June5, 2018).

Furthermore, ORSEB CL2 interviewed on June 05, 2018 on his part has the following to say on the motivation of ORSEB to maintain the mandate of developing primary school curricula particularly developing and publishing textbooks that has been taken by MoE:

Knowingly or unknowingly we gave our mandate [to MoE] but as soon as possible we will take it and do perform quality education. The Afaan Oromo language curricula of 1-4 which were prepared at center by MoE and USAID collaboration gave us lesson. The REB has clear mandate to prepare and implement PSC and therefore we have to argue on the budget of the World Bank or USAID to get our share. As a region we have started dialogue about the budget because it was the issue of the budget which challenges us not to get our mandate.

This participant maintains that currently with its initiation, OREB has working to improve the quality of PSC with regard to overloaded contents, complexity and unattractiveness of the curriculum materials to make relevant to the needs and interests of the learner.

The responses of the above participants suggest that ORSEB can develop its curriculum materials if autonomy and finance are given altogether. The implication is that currently there is lack of autonomy to exercise its mandated authority and finance which are the backbone to exercise once own power which is held at the centre. Here it seems that the

fate of ORSEB's autonomy is on the hands of MoE. As such MoE can have power to take or give autonomy to the region. However, in devolved decentralization system the central government has no direct authority over the decentralized institution (Hanson, 1997; MoE, 2006; Oulai et al.,2011). In other words, the relationship between MoE and REBs is not hierarchical. Thus, if the leadership of decentralized institution is strong and has commitment to exercise its authority, it is possible to exercise once own legal power.

In practice, after the prohibition of Afaan Oromo language curricula of 1-4 which were implemented in 2015, the region has working hard to develop 1-8 Afaan Oromo curricula since 2018. The process of these curricula development is described by ORSEB CL2 as “in relation to Afaan Oromo curricula, we are developing curricula of 1-8 and the syllabuses have already been developed and we will develop the textbooks continuously. In this area we want to make the validation public and will be piloted”.

It seems from the above views that ORSEB top management and curriculum experts have regretted for their inability to use the mandate that has been given and now there is internal initiation particularly from the top management level to use their mandate properly. This is in fact, good start and needs continuous argument to negotiate with MoE to yield enough fruits. For the central government which had experienced controlling power at the center from its inception, it is difficult to transfer this power easily to the regions. Therefore, there must be dialogue and understanding between MoE and ORSEB to regain its autonomy in ORSEB's part.

6.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD Decision Making in ORS

The main rationale behind education decentralization is that it can bring education decision making close to the local stakeholders which is considered as a key ingredient for the development of democracy. Accordingly in Ethiopia there are different education functions that have been decentralized to different tiers of education system and to the community. As such, the local stakeholders have their share in PSCD. Therefore, under this theme how local stakeholders in the region have participated in PSC decision making will be discussed.

ORSEB identifies the following institutions as its stakeholders namely government, MoE, NGOs, different sectors of the government, Religious Institutions, various Social Organizations and investors. However, it doesn't clearly indicate the mechanisms how to communicate with these stakeholders in relation to their participation in education in general and developing curriculum in particular. The following are the views of the participants in the region with regard to local stakeholders' participation in PSCD decision making.

6.4.1. Needs assessment as a major instrument to local stakeholders' participation

In Ethiopian context, there are different education documents which emphasis on the local stakeholders' participation on primary school curriculum decisions (MoE, 2002, 2006; TGE, 1994). For instance, in 1994 Education and Training policy of Ethiopia with regard to public participation, it is stipulated that "mechanism will be created to participate teachers, professionals from major organizations of development, and beneficiaries in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum" (p. 12). Similarly, in MoE (2002) one of public participation is in PSCD and textbooks preparation.

Nevertheless, the existing reality doesn't match the theoretical speculations. More than anything else, the needs assessments have been considered as the best way to make the stakeholders participate in curriculum. To this end, ORSEB SCE 1 interviewed on July 14, 2018 claims that "our main local stakeholders are students, teachers and parents. They participated specially in need assessment of the revised curriculum. We developed different questions to them and gather data. In addition teachers were participated in the curriculum development directly". There seems local stakeholders but only some local stakeholders were consulted.

ORSEB CL1 also explains the participation of stakeholders in PSCD from 1994-1998 in the following manner:

...we consulted stakeholders and we sent it [syllabuses adapted to regional context] to different institution to comment on it. After these processes, teachers

and other concerned bodies worked for ten days to validate syllabuses and textbooks. Then we piloted it in 26 schools. Teachers of the 26 schools where the curriculum was piloted gave information on the curriculum. Then by developing questionnaire data were gathered from supervisors and teachers and students were interviewed (interviewed on June, 05, 2018).

This shows that at the early stage of education decentralization policy (1990s), ORSEB had tried to communicate with different stakeholders while developing primary school curriculum. This of course can be seen as a good start which should be encouraged for the future, however, all the expected local stakeholders were not participated. It seems that teachers, students and parents are the main local stakeholders who have participated in primary school curriculum development. Here two issues deserve attention: the local stakeholders and the extent of their participation. The local stakeholders comprise of not only teachers, students and parents but also all government and social organizations such as agriculture, health, education, religious, women, teacher association, youth etc.

6.4.2. Professional participation than local stakeholders' participation

Public participation is considered as a key ingredient for the development of democracy since it enhances stakeholders' involvement in the decision making process that affects them. The participation of local stakeholders in PSC decision making in Oromia region is described by ORSEB SCE 4 as:

Previously the concept of stakeholders' participation was not known this much. Most of the time the participants in curriculum development were professionals, teacher educators and subject matter teachers of primary as well as secondary schools. To avoid specific dialect problems and make the language standardized, we invited teachers from different corners of the region (May 29, 2018).

It seems that stakeholders who participated in curriculum development process are professionals particularly regional curriculum experts and teachers at different levels. The community at large/ local stakeholders were not in a position to participate in primary school curriculum decisions.

Primary school principal also confirms the above view by saying:

I have worked as a principal for long period of time [more than 15 years]. Still now we principals have reported the issue of curriculum [textbook evaluation] but I haven't participated in curriculum discussions while developing the new curriculum. We normally participated after the textbooks have been prepared and published [orientation how to implement the new textbooks]. We have evaluated textbooks after once the textbooks have been implemented but we have no role to give comment while the textbooks are developed (ORPSP, interviewed on April 7, 2019).

ORSEB SCE 1 states the participation of professionals in syllabus adaptation and textbook development as:

...syllabus was translated in to Afaan Oromo language by subject professionals, regional curriculum experts, primary school teachers, collage teachers. The syllabus was prepared by organizing workshop at regional level i.e. in groups not individually as before (ORSEB SCE 1 on April 24, 2018).

The participant speaks the absence of local stakeholders' participation in curriculum decisions succinctly in Afaan Oromo as “kan qopha’e irratti mari’anna malee, kan qopha’uuf miti”. It can be roughly translated as “we participated in what has already been prepared not on what will be prepared”. This means that school principals and teachers have participated mainly on newly prepared textbooks orientation which is meant to facilitate implementation than participating on the validation of textbooks before their publication.

The preparation of primary school curriculum is not known at local level and it has been developed at regional level. The main role of the woreda office with regard to curriculum is to report the number of students by their grades to get textbooks proportionally. Nevertheless, sometimes teachers have been invited to participate in trainings on their subjects not on curriculum development. With this regard, ORWOR has to say the following:

Totally we have no role in [primary school] curriculum development. I have no experience when ORSEB requested for validation and comments to newly prepared textbooks. Our main role is to report the number of textbooks needed. There has no time when teachers or woreda level experts participated in curriculum development. The main role of curriculum expert at woreda level is distributing textbooks to the school. In addition, he/she reports the shortage of textbooks to concerned bodies (ORWOR).

Here it implies that the role and responsibility of curriculum experts at woreda level is reduced to simple administrative activities such as reporting the shortage of textbooks and distributing textbooks. The participant comments on the position of curriculum experts at woreda level which only requires professionals in any subject and suggests that the incorporation of specific curriculum issues in the competencies of curriculum experts at woreda level.

Generally, in line with curriculum decentralization policy of Ethiopia, many educational documents advocate the participation of local stakeholders on PSC decisions (MoE, 2002; MoE, 2006; TGE, 1994). Nevertheless, the empirical evidences gained from this region reveal that there is less awareness and practice of local stakeholders' participation in PSC decisions in the region. Furthermore, there has not been yet a mechanism that assists ORSEB and local stakeholders to communicate when PSC is revised or changed. This implies the absence of democratic local level governance. In other words, ORSEB is not accountable to local stakeholders in developing PSC which justifies the rhetoric curriculum decentralization in Ethiopia. In the region only regional curriculum experts, teacher educators and professionals in different subjects have participated in PSCD. But there was participation of some regional level bureaus at early period of (1990s) implementation of curriculum decentralization. The participation could be regional curriculum experts or teachers' participation at centrally developed syllabuses which mainly seems involvement through attendance and receipt information and teacher educators and other professionals' participation in textbooks development.

In summary, one of the promises of decentralization in the form of devolution is to hear the voices of local stakeholders i.e. to encourage participation of local stakeholders in

decision making that affects them. However, the data from this region reveal that in reality it can be said that there is no local stakeholders' participation in primary school curriculum decisions. Only professionals (teachers, curriculum experts etc) have participation in preparation and edition of textbooks.

It is also worth mentioning here that there seems participation of local stakeholders such as students, teachers and parents involvement through consultation to respond to questionnaires and interview guidelines during needs assessment though this type of participation is lower level participation which doesn't empower the local stakeholders to make curriculum decisions.

Thus, it can be generally argued that the local stakeholders represented by woreda and kebele education and training board members have not been yet participated in primary school curriculum decision making implying that democratic local governance is not maintained in the region in relation to curriculum participation.

Chapter Seven: Cross-Case Analysis

The above three chapters of this study namely chapters five, six and seven described the institutional capacity of the cases(AACA, GRS & ORS) to carry out PSCD, the practice of PSCD and the local stakeholders' participation in PSCD in these three regions. In this chapter, therefore, I presented an analytical commentary of the three cases which draws evidence from each case. It is cross case analysis because it draws data from the stated three cases. Thus, this chapter is organized around issues out of the three cases which will be followed by critical reflection.

7.1. Regional Education Context

Analysis under this theme involves number of schools and students at primary level, medium of instruction and period allotment of PS education.

The findings of the study disclose that there are differences in number of primary schools in the sample regions. Thus, there are 806, 292 and 14,309 primary schools with enrollment of 515,785, 115,761 and 8,027,171 students in AACA, GRS and ORS respectively in the year 2017. This implies that the number of primary schools and students in ORS is greater than the sum of the two regions. It is also indicated in the study that the percentage of students who passed grade 8 examinations varies though regions can decide on pass mark autonomously.

The findings reveal that the three regions have differences in the use of medium of instruction. AACA uses Amharic as only medium of instruction in first cycle primary education and Afaan Oromo and Amharic are used as medium of instruction in primary education in ORS whereas in GRS six languages (Nuer, Anguwa, Omo, Opo, Mezeng and Amharic) are used as medium of instruction for first cycle primary education. English language is used as medium of instruction in both GRS and AACA for second cycle primary education.

In AACA and ORS five and nine subjects are taught in first cycle primary education and grades 5 and 6 which are as indicated in the curriculum framework of 2010 where as in GRS five subjects are taught only in 1st and 2nd grades and six subjects in grades

3rd and 4th since Amharic language is started as subject of study from grade three as indicated in the policy. Similar to AACA and ORS nine subjects are taught in grades 5 and 6 as stated in the curriculum framework.

In grades 7 and 8 nine subjects in AACA and eleven subjects in GRS and ORS are taught. The variation arise because in GRS and ORS Mother Tongue subjects and Arts and Music are taught in these grades where as in AACA only Amharic language is taught as Mother Tongue. Moreover, Arts and Music subjects are in grade 5 and 6 in AACA where as these subjects are taught in all grades of second cycle of primary education in GRS and ORS. Thirty periods per week are allocated to grades 1-8 in GRS and ORS which is equal to period allotment in the curriculum framework where as it is 35 in AACA.

Here it seems that AACA has used its authority to make some adjustments in both subjects to be taught as well as the period's allotment.

7.2. Institutional Strengths to Carry out PSCD

Analysis under this theme deals with institutional arrangements (vision, mission, values, organizational structures and roles and responsibilities, leadership, recruitment and development of curriculum experts and availability of finance and facilities) and human power. The findings of the study reveal that all the three institutions of sample regions have almost similar vision and mission. For instance, the vision of the three institutions mainly strives to produce human capital endowed with democratic values. With regard to mission ORSEB deals with the attainment of educated human power to bring development whereas both AACAEB and GRSEB give emphasis to mobilize all stakeholders to participate in education of the regions that lead to ownership. Here it seems that the mission of ORSEB is odd in that it couldn't serve as mission because the mission of an organization should describe who and how it serves its stakeholders.

With regard to total human capital, ORSEB has the largest population i.e. two hundred and forty one followed by AACAEB which has two hundred nineteen and GRSEB with one hundred eight human powers. The structure of the AACAEB consists of three vice heads lead by the head, eleven (11) directorates and six units where as ORSEB has six process owners and six directorates. GRSEB has four core process owners, four

supportive process owners and seven units. This implies that there are some variations among the three REBs of the sample regions in their structures.

In ORS the curriculum department has 19 workers of which 18 are professionals and one supportive staff, the secretary. Three of the curriculum experts/professionals have Masters Degree and the rest (15) of them have first degree. The secretary has diploma in secretarial science (Planning Office, on June 5, 2018). Similarly, AACA curriculum department has twenty three workers of which twenty two are curriculum experts and one secretary. Nine (9) of the curriculum experts have second degree qualification and the rest; thirteen of them have qualification of first degree. The secretary has diploma in secretarial science. In GRS the curriculum department which is organized in to Curriculum Development and Education Materials Distribution sub-core process has twenty (20) professionals of which eighteen are males. Sixteen of them have first degree and the rest have second degree and males. The roles and responsibilities of these professionals are divided in to two. Eighteen of them are supposed to develop primary school curriculum of the region based on MoE standards and two professionals serve as delivery and distribution of education materials in the region.

It is also indicated in the results of the study that different roles and responsibilities are assigned to structures of the organizations. For instance, one of the roles and responsibilities of the curriculum department of each sample regions is to develop PSC of its respective region. Nonetheless, in practice many of the activities of PSCD in all regions have been done by MoE (this will be discussed in 'practice of PSCD).

The finding of the study also reveals that there are problems with regard to leadership in all the three regions. All heads of the education bureau and curriculum department in these regions have been assigned to the positions based on their political outlook than their competence and educational qualification and thus this has created absence of good governance in the institutions. Moreover, the relationships that exist between the top management and the curriculum experts have been seen inadequate in all the regions. Thus, the cumulative effect of this poor communication and lack of good governance in the institutions have brought dissatisfaction of the employees particularly curriculum experts and initiated them to leave the institutions.

The results of the study reveal that there is lack of competent human power to develop curriculum in all the three regions because of problems associated with the recruitment and training in all the regions. As such, AACAEB has relatively standard set criteria to recruit curriculum experts and textbook writers and implemented accordingly where as in ORSEB though there are standard set criteria to recruit curriculum experts as well as textbook writers; in practice the recruitment has some sort of bias which can be performed by leader's informal communications. In GRSEB standard set criteria have not been followed to recruit curriculum experts in permanent bases but quota assignment based on different ethnics group have been practiced. This could be performed through negotiation of GRSEB and the zonal or WEO offices. In relation to recruitment of textbook writers on the temporary bases, GRSEB has followed clear set criteria and implemented it accordingly. Furthermore, less emphasis has been given to train curriculum experts in the institutions. For instance, in both AACAEB and ORSEB there have not been yet access to training for curriculum experts whereas in GRSEB there had been short term training to curriculum experts and textbook writers mainly on textbook development but not based on strategic planning i.e. it was in ad hoc base with support mainly from Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working in the region.

The findings of the study also reveal that there is lack of finance to undertake curriculum works in almost all sample regions. But the data that were gained mainly through observation show that in all the three sample regions' REBs the facilities such as computers, chair, table, internet access etc are not the problems to carry out the PSCD in all the regions.

7.3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Central and Regional Governments in deciding on PSCD processes

The results of the study of the three regions indicate that need assessment and initiation of curriculum revision/change processes of PSCD have been dominated mainly by MoE. For instance, PSC change of 1994-1998 was based on the study of Education and Training Policy of 1994 of Ethiopia which was undertaken by the central government with participation of mainly MoE and AAU experts without regional representatives. Of

course, REBs were not established at the start of this study and hence their absence from this study can be attributed to this condition.

Furthermore, the summative evaluation of 2002, research study of 2007 and EGRA study of 2010 which became the bases for primary school curriculum revision/change were made by MoE. Though regional curriculum experts had some sort of participation in these studies, they played the role of assistance than decision makers. The participation of the regional curriculum experts in the need assessments was determined on the will of MoE's curriculum experts and yet there has not been bottom-up initiation of curriculum revision/change of primary school curriculum in Ethiopia.

The findings of the study show that though MoE argues that primary school syllabuses have been designed with the active participation of regional curriculum experts and professionals from all regions at central level, in reality it is MoE which has veto power to decide on PS syllabuses design. For instance, the syllabuses of all subjects of primary school in 1994-1998 were designed by ICDR and approved by the participation of regional curriculum experts and subject teachers on three days' workshop at the centre (ICDR, 2002). Similarly, the design of primary school syllabuses of 2008 and 2009 were also dominated by MoE experts. It was MoE that decided which regions could participate on which subjects' syllabus design at the centre based on quota system. This has created as indicated from the results of the study the absence of equal participation of regions and domination of MoE in centrally designed syllabuses.

The results of the study also indicate that the sample regions' education bureaus developed, published and distributed primary school curriculum materials until the implementation of GEQIP I budget in 2009 except textbooks of Civic and Ethical Education of Grades 5-8 and English Language starting from grade one which have been recentralized in all the three regions since 2003 and 2005 respectively. Since 2009 development, publication and distribution of primary school textbooks of AACA and ORS have been recentralized to the centre to be prepared by Private Publishing Agencies except Environmental Science of grades 1-4 and Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6. Whereas GRSEB has developed, published and distributed primary school Mother Tongue language textbooks, Integrated Science of grades 5 and 6, all first cycle primary

school textbooks except English language until recently. This implies that since the implementation of GEQIP budget GRSEB has relatively autonomy to prepare and publish its first cycle textbooks when compared to the two regions. However, there has been tendency in Oromia region to regain the preparation and publication of primary school Afaan Oromoo textbooks since the omission of first cycle Afaan Oromoo curriculum in 2017 because of public uprising.

The results of the study disclose that AACAEB has important roles and responsibilities in selecting Private Publishing Agencies, recruiting textbook writers and validating textbooks prepared by the agencies as stipulated in the textbook policy and strategy of 2006 whereas ORSEB's roles and responsibilities with these regard was minimal.

The findings of the study also show that there are no clear set roles and responsibilities between MoE and REBs in relation to PSCD. This of course has created role confusion to curriculum experts in these levels.

7.4. Participation of Local Stakeholders in PSCD

The findings of this study show that local stakeholders' active participation is lacking in PSC decision making in all the sample cases. It is only consultation of some local stakeholders (principals, teachers, students and parents) by MoE during needs assessment that has been undertaken. Different social organizations such as teacher association, religion leaders, women and child officers at woreda level were not communicated in developing the curriculum.

It is also indicated in the findings of the study that there was professional participation in adapting centrally developed syllabuses to the region and textbook validation in ORSEB before implementation of GEQIP I budget where as there has been textbook validation by various local stakeholders in AACAEB. In contrary, there has not been participation of local stakeholders in GRSEB in PSCD except consultation during need assessment.

The results of the study also reveal that there has not been institutionalized mechanism in all the three REBs of the sample regions to participate local stakeholders in PSCD.

Chapter Eight: Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1. Discussions

8.1.1. The strength of institutional capacity

The existence of conducive institutional capacity is the precondition to the success of organizational objectives. Accordingly, the presence of vision, mission, values, structure and roles and responsibilities are not a problem in all the sample regions' education bureaus though there are some differences in their contents. Any pass by can observe vision, mission and values posted everywhere in the campus and in each office. The physical sets up of regional curriculum department offices are well organized with material resources such as chairs, tables, desk top computers and internet access and they are assigned to different roles and responsibilities including the development of primary school curriculum. However, the regional curriculum department couldn't develop their PSC as mandated by the policy because of mainly lack of visionary leaderships. In all the sample regions, the heads of the bureaus and curriculum departments are appointed based on their political affiliation. Mulugeta (2012, p. 93) comments the negative impact such kind of appointment has as "Loyalty driven appointments, without taking capability into consideration, adversely affects the entire working environment. It pollutes employees' motivation, erodes citizenry feelings and trust". This practice, many of the regional curriculum experts believe, hinders them not to play their roles and responsibilities as planned and demoralize them. Informal communication works more than the formal one. Leaders prefer those who work what they said without questioning.

Here what is important is 'do what the boss says' than argument to reach consensus. Thus, the employees work based on the instructions that are given by their bosses. This has created communication gap between the leaders and the experts and increased the turnover of experts in all the studied regions. The leaders have full autonomy to decide on what seems correct to them as long as they have good rapport with their bosses. However, Willems and Baumert (2003) advocated two ways communication between leaders and experts as an effective means to attain institutional goals.

It becomes plain from the responses of the participants of the study that the leadership style in the regional education bureaus is the reflection of the political system in the country. As such leaders have been assigned to the position based on their political commitment than their knowledge and skills in the education. It becomes common trend to see education leaders without education background. This of course might be one of the causes for the deterioration of education quality in the country and should be readdressed appropriately.

8.1.2. Recruitment and development of curriculum experts

The existence of quality human power in an organization is considered as backbone to achieve its pre-stated goals and objectives. The findings of the study indicate that there was at least one curriculum expert for each subject in all the regions. Majority of the curriculum experts in studied regions have first degree and the rest have second degree. However, the curriculum experts in all the studied regions have no necessary competencies to develop curriculum because of the problems associated with recruitment criteria and absence of in-service training on curriculum development.

Clear set criteria for recruitment which correspond to the roles and responsibilities of the employees are mandatory to get the work done accordingly by recruited professionals which lacks in recruitment of curriculum experts in all sample regions. Curriculum experts have been recruited based on CPA in AACA and ORS which have no relation to curriculum development competencies whereas in GRS quota system recruitment was employed. Thus, with these poor recruitment criteria it is impossible to get appropriate expert who perform his/her assigned roles and responsibilities confidentially. To this end, since it difficult to get competent curriculum experts in curriculum development in our case, there should be strategic planning to capacitate curriculum experts in the regions.

This implies that strengthening sub-national government capacity is very crucial point to make decentralization policy works as intended. Willems and Baumert (2003) and Weidman and DePietro-Jurand (2011) maintain that for institution to be successful there should be employees' training with skills correspond to individual job and with right incentives. Without the presence of capacity, simply transferring authority and financial

resources to local levels to implement decentralized policies will not have the desired impact (Weidman & DePietro-Jurand, 2011).

Of course, there is document evidence that MoE recognizes the important of training for those who are working in curriculum development, textbook writers, publishers and distributors and developed guideline which reads as:

Providing or organizing training to curriculum development specialists, textbook writers, layout artists, textbook distributors, private sector publishers, private sector book sellers, and personnel in all other areas related to textbook development and distribution. Textbook writing, textbook production, textbook publication and textbook distribution all require specialist training and this training can be provided nationally. There are organizations overseas which specialize in training in all areas of book development, and these can come to provide in training in all areas of book development and these can come to provide suitable courses in Ethiopia (MoE, 2006a, p. 79).

The reasons for the need of this training, MoE (2002a) argues that currently textbooks are developed by experts other than MoE's and hence these new actors need short and long term training in textbooks preparation to address properly issues of nations, nationalities and peoples and gender balances. This in turn helped the textbook writers to develop quality textbooks.

It is true that to have quality curriculum and curriculum materials, building the capacity of professionals those who are participated in the process of curriculum development is mandatory. Nevertheless, in Ethiopian case based on the participants perspectives it seems that there has not been yet such kinds of capacity building irrespective of the ambitious guideline stated above by MoE. This guideline was developed before a decade and yet there has not been trial to implement it both by MoE and REBs.

The response of one experienced curriculum expert from ORSEB clearly shows the denial of training as follows:

There is no chance to update. Even to perform my regular roles, there is no training given for us. There is no direction given to you when you became members of the bureau. You work as it seems good for you. Thanks to the previous curriculum materials and internet access that helped me to perform my roles rather than training on my position (ORSEB SCE 2 on June 05, 2018).

Here it tells us that irrespective of its importance training on curriculum development is lacking. The results of studies by Lema (2015), Kebebe (2016) and Shiferaw (2010) with this regard revealed that there is lack of human power in curriculum development at regional level.

Hence, it is implied that caution is necessary to fulfill conducive institutional arrangements and knowledgeable and skillful human power prior to plan to implement decentralization policy effectively and efficiently.

8.1.3. The rhetoric and practice of regional autonomy in PSCD

The types of relationship that exist between the central and local governments can have potential to determine the success of the implementation of decentralization reform than anything else. Rhetorically, it is argued that the roles and responsibilities of central government in devolved decentralized system is to set and maintain standard and assist the local government and monitor its implementation whereas the local government should have autonomy to exercise its authority without asking for permission from central government (Hanson, 1997; Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983; Winkler, 1989). Similarly, Bannet et al. (1997) suggest the reciprocal relationship between the central government and the local government in decentralized system. In this case, power is everywhere, what Foucault calls 'immanent'. In such cases, both the central and local governments influence one another to construct knowledge. In other words, there is negotiation through dialogue and conversation between them.

Fiske (1996) argues that in decentralizing curriculum development the central government and the local governments are complementary to each other than continuum. As such, the central level, MoE has roles and responsibilities in setting the standards to

be followed by the local levels, support and coordinate the local levels in performing their mandated responsibilities and evaluating the implementation.

Decentralization policies have been in the top of agenda in Ethiopia since 1991 change of government. To this end, the 1995 constitution of Ethiopia advocates decentralization to form federal system of governance to at least minimize the problems associated with the previous centralized governance.

With regard to education; Proclamation No. 41/1993 states the power and duties of MoE and REBs with the framework of decentralization. As such, MoE formulates and implements policies, strategies and plans, and establishes and implements national standards. Furthermore, specific to primary school curriculum it guides regional governments in curriculum development. REBs as well have been mandated to ensure the quality of education in the region, prepare and implement the curriculum of the primary education and provide textbooks and other learning teaching materials appropriately prepared for the primary education in the region (TGE, 1993).

Thus, it can be said that rhetorically, as Kraft (1995) states regions have mandated the authority to develop their PSC to the extent that they can alter or change based on the general guideline of MoE. Nevertheless, in contrary to the above rhetoric many of the PSCD activities as revealed in this study were done by MoE with minimal participation of the sample regions' education bureaus. Although need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design and textbook development are considered as main processes of curriculum development in the literature, the findings of the study reveal that decisions with these regard were made mainly by MoE. This can be evident from what has been done in syllabuses design and textbook development and publication at different periods.

To specifically analyze the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs with regard to PSCD, it is good to have first definition of 'curriculum development' in Ethiopian context. To this end, ICDR (1994:10) states curriculum development as:

A comprehensive term, that includes collection of information, curriculum planning, developing the syllabus and other instructional material[s], trying or testing the materials, in selected sample schools, evaluate the materials, improve the materials according to the results of the try out evaluation and implementation of the curriculum.

This implies that curriculum development involves important steps such as need assessment, curriculum planning, developing the syllabus, developing and publishing textbooks etc. Since REBs have been mandated to develop PSC legally, they are responsible for the steps discussed above. In reality, however, the results of the study indicate that these processes of the curriculum development of PS were done by MoE.

Previously each region was participated in centrally developed syllabus approval with invitation from MoE and prepared and published its own textbooks. For instance, the syllabi of all subjects of primary school in 1994-1998 were designed by ICDR and approved by the participation of regional curriculum experts and subject teachers on three days' workshop at the centre (ICDR, 2002). However, study by Palme et al. (1996) indicates the problems associated with in this workshop as follows:

...some serious discontent with the workshops were expressed by specialist by regional level,...the workshop as such probably represent a necessary step in the process of curriculum reform, if national standards, as expressed by the national syllabi, should have any legitimacy at regional level. It was argued that the workshops were organized in an old fashioned way with focus on a theoretical presentation of content and almost totally lacking the kind of practical, hands-on approach, the regional curriculum developers so much need. Several curriculum developers from the strong regions [Amhara and Oromia] made the point that the ICDR specialists both have little useful knowledge on teaching problems in primary education and lack sufficient understanding of the regional educational realities. As a result, the workshops tend to be increasingly irrelevant to curriculum development in their respective regions (pp. 27-28).

The response of one participant from ORSEB who participated in the workshop also strengthens the reality. As such, ORSCL1 narrates the condition as: “if syllabus is developed at the center, everything is in that syllabus such as objectives, contents, learning-teaching methods and evaluation mechanisms. In validating the syllabuses most of the time the voices of the regions which disagreed with the work of the centre were diluted” (OREB CL1, on June, 05, 2018).

This shows that there was dissatisfaction of regional curriculum experts with the work of ICDR curriculum experts and the absence of negotiation between MoE and regional curriculum experts in validating the centrally developed syllabi. It is also revealed in the study that regions participated on centrally developed syllabi based on quota principle designed by MoE where there are big variations among regional participation. This can be evident from the table six (6) as indicated below:

Table 6: Participants in PS Syllabuses Design of 2008 and 2009 at MoE

Subject	Grades	Year	Levels and no. of Experts/professionals Participated			
			MoE	AACAEB	GRSEB	ORSEB
English	1_4	2008	5	1	0	0
English	5_8	2008	5	1	0	0
Environmental science	1_4	2008?	10	1	0	0
Integrated science	5 & 6	2008	8	6	2	2
Mathematics	1_4	2008	4	1	0	1
Mathematics	5_8	2008	3	3	0	1
Social studies	5_8	2009	4	5	2	0
Biology	7&8	2008	3	3	1	1
Chemistry	7&8	2008	3	3	0	1
Total			45	27	5	6

Source: Tallied from Each Syllabus

The data in Table 6 disclose that MoE curriculum experts' domination on syllabuses design of PS. To this end, the total number of curriculum experts and/or professionals who participated in syllabuses design of PS of 2008 and 2009 were 45, 27, 6 and 5 from MoE, AACAEB, ORSEB and GRSEB respectively. The data also reveal that there was variation among REBs participation in design of syllabuses. As such, AACAEB participated in all syllabuses development though the number of participants was minimal compared to MoE's participants whereas GRSEB and ORSEB had not participated in all development of syllabuses. While GRSEB participated in three out of nine, ORSEB participated in five out of total nine syllabuses development.

Thus, it can be concluded here that primary school syllabuses design of the period was dominated by MoE's curriculum experts. During this period, the regional curriculum experts were participated based on the principle of quota system designed by MoE. With this regard, the response of one participant can be taken as exemplary for clarification as indicated below:

...we give them [REBs] quota. Based on this all regions were included but this doesn't mean that all regions participate in all subjects' syllabus development. One region can only participate in certain subjects. If we want to participate all regions in all subjects' syllabus development, there are no enough budget and places (rooms) to accommodate in the MoE. Therefore, if some regions participate in English [syllabus design], others participate in Mathematics, for example (MoE SCE 4 interviewed on March 26, 2018).

The argument of MoE on quota system seems unconvincing in that there is budget allocation to curriculum development in general and syllabus design in particular specially associated with GEQIP I budget. To this end, curriculum development at all levels of education was taken as one of the six quality package funded through GEQIP I.

Previously, almost all PS textbooks were prepared and published by the regions. Nevertheless, since 2003 there has tendency to recentralize PS text books to the centre. For instance, preparation and publication of Civic and Ethical education of grades 5-8 and English Language of 1-8 have been taken to the centre since 2003 and 2005

respectively. MoE established body that controls Civic and Ethical education to assess needs and centralized the preparation of textbooks based on eleven common values identified where as with regard to English language the reference manual of MoE stipulated the role of MoE as “Responsible for developing the textbooks for English language at primary schools...” (MoE, 2002, p.79).

Moreover, the responsibility to develop and publish textbooks of almost all primary education subjects has also been taken by MoE especially in AACA and ORS since 2009. With this regard, Girma and Raysarkar (2017) state that:

Primary school textbooks in four Mother Tongue languages (Amharic, Afaan Oromo, Af-Somali and Tigrigna) were prepared, published and distributed centrally by private agencies. Only Environmental Science textbooks of grade 1-4 and grade 5-6 Integrated Science textbooks were developed at REBs level.

To advance the choice and competition of Private Publishing Agencies in textbook development, publication and distribution, MoE developed textbook policy and strategy and established new structure under curriculum development and implementation directorate that is named as ‘Textbook Preparation Coordinator Office’ at the centre.

A textbook policy and strategy were developed to deal with the issues of textbook quality and availability and to make clear the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders from centre to the local levels. Textbook Preparation Coordination Office of MoE works mainly as coordinator of financing of textbooks, teachers guide and supplementary materials development, publication and distribution (Smart & Alebachew, 2006). In addition, they state that textbook coordination office should ensure that the textbooks are not overloaded with content while developing evaluation criteria. It also assists the REBs to develop criteria for evaluation of textbooks that fulfills the needs of students by contextualizing the curriculum.

The major argument that MoE made in taking textbooks preparation and publication to the centre was indicated as below:

A policy of offering a single textbook (title) for core subjects helped to achieve economies of scale, and the larger print runs reduced textbook unit costs.

Effective and fair mechanisms like international competitive bidding helped to locate the most economical bidders. Bundling development, printing, and distribution of textbooks helped create a linear production process. Finally, clear quality specifications and high production values for learning materials increased their lifespan and helped to reduce recurrent production costs (Girma & Raysarkar, 2017, p. ix).

Here the argument explicitly sets issue of cost reduction as major pillar to recentralize textbooks publication. It is assumed that when textbooks are published in large numbers by single agency, the cost will be reduced. In addition, quality textbooks that can stay for a long period of time can be gained through international competition. Though it is important to have such textbooks with minimum costs, the issue of curriculum development process (syllabus design and textbooks preparation) should deserve more attention. It is this curriculum development process that determines the quality of contents of the curriculum which are the main pillar of education than the external one.

Here based on the above discussion it can be argued that the main argument of MoE in regaining of PS textbooks' development and publication to the centre was to improve the quality of textbooks. What does quality mean in this case? Is it external, physical aspect of the textbooks or the internal one which comprises of the 'what' and 'how' of the contents? Thus, MoE gives more emphasis to least unit costs and the physical quality of curriculum materials than the internal issue of curriculum such as how contents are selected and organized and materials are developed.

To this end, PS textbooks' preparation and publication have been given to Private Publishing Agencies. In textbook policy and strategy, it is indicated that the roles and responsibilities of MoE and REBs in administering centrally developed textbooks by Private Publishing Agencies are collaborative. As such, they are supposed to develop criteria for the evaluation of textbooks developed by publishers, announce tenders for the submission of textbooks for evaluation and approval, validate textbooks based on criteria set, establish production specification for durability and printing quality textbooks etc (Smart & Alebachew, 2006).

Nonetheless, the results of the study disclose that it was only AACAEB which had important roles and responsibilities in selecting Private Publishing Agencies, recruiting textbook writers and validating textbooks prepared by the agencies as stipulated in the textbook policy and strategy of 2006 whereas ORSEB's roles and responsibilities with these regard was minimal. Many participants at regional level questioned the quality issue of textbooks prepared by Private Publishing Agencies. In the first case, these agencies have been mandated to give textbooks preparation to any one they like without any prescribed criteria to recruit professionals. Secondly, the textbooks were implemented without piloted testing. So, with these realities how can it be possible to maintain quality issues? It seems that MoE gave more emphasis on the 'hardware' of the textbooks than the 'software' issue.

Instead of capacitating the regional experts with knowledge and skills of how to develop and implement decentralization, MoE most of the time argues lack of human power in the regions to retain the power of the regions.

Though setting and maintaining standards, supporting and monitoring the local government while preparing and implementing the decentralization reform is considered as the core role and responsibility of the central government to be successful, in practice there has not been such trails by MoE to capacitate regions to develop their PSC instead MoE prefers to relinquish the mandated authority. Akalewold (2005) argues this reality in the following manner:

The Ministry dominates curriculum decision environment in the name of 'setting and maintaining standards', 'provision of assistance', 'ensure whether the curriculum developed at all levels was free from gender, cultural and political bias'. Capitalizing these discretions, the Ministry goes beyond its jurisdiction in developing primary curriculum (p.1).

This of course, contradicts with Paqueo and Lammert (2000) argument that states the transfer of authority in the form of devolution "cannot be revoked on a whim". In case problem arise as the result of implementation of decentralization, there should be measures to regain the authority devolved (Leung, 2004). This means that the measure to

take the devolved authority back to the centre should be made through decisions of the legislators not MoE.

Thus, contrary to Bannet et al. (1997) speculation which advocates reciprocal relationship between central and local government, the relationship between MoE and REBs in developing PSC is not reciprocal rather MoE influences the studied sample regions education bureaus in knowledge construction of PSC. In most cases, it is experts of MoE that decide who and when experts from each region participate on the curriculum development process.

Therefore, Akalewold (2005) is right in concluding the decentralization of PSC in Ethiopia as:

The practice of curriculum decentralization was tightly controlled by central agencies. All major curriculum decisions were made centrally. The Ministry [MoE] therefore remained to be the key player although regional states took part quite lately to elaborate these decisions. Regions were involved when these decisions were translated by commissioned writers (since the subjects were written in regional languages for which the Ministry lacks expertise) (p.11).

The work of Scott and Rao (2011) depicts that the problem associated with the relationship between central and local government to implement decentralization reform because of unwillingness of the central government to transfer the power to the local governments. Hanson (1997) also states this condition in the following manner:

The exercise of power in a large organization brings psychological as well as material rewards that senior officials are often reluctant to give up or share with regional/municipal officials. Consequently, national officials who have extensive experience managing a centralized system are usually not the best candidates to manage a decentralized system (p.3).

The response of one of the key informants from ORSEB also substantiates the above view in the following way “they [experts who worked in the previous regime] speak theoretically the current policy but practically their minds perform as the previous one”.

This suggests the need to train the central experts intensively to work in decentralized system or change their roles and responsibilities instead of continuing in the same fashion.

Despite of the existing reality, putting all regions in 'One Box' is dangerous and not democratic way of doing things. This condition deprives regions freedom to develop their own PSC. With some regions posing to use their mandate, MoE represses their voices and decided to retain the power to develop and publish textbooks of PS of all regions in similar fashion. It seems that the centre prefer to treat regions together instead of supporting them individually which add on the experts side more load. But to be effective, regions should be treated based on their real conditions and problems.

To this end, MoE should identify the regions by analyzing their real problems and support them to bring improvement than looking all regions with 'One Lens'. In reality there are many differences among regions in both human power as well as availability of resources. But the results of the study show that after almost two decades since the education decentralization has been implemented, the central government, MoE raises the issue of human capacity problem at regional level to carry out PSCD. First of all who is blamed for this lack? MoE or REBs? It is MoE who should be criticized for inability to capacitate human power at regional level because capacitating the human power is the main role and responsibility of the central government in decentralized system (Hanson, 2000).

Furthermore, the existence of clear set roles and responsibilities are the precondition for any organization to attain its desired goals. Decentralization of authority alone is not enough without plain classification of roles and responsibilities among different levels of governments. With this regard, Weidman and DePietro-Jurand (2011) suggest the existence of plain rules that define the authority and accountability of different actors and mechanisms of communication among different levels enhance decision making in decentralized system. Similarly, Popic and Patel (2011) argue that clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government is very crucial to be effective in implementing decentralization reforms. They explain it as:

Without a clear definition of function such as who is in charge, who has oversight, how that oversight can be exercised, what the sanctions are if a procedure is violated or a standard is not met, how national funds are to be locally distributed, etc., there would be no clarity on decision-making procedures, and no consistency on policy implementation(p.16).

This implies that clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different actors in decentralization reform is very important to have clear decision making procedures which will lead to implement the presumed policy accordingly.

However, the results of the study disclose that there are no clear set roles and responsibilities between MoE and the studied sample regions' education bureaus with regard to PSCD. Tilahun et al. (1999) study result confirms this reality stating that “Decentralization of administration and devolution of power to the regional and sub-regional levels is by and large welcome; but there are no clear and detailed outlines regarding the relationship between the Ministry of Education and the regional education bureaus...” (p. 16). To improve this condition, they recommended to have well defined roles and responsibilities at different educational levels, plan for capacity building in all levels of education and set minimum standards for institutional arrangements.

8.1.4. Participation of local stakeholders in PSCD

Local stakeholders' participation has been seen as a bridge to democracy and development in decentralized system. To this end, one of the promises of decentralization in the form of devolution is to hear the voices of local stakeholders that affects them (Komatsu, 2011; Ribot, 2002; Naidoo, 2003). As such, Scott and Rao (2011), Barnett et al. (1997) and Manor (2003) argue that decentralization makes the government closer to the people and hold the government more accountable and responsive to the needs of civil society. In other words, this implies that the decentralized institution should be accountable, transparent and responsive to citizen needs, opinions, and requests in democratic decentralization which opens spaces for a wider and deeper participation of people at local level.

In education context, democratic/political decentralization may mean giving citizens or their representatives the power to decide on their educational matters (Fiske, 1996). This can be described as “the devolution of policy and decision making power (such as over content of curricula) to local governments” (Hinsz et al., 2006), mainly with the participation of local stakeholders in the decision making (UNESCO-IBE, 2002). This can be performed through, ADB (2001) as cited in UNESCO-IBE (2002) depicts, a broad-based consultation process mechanisms which is the basis for curriculum change.

Currently, in Ethiopia the participation of local stakeholders in socio-economic and political processes has got more attention. For instance, Article 43 (sub-article 2) of the Constitution explains that citizens’ participation as “Nations have the right to participate in national development and, in particular, to be consulted with respect to policies and projects affecting their community”.

In Education and Training policy of 1994 it is also indicated that all stakeholders have been made to participate on curriculum preparation, implementation and evaluation through designing mechanisms. More specifically, active participation of community in PSCD is encouraged as stated in MoE (2002).

Nevertheless, the findings of this study show that local stakeholders’ active participation is lacking in PSC decision making in all the sample cases. It is only consultation of local stakeholders (principals, teachers, students and parents) by MoE during needs assessment that has been undertaken. This type of consultation, according to Shaeffer (1994) is a weaker form of activity than participation that guarantees empowerment of local stakeholders in decision making.

The results of the study also reveal that there have not been institutionalized mechanisms in all the three REBs of the sample regions to participate local stakeholders in PSC decision making. However, Gravingholt et al. (2006) and Seddon (2002) advocate the existence of formalized regular mechanisms channels of participation in decision making process than simply ad hoc basis or issue driven. With regard to curriculum development in Agroforestry Education, the work of Rudebjer and A del Castillo (1999) disclose that the absence of mechanisms through which different outsider stakeholders can participate

in curriculum development rather than simply consulted in a training needs analysis, has been considered as the major challenge.

Generally, the findings of the study disclose that the extent of participation to those who participated (principals, teachers, students and parents) was minimal. Thus, according to Shaeffer's (1994) ladder of participation it is involvement through consultation on a particular issue which is considered as a weaker form of activity than participation and hence the participation of principals, teachers, students and parents in need assessment is involvement than active participation which implies that these stakeholders have not been empowered to make decision in PSC decision making.

In addition the local stakeholders who were consulted in this case didn't represent all the local stakeholders such as teacher association, women and youth association and other social organizations. It seems that the rhetoric of participation of local stakeholders in PSCD was not present in practice. It is only some of the local stakeholders who were involved in only some of the activities of PSCD. This may be attributed the REBs inability to identify their local stakeholders and make them to participate as stated in the policy.

8.2. Conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia since 1993. The findings of the study overall reveal that though there was legislation to decentralize PSCD at rhetoric level, in practice the sample regional states have not been yet in a position to use their mandated authority. This is because of the inconvenience of internal institutional arrangements of the REBs to perform their roles and responsibilities as planned as well as the central government interest to hold the power at the centre than transferring to the regions. The political assignment of leaders at different positions in REBs could be seen as a bottleneck to perform different activities of the organization professionally. Leaders have been more committed to perform the political agenda that has been given to them than working collaboratively with the experts. In most cases, curriculum experts at the regional level lack commitment and confidence to perform their roles and responsibilities professionally because of the

influence of their bosses. They have no knowledge and skills to develop curriculum and there is also no strategic planning to train them. Although capacitating the local government is considered as the main role and responsibility of central government in decentralized system, MoE has played minimal role with this regard. Instead MoE has interested to hold authority that was given to regions to develop their PSC.

Furthermore, the evidences gained from cross case analysis of cases show that the authority to devolve PSCD has not been yet transferred to make the regions autonomous in developing their own PSC. Though generally curriculum development process at least comprises of processes such as need assessment, initiation of curriculum revision/change, syllabus design, textbook preparation and publication, the results of the study show that decentralization of PSCD to the regions in this case is reduced to only textbook development and publication. This means that decisions on many of PSCD processes have been made by MoE. As a result the primary school curricula knowledge have not yet constructed based on persuasive or dialogue of central and local governments, but with domination of MoE on decision making of many of curriculum development processes. In other words, power in this case is concentrated at the centre implying the lack of shared responsibility or reciprocal relationship between MoE and the sample regions' education bureaus in developing PSC. In short power with this regard goes in the form of **'Top-Down'** fashion.

The absence of clear set roles and responsibilities for both MoE and REBs in developing PSC has created role confusion and made them to act on the arbitrary bases. The main role and responsibility of MoE PSCD assumed to be providing assistance to the regions though the types of assistance are not mentioned. This implies that there is no strategic planning to perform PSCD by MoE and REBs.

One of the merits of curriculum decentralization is to enhance active participation of the local stakeholders in decision making of curriculum contents. This encourages developing curriculum based on the needs and interests of the local citizens. However, it can be concluded from the evidences gained that the local stakeholders had minimal role and responsibility to influence on primary school curriculum contents. Almost all decisions with this regard were made by experts and professionals at the centre and the

regions. The regions have less awareness on their accountability to the local stakeholders which is one of the main pillars in system of decentralization and have given less emphasis to the participation of local stakeholders in PSC decision making. There has not been systematic set mechanism by the regions to encourage active participation of local stakeholders in PSC decision making.

8.3. Recommendations

To implement decentralization of PSCD as expected and to have its merits, there must be institutional strengths (conducive institutional arrangements and human power), proper transfer of authority, responsibilities and resources, the ability and confidence to use authority autonomously and local stakeholders' active participation in decision making. However, as can be understood from the findings of the study, decentralization of PSCD in Ethiopia is in its infant stage. There have not been yet favorable conditions that encourage the implementation of decentralization of PSCD as stated in the policy. This implies that much work should be done in the future to implement devolution of PSCD at regional level.

Hence, with a view to promote the success of PSCD decentralization the following suggestions are forwarded to policy makers to be reconsidered:

- **Restructuring curriculum department:** there is a need to restructure the existing structure of curriculum department both at central and regional levels to improve the existing situation. As such there should be institutes of curriculum at the centre and regional levels. The central level institute of curriculum has to work to set standards to be followed by regional curriculum institutes and it should give support and monitor its implementation. In addition, it has the responsibility to coordinate regional institutes to share experiences. The regional institutes of curriculum should be autonomous with the roles and responsibilities to develop, evaluate and research their regional primary school curricula.
- **Establish human resource management department:** the curriculum institute at regional level must have well established human resource management department that will have strategic plan on experts' recruitment, development, appraisal and incentives.

➤ **Reasonable budget allocation to regional curriculum institutes:** the regional government should allocate budget to their curriculum institute which is sufficient to perform the PSC tasks. Besides, the funded budget from international organizations for the purpose of PSC should be allocated for regional curriculum institutes based on clear set criteria.

➤ **Setting channels/mechanisms to communicate with local stakeholders:** one of the main objectives of decentralization in the form of devolution is to guarantee the voices of local stakeholders to be heard on issues that affect them. Hence, the regional curriculum institutes must have mechanisms to communicate with local stakeholders which encourage their active participation on PSCD decision making.

➤ **Setting clear roles and responsibilities for the actors:** the will be established central and regional curriculum institutes should negotiate and set their roles and responsibilities clearly on PSCD based on decentralization framework.

8.4. Research areas in the future

In Ethiopian context there is dearth of research on concepts related to curriculum decentralization. This implies that there is a need to study these concepts in the future exhaustively to improve the implementation of curriculum decentralization. Curriculum decentralization has become the topic of discussion globally and hence it requires not only experts who develop and implement but also researchers who identify its strengths and drawbacks and forward the alternatives to improve the existing problems. The ultimate goal of curriculum decentralization is to make learning based on local contexts which can satisfy the needs and interests of local stakeholders including students. Therefore, curriculum institutes and educational researchers are recommended to conduct research on the following curriculum decentralization related concepts:

- The influence of politics on implementation of decentralization of PSCD
- The relationships between REBs top management and curriculum department
- Opportunities and challenges to implement decentralization of PSCD
- Perception of local stakeholders on decentralization of curriculum

References

- Addis Ababa City Administration (2012). The Addis Ababa City Government Executive and Municipal Service Organs Reestablishment Proclamation. *Addis Negari Gazeta of the City Government of Ababa. Fourth Year No. 35*. Addis Ababa.
- Addis Ababa City Government of Education Bureau (2009). Addis Ababa City Government of Education Bureau Business Process Re-engineering plan. Addis Ababa.
-
- _____ (2018). *Education statistics annual abstract 2009 E.C.(2016/17G.C)*. City Government of Addis Ababa Education Bureau. Addis Ababa
- Abdulahi Abdi (2008). *Decentralization of primary education service delivery to the district: A comparative study between Somali Region and South Nation, Nationalities and People Region (SNNPR)*. Master Thesis (unpublished). Erasmus University.
- Aitchison, J. (2006). Decentralization, management of diversity and curriculum renovation: A study of literacy education in four African countries (Botswana, Kenya, South Africa and Uganda). *Association for the Development of Education in Africa*, Libreville, Gabon.
- Akalewolde Eshete (2005). Devolution of rhetoric and practice of curriculum policy making in Ethiopian primary education. *EJOSSAH, Vol. III*, No. 1.
- Alaerts, G., Hartvelt, F., & Warner, J. (1997). Capacity building beyond project approach. *Waterlines, 15*, 2_6.
- Alemayehu Bishaw & Lasser, J. (2012). Education in Ethiopia: Past, present and future prospects. *African Nebula (5)*: 53-70.
- Arnstein, Sh.R.(1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 35*: 4, 216 -224

- Astiz, M.F., Wiseman, A.W., & Baker, D.P. (2002). Slouching towards decentralization: Consequences of globalization for curricular control in national education systems. *Comparative Education Review*, 46(1), 66-86.
- Auerbach, E. (1992). *Making meaning, making change: Participatory curriculum development in Adult ESL Literacy*. University of Massachusetts: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems.
- Ayalew GebreSellassie. (1964). *Three years experience in education*. Unpublished Material.
- Barnett, C. C., Minis, H.P., & Sant, J. (1997). *Democratic decentralization: A paper prepared for the United States Agency for International Development under the IQC for democracy and governance*, Contract No. AEP-5468-I-00-6014-00, Task
- Bahru Zewude (2002). *Society, State, and History Selected Essay: An overview and assessment of Gambella trade (1904-1935)*
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative Report*, 13(4), pp. 544-559. McMaster University, West Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/baxter.pdf>.
- Behrman, J. R., Deolalikar, A.B., & Soon, L. (2002). Conceptual issues in the role of education decentralization in promoting effective schooling in Asian developing countries. *ERD Working Paper Series No. 22: Economics and Research Department*.
- Best, J.W., & Kahn, J.V. (1986). *Research in education* (5th ed.). Prentice-Hall.
- Bezabih Wondimu (2019). An overview of Ethiopian education system, curriculum, curriculum development processes and its historical trends and patterns: A review. *Historical Research Letter*. Vol.50. www.iiste.org ISSN 2224-3178 (Paper) ISSN 2225-0964 (Online)
- Bjork, Ch. (2003). Local responses to decentralization policy in Indonesia. *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 47, no. 2. The Comparative and International Education Society. DOI: 0010-4086/2003/4702-0003\$05.00

- _____ (2004). Decentralization in education, institutional culture and teacher autonomy in Indonesia. *International Review of Education*, DOI: 10.1007/s11159-004-2622-6. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226591535>
- Bowen, G, A. (2009) Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 27-40. DOI: 10.3316/QRJ0902027.
- Brennen, A. M. (2002). *Centralization versus decentralization*. Retrieved on February, 2018.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3:2, 77-101. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bray, M. (1999). Community partnerships in education: Dimensions, variations, and implications. *EFA Thematic Study*. Comparative Education Research Centre.
- _____ (2003). *Control of education: Issues and tensions in centralization and decentralization*. In R.F. Arnove and C.A. Torres (Eds.), *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*. Second edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Central Statistics Agency (CSA) of Ethiopia (2007). *Population and housing census results*. Addis Ababa: CSA.
- Chernyha, L.T., & Burg, S.L. (2008). *Devolution and democracy: Identity, preferences, and voting in the Spanish state of autonomies*. Conference on Rethinking Ethnicity and Ethnic Strife: Multidisciplinary Perspectives. Central European University/Cornell University/University of Michigan.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1985). *Research Methods in Education* (2 ed.). London: Croom Helm.
- Creighton, J. L. (2005). *The public participation handbook: Making better decisions through citizen involvement*. USA. JOSSEY BASS.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks.

- _____ (2012). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4thed.). Boston. PEARSON.
- Darlington, B.O., & Scott, A. H. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Stories from the field*.
- Dawson, C. (2002). *Practical research methods: A user-friendly guide to mastering research techniques and projects*, How to books Ltd.
- Department for International Development (DFID) (2006). Developing capacity? An evaluation of DFID- funded technical co-operation for economic management in Sub-Saharan Africa Synthesis Report. Oxford Policy Management.
- Desta Asayehgn (1979). Socio-economic and educational reforms in Ethiopia (1942-1974): Correspondence and contradiction. *HEP Occasional Papers No. 50*. UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Dickovick, J.T., & Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher (2010). *Comparative assessment of decentralization in Africa: Ethiopia desk study*. USAID Report.
- Dickovick, J. T., & Riedl, R. B. (2010). *Comparative assessment of decentralization in Africa: final report and summary of findings*. Washington, DC: United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
- Dickovick, J. T. & Wunsch, J. S. (2014). *Decentralization in Africa: The paradox of state strength*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Incorporated.
- Dugan, M. (2003). *Integrative power: Beyond intractability*. Retrieved March 15: 2007.-
- Eade, D.(2007). *Capacity-building: An approach to people centered development*. UK and Ireland. Oxfam
- Ethiopian Human Rights Council (2003). *The impact of federalism on education in Ethiopia* (1991_1998). Addis Ababa.
- Ethiopian Peoples Republic Democratic Front (2001). Fourth Congress Report, August 2001

- Faguet, J.P. (2011). *Decentralization and governance*. Economic Organization and Public Policy Discussion Papers, EOPP 027. London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK. Retrieved from <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/37346/>
- Faletti, T. (2004). *Federalism and decentralization in Argentina: Historical background and new intergovernmental relations*. In Tulchin, J. S. and Selee, A.(eds.).*Decentralization and democratic governance in Latin America*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C. website: www.wilsoncenter.org
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1994). *Education and Training Policy*. St. George Printing Press. Addis Ababa
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995).*The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*, Federal *Negarit Gazeta*, 1st Year no. 1, 21st August, Addis Ababa: FDRE.
-
- (2005).*Proclamation No. 471/2005. Definitions of powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*. Federal *Negarit Gazeta* of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. P. 3276.
-
- (2010). *Proclamation No. 691/2010. Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia* Proclamation. P.5626
-
- (2019).*Ethiopia. gov.et Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa City Administration. Web site
- Fiske, E. B. (1996). *Decentralization of education: Politics and consensus*. World Bank Publications.
- Flick,U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Florestal, K., & Cooper, R. (1997). *Decentralization of education: Legal issues*. World Bank Publications.
- Gambella Regional State Education Bureau (2012). *Gambella Regional State Education Bureau Institutional structure* (unpublished). Simles Consulting. Addis Ababa.

-
- (2017). *Gambella Regional State Education Bureau Education Statistics Annual Abstract*. Education Management Information System. Gambella.
- Garcia, M., & Rajkumar, A. S.(2008). *Achieving better service delivery through decentralization in Ethiopia*. World Bank Publications.
- Gershberg, A. I., & Meade, B. (2003). *Parental contributions, school-level finances, and decentralization: An analysis of Nicaraguan autonomous school budgets*. New York, NY: Community Development Research Center, Milano Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy, New School University.
- Gershberg, A. I., & Winkler, D. R. (2003). *Education decentralization in Africa: A review of recent policy and practice*. World Bank.
- Girma Woldetsadik & Raysarkar, Ch. (2017).Textbook provision for all in Ethiopia: Lessons learned from the General Education Quality Improvement Project (GEQIP) 1. *International Bank for Reconstruction and Development*. The World Bank. Washington, DC.
- Goldring, E.B.(1994). *Communities and parents' participation in curriculum decisions*. In the International Encyclopedia of Education. 2nd ed. Vol.2 by Husen,T and Postlethwhite.
- Goldsmith, A.A. (1992). Institutions and planned socioeconomic change: Four approaches. *Public Administration Review*, 52, 582_7.
- _____.(1993). Institutional development in national agricultural research: Issues for impact assessment. *Public administration and development*, 13, 1995-204.
- Gravingholt, J.,Doerr,B., Meissner, K., Pletziger,S., von Rumker,J., & Weikert, J.(2006). Strengthening participation through decentralization: Findings on local economic development in Kyrgyzstan. *German Development Institute*.

- Gulyani,S., De Groot,D., Yitbarek Tessema, Meheret Ayenew & Connors, G. (2001). *Municipal decentralization in Ethiopia: A rapid assessment*. Draft for discussion and comments.
- Gumbel, P., Nyström,K., & Samuelsson, R. (1983). Education in Ethiopia 1974- 82: The impact of Swedish Assistance. *Education Division Documents No.1*
- Halasz, G., Ganami, E., Havas, P. & Vago, I. (2001). *The development of the Hungarian education system*. National institute for public education. <ftp://ftp.oki.hu/bie/bie.pdf>
- Hancock, D.R. & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers*. Teachers College Press, New York.
- Hanson, E. M. (1997). *Educational Decentralization: Issues and Challenges*. Inter-American Dialogue: Corporation for Development Research Washington, DC.
- Hinsz, S., Patel, M., Meyers, C., & Dammert, A. (2006). *Effects of decentralization on primary education: Phase I: a survey of east Asia and the Pacific Islands*. UNICEF Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.
- Hodgson, G.M.(2006). What are institutions? *Journal of Economic Issues*. XL. 1-25. DOI: 10.1080/00213624.2006.11506879.
- Holdar, G.G. & Zakharchenko, O. (eds.). (2002). *Citizen participation handbook: People's Voice Project International Centre for Policy Studies*.
- Hosch-Dayican, B. (2010). *Political involvement and democracy: How Benign is the future of post-industrial politics?* Ph.D. thesis (unpublished)., University of Twente, The Netherlands.
- Illy, H. F. (1995). *Decentralization of political system: a worldwide trend?* In Federalism in the Sudan, H. M. Salih, et al.(eds.) Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, pp. 4 – 13.
- Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR) (1994). *Education and training programme: Including period allotment and contents selection criteria*. Short term plan for developing and implementing the new curriculum.

-
- (2002). *Primary education (1_8) summative evaluation, executive summary report*. Curriculum evaluation and educational research coordination. Addis Ababa.
- Indriyanto, B. (2005). *School-based management: Issues and hopes towards decentralization in education in Indonesia*. Retrieved on November 19/2018, from <http://www.worldedreform.com/intercon3/third/f-bumbang.pdf>
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2012). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles. SAGE Publications, inc.
- Kamat, S. (2002). Deconstructing the rhetoric of decentralization: The state in education reform. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 2 (2), 110–119.
- Karlsen, G. E. (2000). Decentralized centralism: Framework for a better understanding of governance in the field of education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 15 (5), 525-538, DOI: 10.1080/026809300750001676. .
- Kebebe Negewo (2016). *Practice, opportunities and challenges of decentralized primary school curriculum development: The case of Oromia Regional State*. Master Thesis (Unpublished). Addis Ababa University.
- Keller, E. J. (2002). Ethnic federalism, fiscal reform, development and democracy in Ethiopia. *African Journal of Political Science*, 7 (1), 21-50.
- Keller, E. J. & Smith, L. (2005). *Obstacles to implementing territorial decentralization: The first decade of Ethiopian federalism*. Sustainable peace: Power and democracy after civil wars: 265-291
- Ker, A.(2003). *Evaluating capacity development: Experiences from Canada, Chile, the Dominican Republic, South Africa and South Korea* [Online]. Available from IDRC at: http://www.crdi.ca/en/ev-43616-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html retrieved on December 5th 2018.
- Khan, A.M., & Mirza, M.S.(2011). Implementation of decentralization in education in Pakistan: framework, status and the way forward. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, 5 (2),146 -169. Retrieved from <http://www.ue.edu.pk/jrre>

- Kimpston, R.D. & Anderson, D.H. (1982). *A study to analyze curriculum decision making in the school districts*. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Komatsu, T. (2011). *Decentralization and accountability contexts: District education officers' perspectives on education in post-devolution Pakistan*. 14 (2): 189-203.
- Kraft, R.J. (1995). An International curricular perspective on decentralization: An Introduction to its Problems, prospective and evaluation. *Ethiopian Curriculum Policy Workshop*. Addis Ababa. October 23-25, 1995.
- Lee, J.S. (2013). The process of decentralization in Ethiopia since 1991: Issues on improving efficiency. *Korea Review of International Studies*, 16 (1), retrieved from <https://gsis.korea.ac.kr/wp-content/>
- Lemma Setegn (2015). *Curriculum planning process for the primary level education in post-1991 Ethiopia: The case of Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State*. Ph.D. Dissertation (unpublished). Addis Ababa University.
- Lijphart, A. (1984). *Democracies*. Yale University. New Haven.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G.(1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Linnell, D. (2003). *Evaluation of Capacity Building: Lessons from the Field*. Alliance for Nonprofit Management, retrieved from <http://seerconsulting.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/Evaluation-of-Capacity-Building-Lessons-from-Field.pdf>
- Litvack, J., & Seddon, J. (eds.). (2002). *Decentralization Briefing Notes*. World Bank Institute Working Papers in collaboration with PREM network.
- Loh, J. (2013). Inquiry into Issues of Trustworthiness and Quality in Narrative Studies: A Perspective. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(33),1-15. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol18/iss33/1>
- Lugaz, C. & De Grauwe, A. (2010). *Schooling and Decentralization: Patterns and policy implications in francophone West Africa*. UNESCO.

- Lujan-Hernandez, A. (2016). *Is Decentralization at Odds with Democracy? : The Implications of Decentralization in the Democratization Process of Developing Countries*. Presented to the Faculty of the Political Science Department in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of the Bachelor of Arts.
- Lusthaus, Ch., Anderson, G., & Murphy, E. (1995). Institutional assessment: A framework for strengthening organizational capacity for IDRC's research partners. *International development research centre*. Ottawa
- Manor, J. (1999). *The political economy of democratic decentralization*. Directions in development series, D.C. World Bank
- _____ (2003). *'Local Governance' paper prepared for Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency*.
- Marsh, C.J. (2004). *Key concepts for understanding curriculum* (3rded.). London, Routledge Falmer.
- _____ (2009). *Key Concepts for Understanding Curriculum* (4th). Teachers' Library, London.
- Marsh, C.J. & Willis, G. (2007). *Curriculum: Alternative approaches, ongoing issues* (4th ed.). PEARSON
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1995). *Design Qualitative Research* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Martin, D. (1962). *Report on Ethiopian education, elementary and secondary*. UNESCO's expanded program of technical assistance. No.10.
- Matete, R. (2016). Challenges facing primary education under decentralisation of primary school management in Tanzania. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol.6 (1). Center for Promoting Ideas, USA on [web site www.ijhssnet.com](http://www.ijhssnet.com)
- Mathew, G., & Mathew, A. (2003). *Decentralization and local governance: How clienteles and accountability work*. In Hadenius, A.(ed.). *Decentralisation and Democratic Governance Experiences from India, Bolivia and South Africa*.

- McGinn, N., & Welsh, T. (1999). *Decentralization of education: Why, what when and how?* UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Meheret Ayenew (1999). The City of Addis Ababa: Policy Options for the Governance and Management of a City with Multiple Identity. *Forum for Social Studies Discussion Paper No. 2*. Addis Ababa.
- Melo, M. & Rezende, F. (2004). *Decentralization and governance in Brazil*. In Tulchin, J. S. and Selee, A. (ed.). *Decentralization and democratic governance in Latin America*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C. on website www.wilsoncenter.org
- Merera Gudina (2007). Ethnicity, democratisation and decentralization in Ethiopia: The case of Oromia. *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*, 23(1), pp. 81-106. Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa. DOI: 10.1353/eas.2007.0000
- Merriam, Sh. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study application in education*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco. [retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/Qualitative-Research-Study-Applications-Education-ebook/dp/B001PTHYHM](https://www.amazon.com/Qualitative-Research-Study-Applications-Education-ebook/dp/B001PTHYHM)
- Ministry of Education (1999). Education Sector Development Program, Action Plan. Addis Ababa: central printing press.
- _____ (2002a). School organization and Management, Community Participation and Financial Management.
- _____ (2002b). The Education and Training Policy and Its Implementation. Addis Ababa, Berhanena Selam Printing Press.
- _____ (2005a). *Education Sector Development Program III (ESDP-III) (2005/2006 2010/2011)*. Program Action Plan Final Draft. Addis Ababa.
- _____ (2005b). *Kenya education sector support programme 2005-2010*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education.
- _____ (2006a). *Decentralized management of education in Ethiopia: A reference manual*. Addis Ababa.

- _____ (2006b) *Civic and ethical education from where to where*. Civic and ethical education and training guideline.
- _____ (2008). *General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP)*. GoE GEQIP Plan.
- _____ (2007). *Environmental Science Syllabus: Grades 1-4*.
- _____ (2009). *Social Studies Syllabus Grades 5-8*
- _____ (2010). *Education Sector Development Program IV (ESDP IV) 2010/2011 – 2014/2015*. Program Action Plan. Addis Ababa.
- _____ (2014). *Ethiopia 2014 Early Grade Reading Assessment Report of Findings*. Reading for Ethiopia's Achievement Developed Technical Assistance (READ TA). Prepared by RTI International for USAID/ETHIOPIA. Research Triangle Park
- _____ (2015). *Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP-V) (2008 - 2012 E.C./2015/16 -2019/20 G.C.)* Addis Ababa.
- _____ (2017). Education statistics annual abstract 2008 E.C. (2015/16G.C.)
- Moore, M. (1995). *Institution building: As a development assistance method a review of literature and ideas*. Swedish International Development Authority, Stockholm.
- Mulwa, D. M., Kimiti, R.P., & Mukundan, M. V. (2003). Democratic decentralization and primary education: a comparison of continuity and change in two districts of Kerala (India). *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 4 (1), 27–38.
- Kituka, T.M., & Muema, E.N. (2011). Decentralization of education: The experience of Kenyan secondary Schools. *Problems of education in the 21st century, Vol. 30, pp. 86_96*.
- Mulugeta Gemechu (2012). *Decentralization in Ethiopia: The case of Dendi District, West Shoa Zone, Oromia: Concept and process*. Ph.D. Dissertation (unpublished) Dortmund, Technische Universität.
- Murphy, J. (2007). *The individual versus institution: an analysis of power relations in Irish society*. Master thesis (unpublished).

- Naidoo, J.P. (2002). *Educational decentralisation in Sub Saharan Africa. Espoused theories and theories in use*. Paper presented at the CIES Annual Conference. 10-24. Retrieved 03 27, 2018, from <http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED472263.pdf>
- Naidoo, J.P. (2003). *Education Decentralization in Sub-Saharan Africa—Espoused Theories and Theories in Use*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society
- Namukasa, I., & Buye, R. (2007). Decentralization and education in Uganda. *Comparative and International Education, 36*(7).
- Neale, P., Thapa, Sh., & Boyce, C. (2006). *Preparing a case study: A guide for designing and conducting a case study for evaluation input*. Pathfinder International Tool Series. Retrieved from http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_case_study.pdf?docID=6302
- Neuman, W.L. (2007). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Pearson Education, Inc.
- North, D.C. (1991). Institutions. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 5* (1), 97-112. Retrieved on June 27 2018 from <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=08953309%28199124%295%3A1%3C97%3AI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-W>
- Nunan, D. (1988). *The learner-centered curriculum: A study in second language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nye, J.S., (2004). *The soft power: The means to success in world politics*. New York.
- Obsaa Tolesa (2010). *Decentralization and community participation in education in Ethiopia: A case of three woredas in Horro Guduru Wollaga zone of Oromia national regional state*. Master Thesis (unpublished).
- Oberdabernig, D.A. (n.d). The effects of Structural Adjustment Programs on poverty and income distribution. Retrieved on Sep. 22, 2019, from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/8773/a46a689608d5a506a3c00331b1c80e494621.pdf>

- Olum, Y. (2014). Decentralization in developing countries: Preconditions for successful implementation. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*,(15).
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2015). *Stakeholder involvement in decision making: A short guide to issues, approaches and resources*. Radioactive Waste Management.
- Ornstein, A.C. & Hunkins, F.P. (2009). *Curriculum: Foundations, principles and issues* (5th ed.), Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Oromia Regional Education Bureau (2017). *Plan of curriculum and educational assessment directorate*. Finfinne.
- Osei, G.M. & Brock, C. (2006). Decentralisation in education, culture and teacher autonomy in Ghana. *Journal of Education Policy*, 21(4), 437-458. Taylor & Francis. DOI: 10.1080/02680930600731880
- Oulai, D, Lugaz,C, Alemayehu Minas & Haileselassie Teklehaimanot (2011).Analysis of capacity development in educational planning and management in Ethiopia. *International Institute for Educational Planning*. Paris.
- Palme, M., Kilborn, W., Stroud, Ch., & Popov, O. (1996). *Curriculum development in Ethiopia*. A consultancy study for the ministry of education in Ethiopia and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).SIDA evaluation 96/40. Department for democracy and social development.
- Pankhurst, R. (1968). *Economic history of Ethiopia (1800-1935)*. Haile Sellassie I University Press.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publication.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluative methods (3rd ed.)*. London: SAGE Publication Inc.
- Pellini, A. (2007). *Decentralization policy in Cambodia: Exploring community participation in the education sector*. Finland, University of Tampere.

- Popic, D & Patel, M.(2011). *Decentralization: Equity and sectoral policy implications for UNICEF in East-Asia and the Pacific*. Social Policy and Economic Analysis Unit. Draft Working Paper, UNICEF EAPRO, Bangkok.
- Qi, T. (2011). *Between centralization and decentralization: Changed curriculum governance in Chinese education after 1986*. Ph.D. Dissertation(unpublished).
- Rado, P. (2010). *Governing decentralized education systems: Systemic change in South Eastern Europe*. Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Foundations–Budapest.
- Ribot, J. (2001). Local actors, powers and accountability in African decentralizations: A review of issues. *International Development Research Centre of Canada Assessment of Social Policy Reforms Initiative*, 25,104.
- Ribot, J. C. (2002). *African decentralization: Local actors, powers and accountability*, UNRISD Geneva.
- Richards, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ringo, C. J & Mollel, H.A. (2014). Making decentralization promote empowerment of the local people: Tanzanian experience. *International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 5, No. 12*.
- Rondinelli, D. A, Nellis, J. R., & Cheema, G.Sh. (1983). *Decentralization in developing countries*. World Bank Staff Working Paper 581.
- Rondinelli, D, A., & Nellis, J. R. (1986). Assessing decentralization policies in developing countries: A case for cautious optimism. *Development Policy Review* 4(1), 3-23.
- Rondinelli, D. A, McCullough, J.S., & Johnson, R.W. (1989). Analyzing decentralization policies in developing countries: A political-economy framework. *Development and Change*.20, PP.57-87. SAGE, London.
- Ross, A. (2000). *Curriculum: Construction and critique*. London, FALMER PRESS.

- Rudebjer, P.G. & A del Castillo, R. (eds.). (1999). The 1st general meeting of the Southeast Asian Network for Agroforestry Education (SEANAFE). *Training and education report No. 49*. International Centre for Research in Agroforestry Southeast Asia Regional Research Programme.
- Russell, K.A. (2009). Community Participation in Schools in Developing Countries: Characteristics, Methods and Outcomes. *Qualifying Paper*.
- Scott, Z., & Rao, S. (2011). *Topic guide on decentralization and local government*. Commonwealth Secretariat. London.
- Scribner, J.D. & Englert, R.M. (1977). *The politics of education: An introduction*. In Scribner (ed.). The politics of education. 76th Yearbook of the national society for the study of education. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Segnestam, L., Persson, A., Nilsson, M., Arvidsson, A., & Ijjasz, E. (2003). *Country level environment analysis: A review of international experience*. Stockholm Environment Institute.
- Selee, A. (2004). Exploring the Link between decentralization and democratic governance. In Tulchin, J.S. and Selee, A. (eds.). *Decentralization and democratic governance in Latin America*. Washington, D.C. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. www.wilsoncenter.org.
- Sergiu, B. (2010). Foucault's view on power relations. *Cogito-Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 2, PP. 55-61.
- Shaeffer, Sh. (1991). A framework for collaborating for educational change. IIE P research and studies programme Increasing and improving the quality of basic education Monograph No .3. International Institute for Educational Planning. UNESCO.
- _____ (1994). *Participation for Educational Change: A Synthesis of Experience*. International Institute for Educational Planning. Paris
- Shah, A., & Thompson, T. (2004). *Implementing decentralized local governance: A treacherous road with potholes, detours and road closures*. World Bank.

- Sharma, Ch. K. (2004). Why decentralization? The puzzle of causation. *SYNTHESIS* Vol. 3 (1), pp., 1-17. Retrieved from Online at <http://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/196/> MPRA Paper No. 196, posted 7. October 2006.
- Shavelson, R. J. & Towne, L. (Eds.). (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Shiferaw Geneti (2010). *Practice of curriculum development for primary education in Oromia Regional State*. Master Thesis (Unpublished). Addis Ababa University.
- Short, E.C. (1983). The form and use of alternative curriculum development strategies policy implication. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13: 43_64.
- Sijabat, R (2015). An explorative inquiry on educational decentralisation in Bantul District, Jogjakarta, Indonesia. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 9(6), 17-25. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/7826D> OI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7826>
- Siyoum Tefera (1996). Attempts at Educational Reform in Ethiopia: A Top-down or a Bottom up Reform? *The Ethiopian Journal of Education* vol. XVI, No.1.
- Siyoum Tefera (2005). Education and development in Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Economic Association*. Vol. 8 No. 2. Translated by Yonas Admassu.
- Smart, A. & Alebachew Tiruneh (2006). *School textbooks and supplementary materials policy and strategy*. Addis Ababa.
- Solomon Areaya (2008). Policy formulation: Curriculum development and implementation in Ethiopia.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stichweh, R. (1994), *Wissenschaft, Universität und Professionen: soziologische Analysen*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (2005). *Manual for capacity development: Methods document*. Department for policy and methodology.

- Taylor, P. (2001). 10 Key stages towards effective participatory curriculum development: Learning from practice and experience in the social forestry support programme. *Experience and learning international cooperation. Vietnam, and other Helvetas-Supported Projects.*
- Taylor, P. (2004). *How can participatory processes of curriculum development impact on the quality of teaching and learning in developing countries? Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005.* The Quality Imperative. UNESCO.
- Tegegne Gebre Egziabhere & Kassahun Birhanu (2004). The role of decentralized governance in building local institutions, diffusing ethnic conflicts, and alleviating poverty in Ethiopia. *Regional Development Dialogue*, 25(1), United Nations Centers for regional Development, NAGOYA, Japan.
- Tekeste Negash (1990). *The Crisis of Ethiopian Education: Some Implications for Nation-Building.* Uppsala University.
- Tekeste Negash (2006). *Education in Ethiopia: From crisis to the brink of collapse.* Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala
- Teshome Wagaw, (1979). *Education Development in Ethiopia: A Source Book*, vol. ii, Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.
- Thijs, A. & Akker, J.V. (eds.) (2009). *Curriculum in Development.* SLO • Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development. Colophon
- Thomas Haile (2010). *Assessment of decentralized education service delivery: A case study of Dubti woreda afar national regional state.* Master Thesis (Unpublished). Addis Ababa University.
- Tilahun Workineh, Tirusew Tefera, Ayalew Shibeshi & Mercer, M. (1999). *Studies of education in Ethiopia: An Inventory and overview of education sector studies in Ethiopia 1994_1997.* Pilot study on the coordination of analytical work on the education sector in Ethiopia. UNESCO.
- Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE). (1991). The transitional charter of Ethiopia *Negarit Gazeta*, 22nd of July 1991, Addis Ababa: TGE.

(1992A). A proclamation to provide for the establishment of national/regional self-government. *Negarit Gazeta*, 51st Year, No.2

(1992B). A proclamation to define the sharing of revenue between the central government and the national/regional self governments. *Negarit Gazeta* 52nd Year No.7.

(1993). A proclamation to define the powers and duties of the central and regional executive organs of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. *Negarit Gazeta* 52nd Year, No.26.

(1994). Education and Training Policy. Addis Ababa: EMPDA.

United Nations Development Programme (1997). Capacity development – management development and governance division technical advisory Paper 2. Available from <http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/Docs/cap/Capdeven.pdf>

(1998). *Capacity assessment and development*. Technical advisory paper No. 3. Available from <http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/Docs/cap/CAPTECH3.htm>

United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (2005). *Handbook for decentralized education: Implementing national EFA plans*. Bangkok.

(2007). *Educational Governance at Local Levels Policy Paper and Evaluation Guidelines Modules for Capacity Building*. UNESCO. Paris

UNESCO- International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE) (2003). *Building the capacities of curriculum specialists for educational reform: Final report of the regional seminar*. UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok.

(2010). World Data on Education (7th ed). Revised version. <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/>

- UNICEF Ethiopia (2015). Evaluation of learning achievement in selected woredas in Amhara and Sub-Cities in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Mid-Term Report.
- Uphoff, N. (1986). *Local institutional development: An analytical source book with cases*. Kumarian press. West Harford.
- Urbanovic, J. (2009). Aspects of decentralization in management reforms of the education system in Lithuania. *Viesoji Politika ir Administravimas*(30).
- USAID (2000). *Decentralization and democratic local governance programming handbook: Center for democracy and governance*.
- _____(2009). *Democratic decentralization programme handbook*. Washington: ARD. Inc.
- _____(2013). Literacy in Ethiopia: A G2G Case study.
- USAID/Ethiopia(2010). *Ethiopia early grade reading assessment: Regional findings annex*. RTI International and the Center for Development Consulting.
- Van den Akker, J., Fasoglio, D., & Mulder, H. (2010). *A curriculum perspective on plurilingual education*. Preliminary study for the document “Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education”. Netherlands institute for curriculum development. Council of Europe in September (www.coe.int/lang).
- Weidman, J.C., & DePietro-Jurand, R. (2011). *EQUIP2 State-of-the-art knowledge in education decentralization: a guide to education project design based on a comprehensive literature and project review*. USAID.
- Willems, S., & Baumert, K.(2003). Institutional capacity and climate actions. OECD Environment Directorate International Energy Agency.
- Winkler, D. R. (1989). *Decentralization in education: An economic perspective*. World Bank Publications.
- Winkler, D. R., & Gershberg, A. I. (2000). Education decentralization in Latin America: The effects on the quality of schooling. *Human Development Department LCSHID Paper Series No. 59*. The World Bank Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office. Retrieved on September 22, 2019, from

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/427001468743117176/pdf/multi0page.pdf>.

Winkler, D. R., & Gershberg, A.I. (2003). *Education decentralization in Africa: A review of recent policy and practice*.

Wube Kassaye. (2005). An overview of curriculum development in Ethiopia: 1908_2005. *EJOSSAH*, Vol.III, No. 1.

World Bank (2000). *Reforming public institutions and strengthening governance: Public sector group poverty reduction and economic management (PREM) network*. A World Bank Strategy.

Wunsch, J.S. (2014). *Decentralization: Theoretical, conceptual, and analytical issues*. In Dickovick, J. T. and Wunsch, J. S (ed.). *Decentralization in Africa: The paradox of state strength*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Incorporated.

Ye, W. (2011). *Power and school-based curriculum development in moral education in China*. University of Hong Kong. Ph.D. Dissertation (unpublished).

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

_____ (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Los Angeles. Sage publications

Yilmaz, S., & Venugopal, V. (2008). Local governance discretion and accountability in Ethiopia. *International studies program*. Working paper 08-38. Georgia.

Zemelak Ayitenuw (2014). The politics of sub-national constitutions and local governance in Ethiopia. *Perspectives on federalism*, Vol. 6, issue 2.

Ziba, S. A. (2011). *The decentralization and centralization of curriculum in the primary education of Burkina Faso*. Master Thesis (unpublished).

Zhou, Y. (2009). *Decentralization, democracy, and development: Recent experience from Sierra Leone*. A World Bank Country Study. World Bank.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guides

I. Questions to Ministry of Education leaders and curriculum experts

1. How many times do primary school curriculum revision/change takes places since 1994?
2. What have been your institution's roles and responsibilities in primary school curriculum development since 1994?
3. What type of support does your institution give to Regional Education Bureaus (REBs) in primary school curriculum development? What are the activities and procedures your institution performs?
4. Who initiates primary school curriculum revision/change since 1994? Why? Can REBs initiate curriculum revision/change based on their perceived needs? If yes, what are the procedures to be followed? And what are your roles and responsibilities?
5. What types of relationships does your institution have with REBs in curriculum development decision making? Do you think your relationships are effective? Why?

II. Questions to REBs curriculum leaders and experts

1. How do you prepare primary school curriculum in your region since 1994? What procedures and activities have been implemented? Can you justify your roles and responsibilities in developing primary school curriculum?
2. Do you think that your institution is autonomous enough in making decisions on primary school curriculum development issues as mandated according to the law/proclamation? If yes how? And if no why? On which of the following does REB have autonomy to decide?

- Initiating and undertaking need assessment and curriculum revision/change
 - Syllabus design
 - Textbook development, publication and distribution
3. How do you make the local stakeholders participate in PSC decision making? Do you have any mechanisms to implement this activity effectively? To what extent do the stakeholders influence decision on PS curriculum?
 4. How conducive are the environment and institutional arrangement of your institution to carryout PSCD?

III. Questions to Local Stakeholders

1. What educational roles and responsibilities do you perform as members of woreda education and training management board?
2. Who do you think decide what should be taught in primary schools?
3. Do you have participation in primary school curriculum decision making? If yes, what type of participation? Who make you to participate?
4. What do you think about local stakeholders' participation in curriculum decisions in primary school curriculum? Why?

Appendix B: Observation Checklist

Observation Protocol for Physical Setting of Regional Curriculum Department Office

Observer:

Place:

Date:

Purpose: To examine the physical setting of curriculum department office of the regions

No. of staffs:

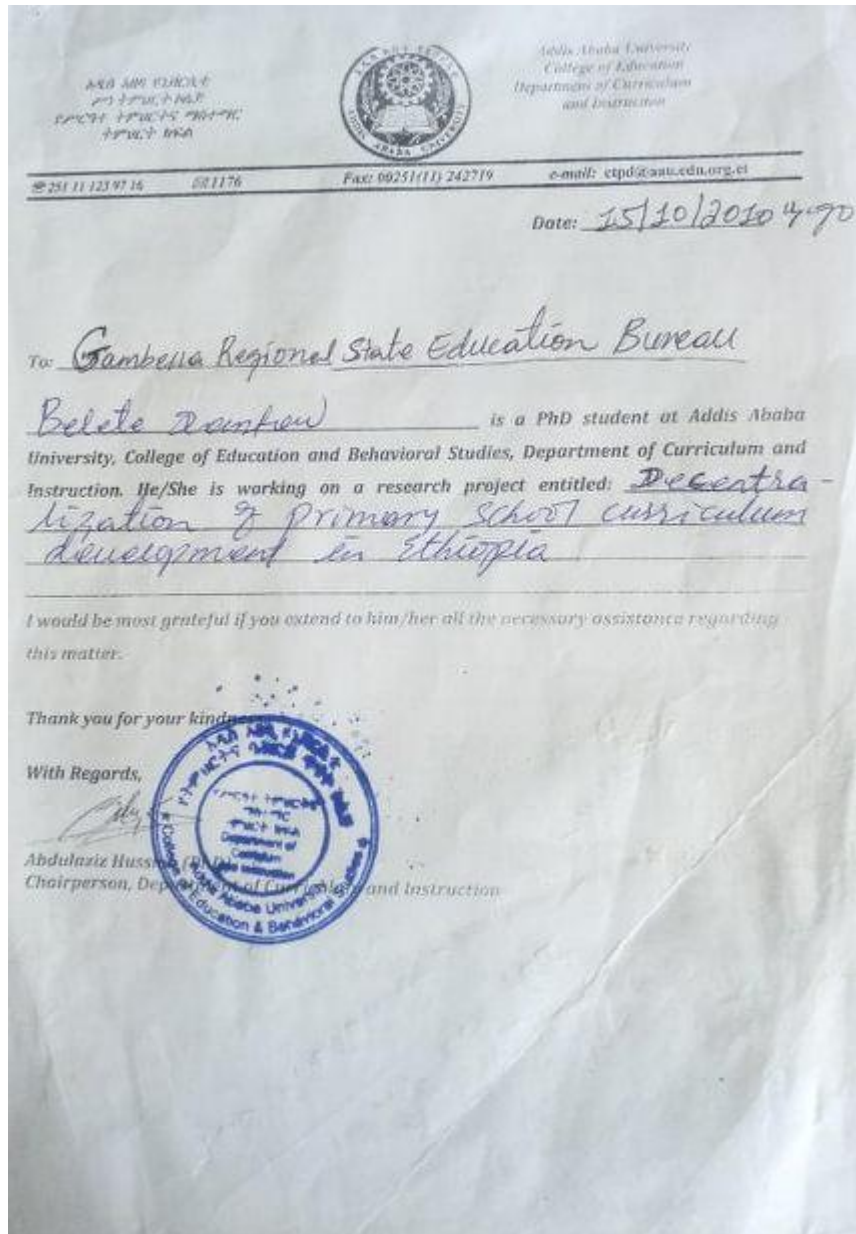
Physical setting:

Space:

Resources availability

Resource	yes	No	Remarks
Table			
Chair			
Computer			
Printers			
Internet access			
Overall quality of the office			

Appendix C: Permission to GREB



Appendix D: Permission to AACAEB



Appendix E: AACA primary school subjects period allotment

በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር ቢሮ አንድ ዙፋኑ የተገኘው ተጨማሪ ተገቢ የሆኑ የሥራ ሰዓቶች

የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ሰዓቶች የመጀመሪያ አርባ የሥራ ሰዓቶች

ተ.ቁ	የትምህርት ዓይነት	የሥራ ሰዓት			
		1ኛ ደረጃ	2ኛ ደረጃ	3ኛ ደረጃ	4ኛ ደረጃ
1	አማርኛ	6	6	6	6
2	እስተ-ቲክስ	6	6	6	6
3	እንግሊዘኛ	7	7	7	7
4	እጥፍ ሳይንስ	9	9	9	9
5	ሒሳብ	7	7	7	7
አጠቃላይ የሥራ ሰዓት ስድስት		35	35	35	35

የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ሰዓቶች የሁለተኛ አርባ የሥራ ሰዓቶች

ተ.ቁ	የትምህርት ዓይነት	የሥራ ሰዓት			
		5ኛ ደረጃ	6ኛ ደረጃ	7ኛ ደረጃ	8ኛ ደረጃ
1	አማርኛ	4	4	5	5
2	እንግሊዘኛ	6	6	6	6
3	ሒሳብ	6	6	6	6
4	ጥበቃ ሳይንስ	3	3	4	4
5	የተጠቃሚ ሳይንስ	4	4		
6	ሥነ ጥናት	3	3		
7	ሙዚቃ	3	3		
8	የሰውነት ማንገልጫ	3	3	2	2
9	የሰውነት ማንገልጫ	3	3	3	3
10	Biology			3	3
11	Chemistry			3	3
12	Physics			3	3
አጠቃላይ የሥራ ሰዓት ስድስት		35	35	35	35

Appendix F: GRS primary school subjects period allotment

No of periods allocated to each subject per week in G 1-8, 30 periods/week

No	Subject	G-1	G-2	G-3	G-4	G-5	G-6	G-7	G-8
1.	Mother tongue	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3
2.	Amharic	-	-	3	3	3	3	2	2
3.	English	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5
4.	Arts & phy. ed	6	6	4	4	-	-	-	-
5.	Maths	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
6.	Environmental science	7	7	7	7	-	-	-	-
7.	Biology	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
8.	Chemistry	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
9.	civic integrated science	-	-	-	-	3	3	3	3
10.	Physics	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-
11.	social study	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	2
12.	physical ed.	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	2
14.	Visual Arts & music	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
	Total periods for the week	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

[Signature]



Appendix G: ORS primary school subjects period allotment

Wayitii torbeettii Gosa barnootaaif ramadame sadarkaa ifaa (sagantaa A/Or. fi A/AM) sadarkaa zifaa (9-10) hunda, qophaa'ina (11-12) saayinsii Uumamaa fi saayinsii Hawaasummaa.

wayitii torbeettii gosa barnootaaif ramadame

Kulaa	A/Or	A/AM	A/Ifre	Ifre	9/Naq	Isaa	S/BAW	BLAQ	O/D	GAQ	Ilmaa	Fiis	Korm	Ilany	seetaa	Jaw	IT	BYO	id	Ilan	Id'a	Ilala	
1	5	5	5	5	7	6																	
2	5	5	5	5	7	6																	30
3	5	5	5	5	7	6																	30
4	5	5	5	5	7	6																	30
5	5	5	5	5	7	6																	30
6	5	5	5	5	7	6	4	3	2	2	3												30
7	5	5	5	5	7	6	4	3	2	2	3												30
8	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2										30
9	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2										30
10	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
11	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
12	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
13	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
14	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
15	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
16	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
17	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
18	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
19	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
20	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
21	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
22	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
23	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
24	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
25	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
26	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
27	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
28	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
29	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
30	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
31	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
32	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
33	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
34	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
35	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
36	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
37	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
38	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
39	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
40	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
41	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
42	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
43	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
44	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
45	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
46	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
47	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
48	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
49	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
50	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
51	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
52	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
53	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
54	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
55	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
56	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
57	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
58	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
59	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
60	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
61	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
62	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
63	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
64	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
65	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
66	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
67	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
68	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
69	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
70	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
71	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
72	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
73	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
74	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
75	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
76	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
77	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
78	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
79	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
80	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
81	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
82	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
83	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
84	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
85	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
86	5	5	5	5	7	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2						32
87																							