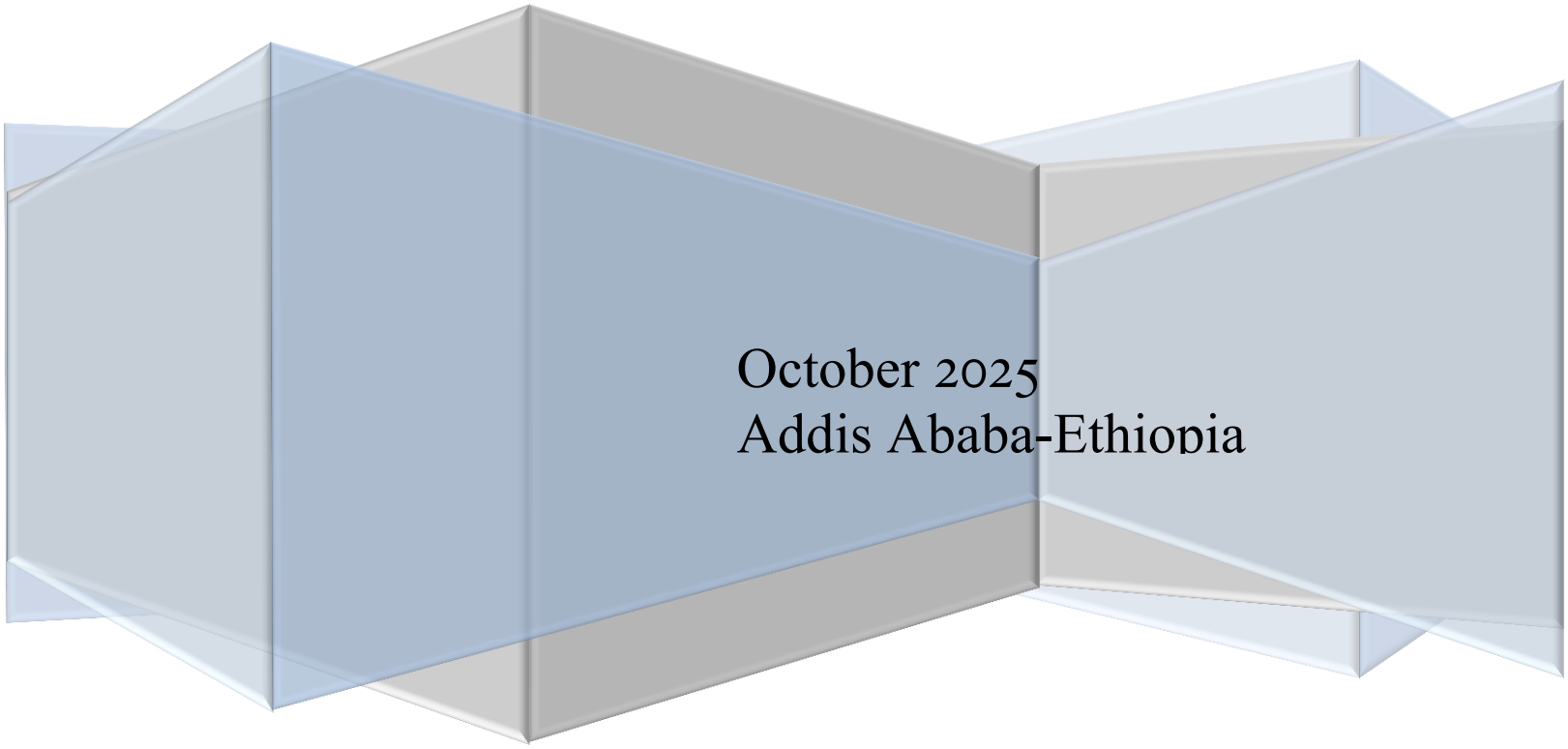
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

Department of Educational Planning and Management

MASTER'S THESIS



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Title of Thesis: - **The Practice of Professional Learning Community in Addis Ketema Sub-city Government Primary and middle Schools of Addis Ababa Administration**

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "The Practice of Professional Learning Community in Addis Ketema Sub-city Government Primary and middle Schools of Addis Ababa Administration" has been carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Yekunoamlak Alemu. The thesis is original and has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma to any university or institutions.

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDY

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Approval of Thesis after Defense

As members of the board of examiners, we examined this thesis entitled "The Practice of Professional Learning Community in Addis Ketema Sub-city Government Primary and middle Schools of Addis Ababa Administration" by Mr., Dagemay Jote. We hereby certify that the thesis is accepted for fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of "Educational Planning and Management".

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANOVA----------Analysis of Variance

ETP----------Education and Training Policy

MoE----------Ministry of Education

KI----------Key Informant

M----------Mean

WPL----------workplace professional learning

SD----------Standard deviation

PLC----------professional learning community

SPSS----------Statistical Package for the Social Science

CPD----------Continuous Professional Development

HSD ----------Honestly Significant Difference

Abstract

This study examined the Practice of Professional Learning Community in Addis Ketema Sub-city Government Primary and middle Schools of Addis Ababa Administration. Using a mixed research approach with descriptive research design, data were collected from 190 participant teachers and principals selected through random sampling from a population of 2,341. The data were analyzed using SPSS 24, applying descriptive statistics using data collection instrument, and thematic analysis for interview and document review instruments from collected data. The findings revealed that while Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are recognized and generally present in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools, their practice is far from optimal and consistently "proper." There's a strong desire and effort for collaboration among teachers, and they perceive a positive impact on student outcomes, but the mechanisms for translating this collaboration into consistently improved, student-centered teaching practices were weak and inconsistently applied. Both teacher perceptions and document analysis strongly indicate a lack of consistent leadership follow-up, dedicated resources, and clear solutions for identified challenges. Furthermore, concerns about the preparedness and effectiveness of PLC facilitators suggest that the formal leadership structures within PLCs are not consistently robust or strong. Based on these findings, the researcher recommends teachers should commit for more active and critical engagement in PLC meetings and activities. Principals should actively participate in, monitor, and provide targeted support to PLCs and ensuring follow-up on action plans. The study suggests further research and policy makers to realize the implementation of PLC diverse way.

Key words*: practice and development, professional learning community, Addis Ketema sub-city,*

CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Background

Education plays a critical role in shaping the social, economic, and cultural fabric of any society. To ensure quality education, continuous professional development for teachers is essential. One of the most effective strategies to enhance teacher professional development and improve instructional practice is the establishment and practice of professional learning communities (PLCs). PLCs are collaborative platforms where teachers and school leaders engage in reflective practices, share experiences, and work collectively to address educational challenges and improve student learning outcomes.

In Ethiopia the Ministry of Education has emphasized the important of professional development and collaborative learning in schools as part of its broader strategy to improve the quality of education (MoE, 2009b). However, the practical implementation and development of PLCs in schools particularly in urban areas such as Addis Ketema Sub-city present unique challenges and opportunities. Addis Ketema Sub-city, a densely populated area in Addis Ababa, is home to diverse government primary schools, which vary in size, resources, and teacher capacity. Understanding how PLCs are practiced in these schools can provide critical insights into the factors influencing their success and sustainability,

This study focused on examining the practice of PLC in government primary and middle schools in Addis Ketema Sub-city. It aims to explore the extent to which PLCs are performing established, the challenges faced, level of practice, and perception of teachers whether PLC has impacts on teaching and learning. By identifying best practices and addressing barriers, the study seeks to contribute to the improvement of PLC implementation and ultimately enhance the quality of education in the Sub-city.

The following research outlines the introduction, background, statement of the problem, objectives, significance, methodology, data analysis and conclusion and recommendation of the study providing a systematic investigation into this critical area of educational development

Organizational learning has been an object of research since the 1960s. The concept of the professional learning community has emerged from theories of organizational learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978; Bolam et al., 2005), organizations as learning systems (Garratt, 1987), learning organizations (Senge, 1990), and learning companies (Pedler et al., 1991). In educational settings, Rosenholtz (1989) linked schools' core social organizational dimensions, like rewards, task autonomy, learning opportunities, and efficacy, with teachers' commitment. She found that workplace factors, like support for professional learning and for classroom practices by teachers' networks and collaboration, strengthened teachers' commitment and teacher efficacy for meeting students' needs. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) agreed with Rosenholtz's findings and stated that shared expertise about teaching could be reached if teachers had opportunities for collaborative inquiry about learning.

The core idea of PLC recognizes the importance of teachers' collaboration outside their classrooms for school improvement, teachers' professional development, and student learning (Louis and Kruse, 1995; Sleegers et al., 2013). Additionally, there is consensus that PLCs improve instruction by offering teachers and other staff members opportunities to reflect on and refine their instructional practices (Harris and Jones, 2010; Weissenrieder et al., 2015).

In Addis Ketema Sub-city the government primary and middle schools are 35 in number. From these 35 schools 31 of them have taught grade 1-8 and 4 of them are from 1-6. In this Sub-city there are 2205 teachers teaching in these 35 government primary and middle

schools. From those 1088 teachers are males and 1117 of them are females. In their educational background only two male teachers are certificate holders; and 651 females and 440 males have diploma. The others 502 females and 610 males are degree holder. The number of students in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools is 43719. 21893 of them are males and 21876 of them are females. The above row data is in 2017E.C academic year. Source: - from Addis Ketema Sub-city Administration Education office.

In the context of Ethiopia, PLCs are increasingly recognized as a strategy for improving the quality of education, addressing challenges faced by teachers, and creating a culture of continuous professional development. As indicated in Ethiopian CPD Framework document (MoE, 2009b), CPD enables teachers to meet different professional competencies. It is often more individualized compared to a PLC. PLC in Fekede Tuli and Adula Bekele. 2020 review article, cited as education army development) as a strategy to improve the education sector.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Numerous studies such as Garratt, 1987, Senge, 1990, Pedler et al., 1991, Rosenholtz (1989), Argyris and Schön, 1978; Bolam et al., 2005, McLaughlin and Talbert (1993), have demonstrated that well-implemented PLCs can lead to enhanced teacher satisfaction, more effective instructional practices, and improved student performance. Why I am motivated to study the practice of PLCs development in Addis Ketema Sub city government primary school is**,** when I have been a cluster supervisor, I have a chance to observe different teachers' inability in their subject matter knowledge, teaching methods, lesson plan preparation, and ways to present what they have planned. So these different variations between teachers may have negative impact on student's achievement in different background. Practicing PLC in school is very important to improve subject matter knowledge, teaching methods, lesson plan preparation, and ways to present what they have planned, and minimize low achievement of students result. Then the researcher

is going to investigate the practice of PLCs in Addis Ketema Sub city government primary and middle schools Addis Ababa Administration.

In Ethiopia, the educational system faces significant challenges related to improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Key strategies that have been recognized globally for enhancing professional development and improving instructional practices is the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and continuous professional development (CPD). PLCs offer a collaborative approach where educators work together to improve their teaching practices, share knowledge, and solve common problems in their schools.

However, in Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa city government education bureau the practice of PLCs remains underdeveloped and inconsistent across schools. It wasn't practiced in a formal and collaborative regularly to brought outcomes on student result. There is limited research on how PLCs are being implemented in the Ethiopian context and what factors contribute to their success or failure. But there were researches on status of professional learning community in developing countries which focused on whether there is a significant difference b/n the teaching experience of secondary teachers & how they see the relevance of PLCs on professional development in Vietnam & Uganda (Doan Nguy Linh, George Wilson Kasule, 2022).

Fekede and Adula, (2020) in their review article also focused on importance of professional learning community in Ethiopia. Finding-: after a decade of practice/implementation in our educational settings, functional professional learning community [locally known as educational army development] was not yet established. Rather, the concept was poorly understood and surfaced by chaos and dilemmas

Esayas & Rao (2021) in their research 'Teachers professional learning practices in the work place: experience of primary school teachers in Ethiopia' was covers entire the country. Its contents were about professional learning practice and experience. Its method

was qualitative case study. The findings from the study disclosed that WPL practices of teachers were highly prescriptive, and it was driven by the schools' learning needs over the needs of individual teachers. The teachers are less autonomous to decide on the focus of their learning needs. This, in turn, has resulted in discontinuous professional learning practice partly because of the disparity between the school's learning needs and those of the teachers' needs.

Another research title 'professional learning of teachers in Ethiopia: challenges and implication for reform' have done by Gemeda & Tynjälä (2015). Its contents were professional learning challenges and implication for reform. Its research method was qualitative case study.

"A Review of Literature" by Yigzaw and Mulu (2018). They highlight that despite efforts to implement PLCs in Ethiopia education settings over the past decades, functional PLCs – locally referred to as "educational army development" have not been fully established. The concept remains poorly understood, leading to confusion and dilemmas in practice.

But my investigation mainly will focus on, the practice of PLCs and development. It covers only Addis Ababa administration Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools. Its method was both qualitative and quantitative study. As I have indicated in the background, the practice of PLCs development in Addis Ketema Sub-city primary schools Addis Ababa Administration recognized in improving teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, no research found on their actual practice and development. Some studies in Ethiopia have been explored on PLCs at the national level; there is no empirical evidence on how PLCs function in primary schools with in this specific sub-city. The challenge, support system, and effectiveness of PLCs in these schools remain largely unexamined. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the current practice, barriers and potential strategies for strengthening PLCS in Addis Ketema Sub-city there by contributing to both academic knowledge and practical educational improvement.

1.2. Research Question

I. To what extent professional learning communities (PLCs) are properly practiced in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary and middle schools?

II. How can collaborative practice of PLCs among educators be designed to enhance student-centered learning and improve overall academic achievement?

III. How does active involvement in the coordination and facilitation of PLCs contribute to the development of leadership skills among educators and administrators?

1.3. OBJECTIVES

The general objective of the study was to establish and promote the practice and development of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within Addis Ababa city administration Addis Ketema Sub-city primary schools to improve the quality of teaching, professional development, and student learning outcomes through collaborative practices among educators.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- To identify whether professional learning community (PLCs) are properly practiced in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary and middle schools Addis Ababa Administration.

- To develop teaching practices that focus on student-centered learning, where educators collaborate to develop strategies that improve student overall academic achievement.

- To develop leadership skills among educators and administrators by involving them in the coordination and facilitation of PLCs, fostering a collaborative leadership model.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCES OF THE STUDY (APPLICATION OF RESULTS)

The study on the practice of professional learning community (PLC) development in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools holds significant importance in various dimensions.

One of the significant of the study is awareness benefits. The study tried to raise awareness among educators, policymakers and stakeholders about the role and importance of PLCs in fostering collaborative learning and professional growth. It also helps to build a culture of teamwork and shared responsibility in schools, highlighting the value of collective efforts over individual approaches in addressing educational challenges.

The other significance is academic benefits. By exploring PLC development, the study can reveal how collaborative efforts among teachers enhance instructional methods and student engagement. The findings may show a direct link between effective PLCs and improvements in students' academic performance, thereby justifying investment in such programs.

The next significance of the studying the practice of professional learning communities (PLCs) development in Addis Ketema Sub-city primary schools is research benefits. This study contributes to the limited research on PLC practice in Ethiopian government schools, particularly in the context of Addis Ketema Sub-city. The insights gained can also inspire further research into effective strategies for professional learning community implementation and their impact on school improvement.

The practice benefits also anther significance of the study. The study emphasizes the practical benefits of PLCs in equipping teachers with ongoing professional development

opportunities. It can also identify effective models and strategies for PLC implementation, which can be adopted or adapted in similar context to improve school performance.

Lastly the significance of the study is policy benefits. Policymakers can use the study's finding to develop or refine educational policies that prioritize and support the establishment and sustainability of PLCs. Insights from the study can guide the allocation of resources, ensuring that sufficient support (e.g., training, time, and infrastructure) is provided for PLC activities.

The study serves as a cornerstone for advancing education in Addis Ketema Sub-city by addressing key challenges and leveraging the potential of professional learning communities. It underscores the transformative power of collaboration and continuous professional learning in improving the quality of education, making it a valuable resource for educators, researchers, and policymakers. This study is not only beneficial for Addis Ketema Sub-city but can also serve as a model for similar contexts, advancing the quality of education across the region.

1.6. DELIMITATIONS/SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study outlines the boundaries and focus areas for investigating the practice of professional learning communities (PLCs) development in Addis Ketema Sub-city primary schools. It includes the following key components:

Geographical Scope: The study focuses on primary and middle schools with in Addis Ketema Sub-city, a densely populated urban area in Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

Institutional Scope: The research examined PLC practice specifically in primary and middle schools, considering the unique challenges and opportunities in this educational level.

Thematic Scope: The study focused on the establishment, implementation, and sustainability of PLCs in the selected schools.

Methodological Scope: The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Surveys questionnaire for teachers, interview with principals and for teachers' development vice principal data analysis were used to gather information.

By defining these boundaries, the study ensured a focused and manageable investigation into the development and practice of PLCs in Addis Ketema Sub-city primary schools.

1.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study did not include preprimary, secondary and tertiary education institution as it was focusing on primary schools. It primarily examined PLC practices in Addis Ketema Sub-city and may not fully generalize findings to other Sub-cities or region in Ethiopia.

1.8. Organization of the study

The study was structured into five main chapters. Chapter one introduces the research by presenting the background, problem statement, objectives, significance, scope, limitations and. Chapter Two reviewed relevant literature, including theoretical, empirical, and conceptual frameworks. Chapter Three outlined the research methodology, detailing the data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter Four presented the collected data, followed by a thorough analysis and interpretation of the findings. Finally, Chapter Five summarized the key findings, draws conclusions, and offered recommendations for future research

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) has gained significant attention in educational research and practice over the last few decades. The practice of professional development in educational processes is recognized as a critical element for achieving sustainable improvements in both educational outcomes and teachers' professional improvement. In Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ketema Sub City, primary schools face numerous challenges that can benefit from the active engagement of teachers and principals. This chapter explores various theoretical perspectives, empirical studies, and conceptual frameworks related to practice of professional learning and development in schools, specifically focusing on primary schools in Addis Ketema Sub City. The review covers both the benefits and barriers of PLCs participation, examines relevant theories and models, and discusses how empirical research can be addressed these issues in different contexts.

2.2. Practices of professional learning community

Building professional learning communities (PLC) has become a widely recognized strategy for school development and for student achievement. Four Finnish comprehensive schools were identified as being ready to be PLCs in a previous quantitative study, and the purpose of this study was to investigate practices of PLCs in these schools. In this paper, we used data from qualitative multiple-case study, which investigated practices of leadership, culture, teacher collaboration, professional learning, and development. The results showed that the principals had played the main role in the progression of schools as PLCs. Principals were described as visionary leaders who had started positive progression, shared the leadership, and created commitment to common goals. The results indicated also that a change of leaders can have a positive effect. Decision-making processes were participative, inclusive, democratic, and collaborative, aiming for a satisfactory level of consensus. Relationships among staff were reported as being based on mutual trust and openness, and members were encouraged to express their

opinions. Common responsibility of students, peer support, encouragement, and co-teaching were practiced. Co-teaching practices were identified as an effective form of collaborative work-embedded professional learning which is related to the core principles of professional learning communities. Structural conditions were reported as barriers to schools' development as PLCs; (Antinluoma, Ilomäki and Toom, 2021).

In the above research review principals play a crucial role, acting as visionary leaders, promoting shared leadership and fostering commitment to common goals. Relationships based on mutual trust, openness and democratic decision making processes. Co-teaching, peer support, shared responsibility for students-these are all forms of collaboration. Structure conditions can hinder PLC development. Its strengths are it examines leadership, culture, collaboration and professional learning. Gives depth and allows comparisons between different schools. Highlights the dynamic role of principals, including how leadership changes can have positive effects. Co-teaching and democratic decision-making are clearly described as effective practice. Its weaknesses are the study focuses on Finnish schools; applicability to other contexts might differ. While mentioned, there's limited discussion on how these can be addressed. The impact on actual student learning achievement isn't deeply discussed, though PLCs aim to enhance this.

According to my study on practice of PLCs in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary and middle schools as I have seen not all principals share leadership and promote collaborative culture. Co-teaching and collaborative learning are not that much facilitated in different schools.

2.3. Professional Learning Communities

Teachers are professionals in charge of planning and implementing the learning process, assessing the results of learning, coaching and training, and conduct research and

community services. As professionals, they must continue to learn and relearn to equip themselves with required tools to function effectively in today's world. To this end, professional learning communities are receiving considerable attention from policy makers, scholars and practitioners. Researchers have documented that the right kind of continuous and job embedded teachers professional learning opportunities will improve the quality of teaching thereby ensures learning for all students-the fundamental mission of educational institutions.

Cognizant of this fact, the Ethiopian ministry of education placed professional learning community at the forefront and tried to institutionalize it in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, after a decade of practice/implementation in our educational settings, functional professional learning community [locally known as educational army development] was not yet established. Rather, the concept was poorly understood and surfaced by chaos and dilemmas. Hence, in this paper, authors attempted to give an overview of the professional learning community based on the current literatures and international experiences. In so doing, authors emphasized the concept of a professional learning community, characteristics of a professional learning community, forces that have compelled organizations to build a professional learning community and supportive conditions for professional learning community. Professional Learning Communities: (Fekede and Adula, 2020).

From the above review literature (Fekede and Adula, 2020) the core massages are; teachers are seen as professionals who are responsible for facilitating learning, assessment, coaching and engaging in research and community service. Teachers must continually develop their skills to stay effective. Professional learning communities (PLCs) are crucial for ongoing professional learning. They have gained attention globally and in Ethiopia. Despite efforts by the MoE to institutionalize PLCs (locally known as

"educational army development"), functional PLCs are not yet well-established after a decade of implementation. There's a poor understanding of PLCs, and the practice is surrounded by confusion and dilemmas. The authors aim to review the concept, characteristics, driving forces and supportive conditions for PLCs, using both local and international perspectives. The strengths of the review covers key aspects like the concept of PLCs, their characteristics, driving forces and necessary conditions. They acknowledge the gap between policy and practice, highlighting real-world issues like misunderstanding and implementation challenges.

The weakness of the review mentions challenges but doesn't provide specific examples or empirical data demonstrating why PLCs haven't functional as intended. While challenges are noted (chaos, dilemmas), the strategies to overcome these are not detailed in the summary. There could be more emphasis on cultural factors influencing the poor understanding or misapplication of PLCs in the Ethiopian education system. This review reflects there is a clear need for capacity building and better conceptual understanding of PLCs among Ethiopians educators. Policy initiatives need to address the confusion and provide practical support mechanisms. Ethiopian education can benefit from adapting international PLC practices in ways that suit local needs and context.

2.4. Practices of effective professional learning communities

Professional learning communities (PLCs) are groups of teachers working together in a collaborative way to inquire into their teaching practice in order to develop it in ways that improve outcomes for students. Research into effective PLCs demonstrates the foundational importance of having a shared vision and values, and a culture based on trust, collaboration, collective responsibility and an inquiry mindset. In addition, there are a number of practices to consider when setting up and working in PLCs to ensure that they lead to teacher learning and improved student outcomes. (The Education Hub 2019)

Is there a significant difference between the teaching experience of secondary teachers and how they see the relevance of professional learning communities on professional development in Vietnam and Uganda? The fore mentioned questions were explored by collecting data from secondary school teachers (n=345) in Vietnam and Uganda through a questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey honestly significant difference (HSD) were used to analyze the data. The findings depict that involvement of secondary school teachers in professional learning communities and the associated contribution on professional development is 'moderate' in Vietnam whilst, it is 'minimal' in Uganda. It was also established that significant difference exists between the teaching experience of secondary teachers and how they recognize the relevance of professional learning communities on professional development. The findings suggest that relevant educational policies and adequate funding ought to be considered in order to make professional learning communities vibrant in both Vietnam and Uganda. This is deemed key to enhance secondary school teacher competence which in turn could lead to higher students' learning outcome in Vietnam and Uganda respectively as reported at the International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE) Vol. 11, No. 1, March 2022,

When these two literature review summarized 'The education hub (2019)' explains what effective PLCs are groups of teachers collaborating, reflecting on, and inquiring into their practice to improve student outcome. Its key practice was shared vision and values, a culture of trust, collaboration and collective responsibility and an inquire mindset. The second source 'IJERE study (Vietnam and Uganda) investigates the relationship between teaching experiences and perception of PLC relevance among secondary teachers in Vietnam and Uganda. Quantitative questionnaire (n=345), with descriptive stats, ANOVA, Tukey HSD analysis. Its key findings Vietnam: PLC involvement and

professional development contribution = moderate. Uganda: PLC involvement and professional development contribution = minimal. Significant differences based on teaching experience and their recognition of PLC relevance.

Their strength is as follow: ‘The education hub (2019)’ provides clear guidelines on effective PLC practices. Emphasize foundational principles like shared vision and inquiry, which are universally relevance. Practical focuses offering actionable strategies for schools and teachers. The second source ‘IJERE study: provides empirical evidence from two different countries. Uses quantitative analysis’s, giving statistical validities to the findings. Highlight contextual differences in PLC implementation between Vietnam and Uganda. Their weaknesses the source is descriptive and theoretical, with less focus on challenges or barriers in different contexts (developing vs. developing countries). Lacks empirical evidence or case studies to show how these principles work in practice, especially in resource-limited settings. Focuses narrowly on secondary school teachers-findings may not extend to primary or tertiary levels. Although it highlights differences between countries, it doesn’t deeply explore why Uganda lags behind Vietnam beyond policy and funding, doesn’t provide detailed strategies for improving PLC effectiveness.

Generally both studies highlight the critical role of PLCs in teacher development and student learning. However, while the education Hub outlines ideal practices for effective PLCs, the IJERE study reveals the complex realities of implementing such communities in varying contexts. To make PLCs successful, particularly in countries like Vietnam and Uganda, educational policymakers must address practical barriers such as funding, leadership, and policy support while fostering the cultural and collaborative principles emphasized in theoretical models.

Educational quality development by the professional learning community has been implemented in many countries. Researchers and educational leaders point to the

transformation of school systems into professional learning communities 2618 (PLCs) as the most important initiative to improve schools (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hord, 2004). Researchers have found evidence that PLCs can have positive effects not only on a teacher's performance in the classroom but also on students' academic performance (Barton & Stepanek, 2012; Harris & Jones, 2010; Katz & Earl, 2010). In Thailand, the professional development committee of the teachers' council of Thailand has identified five characteristics that should occur for the development of professional learning communities, including 1) shared values and norms, 2) collective focus on student learning, 3) collaboration, 4) expert advice and 5) study visits and reflection dialogues (Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand Secretariat, 2020). Lesson study is an important technique for implementing PLCs in schools, which has the important steps: plan - including jointly designing learning management; do - observing the teaching of fellow teachers; and see - reflecting on the teaching and learning, which leads to the development of the teaching and learning in the next cycle.

2.5. Teachers' professional learning practices in the workplace: experiences of primary school teachers in Ethiopia

Teachers' professional learning in the workplace is of great interest, for it is believed to positively impact the quality of teaching and learning. To this end, this qualitative case study explored the lived experiences of teachers involved in workplace professional learning (WPL) practices in Ethiopian primary schools. Guided by the constructivist paradigm, data were collected via in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document review. The findings from the study disclosed that WPL practices of teachers were highly prescriptive, and it was driven by the schools' learning needs over the needs of individual teachers. The teachers are less autonomous to decide on the focus of their learning needs. This, in turn, has resulted in discontinuous professional learning practice partly because of the disparity between the school's learning needs and those of the

teachers' needs. Esayas Teshome Taddese & Congman Rao (2021): Teachers' professional learning practices in the workplace: experiences of primary school teachers in Ethiopia, Education

This review literature: Esayas Teshome Taddese & Congman Rao (2021) focuses on examines teachers' lived experiences of workplace professional learning in Ethiopian primary schools. Guided by a constructivist paradigm, it uses interview, focus groups, and document review for data collection. Its key findings are workplace learning practices are highly prescriptive, mainly addressing school learning needs, rather than individual teacher needs. Teachers have limited autonomy in deciding what they want to learn. This mismatch creates discontinuity in professional learning, because teacher motivation and relevance are lacking. The strengths of the study are; the qualitative case study approach with multiple data sources (interviews, focus groups, documents) gives depth and richness to the findings. Focusing on teachers' voices provides authentic insights into how WPL is experienced at the ground level. It highlights disconnect between institutional goals and personal teacher development, which is a common challenges in many education systems. Its weaknesses; limited autonomy is identified, but the reason behind why schools prioritize their own learning needs over teacher choice could be further explored. The study shows discontinuity in WPL but doesn't deeply explore how to bridge the gap between school and teacher needs. These indicate that the lack of teacher autonomy can reduce motivation and ultimately impact the effectiveness of professional learning. School and policymakers should balance institutional goals with teacher-driven learning promoting ownership and relevance. Professional learning should be collaborative, ongoing and responsive to both organizational and individual needs to avoid discontinuity.

2.6. Professional learning activities in the higher education institution of Ethiopia

The study below investigated the professional learning activities of university teachers in Ethiopia. A case study design was used in which twenty-four teachers participated in the study. A semi-structured interview was used to explore the learning activities used by the participants. The findings demonstrate that various learning activities are utilized, each driven by a different form of inspiration. The learning motives largely depend on incentives and are motivated by outside factors. University instructors' professional learning practices seem to require more advanced learning methodologies to maintain their learning that is underpinned by self-motivated learning. (Temesgen and Raju, 2023)

The study investigates professional learning activities among university teachers in Ethiopia. It's qualitative case study with 24 teachers who were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Its key findings are university teachers engage in varied learning activities, but these are mostly driven by external motivations (like incentives). There's a lack of intrinsic/ self-motivation in their professional learning. There's a need for more advanced learning methods to promote self-directed, sustainable professional learning. The strengths of this study address a less explored area in Ethiopia education professional learning in universities while many studies focus on primary/secondary education. The semi-structured interviews give rich, nuanced insights into the motivations and behaviors of university teachers. It brings to light the issue of external vs. internal motivation, which is critical for sustainable professional development. Its weaknesses; the study mentions the need for advanced methodologies but doesn't elaborate on what these methods could be or how to implement them. Only 24 teachers from a single or limited number of universities may not represent the diverse contexts of Ethiopia's higher education institution. Incentives are emphasized, but the study doesn't deeply explore why internal motivation is lacking –is it due to workload, institution culture, lack of support? This study implies there's a need for professional learning frameworks that foster self-directed, reflective, and collaborative learning for university teachers. Institutions should create

supportive environments, reduce external pressure for incentives, and promote intrinsic motivation through recognition, opportunities for collaboration, and research support. Professional development programs should integrate innovative learning strategies

Summary

From the above related literature review I generalize that Effective PLCs rely heavily on visionary and shared leadership. Principals are central in initiating and sustaining PLC practices (Antinluoma et al., 2021). Successful PLCs are marked by democratic decision-making, mutual trust, peer support, and co-teaching A shared vision, collective responsibility, and inquiry-based reflection are foundational to improving both teacher learning and student outcomes (The Education Hub, 2019).In Ethiopia, and similar developing contexts (e.g., Uganda), misunderstanding of PLC concepts, lack of teacher autonomy, and policy-practice gaps limit PLC effectiveness (Fekede & Adula, 2020; Taddese & Rao, 2021).

There are specific insights in different countries concerning PLCs. In Finland demonstrates successful PLCs through visionary leadership, co-teaching, and inclusive culture. In Ethiopia PLCs are policy-driven but poorly implemented; lack of clarity, motivation, and autonomy hinders sustainability. In Vietnam vs. Uganda Vietnam shows moderate PLC integration, while Uganda's is minimal—highlighting how funding, policy, and teacher experience affect perceptions of PLCs (IJERE, 2022).In Thailand emphasizes lesson study, shared norms, expert guidance, and study visits as PLC features (Teachers Council of Thailand, 2020).

In general in Ethiopian context professional learning is often prescriptive, ignoring teachers' own learning needs in primary school teachers and professional development is mostly externally motivated (incentive-driven), lacking sustainability and self-direction in universities (Temesgen & Raju, 2023). Weak understanding and misapplication of PLCs

in schools, Leadership not always supportive or distributed, Lack of collaborative culture and teacher-driven learning, External motivations dominating professional learning, Structural barriers (time, funding, workload, etc.) are common challenges

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section described the study area, research design, approach, type, sampling technique, and data sources for collecting and analyzing data on professional learning community practice and development in government primary schools within Addis Ketema Sub City. It also emphasis on outlined the methods and locations where the research was carried out.

3.2. Research Design:

The study employed mixed-methods research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of PLC development. Descriptive design: helped in capturing the status, organization, and practices of PLCS in the selected schools.

3.3. Population and Sampling:

Target population: The study focused on teachers, principals and school teachers' development vice principal across government primary and middle schools in Addis Ketema Sub-city Addis Ababa administration. Because in government school teachers are the main focus area for professional learning community, School teachers' development vice principal as the name indicate the representative of teachers development in government schools. His duty is mainly on professional learning and managing of school teachers' resource.

3.4. Sampling Method:

Schools: - Systematic random sampling was used to determine the target schools. First all target schools in the study are listed in alphabetical order. And then randomly choose a starting point from the first six schools in the list to avoid bias; I started from number one. The interval was determined by the rule, which in this case was "every sixth school." This insured consistent spacing between selections. Finally, from the starting point selected every sixth school on the list. So, from 35 primary schools in Addis Ketema Sub-city 1^{st}, 6^{th}, 12^{th}, 18^{th}, 24^{th}, and 30^{th}, number schools are samples of the study. Totally around 18% or six schools were selected from 35 schools.

This method: - is easy to implement and reduces the likelihood of human error. If the population is evenly distributed, it often yields a sample that is representative of the whole.

3.4.1 Sample size

As indicated above six schools were selected.

For smaller populations, say, N = 100 or fewer, there is little point in sampling; survey the entire population.

If the population size is around 500 (give or take 100), 50% should be sampled.

Educational Research (10^{Th} ed.) –Gay, Mills and Airasian So I used 50% of the population

Table 3.1 Sample size distribution

School Id	Population size in each school	Sample size proportional		Sampling method
		teachers	principals	
1st	63	29	2	Simple Random sampling
6th	70	33	2	
12th	73	35	2	
18th	38	17	2	
24th	77	36	2	
30th	60	28	2	
Total	381	178	12	

For participants: - stratified random sampling was applied to include teachers from different grades, school leaders. From these 190 participants 178 teachers and 12 principals (1 principal and 1 teachers development vice principal) from each schools were selected.

3.5. Data Collection Methods

3.5.1. Quantitative Data Collection

Survey Questionnaires: Likert-scale structured questionnaires distributed to 178 teachers to gather data on; the structure and organization of PLCs, participation level and activities perceived effectiveness and challenges.

Using a questionnaire to research the practice of professional learning community in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary and middle schools offered several advantages. Questionnaires allowed researchers to collect data from a large number of respondent's quickly and efficiently. They ensured consistencies in the way questions were asked, making it easier to compared and analyzed responses. Questionnaires are relatively inexpensive to design, distribute and administer compared to other methods. Respondents may feel more comfortable providing honest feedback in a questionnaire,

especially if anonymity is guaranteed. They also can complete the questionnaire at their convenience, minimizing disruption to their professional activity. Questionnaires can be designed to target specific aspects of PLC development, such as collaboration, shared leadership and ongoing professional learning. It also can be customized to reflect the unique context of Addis Ketema government primary schools, ensuring relevance and accuracy.

3.5.2. Qualitative Data Collection

Document Analysis**:** Relevant documents (e.g., professional learning community meeting minutes, action plans and reports) was reviewed in the six schools with vice principal to understand the planning and implementation processes of professional learning communities. Besides, the researcher conducted open ended interview questions with six principals for 30 minute for each principals and the interview was recorded.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure in my research was the systematic approach to gathering information for analysis by address research questions. Here was a step- by- step out line of the process. By defining objectives the researcher identified the research question; clarified both qualitative and quantitative data needed.

Research Design: - By aligning the design with the objectives, the research approach was survey (questionnaire, interview and data analysis)

Moreover defining the group from which data were collected and the sampling method was both random and stratified sampling.

3.7. Data analysis

3.7.1. Quantitative Data Analysis:

Statistical tool (e.g.,SPSS) was used for data analysis.

Descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, frequency, percentage and slandered deviation) summarized key finding from survey responses.

3.7.2. Qualitative Data Analysis:

Thematic analysis applied to document and which interviewed with principal and assessed from schools.

Key themes identified, coded and categorized provide a narrative on professional learning community practice and challenges.

3.8. Ethical Consideration:

Informed consent: - Participants informed about the purpose of the study, and consent obtained before data collection.

Confidentiality: - Participants information and responses kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Voluntary Participation: - Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without repercussions.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data in two sections. The first outlines, respondents' demographic characteristics, providing context for the analysis. The second examines data from interviews, data analysis and questionnaires focusing on the practice of professional learning communities' development in Addis Ketema sub-city government primary schools structured around the study's three objectives.

4.2 Data presentation and analysis

4.2.1. Demographic characteristics of the key informants

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews and data analysis posed open-ended questions to principals and vice principals of primary and middle schools to examine understanding, implementation regularity, leadership structure, collaboration methods, impact ,key challenges and suggestions of professional learning community and the

practice of PLCs and development in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary and middle schools. The principals and vice principals selected for the interviews and show documents were chosen based on their extensive professional experience and significant involvement in PLCs activities. These principals came from diverse educational and administrative backgrounds, offering valuable perspectives on how teachers' participation and collaboration on PLCs and their engagement influences effectiveness of teaching practice. Their roles in the practice were essential to understanding the dynamics and challenges of implementing professional learning communities at the school level. To ensure the protection of participants' identities and comply with ethical standards, their actual names have been replaced with school code in the study. This approach not only ensures confidentiality but also fosters a trustful environment for candid and open responses during the interviews.

Table 4.1.Demographic characteristics of open ended questions for interview and

S/N	School code	Sex	Education back ground	Position	Experience
1	1st	M	Degree	principal	18
2	2nd	M	Degree	principal	16
3	3rd	M	Degree	principal	20
4	4th	M	Degree	principal	16
5	5th	M	Degree	principal	13
6	6th	M	Degree	principal	13
7	1st	M	Degree	Vice principal	15
8	2nd	M	Degree	Vice principal	12
9	3rd	M	Degree	Vice principal	13
10	4th	M	Degree	Vice principal	24
11	5th	M	Degree	Voice principal	18
12	6th	M	Degree	Vice principal	10

The Table 4.1 shows principals and vice principals which conducted interview for principals and made them showed me documents which concerned PLCs by vice principal in their schools. 6 principals and 6 vice principals, each has brought unique experiences and qualifications to the study. All principals possess a bachelor's degree. The participants' professional experience spans from 8 to 24 years. This breadth of experience reflects the participants' substantial expertise in educational leadership. Their position enhances the study by providing wide information of perspectives on the practice of professional learning community development and in teachers teaching learning improvement activities.

4.2.2. Response rate of the participants for the questionnaire

The researcher's analysis was carefully aligned with the research questions, objectives, and problem statement to ensure a focused and coherent study. A total of 178 questionnaires were thoughtfully designed and distributed among teachers to 6 government primary and middle schools, enabling comprehensive data collection.
The researcher achieved a 100% response rate, successfully collecting all 178 distributed questionnaires. This was due to active engagement in the study area and strong relationships with school principal and vice principals. By fostering trust and collaboration, participants felt valued, ensuring all questionnaires were fully completed without missing data.

4.2.3. The Demographic Characteristics of Teachers Respondents

To collect key demographic data, the questionnaire included a section covering gender, age, education level, and years of experience in schools. Information was gathered from teachers those who expected to participate in PLCs to provide a descriptive overview. Data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and presented in tables for clarity.

Table 4.2.Demographic characteristics of participant teachers

Items	**category**	**Teachers**	
		Number	**%**
Gender	Male	114	64%

	Female	64	36.0%
	Total	**178**	**100.0%**
Experience	1-10 years	63	35.4%
	11-20 years	99	55.6%
	21-30 years	9	5.1%
	31-40 years	7	3.9%
	Above 40 years	0	0%
	Total	**178**	**100%**
Education Background	Diploma	46	25.8%
	Degree	128	71.9%
	Masters	4	2,2%
	Other	0	0%
	Total	**178**	**100%**

In item 1 the sex of teachers, the majority were male 114 (64%), while females constituted 64 (36%). In item 2 teachers' experience ranged from 1 to 10 years,63 (35.4) with the largest groups being 11–20 years, 99 (55.6%), 21–30 years nine (5.1%), 31-40 years seven (3.9%) and no participant above 40 years indicating that 11-20 years experienced teachers were more involved in PLCs questionnaire. In item 3 educational background most participants in the study were degree holder that indicates 128 (71.9%) 46 (25.8%) of them were diploma holders in their education background. The rest four (2.2%) of them were masters. The participant teachers mostly held first degrees. This indicates most academically qualified participants. Overall, males dominated across all groups, and 11–20 years experienced teachers with first degrees, were the most engaged participants.

4.2.4. A descriptive analysis of teachers practice and development of PLCs

In this section, descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation) were employed to analyze the feedback from the teachers' response. A 5-point Likert scale was used, with scores ranging from 1 to 5, and the

responses were interpreted using a predefined scale of agreement, as outlined in the table below.

The scale allows for a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' view points on the subject matter. Chin and Md (2020) suggest the following interpretation of mean scores on the Likert scale: a mean score between 0.99-1.00 indicates strong disagreement, 1.00-1.99 indicates disagreement, 2.00-2.99 indicates neutrality, 3.00-3.99 indicates agreement, and 4.00-5.00 indicates strong agreement. Additionally, frequency descriptors such as "never," "occasionally," "sometimes," "often" and "always" were used to further interpret the data, representing varying degrees of frequency or occurrence. These descriptors are typically aligned with numerical values to quantify subjective responses. This rating system was applied to analyze both the interview responses and questionnaire data, which were subsequently combined for a more comprehensive analysis. The results, reflecting the participants' perspectives, were interpreted based on the mean scores and summarized accordingly. By using this method, the study provides valuable insights into the respondents' opinions on PLCs practice and development; and then positive changes on teachers' attitude, knowledge, collaboration and improvement of teaching methodologies; finally have seen their potential impact on student academic performance. The descriptive statistical analysis offers a clear and systematic interpretation of the data, which facilitates understanding of the respondents' attitudes toward the topic under investigation (Field, 2018).

4.2.4.1 Establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities

Table 4.3.Establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities

S/N	Item	SD/ %	D/%	N/%	A/%	SA/%	M/	Std.
1	Professional Learning Communities are formally established and practice in my school	7/3.9 %	11/6.1 %	33/18.5 %	99/55.6 %	28/15.7 %	3.73	.936

2	There are clear goals and guidelines for PLC activities in my school	27/15.2%	17/9.6%	44/24.7	80/44.9	10/5.6	3.77	.888
3	PLC meetings are held regularly and are well-organized.	2/1.1	25/14.0	42/23.6	85/47.8	24/13.5	3.58	.930
4	Participation in PLCs is expected and encouraged among all teachers	17/9.6	29/16.3	43/24.2	69/38.7	20/11.2	3.26	1.15
5	There is a shared understanding among staff about the purpose of PLCs	8/4.5	11/6.2	40/22.5	99/55.6	20/11.2	3.63	.925

The resource made "Under establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities" shows varied responses about the item Professional Learning Communities are formally established and practice in my school. Out of 178 teachers, 18 (10%) disagreed, 33 (18.5%) remained neutral, 127 (71.3%) agreed. The mean score of 3.73 which ranges between 3.00-3.99 indicates a generally positive view of Professional Learning Communities are formally established and practice in my school, with a relatively medium level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.936 reflects consistence variability in responses, suggesting that many teachers participate in PLCs establishment and practice and have role.

The response of teachers regarding “There are clear goals and guidelines for PLC activities in my school.” out of 178 respondents, 24.8% disagreed, 24.7% neutral, 50.5%, agreed. The mean response score is 3.77, which ranges between 3.00-3.99 with a standard deviation of 0.888, indicating a wide variation in perceptions. This suggests agreement feelings about clear goals and guidelines for PLC activities, with some teachers feeling disagreed and neutral or dissatisfied in clear goals and guidelines for PLC activities." On

the item “PLC meetings are held regularly and are well-organized” shows out of 178 teachers 15.1% disagreed, 23.6% neutral, 61.3%, agreed. The average score of mean 3.58 which ranges between 3.00-3.99 suggests a tendency toward agreement with the teachers 178 responses. The standard deviation of 0.930 indicates a relatively consistent response pattern, indicating PLC meetings are held regularly and are well-organized in their schools.

“Participation in PLCs is expected and encouraged among all teachers”: shows the following distribution of responses: 46 teachers (25.9 %) disagreed, 43 teachers (24.2%) were neutral, 89 teachers 49.9% agreed. While there is a general tendency toward agreement, the item did not receive a strong or consistent endorsement. The wide spread of responses—including a notable number of “strongly disagree” and “disagree” responses—suggests that some respondents may not share the same understanding, experience, or acceptance of the concept or the encouragement of participation in PLCs among all teachers. This variation may point to inconsistent implementation**,** differing interpretations of the item**,** or varying levels of engagement across schools or individuals.

There is a shared understanding among staff about the purpose of PLCs received responses from 178 teachers, with the following distribution across the scale: 19 teachers (10.7%) disagreed, 40 teachers (22.5 %) were neutral, 119 teachers 66.8 % agreed. The item yielded a mean score of 3.63**,** indicating that respondents, on average, agreed with the statement shared understanding among staff about the purpose of PLCs. Since the mean is above the neutral point **(3.0)** and approaching the "agree" category (4.0), it reflects a moderately positive perception of the item. The standard deviation of 0.925 suggests that most responses were relatively close to the mean, indicating moderate consistency among respondents. While some variation exists, it is not extreme**,** meaning that a majority of participants shared a similar view regarding this item.

The general findings reveal that while teachers agreed the establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities in schools, there is neutral with their participation in PLCs encouragement among all teachers. Overall, the data suggests a sense of establishment and practice of PLCs but most teachers not encouraged with participation of PLCs.

Analytical summary of the verbatim responses from the six school principals regarding the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in their respective schools is the following.

Schools vary in consistency. School 6 principal stands out for comprehensive and regular implementation. School principals 2 and 4 face scheduling issues, while School principal 1 acknowledges an evaluation gap despite routine sessions. The knowledge-sharing implemented weekly on Mondays but not systematically evaluated and irregular due to scheduling constrains and inconsistent. Continuous professional development scheduled weekly and structure across all levels but previously sporadic (sometimes).

This is an analysis of how Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) were doing in some schools, based on a checklist the researcher used to gather information. This is where things get a bit varied: PLC activities aren't consistent across all the schools I looked at. There's no uniform agenda for PLC meetings, and some schools don't even have meeting minutes (for example, two schools didn't have minutes for their subject department meetings). While meetings might be planned, they don't always happen according to the schedule.

Four schools had meeting minutes showing lesson study happening in English and Math departments – that's a great step! Also, in two schools, especially for grades 1-3, teachers are working together to plan their lessons, and there's evidence of this collaboration. While I saw evidence of work, it doesn't always directly connect to the plan's goals. For instance, teachers might be doing things like providing tutorials to students, but the reports

don't show how the teachers themselves are improving their skills. This is especially true for Continuous Professional Development reports. I found attendance records for participants in only three schools, and even then, they weren't consistently kept.

There's no regular reporting on how CPD efforts impact student academic performance within this framework. However, subject departments do analyze overall student results and present them to the school leadership. Applied research projects are prepared and submitted, but they often don't get presented to the wider school community for evaluation, nor are successful findings adopted and implemented. Sometimes, it seems the research is done just to say it has been done.

The data from the teacher survey and principal interviews paint a nuanced picture of the establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). While there's a general consensus among teachers that PLCs are formally established and practiced in their schools, the implementation and effectiveness appear inconsistent and varied.

A majority of the 178 teachers surveyed **agreed** or **strongly agreed** that PLCs are established and that clear goals exist for PLC activities. The mean scores for these items (3.73 and 3.77, respectively) reflect a positive overall perception. However, the standard deviations and distribution of responses—especially the notable number of "disagree" and "neutral" responses—indicate significant variability in individual experiences. This suggests that while PLCs may be officially in place, they aren't functioning uniformly across all schools or for all teachers.

The lack of consistent implementation is further highlighted by the qualitative data from the principal interviews and the checklist analysis. Although principals acknowledge the importance of PLCs, many reported scheduling conflicts and evaluation gaps that hinder regular and consistent meetings. The analysis of PLC activities also revealed a lack of standardized practices, such as the absence of meeting minutes and inconsistent

attendance records in several schools. While positive examples of collaboration, such as lesson study in English and Math departments, do exist, the findings show a disconnect between these activities and their intended outcomes. Specifically, there is limited evidence of how these professional development efforts translate into improved teacher skills or, more critically, how they impact student academic performance. The tendency for research to be conducted "just to say it has been done" further underscores the gap between formal policy and actual practice.

In summary, while there is a formal structure and positive sentiment toward PLCs among teachers, the findings reveal a significant gap in their consistent and effective implementation. The varied experiences reported by both teachers and principals' point to a need for more systematic and unified guidelines, regular evaluation, and a stronger focus on connecting PLC activities directly to measurable improvements in professional practice and student outcomes.

4.2.4.2 Collaboration and Professional Development

Table 4.4 Collaboration and Professional Development

S/N	Item	SD/%	D/%	N/%	A/%	SA/%	M/	Std.
1	Teachers collaborate regularly to improve teaching strategies.	7/3.9	8/4.5	50/28.1	79/44.4	34/19.1	3.70	0.96
2	PLCs provide a platform for sharing best practices and teaching resources.	0/0.0	19/10.7	42/23.6	82/46.1	35/19.7	3.75	0.895
3	PLC discussions focus on real classroom issues and student needs	8/4.5	44/24.7	88/49.4	35/19.7	3/1.7	2.89	0.82

4	Participation in PLCs has improved my teaching effectiveness	15/8.4	26/14.6	100/56.2	34/19.1	3/1.7	2.91	0.86
5	My professional learning has improved as a result of PLC involvement.	13/7.3	37/20.8	87/48.9	38/21.3	2/1.1	2.88	0.87

The resource made "Collaboration and Professional Development" shows varied responses about the item teachers collaborate regularly to improve teaching strategies. Out of 178 teachers, 15 (8.4%) disagreed, 50 (28.1%) remained neutral, 113 (63.5%) agreed. The mean score of 3.70 suggests that, on average, respondents agree that teachers collaborate regularly to improve teaching strategies. This reflects a positive perception of collaboration among teachers. The standard deviation of 0.96 indicates a moderate spread in responses. While most teachers agreed, there is still a range of opinions so neutral and a few in disagreements implying some inconsistency in collaborative practices across schools or departments**.**

The response of teachers about, PLCs provide a platform for sharing best practices and teaching resources indicate that out of 178 teachers, 19 (10.7%) disagreed, 42 (23.6%) remained neutral, 117 (65.8%) agreed. The mean score of 3.75 indicates that most respondents agree that PLCs provide a platform for sharing best practices and teaching resources, reflecting a positive perception of collaborative sharing. The standard deviation of 0.895 shows a moderate spread, suggesting that while a majority are in agreement, there are still varying views, with a notable portion neutral or in mild disagreement. Overall, this suggests moderately strong and consistent support for this role of PLCs.

The response of teachers about, PLC discussions focus on real classroom issues and student needs indicate that out of 178 teachers, 52 (29.2%) disagreed, 88 (49.4%)

remained neutral, 38(21.4%) agreed. The mean of 2.89 suggests that respondents are close to neutral, but slightly leaning toward disagreement with the statement that PLC discussions focus on real classroom issues and student needs. The standard deviation of 0.82 shows that while responses are not extremely spread out, there is moderate variation, indicating that, teachers' experiences and perceptions differ somewhat across schools.

From the description above on item 4, 41 (23%) said disagree, 100 (56.2%), neutral in their response, 37 (20.8%) are agreed. The mean score of 2.91 indicates that respondents are close to neutral, with a slight leaning toward disagreement with the statement that PLC participation has improved their teaching effectiveness. The standard deviation of 0.86 shows a moderate variation in responses—most teachers are clustered near the mean, but there are some differing experiences or opinions across the group. This suggests that: while a few teachers recognize the benefits of PLCs, a large portion remains neutral**,** possibly due to limited or unclear impact**.** The effectiveness of PLCs in influencing teaching practice is still uncertain or inconsistent across the schools studied.

The response of teachers about the improvement of professional learning as a result of PLCs involvement, showed out of 178 teachers 50 (28.1%) disagree, 87 (48.9%) neutral, and the rest 40 (22.4%) agree. The mean of 2.88 suggests that respondents were slightly below neutral, indicating a mild tendency toward disagreement that PLC involvement has improved their professional learning. The standard deviation of 0.87 reflects moderate variability in responses—many teachers answered similarly, but there is still a spread across the scale. This implies that: A significant portion of teachers (48.9%) remained neutral or disagreed**,** showing uncertainty or skepticism about the impact of PLCs on their professional growth. While some teachers perceive benefits, others may not yet see or experience improvement, possibly due to limited quality or depth of PLC activities in their context.

While collaboration and knowledge sharing within PLCs are generally viewed positively, especially in terms of peer collaboration and sharing best practices, the impact on individual professional development and teaching effectiveness appears uncertain or inconsistent. Collaboration is happening and is valued, but...The transformative professional development aspect of PLCs is not fully realized for many teachers. This gap may result from limited quality, unclear goals, uneven support, or a lack of reflective practice in some PLC settings

Analytical summary of the verbatim responses from the six school principals regarding Collaboration and Professional Growth on the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in their respective schools is the following. Strong collaboration mechanisms exist in Schools 3–6, using practical tools like action research, digital platforms, and structured departmental activities. Schools 1–2 focus more on informal knowledge exchange. In school 2 PowerPoint-based departmental presentations for knowledge-sharing. In school 5 ICT training was example of professional growth.

The data from the teacher survey and principal interviews indicate a significant gap between the perceived value of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and their tangible impact on professional growth and teaching effectiveness.

On the one hand, a majority of teachers view PLCs as valuable platforms for collaboration and resource sharing. With mean scores of 3.70 and 3.75, most teachers agree that they regularly collaborate to improve teaching strategies and that PLCs are effective for sharing best practices. This positive perception is supported by the principals' reports, which highlight the presence of strong collaboration mechanisms in several schools, including the use of action research and structured departmental activities.

On the other hand, the survey results reveal a clear disconnect when it comes to the practical benefits of PLCs. The mean scores for items about the impact of PLCs on

teaching effectiveness (2.91), professional learning (2.88), and whether discussions focus on real classroom issues (2.89) all lean toward neutral or even slight disagreement. A large percentage of teachers, up to 56.2%, remained neutral on these critical items, suggesting uncertainty or an unproven impact. The principals' reports confirm this inconsistency; while some schools engage in structured activities, others rely on informal knowledge exchange, and examples of professional growth are sporadic or sometimes.

In summary, while the collaborative spirit of PLCs is generally strong and valued by teachers, the current implementation often falls short of translating this collaboration into meaningful professional development and improved teaching practices. The findings suggest that PLCs are largely perceived as forums for sharing, but not yet as a consistent, effective driver of professional growth. To realize the full potential of PLCs, schools should focus on ensuring that discussions are grounded in relevant classroom issues and that collaborative efforts lead to measurable improvements in teaching effectiveness and professional learning for all teachers.

4.2.4.3. Leadership and School Support

Table 4.5 Leadership and School Support

S/N	Item	SD/%	D/%	N/%	A/%	SA/%	M/	Std.
1	School leaders actively support the implementation of PLCs.	21/11.8	39/21.9	83/46.6	33/18.5	2/1.1	2.75	.936
2	Leadership roles within PLCs are shared among staff, not limited to administrators	10/5.6	15/8.4	44/24.7	99/55.6	10/5.6	3.47	.936
3	Adequate time and resources are allocated for PLC meetings and activities.	17/9.58	23/12.9	86/48.3	39/21.9	13/7.3	3.04	1.01
4	Facilitators of PLCs are well-prepared and effective	16/9.0	46/25.8	72/40.4	41/23.0	3/1.7	2.83	0.94

5	I feel empowered to take initiative and lead collaborative efforts within my school	2/1.1	7/3.9	45/25.3	89/50.0	35/19.7	3.83	0.82

Under section Leadership and School Support the respondents finding are as follow: under item School leaders actively support the implementation of PLCs, showed from178 teachers, 60 (33.7%) disagree, 83(46.6%) neutral, 35(19.6%) agree. The mean score of 2.75 indicates a tendency toward disagreement or neutrality regarding school leaders' support for PLCs. Most teachers do not strongly feel that school leaders actively support PLC implementation. The standard deviation of 0.93 shows moderate variation in responses, indicating a diversity of opinions among staff — some feel supported, but many are unsure or disagree.

This suggests that school leadership support is perceived as limited or inconsistent, which may affect the effective implementation of PLCs.

According to the item “Leadership roles within PLCs are shared among staff, not limited to administrators” from 178 respondents showed 25 (14%) disagree, 44(24.7%) neutral, 109 (61.2%) agree. A mean of 3.47 indicates a moderate agreement that leadership roles in PLCs are shared among staff and not limited to administrators. The SD of 0.93 suggests a moderate spread of opinions—while many agree, there is noticeable variation in perception across respondents.
This implies that in many schools, leadership responsibilities are beginning to be distributed among teachers, although some still see it as mainly administrator-driven.

The study in item 3(Adequate time and resources are allocated for PLC meetings and activities.) results indicated that 40 (22.48%), 86 (48.3%), 52 (29.2%), said disagree, neutral, agree respectively. A mean of 3.04 indicates that responses are just slightly above neutral, showing mild agreement that adequate time and resources are provided for PLC

activities but not strongly so. The SD of 1.01 reflects high variability in responses, suggesting that some schools or respondents feel supported**,** while others do not perceive time and resources as sufficient**.**

This highlights a lack of uniformity in PLC resource allocation across schools.

The study in item 4(Facilitators of PLCs are well-prepared and effective.) results indicated that from 178 teachers 62 (34.8%), teachers answered disagree, 72 (40.4%) teachers answered neutral, 44 (24.7%) teachers said agree. A mean of 2.83 indicates that teachers lean slightly toward disagreement with the idea that PLC facilitators are well-prepared and effective. The SD of 0.94 suggests moderate variability in responses, meaning opinions differ somewhat among teachers.

This reflects a general lack of confidence or inconsistency in the effectiveness and preparation of PLC facilitators.

In item 5(I feel empowered to take initiative and lead collaborative efforts within my school) 178 teachers' response indicates 9 (5%) disagree, 45 (25.3%) neutral, 124 (69.7%) agree. A mean of 3.83 suggests that respondents generally agree they feel empowered to lead collaborative efforts at school. The standard deviation of 0.82 shows moderate consistency in responses, with most teachers aligning positively on this view.

This indicates a strong and shared sense of empowerment among teachers in PLC-related leadership within their schools.

Generally while teachers largely feel empowered to lead collaborative efforts and see some sharing of leadership within PLCs, the overall picture of leadership and school support is inconsistent. There's a clear need for school leaders to more actively and consistently support PLC implementation, and for schools to ensure adequate and uniform allocation of time and resources. Addressing these areas would likely strengthen the effectiveness and impact of PLCs, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

Analytical summary of the verbatim responses from the six school principals regarding Organization and Leadership on the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in their respective schools is the following. All schools show

organized leadership, but effectiveness varies. School principal 6 demonstrates structured delegation and integration into broader school plans, suggesting stronger institutionalization. TEMUMA or Continuous professional development was led by Teachers development Vice principal whereas a knowledge-sharing initiative was lead collectively by school leaders. In school 4 and 6 planning was collaborative and hierarchical, department-based with oversight from leadership.

The findings from both the teacher survey and the principal interviews reveal a critical paradox in the leadership and support structures for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). While there's a positive and widely shared sentiment among teachers that they feel empowered to lead collaborative efforts and that leadership roles are shared, this sense of empowerment doesn't consistently translate to active support from school administration.

Specifically, the data shows that only a minority of teachers feel that school leaders actively support the implementation of PLCs, with a mean score of 2.75 leaning toward disagreement. This is a crucial finding, as it suggests that despite the positive feelings of teacher empowerment, the formal backing and resources needed for PLCs to thrive may be absent. The principal interviews reinforce this idea of varied effectiveness; while some leaders demonstrate structured delegation and integration of PLCs into school-wide plans, others' efforts seem less formalized.

Furthermore, the lack of consistent support is tangible. The mean score for adequate time and resources is a weak 3.04, reflecting a significant lack of uniformity in how resources are allocated. This is a major hurdle for effective PLC functioning. Similarly, the effectiveness of PLC facilitators is also a point of concern, with a low mean score of 2.83 suggesting a widespread perception that these leaders are not adequately prepared.

In short, while teachers possess the will and a sense of shared responsibility to make PLCs successful, they are often operating in an environment with inconsistent or insufficient support from school leadership. The data points to a clear need for school administrators to step up by providing more active, consistent backing, and by ensuring that adequate time, resources, and training are provided to help PLCs move beyond collaborative intent toward tangible, lasting impact. Without this foundational support, the current levels of teacher empowerment may not be enough to sustain and improve PLC effectiveness.

4.2.4.4. PLC Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

Table 4.6 Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

S/N	Item	SD/%	D/%	N/%	A/%	SA/%	M/	Std.
1	PLC activities have helped improve student academic performance.	0/0	6/3.4	49/27.5	78/43.8	45/25.3	3.91	0.812
2	The teaching strategies developed through PLCs are aligned with student learning	5/2.8	5/2.8	33/18.5	104/58.4	31/17.4	3.85	0.84
3	I regularly use feedback from PLC discussions to adjust my classroom	21/11.8	49/27.5	88/49.4	13/7.3	7/3.9	2,64	0.92
4	There is a noticeable improvement in student engagement due to PLC-influenced teaching.	4/2.25	33/18.5	72/40.4	65/36.5	4/2.25	3.18	0.84
5	Overall, PLCs have positively influenced the learning environment in our school	10/5.6	34/19.1	90/50.6	40/22.5	4/2.2	2.97	0.85

As indicated on table 4.6 "Impact of PLC on Student Learning Outcomes." the respondents finding are as follow: under item PLC activities have helped improve student academic performance shows out of 178 teachers 6 (3.4%) of them said disagree, 49 (27.5%) of them said neutral, 123 (69.1%) of them said agree. A mean of 3.91 shows a strong tendency toward agreement—most teachers believe PLC activities have positively impacted student academic performance. The standard deviation of 0.812 indicates moderate consistency in responses—while some variation exists, the majority view is fairly aligned.

This suggests that PLCs are perceived as contributing meaningfully to academic outcomes in the eyes of most teachers.

Under item 2(The teaching strategies developed through PLCs are aligned with student learning needs) shows out of 178 teachers 10 (5.6%) of them disagree, 33 (18.5%) of them neutral, 135 (75.8%) of them agree. A mean of 3.85 shows a strong tendency toward agreement, suggesting that most teachers believe teaching strategies developed through PLCs align well with student learning needs**.** The SD of 0.84 indicates moderate

consistency—while a few respondents disagreed or remained neutral, the dominant perception is positive and generally shared.

This supports the view that PLCs are effectively tailored to meet student learning needs, according to teacher experience.

Under item 3(I regularly use feedback from PLC discussions to adjust my classroom practices.) shows out of 178 teachers 70 (39.3%) disagree, 88 (49.4%) neutral, 20 (11.2%) agree. The mean of 2.64 indicates that teachers tend to disagree or remain neutral about using PLC feedback to adjust classroom practices. The SD of 0.92 shows a moderate level of variability**,** suggesting differing experiences or engagement levels among teachers. This result implies that many teachers are not actively applying insights from PLC discussions into their teaching practices, possibly due to lack of support, relevance, or follow-up mechanisms.

This item reveals a critical gap between collaboration and classroom implementation, which should be addressed to improve PLC effectiveness.

Under item 4(There is a noticeable improvement in student engagement as a result of PLC-influenced teaching.) shows out of 178 teachers 37 (20.75%) disagree, 72 (40.4%) neutral, 69 (38.75%) agree. The mean score of 3.18 indicates that, on average, teachers slightly agree that student engagement has improved due to PLC-influenced teaching. The standard deviation of 0.84 shows moderate consistency in responses, with some teachers less certain or neutral. Overall, this suggests a modestly positive perception of PLC impact on student engagement — not overwhelmingly strong, but leaning in the right direction.

To enhance impact, schools might: Strengthen the link between PLC strategies and classroom execution. Provide feedback loops to help teachers observe actual changes in student behavior and engagement.

Under item 5(Overall, PLCs have positively influenced the learning environment in our school.) shows out of 178 teachers 44 (24.7%) disagree, 90 (50.6%) neutral, 44 (24.7%) agree. The mean of 2.97 suggests that responses are very close to neutral**,** with a slight lean toward disagreement**.** The SD of 0.85 indicates moderate variability, meaning responses were somewhat spread out.

This implies that while some teachers feel PLCs have positively impacted the learning environment, a significant number are neutral or disagree, signaling limited or unclear perceived impact across the staff. This might suggest a need for stronger evidence of impact, better communication of PLC outcomes, or more effective implementation.

Overall, teachers generally acknowledge the importance of collaboration and view PLCs positively as platforms for sharing resources. However, there are significant concerns and inconsistencies regarding the practical focus of PLC discussions on real classroom issues and their perceived impact on individual teaching effectiveness and professional learning. This suggests a need for targeted efforts to ensure PLCs consistently address relevant classroom challenges and demonstrably contribute to the professional growth of all teachers.

Analytical summary of the verbatim responses from the six school principals regarding Impact on Teaching and Student Learning on the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in their respective schools is the following. All school principals' report improved teaching quality and learning outcomes, though evidence remains anecdotal (consisting of reports or observation of usually unscientific observers). School 5 offers the most tangible results (e.g., student building a drone), reflecting practical application of skills. For example all principals report improved teacher cooperation, improved teacher preparation and student behavior, enhanced academic performance and student-centered methods, better lesson planning and classroom engagement.

The findings from both the teacher survey and the principal interviews present a complex and somewhat contradictory picture regarding the impact of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on student learning outcomes.

On one hand, there is a strong and widely shared belief among teachers that PLCs positively influence student academic performance and that the strategies developed are well-aligned with student needs. This is supported by high mean scores for these items (3.91 and 3.85, respectively). Principals corroborate this view, reporting anecdotal (unscientific observers) evidence of improved teaching quality, student behavior, and academic performance, with some schools even offering tangible examples like a student building a drone.

However, a critical gap exists between this positive perception and the actual application of PLC insights in the classroom. A significant number of teachers reported that they do not regularly use feedback from PLC discussions to adjust their classroom practices, with the mean score of 2.64 leaning toward disagreement. This disconnect suggests that while teachers see the value in PLC collaboration, a substantial number are not translating these discussions into concrete changes in their daily teaching. The data also reveals a lack of strong conviction about the overall positive impact on the learning environment, with over half of the teachers remaining neutral on the subject.

In conclusion, while a general perception of positive impact on student outcomes exists, the data indicates a critical breakdown in the implementation phase. PLCs are viewed as valuable for collaboration and strategy development, but they are not consistently and effectively translating into changed classroom practices that drive tangible improvements in student engagement and the overall learning environment. For PLCs to realize their full potential, it's essential to bridge this gap by strengthening the link between collaborative discussions and actual classroom implementation, ensuring that the insights gained are actively used to inform and improve teaching

4.3. An analytical summary of the rest verbatim responses

4.3.1. General Understanding of PLCs

Most school principals lack a deep, standardized understanding of PLCs. Only School principals 4, 5, and 6 articulate a structured and informed understanding linked to professional development models like action research or peer observation. On the

understanding of PLCs unfamiliarity with the term but engages in knowledge sharing and monitoring which is directive from education bureau. Most of them take continuous professional development only as a PLC.

4.3.2. Challenges Identified

Challenges are recurring or occurring repeatedly—lack of time, budget, and commitment are dominant. Mindset and leadership support are critical factors across all schools.

4.3.3. Recommendations for Improvement

There is a strong call for structured training, awareness-building, and systemic support. Schools stress the need for sustainability through consistent scheduling, recognition, and cross-school collaboration. All school principals recommended for PLCs development change mindset, provide awareness training, experience-sharing, showcase successful model, and allocate resources and budget, schedule dedicated time in terms of sub-city education office or Addis Ababa education bureau. All principals see PLCs as transformative if properly embedded into the school culture. Emphasis is placed on sustainability, technological integration, and systemic planning.

In general several school leaders still confuse PLCs with general knowledge sharing or CPD activities. There is also strong leadership (Schools 5 and 6) correlates with consistent and impactful PLC implementation. A dedicated budget, training, and accountability structures are necessary for long-term impact. Resistance, skepticism, and habitual practices hinder full participation: addressing these through awareness and incentives are key.

4.4. Document analysis based on rest checklist

4.4.1. General Information

The researcher looked at six schools document, and here's what I saw:

All six schools have a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) plan in place. That's great! But some pieces are missing, what's not happening, though, is the formal planning for things like lesson study (where teachers work together to plan, observe, and refine lessons) or knowledge transfer initiatives that come from the education bureau. These weren't specifically included in the plans. I found meeting minutes for discussions around CPD. Interestingly, none of the schools had clear information on when this CPD journey officially began. However, it seems to be widely known that the Ministry of Education introduced it as a "package" way back in 1999. The plans clearly state who's responsible for it. And it's good to see that teachers and principals are explicitly named as the target audience.

4.4.2. Challenges & Solutions

It's important to understand the hurdles: The problems encountered during CPD (as most school principal saw PLC) implementation aren't formally documented. However, the Teacher Development vice principals in the schools shared some challenges: Lack of commitment from teachers, not enough time, insufficient support and follow-up from school leadership, no dedicated budget for PLCs. I found no information on what solutions have been put in place to address these challenges, nor any clear direction moving forward.

4.4.3. Alignment and Integration

Finally, how well are things fitting together? There's no clear evidence that school leadership has consistently supported CPD or other PLC initiatives. The CPD plans don't seem to reference relevant policy information, which could strengthen their foundation.

PLCs are partially practiced, but not systematically or consistently across schools. Their implementation is fragmented, and their integration into school culture and routines is weak. While there are emerging collaborative teaching efforts, the student-centered

learning approach is not well-established, and there's little evidence that PLCs are measurably improving academic outcomes. Leadership involvement in PLCs is superficial or inconsistent. The opportunity for developing collaborative leadership and professional growth among administrators is largely untapped (not subjected to tapping).

In general, the questionnaires were structured into distinct sections, each addressing key facets of PLC development and practice, directly aligning with the research objectives. The questions primarily utilized a Likert-type scale (e.g., Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) to measure perceptions, attitudes, and reported practices, supplemented implicitly by qualitative insights derived from the nuances of agreement/disagreement and neutral responses.

In essence, the questionnaires were meticulously designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of PLC implementation in the target schools. By collecting data across these critical domains, the instruments facilitated an assessment of the extent of PLC practice, identified areas where teaching practices could be further developed for student-centered learning through collaboration, and shed light on how leadership skills are being fostered or could be improved within the PLC framework. The quantitative nature of the responses, captured through Likert scales, allowed for statistical analysis (means and standard deviations) to identify general trends and areas of agreement or disagreement, while the variability in responses underscored the nuanced and often inconsistent nature of PLC implementation and perceived impact across the surveyed schools. This multi-dimensional approach enabled the research to effectively address its objectives and provide actionable insights for improving PLC development in Addis Ketema government primary schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of major findings

The researcher collected all 178 distributed questionnaires, constituting 100% of those distributed, due to active engagement in the study area and building close relationship with primary school principals and teachers. As a result, all questionnaires were returned complete, without any missing information. Overall, males dominated across all groups, and teachers experience ranges from 1.40 years, and principal experience ranges from 10-

24 years, teachers and principals with first degrees were the most engaged participants. This study, conducted in government primary schools within Addis Ketema Sub-City, employed a descriptive research design using a mixed-methods approach to investigate the extent PLCs properly practiced, collaborative practice of PLCs, barriers, and how does active involvement in the coordination and facilitation of PLCs contribute to the development of leadership skills. Data were gathered from a sample of 190 participants, including principals and teachers, selected through random, stratified proportionate. Primary data were collected via questionnaires and interviews, while secondary data came from documents and reports. The study explored (1)Establishment and practice of Professional Learning Communities (2)Collaboration and Professional Development (3)Leadership and School Support (4)Impact on Student Learning Outcomes, Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and qualitative data were analyzed thematically, ensuring a comprehensive and ethical investigation of school community engagement in educational profession development.

While teachers perceive PLCs as generally established and regularly meeting with clear goals, both principal interviews and document analysis reveal a more fragmented and inconsistent reality. There's a significant disconnect between teachers' general positive perception of PLC presence and the actual systematic and uniform implementation across schools. Principals' varied understanding and the lack of formal documentation and consistent adherence to schedules indicate that PLCs are partially practiced, but not yet properly, systematically, or consistently integrated across all Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools. The "proper practice" is hindered by a lack of standardized understanding, inconsistent scheduling, variable documentation, and uneven teacher participation

While there is clear evidence and perception of teacher collaboration and sharing of best practices within PLCs, particularly for improving teaching strategies, the link between

these collaborative efforts and a consistent, measurable impact on student-centered learning and overall academic achievement is not fully realized or documented. Teachers perceive an impact on student performance, and principals offer anecdotal (consisting of reports unscientific) evidence, but quantitative data from questionnaires shows a disconnect in the application of PLC feedback to classroom practice and a less clear impact on individual teaching effectiveness. Document analysis further highlights this gap, with a lack of direct evidence of skill improvement from CPD and a failure to fully integrate and apply research findings. This suggests that while the intent and platform for developing student-centered practices exist, the execution and demonstrable impact need strengthening, particularly in translating collaborative insights into consistent classroom application and measurable student outcomes.

While teachers express a strong sense of personal empowerment and perceive some sharing of leadership roles within PLCs, the overall fostering of a truly collaborative leadership model through PLCs is significantly hampered by inconsistent and often perceived as insufficient active support from school leaders. Both teacher perceptions and document analysis strongly indicate a lack of consistent leadership follow-up, dedicated resources, and clear solutions for identified challenges. Furthermore, concerns about the preparedness and effectiveness of PLC facilitators suggest that the formal leadership structures within PLCs are not consistently robust or strong. The opportunity for developing distributed and collaborative leadership through systematic involvement in PLC coordination and facilitation remains largely underdeveloped and inconsistently realized across the schools.

5.2. Conclusion

In general, the researcher concludes from both quantitative and qualitative findings clearly indicates that while Professional Learning Communities are recognized and generally present in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools, their practice is far from

optimal and consistently "proper." There's a strong desire and effort for collaboration among teachers, and they perceive a positive impact on student outcomes, but the mechanisms for translating this collaboration into consistently improved, student-centered teaching practices are weak or inconsistently applied. A critical missing link is the active, consistent, and well-resourced support from school leadership, which significantly hinders the full development of collaborative leadership models within PLCs and limits their transformative potential on both teaching practices and student learning. The findings highlight a need for a more standardized, deeply understood, and systematically supported approach to PLC implementation, with clear expectations for leadership involvement, resource allocation, and a focus on measurable impact on teacher development and student outcomes.

5.3. Recommendations

Here are recommendations for teachers, principals, and the government, based on my research findings and conclusions, aimed at improving the practice and impact of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in Addis Ketema government primary schools:

Based on the comprehensive findings from teachers' questionnaires, principals' interviews, and document analysis, the following recommendations are put forth to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of Professional Learning Communities in Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools. These recommendations are directed towards key stakeholders: teachers, school principals, and relevant government education bodies.

1. For Teachers:

Teachers should strive for more active and critical engagement in PLC meetings and activities. Move beyond passive attendance to actively contribute to discussions, share challenges, and seek solutions. Empower themselves to initiate informal collaborative efforts, such as peer observations, co-planning, and co-teaching, even beyond formal PLC

structures, to foster a pervasive culture of continuous learning. Actively seek and utilize feedback from PLC discussions to adjust teaching methods and address real classroom issues and student needs. Maintain a reflective journal to track changes and observed impacts. Consciously and consistently apply insights and strategies gained from PLC discussions into daily classroom practices. Regularly reflect on how PLC learning is impacting their teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, and be prepared to articulate this impact. Clearly articulate to school leadership the specific challenges faced within PLCs, such as the perceived lack of focus on real classroom issues, inconsistent application of feedback, or insufficient time and resources.

2. For School principals:

Ensure a consistent and deep understanding of what a Professional Learning Community truly entails, differentiating it from general CPD or informal knowledge sharing. This requires dedicated training for all school leaders on the principles and effective models of PLCs.

Articulate a clear and compelling vision for PLCs that aligns with the school's strategic goals and emphasizes their role in driving student-centered learning and teacher growth. Regularly communicate this vision to all staff.

Move beyond informal practices to formally establish PLCs with clear charters, consistent meeting schedules, and mandatory documentation (agendas, minutes, action plans, and attendance records) for all PLC activities.

Actively participate in, monitor, and provide targeted support to PLCs. This involves regular presence, offering guidance, removing barriers, and ensuring follow-up on action plans.

Invest in comprehensive training and ongoing support for PLC facilitators, equipping them with the necessary skills to guide productive discussions, manage group dynamics, ensure focus on student-centered learning, and foster reflective practice.

Develop formal and informal mechanisms to recognize and reward teachers' active participation and successful outcomes within PLCs, fostering a culture of appreciation and sustained engagement.

Intentionally connect PLC discussions to real classroom issues and student needs. Ensure that collaborative strategies developed in PLCs are systematically implemented, monitored for impact, and refined based on evidence. Move beyond anecdotal evidence to concrete data-driven evaluation of impact.

Establish clear accountability mechanisms for PLC effectiveness. This includes regular review of PLC outcomes, analysis of their impact on teaching practices and student achievement, and integrating PLC performance into staff evaluations.

3. For Government:

Develop a clear, standardized national/regional policy and framework for PLCs that differentiates them from general CPD and outlines their purpose, structure, and expected outcomes. This framework should guide schools in their implementation. Mandate the establishment and consistent practice of PLCs in all government primary schools with clear guidelines on frequency, duration, and thematic focus. Provide the necessary support structures for implementation.

Develop and roll out comprehensive, cascaded training programs for school leaders (principals, vice-principals) and identified PLC facilitators on effective PLC implementation, collaborative leadership, and data-driven decision-making.

Advocate for and allocate dedicated budget lines for PLC activities at the school level, ensuring that schools have the financial resources for meetings, materials, and external expertise if needed.

Develop and disseminate high-quality resources, toolkits, and best practice guides for PLCs, focusing on student-centered learning strategies, action research methodologies, and effective feedback mechanisms. Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to regularly assess the quality and impact of PLCs across schools. This should

include both process (e.g., adherence to schedule, quality of discussions) and outcome (e.g., impact on teacher practice, student achievement) indicators. Ensure that all education policies, particularly those related to teacher professional development, school improvement, and curriculum implementation, are explicitly aligned with and leverage the PLC framework.

By implementing these recommendations, Addis Ketema Sub-city government primary schools can move towards a more mature, consistent, and impactful practice of Professional Learning Communities, ultimately fostering a culture of continuous improvement that genuinely benefits both educators and students.

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Appendices

Research Questionnaire for teachers

Dear Participant,

- A Professional Learning Community (PLC) in schools is a collaborative group of educators who work together to improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning. It's a structured approach to professional development where teachers share ideas, reflect on their practice, and collaborate to create more effective learning environments.
- You are invited to participate in a research study titled **"The Practice of Professional Learning Community (PLC) Development in Addis Ketema Sub-city Government Primary Schools."** The purpose of this study is to assess the current implementation, effectiveness, and challenges of PLCs in government primary schools within the sub-city, with a focus on enhancing teaching quality, professional development, and student learning outcomes through collaborative practices.

- Your responses will provide valuable insights that may help improve the functioning of PLCs in Addis Ketema and beyond.
- Please note that all information collected through this questionnaire will be **kept strictly confidential** and used **solely for academic purposes**. Your identity will **not** be disclosed, and responses will be reported in aggregate form only.
- Participation in this study is **completely voluntary**. You are free to choose whether or not to participate, and you may **withdraw at any time** without any negative consequences.

Thank you for your valuable time and contribution to this important research.

Sincerely,
[Dagemay Jote Tulu]
[Addis Ababa University]
[0946361795]

Background Information

- Gender: Male / Female
- Role in the school: Teacher / Principal / Coordinator
- Years of experience: ____
- Education level: Diploma / Degree / Masters / Other

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement by selecting one of the following responses: make "√" in the box

1 – Strongly Disagree | 2 – Disagree | 3 – Neutral | 4 – Agree | 5 – Strongly Agree

Section A: Establishment and Practice of PLCs

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	PLCs are formally established and practiced in my school.					
2	There are clear goals and guidelines for PLC activities in my school.					
3	PLC meetings are held regularly and are well-organized.					
4	Participation in PLCs is expected and encouraged among all teachers.					
5	There is a shared understanding among staff about the purpose of PLCs.					

Section B: Collaboration and Professional Development

		1	2	3	4	5
6	Teachers collaborate regularly to improve teaching strategies.					
7	PLCs provide a platform for sharing best practices and teaching resources.					
8	PLC discussions focus on real classroom issues and student needs.					
9	Participation in PLCs has improved my teaching effectiveness.					
10	My professional learning has improved as a result of PLC involvement.					

Section C: Leadership and School Support

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
11	School leaders actively support the implementation of PLCs.					
12	Leadership roles within PLCs are shared among staff, not limited to administrators.					
13	Adequate time and resources are allocated for PLC meetings and activities.					
14	Facilitators of PLCs are well-prepared and effective.					
15	I feel empowered to take initiative and lead collaborative efforts within my school.					

Section D: Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
16	PLC activities have helped improve student academic performance.					
17	The teaching strategies developed through PLCs are aligned with student learning needs.					
18	I regularly use feedback from PLC discussions to adjust my classroom practices.					
19	There is a noticeable improvement in student engagement as a result of PLC-influenced teaching.					
20	Overall, PLCs have positively influenced the learning environment in our school.					

Interview Questions for principals

Section 1: General Understanding and Awareness of PLCs

1. What is your understanding of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)?
2. Are PLCs formally implemented in your school? If so, when and how were they introduced?
3. How would you describe the current status of PLC practice in your school?

Section 2: Organization and Participation

4. How are PLCs structured and managed in your school?
5. How often do PLC meetings take place, and who typically participates?
6. What role do teachers and administrators play in the planning and facilitation of PLC sessions?

Section 3: Collaboration and Professional Development

7. In what ways do teachers collaborate through PLCs to improve teaching practices?
8. How has participation in PLCs influenced your professional growth?
9. Can you share an example of a successful teaching strategy or professional development activity that emerged from PLC collaboration?

Section 4: Impact on Teaching and Student Learning

10. Have you noticed improvements in teaching quality as a result of PLC engagement? Please explain.
11. Do you think PLCs have had a measurable impact on student academic performance? Why or why not?
12. How are student needs considered and addressed in PLC discussions?

Section 5: Leadership, Support, and Challenges

13. How do school leaders support or promote PLCs in your school?
14. What challenges or barriers have you faced in implementing or sustaining effective PLCs?
15. What kind of support (training, resources, time, etc.) do you think is needed to strengthen PLC practice?

Section 6: Recommendations for Improvement

16. What improvements would you suggest to enhance the effectiveness of PLCs in your school?
17. How can the practice of PLCs be better promoted across schools in Addis Ketema Sub-city?
18. What role do you think PLCs should play in the long-term improvement of education in your area

የቃለ መጠይቅ ጥያቄዎች

- በትምህርት ቤቶች ውስጥ የፕሮፌሽናል መማሪያ ማህበረሰብ (PLC) የማስተማር ተግባራቸውን ለማሻሻል እና የተማሪዎችን ትምህርት ውጤት ለማሻሻል በጋራ የሚሰሩ አስተማሪዎች የትብብር ቡድን ነው። መምህራን ሃሳቦችን የሚለዋወጡበት፣ ተግባራቸውን የሚያንፀባርቁበት እና የበለጠ ውጤታማ የመማሪያ አካባቢዎችን ለመፍጠር የሚተባበሩበት ለሙያዊ እድገት የተዋቀረ አካሄድ ነው።

- "በአዲስ ከተማ ክፍለ ከተማ የመንግስት አንደኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ቤቶች የሙያዊ ትምህርት ማህበረሰብ (PLC) አተገባበርና ዕድጋት" በሚል ርዕስ በተደረገው የምርምር ጥናት ላይ እንድሳተፉ ተጋብዘዋል። የዚህ ጥናት ዓላማ በክፍለ ከተማው በሚገኙ የመንግስት አንደኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ቤቶች የ PLC ዎች ትግበራ፣ ውጤታማነት እና ተግዳሮቶች በመገምገም የመማር ማስተማር ጥራትን፣ ሙያዊ እድገትን እና የተማሪዎችን የትምህርት ውጤት በትብብር ማሳደግ ላይ በማተኮር ነው። - የእርስዎ ምላሾች በአዲስ ከተማ እና ከዚያም በላይ ያሉትን የ PLCs አሠራር ለማሻሻል የሚረዱ ጠቃሚ ግንዛቤዎችን ይሰጣሉ።

- እባክዎን በዚህ መጠይቅ የሚሰበሰቡ ሁሉም መረጃዎች በጥብቅ በሚስጥር እንደሚጠበቁ እና ለአካዳሚክ ዓላማዎች ብቻ እንደሚውሉ እባክዎ ልብ ይበሉ። ማንነትዎ አይገለጽም፣ እና ምላሾች የሚነገሩት በድምር መልክ ብቻ ነው።

- በዚህ ጥናት ውስጥ መሳተፍ ሙሉ በሙሉ በፈቃደኝነት ነው. ለመሳተፍ ወይም ላለመሳተፍ የመምረጥ ነፃነት አለህ፣ እና በማንኛውም ጊዜ ያለ አሉታዊ መዘዞች መውጣት ትችላለህ። ለዚህ ጠቃሚ ምርምር ላደረጉት ጠቃሚ ጊዜ እና አስተዋፅዖ እናመሰግናለን።

ከሰላምታ ጋር

[ዳግማይ ጆቴ ቱሉ]

[አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲት]

[0946361795]

ክፍል 1፡ የ PLCs አጠቃላይ ግንዛቤ እና እውቀት

1. ስለ ሙያዊ መማሪያ ማህበረሰቦች (PLCs) ያለዎት ግንዛቤ ምንድን ነው?
2. PLCs በትምህርት ቤትዎ ውስጥ በመደበኛነት ይተገበራሉ? ከሆነስ መቼ እና እንዴት ተዋወቁ?
3. በትምህርት ቤትዎ ያለውን የ PLC አተገባበር አሁን ያለውን ሁኔታ እንዴት ይገልጹታል?

ክፍል 2: ድርጅት እና ተሳትፎ

4. PLCs እንዴት ነው የሚዋቀሩት እና የሚተዳደረው በእርስዎ ትምህርት ቤት?
5. የ PLC ስብሰባዎች በየስንት ጊዜ ይከናወናሉ፣ እና ማን በተለምዶ ይሳተፋል?
6. የ PLC ክፍለ ጊዜዎችን በማቀድ እና በማመቻቸት መምህራን እና አስተዳዳሪዎች ምን ሚና ይጫወታሉ?

ክፍል 3: ትብብር እና ሙያዊ እድገት

7. የማስተማር ተግባራትን ለማሻሻል መምህራን በ PLCs በኩል የሚተባበሩት በምን መንገዶች ነው?
8. በ PLC ውስጥ መሳተፍ በእርስዎ ሙያዊ እድገት ላይ ምን ተጽዕኖ አሳድሯል?
9. ከ PLC ትብብር የተገኘውን የተሳካ የማስተማር ስልት ወይም ሙያዊ እድገት እንቅስቃሴን ምሳሌ ማጋራት ትችላለህ?

ክፍል 4፡ በማስተማር እና በተማሪ ትምህርት ላይ ያለው ተጽእኖ

10. በ PLC ተሳትፎ ምክንያት የማስተማር ጥራት መሻሻሎችን አስተውለሃል? እባክዎን ያብራሩ።

11. PLCs በተማሪ አካዴሚያዊ ክንዋኔ ላይ የሚለካ ተፅዕኖ ያሳረፉ ይመስላችኋል? ለምን ወይም ለምን አይሆንም?
12. በ PLC ውይይቶች ውስጥ የተማሪ ፍላጎቶች እንዴት ይታሰባሉ እና ምላሽ ይሰጣሉ?

ክፍል 5፡ አመራር፣ ድጋፍ እና ተግዳሮቶች

13. የት/ቤት መሪዎች PLC ን በት/ቤትዎ እንዴት ይደግፋሉ ወይም ያስተዋውቃሉ?
14. PLCs በመተግበር ወይም በማስቀጠል ምን ተግዳሮቶች ወይም መሰናክሎች አጋጥመውዎታል?
15. የ PLC አሠራርን ለማጠናከር ምን ዓይነት ድጋፍ (ስልጠና፣ ግብዓቶች፣ ጊዜ፣ ወዘተ) የሚያስፈልገው ይመስልዎታል?

ክፍል 6፡ ለመሻሻል ምክሮች

16. በት/ቤትዎ ውስጥ የ PLCን ውጤታማነት ለማሳደግ ምን ማሻሻል ይኖርበታል ብለው ይመክራሉ?
17. በአዲስ ከተማ ክፍለ ከተማ በሚገኙ ትምህርት ቤቶች PLCን አሠራር እንዴት በተሻለ ሁኔታ ማስተዋወቅ ይቻላል?
18. በትምህርት የረዥም ጊዜ ማሻሻል ላይ PLCs ምን ሚና መጫወት አለባቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?

Document Analysis Checklist:

PLC Planning and Implementation

Section A: General Information

1. Document type identified (e.g., strategic plan, meeting minutes, training report)? Yes /No _____

_____

2. Date of creation or update provided? Yes/No _____

_____

3. Author/organization clearly stated? Yes/No _____

_____

4. Target audience indicated (e.g., teachers, principals,)? Yes/No _____

_____

Section B: PLC Planning Components

5. Specific roles and responsibilities assigned to PLC members? Yes/No _____

_____

6. Timeline or schedule for PLC activities outlined? Yes/No _____

_____

7. Resource requirements (time, budget, materials) addressed? Yes/No _____

_____

8. Professional development needs assessed or mentioned? Yes/No _____

_____

9. Monitoring and evaluation strategies included in planning? Yes/No_____

_____

Section C: PLC Implementation Evidence

10. Records of regular PLC meetings (e.g., agendas, minutes)? Yes/No _____

_____

11. Evidence of collaborative activities (e.g., lesson study, peer coaching, joint planning)? Yes/No _____

_____

12. Documentation of reflective practice (e.g., self-assessments, journals, feedback)? Yes/No _____

_____

13. Participation logs or attendance records available? Yes/No_____

_____

14. Reports of student learning impact or instructional improvement? Yes/No _____

_____

15. Examples of action research or inquiry projects by PLCs? Yes/No _____

_____

16. Feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, interviews) for continuous improvement? Yes/No _____

Section D: Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

17. Document discusses barriers to PLC implementation (e.g., time, resistance, leadership)? Yes/No _____

_____

18. Strategies or solutions to overcome challenges proposed? Yes/No _____

_____

Section E: Alignment and Integration

19. Evidence of leadership support (e.g., principal involvement, coaching)? Yes/No _____

_____

_____

20. Evidence of policy alignment (e.g., Ministry of Education guidelines)? Yes/No _____

_____

_____