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CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IN ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: THE

CASE OF THREE SELECTED UNIVERSITIES

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Continuous Professional Development in Ethiopian Public Higher Education: The Case of Three Universities

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This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Medhanit Adane entitled “*Continuous Professional Development in Ethiopian Public Higher Education: The Case of Three Universities*” and submitted to the Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Language Studies, Department of Curriculum and Comparative Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum Studies complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by Examining Committee

_____ Advisor	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ External Examiner	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Dedication

I dedicate this to my beloved father Adane Solomon, my mother Yikerta Mekonen and my dear husband Yibeltal Alie. Your trust in me has been the anchor that steadied my course. Your unwavering support has been the bridge that carried me through the most challenging moments. And your patience has been the quiet strength that allowed me to persevere. This achievement is not mine alone, but a testament to the love, sacrifice, and encouragement you all have shown throughout my PhD journey. With all my gratitude and love.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the practices and challenges of continuous professional development of academic staff in Ethiopian higher education. The study posed five fundamental research questions: 1) how do academic staff understand and practice continuous professional development in the Ethiopian universities? 2) how do the universities practice continuous professional development? 3) why do Ethiopian universities and academic staff practice the way they practice? 4) how do academic staff account for their continuous professional development engagement? 5) what are the enablers and challenges in practicing continuous professional development in the case universities? To answer these questions, a qualitative research approach, exploratory case study research design, was employed. Data were mainly collected using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews. The data were analyzed using deductive thematic analysis. Based on the analysis and discussions, it was found that there is varied perception of CPD among academics. When it comes to how academics practice CPD, the findings showed that those at the research sites participated in different CPD activities; however, their methods varied, with some being more influenced by outside pressures than by their own desire to professionally develop. The looseness of accountability in relation to CPD engagement undermines the professionalism of teaching in higher education. The CPD program in the three universities faces significant challenges, including a lack of tailoring the program to individual academic needs, uniform and repetitive content, a lack of assessment of the impact of CPD, a lack of clear policy that guides the programs, and weak integration of CPD with technology and classroom practices. Hence, the study recommended that effective CPD practice in higher education requires a systematic, comprehensive, and well-established policy-led approach to staff professional development.

Key words: Academics, adult learning theory, continuous professional development, higher education institutions

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU- Addis Ababa University

AU- Ambo University

CPD- Continuous Professional Development

ELIP- English Language Improvement program

ESDP- Education Sector Development Program

ETP- Education and Training Policy

GEQIP- General Education Quality Improvement Package

HDL- Higher Diploma Leaders

HDP- Higher Diploma Program

HDT- Higher Diploma Tutors

HSIU- Haile Selassie I University

HU- Hawassa University

MCT- Master Class for Teaching Online

MoE- Ministry of Education

MoSHE- Ministry of Science and Higher Education

PLC- Professional Learning Community

SRL- Self-Regulated Learning

TDP- Teacher Development Program

TESO- Teacher Education System Overhaul

UCAA- University College of Addis Ababa

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This introduction chapter presents an overview of this study, including its background, research problem statements, research questions, study objectives, significance, scope, and the conceptual and theoretical framework that support the research.

1.1 Background of the study

Higher education is globally recognized as a cornerstone for socio-economic advancement, responsible for cultivating the essential human resources—from educators and engineers to researchers—that boost a nation forward. The efficacy of this entire educational system is fundamentally contingent upon its quality, which encompasses institutional inputs like staff and infrastructure, as well as processes such as teaching and research. Among these factors, the caliber of the academic staff is the primary determinant of the quality of educational services provided by any higher education institution. Therefore, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) emerges as a critical strategy for enhancing the learning and teaching processes and, by extension, the overall quality of education. CPD is essential for equipping academic staff to adapt to a landscape of constant change, including new curricula, evolving subject knowledge, and emerging technologies. It provides ongoing, high-quality learning opportunities that keep academics engaged and growing, often through job-embedded practices like collaborative planning and action research that foster professional learning communities. In this dynamic, academic staff are both catalysts for change and variables that require continuous improvement, making the success of professional development programs a key factor in elevating educational standards and fostering the professional competence of teachers.

The landscape of modern higher education in Ethiopia, while relatively young, has undergone a profound transformation since its inception. The journey began in 1950 with the establishment of the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA), which initially opened its doors to just 33 students with a faculty of nine expatriate instructors (Wagaw, 1990). This reliance on foreign scholars was

a necessary strategy to launch the system, given the absence of qualified Ethiopian educators at the university level. Over the next few decades, the system experienced a period of deliberate and steady growth. UCAA expanded to include diverse faculties, and additional specialized colleges were established in fields like engineering and agriculture (Molla, 2018). This foundational period saw UCAA eventually become Haile Selassie I University (later renamed Addis Ababa University), marking the slow but steady consolidation of the nation's higher education infrastructure.

This era of measured growth gave way to a dramatic policy shift in the late 1990s, when the government began to strategically leverage the higher education system as a primary engine for national development and poverty alleviation. This new focus triggered an unprecedented wave of expansion, often referred to as "massification." In less than two decades, the government aggressively increased the number of public universities from six to 50, establishing new institutions and upgrading existing colleges to ensure a wide distribution across all regions of the country (Ministry of Science and Higher Education [MoSHE], 2020). This expansion was mirrored in the private sector and led to a staggering surge in student numbers. From an enrollment of just 974 students in 1961, the system has grown to accommodate over 700,000 students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Molla, 2018; Ministry of Education [MoE], 2015).

This massive and rapid expansion, while successful in broadening access to higher education, has created a fundamental tension that defines the contemporary challenge for the sector. To meet the soaring student enrollment, the number of academic personnel grew exponentially, from the initial nine expatriates in 1950 to over 21,000 by 2015 (Molla, 2018; MoE, 2015). However, this rapid recruitment has placed immense pressure on the system's ability to ensure and maintain the quality of education. The core challenge now lies in managing the consequences of this expansion, specifically in ensuring that the massively expanded academic workforce is adequately prepared, supported, and continuously developed. This context of rapid massification versus the imperative for quality underscores the critical importance of effective Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs for academic staff in Ethiopia's public universities.

The government has worked to address the many problems brought about by the rapid expansion of higher education (Bird et.al, 2019; Dereje,2022). In other word, a consideration of historical development and the current significant expansion of Ethiopian higher education reveal a pattern

of continuing threats in the system. One of the major threats is poor quality. A reduced quality of education is apparent across the higher education system in Ethiopia (Dereje, 2022; MoE, 2018a; Wondwosen, 2022). This decline in educational standards can hinder the overall effectiveness of institutions and limit students' preparedness for the workforce. Consequently, addressing these quality concerns became essential for the future success and sustainability in Ethiopian higher education.

The Ethiopian government has implemented different programs to address the decreased quality. One of the programs is Teacher Development Program (TDP). The teacher development program in Ethiopia is a nationwide initiative administered by the ministry of education aimed at enhancing quality within the education system. TDP involves continuous development of educational knowledge, a deeper understanding of pedagogical skills, and the improvement of professional competence throughout a teacher's career, facilitated by participation in diverse learning experiences and practical applications (Liyun & Zhaolong, 2024). It includes all natural learning experiences and intentional activities aimed at directly or indirectly benefiting the individual, group, or institution, hence improving educational quality (Day & Sachs, 2004). This process entails educators, both independently and collectively, reevaluating, revitalizing, and improving their commitment as change agents to the ethical aims of teaching, while acquiring and critically refining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for effective professional thinking, planning, and practice (Day & Sachs, 2004; Bautista & Ortega-Ruíz, 2015).

Studies reveal that teacher professional development is commonly referred to as Continuous Professional Development (CPD), focusing on a continual process of learning and progress for educators. CPD is essential for various reasons. Addressing the complexities of contemporary society is a critical challenge that all businesses face (Zuber-Skerritt et al., 2015). Recent advancements in technology have resulted in evolving workplace needs, necessitating a currency of knowledge to meet the ongoing economic imperatives that professional development aims to address. Therefore, governments professionals, companies, and individuals must invest in CPD to operate more efficiently in responding to contingencies and building platforms for sustainable growth in the face constant change (Muammar & Alkathiri, 2021).

According to Webster-Wright (2009), providing teachers with the opportunities for CPD is essential because preservice teacher education programs are not enough to provide them with all the skills,

they need for the classroom, especially the procedural skills that are primarily developed from practical environment. Muammar and Alkathiri (2021) also described that, many academic professionals begin their careers with significant proficiency in their field, yet often lack formal pedagogical training. So, professional development is important to helping academics succeed in teaching, undertaking research, and leading endeavors.

A variety of CPD practices exist globally, encompassing formal training courses (Clegg, 2003), coaching and mentoring (Gast et al., 2017), and informal learning occurring within the workplace, which pertains to an individual's job performance and job readiness and is not systematically designed into a curriculum or program by the employer. Some examples of informal learning include reading professional magazines to stay current with technical advancements and choosing to take short courses that address the individual's recognized training needs.

In numerous African nations, CPD is essential to reforming the education system for various purposes, including improving teaching quality, facilitating career advancement, enabling digital transformation, adapting to the ever-evolving work environment, and addressing challenges in higher education (Ajemba et al., 2024; Nakaziba & Ngulube, 2023). One of the four goals of UNESCO's (2006) Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa was to help teachers strengthen their skills. This one is considered a way to make the whole education system better (Mukeredzi & Mandrona, 2013; Ndebele et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2013), as cited by Ruszayak (2018). In South Africa, the promotion of teacher professionalism is regarded as reducing the uneven quality of learning in classrooms (Ruszayak, 201-2018).

Similarly, in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has implemented the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) to enhance the quality of education in higher education institutions, with a particular focus on the professional development of academic staff (MoE, 2018b). Rapidly evolving technology, competition, resource constraints, and rapidly increasing expectations from students, companies, and communities have forced Ethiopian higher education to pursue enhancement and excellence. The MOE conducted comprehensive analyses of the education system, including teacher education, and established the HDP in 2002 (Gebru, 2016), which is a one-year training program that has a license, designed to enhance the abilities and professionalism of academics, as well as to organize and provide short-term training in research and technology. The objectives of HDP program are enabling the HDP candidates to:

- *identify their needs and become professional, reflective teacher;*
- *demonstrate high standard of professional ethics;*
- *demonstrate adequate awareness of higher education environment and the evolving changes and needs to improve academic programs;*
- *develop teaching skills based on sound theoretical knowledge and experience;*
- *serve as a role model for effective teaching and contribute to institutional level and community development;*
- *provide high quality learning experience for students;*
- *engage in action research, collaborative learning and teamwork;*
- *adopt inclusive approach in teaching- learning (MoE, 2018b, p.1)*

The objectives will be succeeded in through the carrying out of four modules: comprehension of higher education, management of teaching and learning, assessment, action research placement in educational institutions and organizations, each subdivided into multiple sessions employing active learning and ongoing assessment. The total hours required for training completion is sixty, equating to four hours each week over a duration of fifteen weeks. The Higher Diploma Program emphasizes practical experience; candidates collaborate in groups, guided by Higher Diploma Leaders (HDL), who are either volunteers or Ethiopians who have already completed the program as Higher Diploma Tutors (HDT). The group is tasked with idea generation, facilitating discussions, conducting mutual teaching observations, offering peer support and feedback, and presenting research findings.

Based on the researcher's experiences as a teacher educator and a tutor of higher diploma program at Ambo University, the continuous professional development of academic staff is not practiced as its premise. A significant issue is the frequent disconnect between the theories and skills promoted in HDP training and the actual classroom practices of instructors. Research indicates that even after completing the HDP, many academics tend to revert to traditional teaching methods, suggesting that the program has not been fully effective in changing long-standing pedagogical habits.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Higher education institutions worldwide face challenges from rapid societal changes, globalization, and technology advancements. These factors demand that universities adapt their curricula and teaching methods to prepare students for an increasingly complex and interconnected

world. As a result, institutions must innovate and evolve to remain relevant and effective in fulfilling their educational missions. This widely acknowledges the significant transformation of the teacher's position in educational institutions in recent years. The pressures on academic staff have intensified due to increased participation rates in tertiary education, leading to larger class sizes and a student body characterized by more cultural, experiential, and social diversity. Furthermore, teachers face additional challenges stemming from constrained budgets, restricted resources, accountability demands, quality assurance requirements, and heightened research and development obligations. Addressing these challenges requires academic personnel to evaluate their existing practices and enhance their knowledge and skills. It also requires ongoing learning and transformations in curriculum and instructional methodologies, as well as in the content and methods employed by educators in teaching students (Lowrie & Smith, 1998; Bautista et al., 2015).

The importance of CPD to maintain high-quality practice is increasingly recognized in any professional field. It is commonly understood that professionals have an implicit responsibility to pursue continuous professional and skill development to ensure they remain competent and effective in their roles (Webster-Wright, 2009). These elements underline the critical role of CPD in fostering both academic excellence and broader professional accountability to public and their respective fields.

The goals of higher education in Ethiopia include: teaching students, doing research and serving the community (MoE, 2018b). Besides, in Ethiopia, the objectives of higher education include the following ones:

- *Prepare sufficient knowledgeable, skilled, and attitudinally mature graduates in relevant discipline with competence to support peace democracy and national development that can make the country internationally competitive;*
- *Promote and enhance research and focusing on knowledge and technology transfer consistent with the country priority need;*
- *Establish a system to create and enhance institution that can be emulated as center of excellence for mission and attainment and good governance (HEP, No. 1152/2019)*

One of the most promising strategies for fulfilling these goals and improving quality of education is developing teachers/staff's capacity at all levels to function as a professional through CPD

(MoE, 2005, 2010). These objectives can be realized by equipping academic staff with subject matter knowledge and standard-based repertoire of pedagogical skills that are demonstrably effective in meeting the learning needs of all students for whom they have responsibility (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Guskey (2000) supports this argument that claims notable improvement in education almost never take place in the absence of professional development and therefore; professional development is a key strategy in meeting today's educational demands. Furthermore, investing in CPD not only enhances academics' capabilities but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement within educational institutions. By prioritizing these initiatives, institutions can ensure they are better prepared to address diverse learning needs and adapt to the ever-evolving educational landscape.

Ensuring that teachers are appropriately equipped with competencies like knowledge and skills related to professional practice, collaboration and leadership, integrity and commitment to education and social change is essential to guarantee the success of educational reforms (Driel et al.; Garet et al., 2001). There is also a common understanding among policy makers, scholars, and educators around the world that promoting the professional development of in-service teachers is corner stone to the ambition aims of educational reforms (Desimone et al., 2002). For this reason, many nations across the world are investing in the continuous learning of their teachers as a primary engine for the enhancement of both teacher competency and student academic success (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010). This investment not only fosters an environment of lifelong learning among educators but also ensures that teaching practices evolve in response to new research and societal needs. Consequently, as teachers become more adept in their craft, students are likely to benefit from more engaging and effective learning experiences.

The Ethiopian government indicates a robust resolve and dedication to the continued expansion and revival of higher education. The government recognizes the vital role of teachers and has taken efforts to strengthen the competences and credentials of instructors in higher education. The government focuses enormously on staff development, both through CPD, such as the HDP program, and through the upgrade of certifications (Education Strategy Center [ESC], 2015; MoE, 2022). These initiatives aim to enhance the quality of education and ensure that educators are well-equipped to meet the evolving demands of the academic landscape. By investing in the professional growth of academic staff the governments hope to foster an environment that

encourages innovation and critical thinking among students. In Ethiopia universities CPD is practiced in different ways. This is clearly portrayed in Ethiopia staff development strategy in higher education – implementation plan as:

Some institutions; such as AAU [Addis Ababa University]; have modified the HDP program to fit in with their needs, others have continued to deliver the modules of HDP with some additional. Some have made it compulsory (AAU) for all academic staff, and the great majority have chosen to phase it in gradually. It was also noted that most of the universities offer a variety of training programs for their employees both through in-house arrangements, and through external and/ or overseas scholarships. A few (AAU, ASTU [Adama Science and Technology University] Jimma, etc.) facilitate staff development through internalization, exchange initiatives and other link programs. While some universities have embedded professional and personal developments into performance management, others are yet to do this (ESC, 2015 p.6).

This quotation informs that there is disparate practice of CPD program. And, there is no continuous, well organized and comprehensive approach to CPD of academic staff in Ethiopia. The problem of this research then aroused from this context.

The rationale for this study also stemmed from working in teacher education department at Ambo University, and involvement in tutoring new staff who were participating in Higher Diploma Program had given the researcher some insight about lessened engagement of university teachers in continuous professional development activities and program. Furthermore, researches conducted in the area of professional development of academic staff are not many. Though studies of professional development for academic staff are found in limited numbers in Ethiopian context, impacts, practices and challenges of Higher Diploma program (HDP) have been studied. For example, Alemayehu and Solomon (2007) summarized the challenges and the problems pertaining to the HDP as some instructors reveal their resentment towards HDP believing that it is boring, redundant, irrelevant to current needs of instructors and mere time-consuming practice. Taye (2009) has pointed out that there are different problems associated with HDP, to mention some the program is externally imposed one; modules of HDP were found to be too elementary and repetitive, the modules of HDP lack completeness.

In addition, Yilfashewa (2013) has also identified and summarized the effect of professional development program on instructors' professional competencies as approach of CPD was top-down and dominantly characterized by donor driven rather than demand driven; the academic staff were not involved in materials preparation and institutionalization of the professional development program. Moreover, need assessment was not conducted which resulted in the dissatisfaction of the instructors.

More recently, Wondem (2022) has highlighted key attributes of the HDP that supports its effective institutionalization. These futures include evidence-driven design, execution, strong moderation process, structured capacity- building effort active leadership involvement. In fact, the concerns addressed in the aforementioned research seem to be limited to be HDP and yet their usefulness for improving the HDP content revision, implementation and evaluation is obvious. Nevertheless, as Solomon et al. (2023) point out that the practices and the challenges of professional development of academics beyond HDP need further research considering that professional development that are limited to as special event like training or credits each year like HDP, is not broad view of professional development (Guskey, 2000).

When academics considers their role as satisfying this time-based mandate, they tend to conceive of professional development in terms of “how can I get in my hours?” rather than “what do I need to improve my practice, and how can I get it?” (Guskey, 2000, p. 15). Scholars like Steward (2009) support the argument of Guskey that is; in order to improve quality of teaching and learning professional development should be ongoing workplace learning which is long term in focus practice-oriented and work-based to improve future practice and needs to be embedded in critical reflection and evaluation of workloads. Academics in Ethiopia are left to their own knowledge and experience to continue their professional growth after finishing HDP training, meaning MoE does not provide consistent and well- organized material and training courses for academics. Therefore, this study sought to explore practices and challenges of CPD for academic staff in Ethiopian context during and beyond higher diploma.

This study sought to answers for the following research questions:

1. How do academic staff understand and practice continuous professional development in Ethiopian higher education?
2. How do the universities practice continuous professional development?

3. why do the Ethiopian universities and academic staff practice the way they practice?
4. How do academic staff account for their continuous professional development engagement?
5. What are the enablers and challenges in practicing continuous professional development in the case universities?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to explore the practices and challenges of CPD of academic staff in three selected Ethiopian public universities. This research had the following specific objectives:

- Exploring the understandings and practices of academic staff regarding CPD in three selected Ethiopian public universities and their respective institutions;
- Exploring the factors influencing the practices of universities and academic staff within those institutions;
- Identifying perceived enablers and challenges in initiating and developing effective CPD activities in the three public universities;
- Understanding how academic staff are accountable in relation to their CPD engagement.

1.4 The Scope of the study

This study was delimited in content, in geography, in time, and in participants of the study. As for the study's content, it looked at how academic staff and their institutions perceive about and practice CPD, as well as how accountable academic staff are for their participation in CPD. Geographically, the study was delimited to three Ethiopian public higher education namely Addis Ababa University, Hawassa University and Ambo University. In terms of time, it covers practices and challenges of CPD of academic staff from 2021 to 2024. In terms of participant the study was delimited to those purposively selected academic vice presidents or their representatives, teacher professional development coordinators, deans, and university instructors who were teaching in the selected universities and who took or who were taking HDP training.

1.5 Significance of the study

The ever-growing process of globalization, which has led to the rapid change of knowledge and skills today, has necessitated the provision of CPD as a means of enhancing teachers' skills and competencies at the level they are teaching. CPD is an essential element in the success of sustained improvement. In Ethiopia, professional training of academic staff through HDP is one of the measures that have been taken by the MoE to enhance the quality of education in higher education institution (MoE, 2018b). Currently, academic staff are receiving trainings to develop their skills and professionalization in doing research, teaching, students' handling, assessing learning, online teaching and teamworking. This is a clear sign that the education system is working positively towards ensuring quality of education through effective professional development at least by giving varied trainings to academics.

However, previous experiences in the Ethiopian context have not demonstrated the implementation of comprehensive and well-organized professional development activities. This research could help us learn about the views and practices of academic staffs regarding CPD; how universities and academic staff carry out CPD; what the academic staff thinks are the pros and cons of starting and running effective programs for CPD and getting them involved; and how academic staff in Ethiopia explain their participation in CPD. The research might also benefits academics by acquainting them with recent information related to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are useful and required in the present and future professional development endeavors. Furthermore, policymakers and planners may need to be more aware of the issue and use it as inputs when reviewing the program, policymaking, and planning. Furthermore, this current endeavor will act as an initial basis for other researchers to conduct additional investigations in a related area.

1.6 Theoretical and conceptual framework

Theoretical framework refers to the use of a theory, or set of concepts divded from one particular theory to describe an event or clarify a specific occurrence or study issue (Imenda, 2014). Researchers can strength case study design by articulating a "theory" about what is to be learned. The theoretical propositions also lay the ground work for making analytical rather than statistical generalization from their case study. By framing their research within a theoretical context, researchers can better identify patterns and relationships that emerges from the data. This approach

not only enhance the validity of their findings but also facilitate deeper insight that can inform broader application in the field.

A conceptual framework can be seen as the result of integrating several interrelated concepts to explain or anticipate a specific event, or to provide a comprehensive grasp of a study issue. Academic staff, as professional learners, aspire to attain their strategic objectives by methodically enhancing their praxis, encompassing both practice (activity) and theory (learning), within their specific setting. This ongoing development fosters a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in their field, allowing for more effective teaching and learning strategies. By reflecting on their experiences and incorporating new insights, academic staff can ultimately contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice in their disciplines.

This study has its basis in adult learning theory. The theory of adult learning was first established in the 1920s and has been articulated as “Andragogy” by Knowles, serving as the fundamental science for the design and implementation of adult education programs (Merriam, 2001; Zuber-Skerrit et al., 2015). Andragogy emphasizes the importance of recognizing the unique characteristics and motivations of adult learners, such as their need for autonomy and relevance in learning. By applying these principles, educators can create more effective and engaging learning experiences tailored to the specific needs of adult participants.

Traditionally, CPD has relied on external sources as accelerators for change and solution providers. These sources typically employ ‘top-down’ methods that utilize ‘one-size fits all’ methodology for workplace learning, disregarding the expertise and particular requirements that employees provide to a learning environment. Terms like ‘training’ or ‘development’ imply that the employee is a passive recipient of educational initiatives. Recent advancements in a learning theory demonstrate the limitation of a top-down mandated training program in altering practices and enhancing outcomes. Thus, the reform agenda that inspired global change and innovation emphasizes the necessity of offering professional development rooted in adult learning principles (Hargreaves, 1994; Zuber-Skerrit et al., 2015). Consequently, a conceptual framework defining effective adult learning must inform both the planning and implementation of effective adult learning initiatives, such as CPD programs for academic staff. Knowles (1968) established a framework of principles based on the perspective of adult learners as self-directed individuals, who are accountable for

making autonomous decisions for their own education. The Fundamental principles of adult learning theory encompass the following:

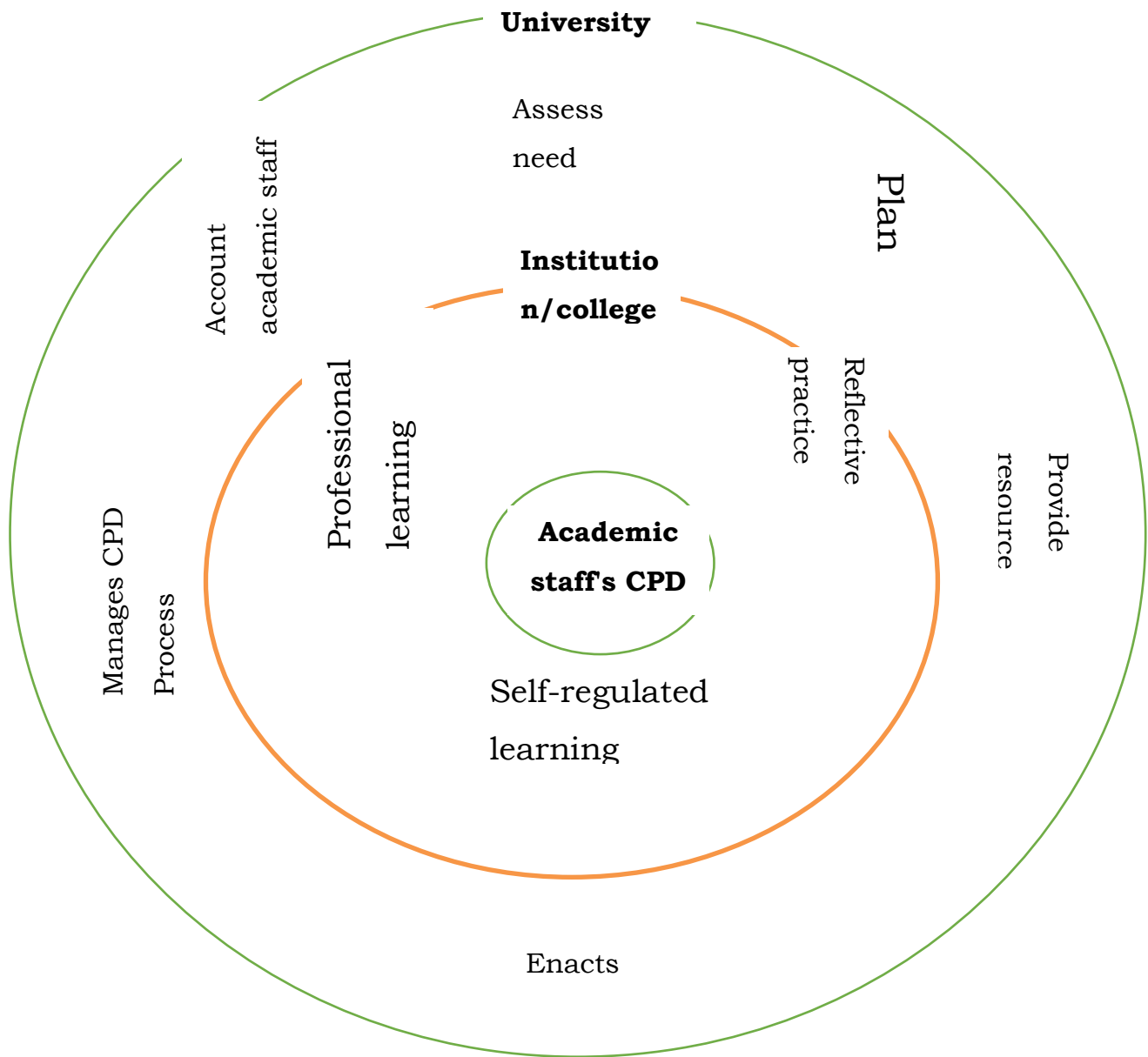
- autonomous, self-motivated, and accountable for their own education;
- possessing diverse experiences that serv as a valuable resource for learning;
- having particular learning requirements pertinent to their educational context;
- concentrating on problem-solving;
- being intrinsically motivated to learn rather that driven by external rewards.

Knowles et al. (2005) recently defined andragogy as any internationally and professionally supervised activity aimed at effecting change in adults, expanding up on the original concepts to incorporate individual variations, meta-learning, and developmental implications on adult education.

This approach underpins CPD, wherein academic staff own responsibility for their learning, encompassing the content, timing, and methods pertinent to their teaching experiences and requirements. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge their preferences in CPD.

Upon reviewing the pertinent literature regarding the various concepts of CPD, along with its practices and challenges, the opportunities for academics to engage in CPD can be categorized into (a) reflection, (b) self-regulated learning, and (c) professional learning community. The researcher has engaged with the conceptual framework of CPD considerations to establish an outline for understanding its implementation. This schematic representation below elucidates the concept of CPD, its university practices, and the challenges that may impact its processes, accompanied by a concise description of each specific area within the framework.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of continuous professional development



Clearly, these elements are deeply interconnected and mutually defining. Each element is unlikely to sustain academic staff's CPD on its own, but it is the combination of these elements that establishes a conceptual framework to initiate and practice CPD of academic staff. The connections between the elements are likened to the numerous, unbroken threads of a spider's web, and they are described as all being part of the web, which in its entirety makes up the conceptual framework of CPD.

The framework demonstrates that the CPD of academic staff sits at the core of various university activities. Considering that, the different activities that are done in the colleges and at large in the universities are connected with academic staff's CPD endeavor. This endeavor not only enhances teaching quality but also fosters a culture of innovation and collaboration among faculty members. By prioritizing professional development, universities can ensure that their staff remain at the forefront of educational advancement, ultimately benefiting students and the institution as a whole.

The subsequent circle illustrates the significance of academic reflective practice regarding newly acquired information, whether obtained in formal or informal contexts, and its implications for future practice (Boud et al., 1985). According to Schon (1983), it is an internal dialogue in which professionals reflect on their work to address challenges and issues. Through a comprehensive review of teaching methods, educators may decide to modify or substantially alter their approach, resulting in improved outcomes. Similar to this, reflective practice is an ongoing process of looking at and improving practice. One can concentrate on the personal, pedagogical, curricular, intellectual, social, and ethical contexts of professional work (Cole & Knowles, 2000). To continuously develop as a teacher, it is necessary to learn from experience through reflection. Teachers are always learning simply by doing their jobs. However, reflection, a fundamental component of teacher professional development theory, significantly advances the process. This reflective practice not only helps educators identify their strengths and areas for improvement but also fosters a more profound understanding of their students' needs and learning processes. Engaging in this continuous cycle of self-assessment enables teachers to adapt their strategies, ultimately enriching the educational experience for both themselves and their students. Reflection is viewed as facilitating a learning process wherein academics consistently evaluate past events, their causes, and the outcomes attained to foster continued development (Efu, 2022).

What is shown in the same circle is a professional learning community of academic staff; academic staff do not learn in isolation but professionally develop by working together to achieve common teaching goals; sometimes this is known as a 'community of practice.'. As they socially interact with each other in formal settings such as training sessions and conferences, as well as informally, they share their experiences and engage in debates. This progressive discourse encourages teachers to theorize and engage in generative discussions, resulting in the constant evolution of new ideas (Steward, 2009). These interactions foster an environment where innovative teaching strategies

can emerge, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students. By engaging in community learning practices and valuing diverse perspectives, academic staff can continuously refine their approaches and contribute to a richer setting of learning.

The other thing in the same circle is self-regulated learning for academic staff. Serving the community, researching, and teaching are expected roles of academic staff. As MacPhail et al. (2018) state, effective academic staff as educators are increasingly expected by their institutes to be critical readers of research, basing their teaching on the accumulated knowledge and experience of the professional teaching community. In addition, many academic institutions expect academic staff to contribute to the development of knowledge in their field through their research. This dual responsibility of teaching and research necessitates that academic staff engage in self-regulated learning, allowing them to continuously adapt and enhance their skills. By doing so, they improve their own pedagogical practices and foster a culture of lifelong learning within their institutions, ultimately benefiting their students and the wider academic community.

What is shown in the outer circle are the different activities done by universities to support the CPD of academic staff at the university level. Universities operate in an ever-changing context. And hence, to render their expected service to society, they depend on their human resources, especially academic staff. Universities plan academic staff development activities to foster a high-achieving workforce that is competent, committed, creative, and capable of managing and responding positively to change. Additionally, universities should provide relevant and useful resources for staff development activities. Furthermore, management of academic staff development activities and ensuring accountability are the two important things for the realization of the plan.

1.7 Organization of the study

This study begins with an introduction, presenting the background, statement of the problem, objectives, scope of the study, and operational definitions along with a theoretical and conceptual framework. There have been a lot of ideas about how higher education has grown in Ethiopia. This literature review looks at those ideas and models along with previous empirical studies that looked at CPD in higher education, pointing out practice, challenges, and gaps. The methodology section outlines the research paradigm description, data collection instruments, and procedure along with

the data analysis technique. The next three consecutive chapters describe the three universities as the context of the study with insightful findings on CPD practices and perceived enablers and challenges. The discussion in these chapters interprets the findings in light of existing literature, discusses implications for academics and institutions, and identifies the study's contribution. The inter-case analysis section presents a comprehensive analysis across the three universities. Finally, the section concludes with recommendations and suggests areas for future research.

1.8 Operational definitions

- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) refers to all natural learning experiences and intentional activities aimed at improving professional knowledge, skills, and attitude needed to improve academics' teaching and researching practice.
- Ethiopian public universities are government- owned higher education institutions in Ethiopia that operate under the government of the Federal Ministry of Education.
- Academic Staff are full-time teaching and research employees at the selected universities.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature related to CPD with a particular focus on academic staff. It begins with an overview of the historical development of higher education in Ethiopia and then explores conceptualizations of CPD. The review is organized into three major sections. The first section provides an overview of the demographic and socio-economic context of Ethiopia, then followed by a discussion on the historical development and structure of higher education in Ethiopia. The second portion examines the concepts and issues associated with CPD in higher education. The third section ultimately discusses accountability and the CPD of academic staff in higher education.

2.2 The Development of Higher Education in Ethiopia

Any kind of qualitative research that only looks at the present and doesn't look at the past will inevitably miss important things that connect the past to the present or can be learned from studying the past. By quickly looking at how higher education in Ethiopia has developed over time, researchers and readers can gain a sense of what might be beneficial or detrimental to current actions in our general or specialized education system. Such knowledge lets them respond appropriately. By understanding these historical shifts, educators and policymakers can better address the challenges faced today and identify effective strategies that have been successful in the past. Thus, integrating historical context into qualitative research enriches our understanding and informs our future directions in education.

To begin with, Ethiopia is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa, with a population over 109 million (Bird et al., 2019). The yearly population growth rate is 2.6%, with 44% of the population aged 0 to 14 years and 53% aged 15 to 65 years (MoE, 2015). The surface area encompasses a total of 1.125 square kilometers. The climate ranges from temperate in the highlands to tropical in the plains. Moreover, the nation possesses a federal framework with twelve regional states (Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, South Ethiopia, Gambela Peoples, Harari

People, Oromia, Sidama, Somalia, Tigray, and Southwest Ethiopia) together with two city administrations (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). The diverse nations and nationalities inhabiting the country's land constitute the foundation of the political, economic, and social frameworks that characterize the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Concerning the Framework of the Educational System the prior general education spanned ten years, comprising eight years of primary education (segmented into two four-year cycles: basic and general) culminating in the Primary School Certificate, followed by two years of general or first cycle secondary education (grades 9 and 10), concluded with a school leaving examination. Students may thereafter engage in one of two academic pathways. One pathway consisted of two years of secondary education (grades 11 and 12) designed for university admission. Subsequently, a new education and training policy was implemented in 2019/20, altering the educational framework to encompass twelve years of general education. This system is categorized into elementary education (grades 1-6), junior secondary education (grades 7-8), and senior secondary education (grades 9-12), following a 6+2+4 framework (MoE, 2022b).

Ethiopia aims to achieve middle-income status by 2030 (MoE, 2018a). The vision has been supported by judicious macroeconomic policies and substantial infrastructural spending. The economy has had robust and widespread growth over the last decade, averaging around 10% annually from 2003/04 to 2012/13, in contrast to the regional average of about 5% (MOE, 2015). Ethiopia is primarily defined by a rural economy, with agricultural output being the leading component of its economic structure and the primary source of subsistence for the bulk of its population. In recent years, the proportion of the services and industrial sectors in the economy has risen, but that of agriculture has diminished. The annual growth in the industrial sector was significant (21%), primarily propelled by robust performance in the construction sub-sector. Ethiopia has initiated its fourth macroeconomic development program since 1995, all aimed at expediting poverty alleviation. The evolving economic framework has clear results for education and training; nonetheless, it should not be construed as signaling a departure from agriculture. The historical narrative of Ethiopian education can be examined from two viewpoints: the 'traditional education system' and the evolution of the 'modern education system.'

2.2.1 The Traditional Educational System

Ethiopia has a traditional education system that is two millennia old, associated with the Orthodox Church. The establishment of formal education was intricately linked to the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in the early fourth century during the zenith of the Axumite monarchy (Molla, 2018). The Orthodox Church of Ethiopia has upheld a meticulously regulated educational system spanning from primary to higher education (Mulualet al., 2022; Teshome, 1979). This education concentrated on religious themes and values, serving the church by preparing priests and church personnel. Traditional church education comprises distinct levels: beginner, middle, and advanced (Mulualet al., 2022; Molla, 2018). The novice level is frequently termed 'Nebab bet,' signifying a school of reading where students acquire knowledge of Ge'ez letters. This educational level also functioned as preparation for admission into contemporary schooling. The subsequent stage of religious education is 'zema Bet,' signifying a school of liturgical music. At this level, students study religious music and dance forms. The high level of church education includes 'Bahre Hasab' meaning calendar calculation, theology, history, canon law like 'Fetha Negest', moral philosophy, and art and crafts (Molla, 2018). This level is equivalent to higher education in the structure of the modern education system (Wagaw, 1990). Graduates of church education serve not only the church but also the society by taking different position. However, in the beginning of the twentieth century, Ethiopia could no longer rely on church graduates for its civil servants. In addition, the opening of the country for diplomatic relations with foreign governments also necessitated modern education.

2.2.2 The Development Modern Higher Education

In the mid-twentieth century, neither religious scholars nor the limited number of internationally educated nationals were adequate to operate the increasingly complex modern governmental systems. Due to a significant shortage of qualified personnel and skilled workers to support the modernization process initiated in the late 19th century, the establishment of a local higher education institution became an essential political decision. This institution aimed not only to bridge the gap in expertise but also to foster a new generation of leaders equipped to navigate the challenges of governance and development. By prioritizing practical skills and theoretical knowledge, it sought to cultivate a workforce capable of driving the nation forward in a rapidly changing global landscape.

As it is mentioned elsewhere in this study, modern higher education came into existence in 1950 with the opening of the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA) (MoSHE, 2020; Wagaw, 1990). The first class in a modern higher education institution commenced on 11 December 1950 with 33 male students and nine expatriate teachers, and the first degrees in Ethiopia were awarded in 1954, and in that decade a total of more than 1141 (655 diploma and 486 certificate) students graduated from the five colleges (Wagaw, 1990). In the subsequent decades, UCAA became the first national university and was named Haile Selassie I University (HSIU), but after the revolution, it was renamed Addis Ababa University (AAU).

Additionally, at the same decades, numerous institutions and training establishments were inaugurated, including Addis Ababa College of Engineering (1953), Addis Ababa Building Institute (1954), Alemaya College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (1954), Gondar College of Public Health and Training Center (1954), Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute (1963), Kotebe College of Teacher Education (1969), College of Urban Planning (1970), and Bahir Dar Teachers College (1972). From 1974 to the late 1990s, two further universities were founded. Established by an Italian missionary organization in 1958, the institution of Asmara University (AU) transitioned to a public institution in 1979. Alemaya College of Agriculture, established in 1954, became independent from Addis Ababa University during the revolution and was elevated to Alemaya University of Agriculture (AUA) in May 1985 (Wagaw, 1990). Additional junior colleges and institutes were established nationwide: Awasa College of Agriculture (1976), Wondogenet College of Forestry (1977), Addis Ababa College of Commerce (1979), Ambo College of Agriculture (1979), Jimma College of Agriculture (1952), Jimma Institute of Health Sciences (1982), and Arba Minch Water Technology Institute (1986) (MoSHE, 2020). The government augmented the number of public universities from six to 50 within less than two decades by renovating existing colleges, combining other institutions, and establishing new ones, so ensuring distribution across all regions of the country (MoSHE, 2020). Private higher education institutions have proliferated, totaling 250 and serving approximately 15% of all student enrollments at the conclusion of the ESDP IV period (MOE, 2015; MoSHE, 2020).

Ethiopia has benefited from the expansion of higher education. Notable benefits include: improved access and equity in higher education; a greater number of graduates; improved student mobility nationwide; enriched socio-cultural exchanges among students; community development through

the construction of infrastructure, including buildings and roads, as well as various community support initiatives in health, education, and related fields, leading to the prosperity of towns and cities; and the establishment of centers of excellence in universities focusing on health, medicine, agriculture, liberal arts, and engineering (MoSHE, 2020).

However, the swift increase of higher education has introduced other obstacles, which the government has sought ways of addressing (Bird et al., 2019). In other words, a consideration of historical development and the current significant expansion of Ethiopian higher education reveal a pattern of continuing threats in the system. One of the major threats is poor quality. A reduced quality of education is apparent across the higher education system in Ethiopia (MoE, 2018a; MoSHE, 2020). The Ministry of Education has taken measures to enhance the quality of education in higher education institutions, including the professional development of academic staff through the Higher Diploma Program (HDP).

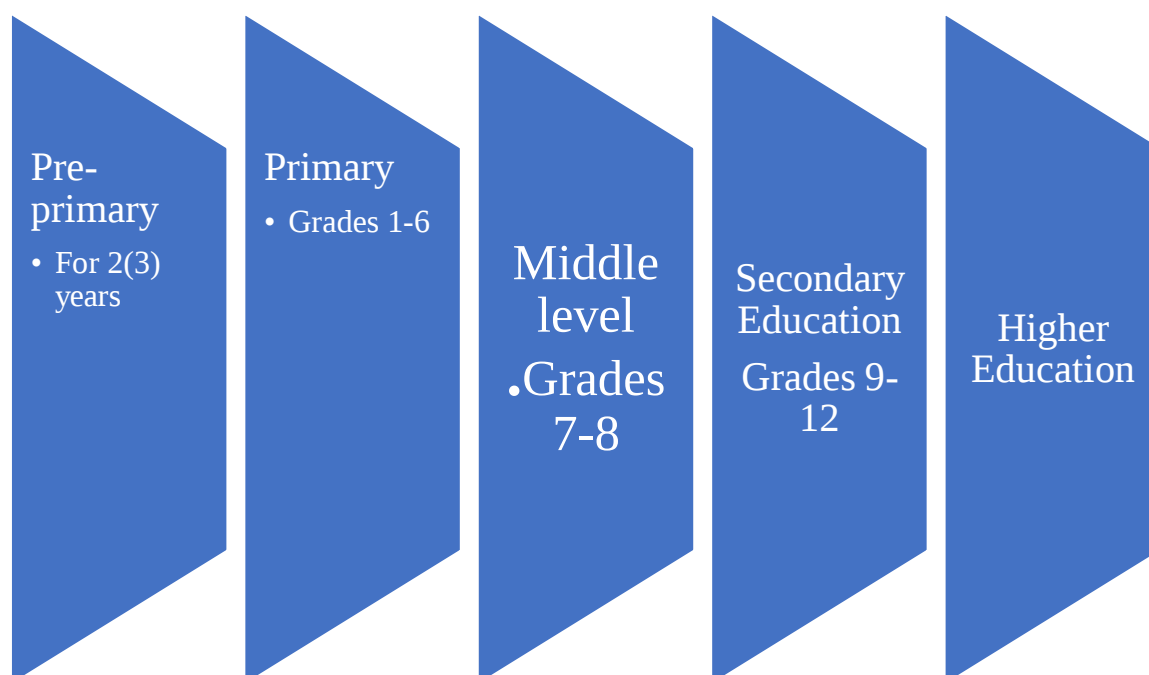
2.2.3 Higher Education

Higher education, as defined by Alemu (2018), encompasses all post-secondary education, training, and research supervision at educational institutions, such as universities, that are accredited as institutions of higher education by the appropriate regulatory bodies of a country. It encompasses all activities that a country recognizes as higher education, including correspondence courses utilizing information technology aimed at a wide student demographic. This broad definition highlights the diverse methodologies and formats through which higher education can be delivered, reflecting the evolving needs of society and the increasing importance of lifelong learning. As such, higher education plays a critical role in fostering innovation, promoting social mobility, and contributing to the overall economic development of a nation.

Higher education institutions fulfill three distinct responsibilities. Universities have defined the role of academic staff as teaching (helping the next generation to be creative, economically active, and influential citizens and the next generation of academics), research (finding solutions to problems and improving the health and wealth of sponsoring societies), and service to society (doing various things to help society) (Luzcky & Badger, 2009; Mekonnen et al., 2024). This evidence suggests that the delivery of teaching, research, and community services primarily frames the effectiveness of academic staff. The realization of the core objectives of higher education globally recognizes the service delivery of academic staff as essential.

Academic staff are expected to be effective in preparing themselves before teaching, teaching content, using appropriate teaching methods, assessing learners' performance, and conducting research (Walters & Openjuru, 2016). Furthermore, their ability to engage with students and the wider community is expected to enhance the overall educational experience, fostering a culture of learning that extends beyond the classroom. This engagement not only aids in the retention of knowledge but also cultivates critical thinking skills essential for students' future endeavors.

Figure 2: Position of Higher Education within Educational System of Ethiopia



Recently there has been rapid expansion of higher education throughout Ethiopia (Oliso, 2023). One of the reasons for such growth is that the demand for human resources who had undergone higher-level education or training grew with the increasingly complicated society and economy. Furthermore, over the past three decades, the country had put its energy into expanding basic education, producing a result whereby the expansion of primary and secondary education led to an increased need for higher education. This growing demand has prompted the government to invest in the establishment of new universities and colleges, as well as to enhance the quality of existing institutions. As a result, more students are gaining access to higher education opportunities, which in turn is expected to contribute to the nation's development and economic growth.

On the other hand, the expansion of higher education results in a deterioration of quality (Wagaw, 1990; Wondimu, 2003; Teferra, 2005; Akalu, 2014; MoE, 2018a). To ensure quality education in response to the persistent rise in demand, it is essential to enhance the quality of several elements, including educators, learners, infrastructure, equipment, educational resources and methodologies, and funding. The caliber of educators is essential for enhancing the quality of higher education; therefore, it is imperative to increase the number of students who graduate from graduate programs and consistently advance their abilities and expertise through CPD. Moreover, investing in innovative teaching methods and integrating technology into the learning environment can further elevate the educational experience. By fostering a culture of lifelong learning among educators, institutions can better equip themselves to meet the evolving needs of students and the job market.

At present, the professional development of academic staff is facilitated through both updating and upgrading. The Higher Diploma Program (HDP), which seeks to enhance the quality of teaching and learning while fostering the development of reflective practitioners in Ethiopia's higher education system (MoE, 2018b, p. 1), is one example of an updating program. One can view the master's, PhD, and postdoc opportunities as examples of upgrading practices. These initiatives not only aim to improve the academic qualifications of educators but also strive to cultivate a culture of CPD. By encouraging research and collaboration, they contribute to a more vibrant and effective educational environment.

2.3 Continuous Professional Development in Higher Education

2.3.1 Teaching as a profession

Teaching may mean different things to different individuals because of the variations in conceptualizing teaching. Scholars may attribute these variations to the different perspectives they advocate. Scholars like Bates (2019), El Miedany (2019) and Robison (2005) conceptualize teaching as both art and science. Teaching is conceived as an art because any teacher has to adapt to numerous and constantly changing variables that require rapid judgment and decision-making. As one quality, a good teacher usually has a passion for teaching, so the emotional as well as the cognitive side is important. Besides, the art of teaching is clearly something practical and dynamic that is enacted within a real, life context—the daily toil of the classroom and the school. According to Robison (2005), the art of teaching is concerned with individual teachers' application of their

knowledge, skills, experience, and creativity to any teaching situation. Similarly, El Miedany (2019) elucidates that teaching itself blends both art and science. The act of teaching itself is an art, likened to a performance where educators interpret the lesson as if it were a script.

The concept of teaching as science implies that the art (practice) of teaching is elevated to a different level, which can be higher than, equal to, or compulsory to the art of teaching. We conceptualize teaching as a science because teaching base its practice on research and theory. The scientific aspect involves research that identifies what works best in the classroom and applies the scientific method for continuous improvement (El Miedany, 2019). By integrating evidence-based strategies and pedagogical theories, educators can enhance their instructional techniques and ultimately improve student outcomes. This fusion of art and science not only empowers teachers to adopt innovative approaches but also fosters an environment conducive to student engagement and learning.

Teaching is a profession (Sethy, 2018; Squires, 2003). In general, professions evolve as groups compete for authority over their fields' problems and knowledge, developing foundational expertise along with distinctive pedagogies unique to their practice (Sethy, 2018; Tatto, 2021). A profession is characterized by a robust technical culture and a specific body of knowledge acquired over an extensive duration of advanced training. Professionals possess established standards of practice, a significant degree of autonomy in decision-making regarding their work, and a service ethic that obligates them to deliver expert services, for which they maintain a strong monopoly, to clients in exchange for a predetermined charge (Hargreaves, 2000). Cobbold (2015) asserts that the principles of knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility are interconnected and essential to the traditional notion of professionalism.

The knowledge base consists of two markedly different forms of knowledge. Scholars commonly refer to the first as research knowledge, also known as subject knowledge. The other is referred to as craft knowledge or, alternatively, practical pedagogical professional knowledge. As the various synonyms imply, research knowledge refers to the knowledge base that has been and continues to be amassed by academic researchers based mostly in universities, while craft-based knowledge refers to knowledge that focuses on what Hoyle and John (1995, p. 73) call 'the action-related world of the practitioner.'. Similarly, Day and Sac (2004) assert that one important component of teachers' ongoing learning is the expansion and elaboration of their professional knowledge base.

Teachers must acquire rich knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, and subject-specific pedagogy. And they should come to hold new beliefs in these domains.

Autonomy, the second major attribute of professions, signifies that practitioner "ought to be adequately liberated from bureaucratic and political constraints to act upon judgments made in the best interests (as they perceive them) of the clients" (Hoyle & John, 1995, p. 77). Autonomy must be exerted within the confines of established norms of practice (Hargreaves, 2000) that regulate the interactions of members with each other and the external community in which they operate. The right and freedom to practice is granted solely to individuals who have demonstrated professional competence by passing a mandated examination after completing certified specialized training (Cobbold, 2015).

Responsibility is characterized as the inverse of autonomy; to the extent that a profession possesses autonomy, it is imperative that the freedom afforded to the practitioner be exercised with accountability (Hoyle & John, 1995, p. 1103). Responsibility compels the practitioner to voluntarily adhere to principles of good practice, including respect for and compliance with accountability standards, so ultimately serving the client's interests more effectively (Hoyle & John, 1995). If teaching is considered a profession, academic personnel must embody professionalism.

According to Zuber-Skerrit et al. (2015), academics who want to be truly professional should strive for the highest quality in both learning and teaching. They should do educational action research, lifelong self-directed learning, and coming up with their own theories that apply to their practice. They ought to make judgments regarding the overarching context in which they function. They might engage actively in the process rather than delegating these decisions and the development of their educational theoretical framework to external specialists and educational researchers. They will shift from being uncritical technical researchers to becoming critical and self-reflective action researchers, focusing on teaching and student learning in higher education.

2.3.2 Concept of Continuous Professional Development

The concept of CPD in higher education is associated with several arguable interpretations. Numerous terms are utilized globally to denote the professionalization of academic personnel: teacher development programs (Liyun & Zhaolong, 2024), professional learning (Daniels, 2016;

Gore & Rosser, 2020), in-service education and training (Mutshekwane, 2004; Stone et al., 1981), faculty professional development (Muammar & Alkathiri, 2021), academic development (Dickson et al., 2016), and continuous professional development (Clegg, 2003). Unfortunately, while each of these concepts refers to parts of teacher professionalization, they exhibit nuanced distinctions. The term CPD essentially signifies an individual's ongoing learning pertinent to their professional activity throughout their career (Liyun & Zhaolong, 2024).

Certain authors refer to it as continuous professional learning thereby differentiating between the processes of development and learning. Zuber-Skerritt et al. (2015) favor the term 'learning' over 'development', using 'professional learning' instead of 'professional development', due to the implication that 'development' suggests external control over the content and methods of learning. This perspective emphasizes the importance of self-directed and intrinsic motivation in the learning process. By prioritizing professional learning, individuals are encouraged to take ownership of their growth, fostering a more dynamic and responsive approach to their ongoing education and skill enhancement. However, they conceive development as a process of self-directed, lifelong learning from the simplest to the highest levels. In this way, learning becomes increasingly professional, which is work-related and specialized in a particular area or field of one's choice. In addition, they delineate that learning becomes professional when it is goal-oriented and work-related—that is, engaging in activities for gain or improvement and toward transformation. Professional learners include all learners who want to achieve their strategic goals of systematically improving the praxis of their lives—that is, in both practice (action) and theory (learning) in their own particular context.

CPD is the continuous, deliberate initiatives of academics and organizations to improve teaching, research, and scholarly activities. According to Gazzard (2016), CPD encompasses learning opportunities that facilitate the enhancement of academics' professional activity. Avalos (2011) defines "professional development" as the process via which instructors acquire knowledge, learn how to learn, and apply their knowledge in practice to enhance their students' growth. Teacher professional development is a multifaceted process that necessitates both cognitive and emotional engagement from educators, both individually and collectively. It requires the capacity and willingness to reflect on personal convictions and beliefs, as well as the exploration and implementation of suitable alternatives for enhancement or transformation.

Guskey (2000) defines professional development as "processes and activities aimed at enhancing the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators to subsequently improve student learning." Guskey has identified three basic factors about the extent of professional development. Professional development is a process that is deliberate, continuous, and systematic. It is a deliberate process, since it is a carefully crafted endeavor aimed at facilitating good transformation and enhancement. Professional development is a systematic process, directed by a distinct vision, established objectives, and intent, which will serve as the basis for determining the content, materials, processes, and assessment and evaluation of the program. Professional development is an ongoing process because change is an ever-existing phenomenon and knowledge is continually expanding; to keep abreast of this new knowledge, educators at all levels should continue learning throughout the entire span of their professional careers. They must constantly analyze the effectiveness of what they do, reflect on their current practice, make adaptations when things are not going well, and continually explore new alternatives and opportunities for improvement. Considering professional development as a special event that occurs three or four days of the school year severely restricts educators' opportunities to learn. But if educators view it as an ongoing, job-embedded process, every day presents various learning opportunities. Such chances arise whenever a lesson is delivered, an assessment is conducted, a curriculum is evaluated, a professional journal is perused, a classroom activity is watched, or a dialogue occurs with another educator or administrator. Professional development is a systematic procedure that accounts for change over a prolonged period and encompasses all levels of the organization. In the absence of a systematic methodology, organizational factors may obstruct or thwart the success of enhancements. The systemic approach also recognizes the need for professional development for all those who impact student learning (Guskey, 2000).

Continuing professional development (CPD), as it has been mentioned elsewhere in the introduction section, is a term used to describe all formal and informal learning that enables individuals to improve their practice. On her part, Crawford (2009) attempts to state the different contestable definitions of CPD as:

Continuing professional development is defined as any process or activity, planned or otherwise, that contributes to an increase in or the maintenance of knowledge, skills and personal qualities related to learning and teaching and broader academic

practice. This includes appropriate research and scholarly activity and the leadership, management and administration of academic provision and support.

Continuing professional development is systematic, on-going, self-directed learning. It is an approach or process which should be a normal part of how you plan and manage your whole working life (Crowford, 2009, p.40).

The literature shows that different people have different ideas about what continuing professional development (CPD) means in higher education today. However, Bolam's definition of CPD is a good place to start (Bolam, 2000). This definition includes education, training, and support in a variety of activities that teachers and education administrators do after they get their initial certification. These activities are meant to improve their professional knowledge, skills, and values, as well as to make the education of their students better.

Bolam's definition of CPD is based on the idea that it has three main parts: (1) professional training and activities that happen at work that are mostly about practices and skills; (2) professional education, which are longer courses that focus on theory and research-based knowledge; and (3) professional support, which are arrangements or procedures that happen at work. These components work synergistically to enhance an individual's capabilities and ensure that professionals remain competent in their fields. By integrating practical experiences with theoretical knowledge and ongoing support, CPD fosters a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability in an ever-evolving professional landscape.

Academics generally participate in ongoing professional development to remain current in their subject area and pedagogical advancements. It enables educators to revitalize their practice with innovative concepts (Solomon et al., 2023). Moreover, advanced pedagogical approaches are essential for cultivating student competencies, including profound command of intricate topic, critical analysis, complicated problem-solving, effective communication and cooperation, and self-directed learning. Ragupathi (2021) clarifies that academic professional development encompasses a wide range of activities, both formal and informal, including the enhancement of teaching practices, the advancement of technology-supported instruction, the recognition of individuals' academic identities beyond their specific disciplines, and the cultivation of partnerships with faculties and departments to promote leadership development. Effective CPD is

essential for assisting teachers in acquiring and enhancing the instructional strategies necessary for teaching these abilities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Researchers have found that teachers' knowledge, skills, and methods got better when they took part in professional development that was consistent, focused on content, included active learning, was relevant to the school setting, and was done with other teachers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001). Researchers have identified effective CPD as multifaceted and intricate, making it impossible to expect a singular list of traits. However, the following lists are the most frequently cited features of effective CPD: The features of effective CPD include the enhancement of teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge, the provision of sufficient, well-organized, carefully structured, and purposely directed duration to deepen their understanding, analyze students' work, and develop new approaches to instruction. Coherence refers to the degree to which the learning of teachers aligns with their own knowledge and beliefs, as well as with the reforms and policies implemented by the school, district, and state; Promotion of structured and purposeful collegiality and collaborative exchange where educators work together, reflect on their practices, exchange ideas, and share strategies. The evaluation procedures should be included, whether they are school- or site-based, evidence-based, or practice-based. They should also be integrated into the teachers' work, utilizing analyses of student learning data such as marks, grades, or scores from standardized examinations. Additionally, active learning should be implemented to engage teachers in highly contextualizing classroom learning. Use of curriculum models and instructional modeling provides teachers with a clear vision of what best practices look like (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey, 2003).

2.3.3 Models of Continuous Professional Development in University Education

According to Neil (1986), a CPD model is a type of research that focuses on in-service teacher education, provides a robust conceptual framework, and has a broad focus. Similarly, Farrugia (1996) described that a more open model is required, incorporating principles of quality assurance and academic audit to analyze the state of professional growth of lecturers in higher education. The CPD model serves as an instrument for evaluating the professional advancement of university

instructors. The CPD model can help any occupation evaluate its current professional development position and chart its future.

New views of professional development have led to new professional development models and designs. These models present educators with a wide variety of options and opportunities to enhance their professional knowledge and skill (Guskey, 2000).

Kennedy (2014), citing a deficiency in the existing research on this spectrum, identifies nine models of CPD, which we detail below:

Training—this method of ongoing professional development supports a tech-focused, skill-based view on teaching, where ongoing professional development helps teachers improve their abilities to show that they are competent. The teacher typically receives information from an expert, with the agenda set by the deliverer, while the participant assumes a passive position. This technique is recognized as an excellent method for disseminating new knowledge, although it is critiqued for its lack of influence on classroom practice.

Award-bearing—a model of CPD that depends on, or prioritizes, the completion of programs of study that confer awards, typically verified by universities, though not solely. This external validation may be perceived as a quality assurance measure, although it can also be regarded as an exertion of control by the validating and/or financing entities.

Deficit—professional development may be tailored to rectify a perceived gap in teacher performance. In this model, ongoing professional development is seen as a way to fix what people think are the problems with individual teachers. It is usually tailored to each teacher, but this can hurt confidence and make it harder for institutions to build a collective knowledge base.

Cascade—this model calls for individual teachers to go to "training events" and then share what they've learned with their colleagues. However, this makes people worry that the collaborative parts of the initial learning experience will be lost. The award-bearing model focuses on the completion of accredited programs of study, typically validated by external organizations, though not exclusively. This external validation serves as a quality assurance indicator while simultaneously functioning as a mechanism of control by the validating and funding entities;

Standards-Based—this model is based on the goal of creating a system for teaching and teacher education that can find and prove links between how well teachers do their jobs and how well their students learn. The standard can facilitate professional development and establish a shared vocabulary, thus promoting enhanced dialogue among educators.

Coaching and mentoring—this model involves a one-on-one relationship, typically between two teachers, aimed at supporting continuing professional development (CPD). This paradigm posits that professional development occurs within the classroom environment and is augmented through discussion with colleagues. It facilitates a discussion between the two teachers regarding possibilities, beliefs, and aspirations in a manner that is less hierarchical and intimidating;

Community of Practice—in this framework, learning occurs within a community of practice because of the community and its interactions, rather than solely through structured learning experiences such as courses. Depending on the individual's role within the broader team, learning in such a community may be either an active and constructive experience or a passive one, influenced by the collective wisdom of dominant group members, which shapes others' comprehension of the community and its roles.

Action research— as a model of CPD has been acknowledged as being successful in allowing teachers to ask critical questions of their practice.

Transformative model of CPD— This model involves the combination of a number of processes and conditions – aspects of which are drawn from other models outlined in this article. The central characteristic is the combination of practices and conditions that support a transformative agenda. In this sense, it could be argued that the transformative model is not a clearly definable model in itself; rather it recognizes the range of different conditions required for transformative practice.

Kennedy contends that the initial three approaches were primarily transmission mechanisms, with less chance for educators to exert control over their own learning. The subsequent four are increasingly transformational, enhancing professional autonomy or teacher agency. The collaborative professional inquiry model encompasses all frameworks and experiences that incorporate collaborative problem identification and ensuing activities, wherein these activities involve examining one's own practice and gaining insights into others' practices, potentially through engagement with existing research.

In this model, Kennedy articulately asserted that 'teacher agency,' signifying an enhanced ability for professional autonomy, escalates when one transitions from the training model to the collaborative professional inquiry model categories. This shift not only empowers teachers to take ownership of their professional growth but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement within educational settings. By encouraging collaboration and reflection, educators serve not only as individual practitioners but also as a community committed to shared learning and collective success.

Cochrane-Smith and Lytle, as cited by Day and Sachs (2004), identify three categories of knowledge pertinent to teacher learning and development: knowledge-for-practice, which is derived from external research; knowledge-of-practice, which originates from teachers' own experiences; and knowledge-in-practice, which emerges from teaching requirements and self-reflection. Day and Sachs (2004) introduce a fourth category: reflection. Nonetheless, one could assert that this category can indeed be encompassed within Cochrane-Smith and Lytle's concept of knowledge derived from experience.

Klapper (2001) and Ragupathi (2021) identify numerous options for teachers to engage in CPD, encompassing both formal and informal learning. The experiences include experiential learning through direct teaching; formal education; workshops and seminars; graduate and postgraduate qualifications; instructional methodology literature; collaborative implementation, development, and evaluation of teaching materials with colleagues; peer observation; group discussions; mentoring novice educators; watching inexperienced teachers; conducting workshops and presentations regarding personal teaching experiences; materials development; and the dissemination of effective practices.

As Luneta state that CPD is important for updating and upgrading teachers. classifying CPD programs as "updating" or "upgrading" programs can be a useful distinction, although the terms aren't strictly defined in the literature. It helps clarify the purpose and outcome of different CPD activities. Updating programs focus on refreshing existing knowledge and skills (Lockyer et al., 2017); whereas upgrading programs go beyond maintenance and focus on expanding knowledge and skills to a higher level (Ramani et al., 2019).

The main idea behind this study makes it clear that teachers can keep learning through three different types of professional development: (a) reflection; (b) self-regulated learning; and (c) professional learning communities.

A. Reflective practice

John Dewey (1933) introduced the notion of reflection to education many decades ago. He has already pointed out that one doesn't learn from experience but learns from reflecting on it. Furthermore, in his study, Dewey concluded that reflecting on work improves job performance (Dewey, 1938, p. 45). While reflective practice originates from Dewey's (1933) concept of "reflective thought," it is Schön's (1983, 1987) conception of the "reflective practitioner" that elucidates how educators should and ought to engage in their own professional growth. Reflection in, on, and about action, despite its intricacy, is an essential component of classroom survival, as it initially mitigates numerous variables present in any situation, thereby enabling educators to "re-make and, if necessary, re-order the world in which they live" (Schön, 1987). Schön's work highlighted that reflective engagement with one's own ideas and practices can be considered a kind of professional development for practitioners.

Reflective practitioners are thus thoughtful and knowledgeable regarding their practice environment, having developed their understanding through experiential learning and a willingness to reassess their responses to situations, as well as to contextualize those situations in ways that recognize and address diverse perspectives (Loughran, 2010). A reflective practitioner consistently engages in the process of reflecting on experiences, enabling ongoing learning that fosters self-awareness, enhances teaching and learning, promotes research development, and strengthens collegial relationships, thereby improving future actions (Kemmis, 2024; Mohamed et al., 2022; Sellheim & Weddle, 2015). Reflective practice is, therefore, important that can reveal important valued benefits at the core of professional development. And, through reflection on experience, teachers' knowledge of practice is developed and enhanced in ways that help to inform and shape their expertise.

Nowadays reflective practice is widely used as a model and also a strategy for the professional development of academics, enhancing teaching practice, self-efficacy, and pedagogical skills (Leigh, 2016; Mohamed et al., 2022). As Clegg et al. (2002) assert, this 'reflective practice is becoming the favored paradigm for CPD in higher education'. Similarly, scholars like Leigh

(2016) and Mohamed et al. (2022) have evidenced that reflective practice and reflective writing are used as strategies for the professional development of academics in higher education, but their use is not always critical or unbiased.

To make reflective practice effective, key elements must be in place, for example, questioning those things that are taken for granted (Loughran, 2010); identifying time to do reflection; identifying the data on which academics need to reflect; and detaching it from an evaluation of competence (Leigh, 2016). This detachment allows for a more honest and open exploration of experiences, fostering a more profound understanding of one's teaching practices. Consequently, by creating an environment where reflection is encouraged and valued, academics can enhance their professional growth and contribute to a more dynamic educational landscape.

B. Professional Learning Community (PLC)

The concept of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) can be defined in many ways and has been widely used as an approach for facilitating teaching and learning in classrooms. A PLC consists of a group of professionals sharing common goals and purposes, constantly gaining new knowledge through interaction with one another, and aiming to improve practices (Sigurdardottir, 2010). As Hord (1997) defines, a PLC is a collegial group of administrators and staff who are united in their commitment to student learning. They share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision-making (Hord, 1997). In the same vein, Tuli and Bekele (2020) explain it as a collective platform to enhance students' learning outcomes and teachers' professional development. In addition, Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2009) explain professional learning communities as deliberate arrangements that bring practitioners together in a systematic way to examine and make problematic features of practice with the intention of development and improvement. As to Groundwater-Smith and Mockler, the learning is collective, collegial, and collaborative. The whole idea of a PLC is not an event that teachers do once a week or once a term; rather, it is an ongoing process where teachers work collaboratively in cycles of inquiry and joint construction of knowledge to improve their educational practices and student learning.

Scales et al. (2008) remarked that teachers have not only a right to be professionals but also a responsibility to be professionals. As they further explain, part of this responsibility is to engage in meaningful continuous professional learning, which benefits teachers themselves, their

organization, and, above all, their learners. Teachers' professional learning community is recognized in today's society for their critical function and importance for academics' CPD (Nguyen et al., 2024; Tuli & Bekele, 2020). It is one of the most effective approaches to teachers' learning and professional development that emphasizes group or collective learning (Kelly, 2013). Likewise, Dufour and Eaker (1998) describe that the most promising strategy for sustained and substantive educational improvement is developing the ability of staff to function as a professional learning community. Similarly, Peery (2004) states the best way to improve education for the nation is to improve the ongoing education of the adults who facilitate student learning. Hence, the importance of teachers continuing their professional learning cannot be underestimated, especially during this era of increasing demands on teachers' expertise and higher expectations for their accomplishments (Lieberman & Miller, 1999; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2020).

Hord (2004) identified five key features that characterize PLC.

Shared values and vision: this feature indicates that members of the professional community are in agreement with and prioritize the mission of their institution, as well as the values that will guide their professional behavior (Robert & Pruitt, 2003). Sharing a vision as an articulate mental image of what is important to both the individuals and the organizations.

Collective Responsibility: there is broad agreement in the literature that members of a professional learning community consistently take collective responsibility for students' learning, development, and well-being. This feature will help in building and sustaining commitment, resulting in pressure and accountability on those who do not share their ideas and carry out tasks with their colleagues. University instructors, for example, learn from each other through peer assessment of lectures and exchange of personal thoughts and experiences.

Reflective personal inquiries: developing professional learning communities requires ongoing conversations about all work-related issues and involvement in the decision-making process. This feature is characterized by ongoing conversations and decision-making curriculum, teaching, and learning that concentrate on student outcomes.

Collaboration and involvement of staff in all activities: this feature values and respects each of its members and insists that all staff achieve high standards.

The development of the group as well as individual learning is promoted: in this feature, all teachers are learners with their colleagues.

In addition to these five characteristics, Stoll et al. (2006) introduced three additional elements: mutual trust, mutual respect among staff members, and inclusive membership. Stoll et al. (2006) have also identified four key operational processes that facilitate the creation, management, and sustainability of professional learning communities. These are: optimizing resources and structures; promoting individual and collective learning; explicit promotion and sustaining of a professional learning community; and leadership and management.

C. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) refers to academics' capacity to enhance their professional development through accessible possibilities both within and outside their educational institutions. Self-regulated learning is characterized as a goal-oriented process that advances through developmental stages, commencing with foresight, followed by self-monitoring and self-control, and culminating in self-reflection (Vrieling et al., 2012). Skills and competencies can be developed beyond the institution by engaging in online courses (Signer, 2008), reading academic journals and literature related to education or a specific discipline (Davey & Ham, 2010; Kitchen et al., 2017), conducting research, publishing journal articles, and observing colleagues' classes, all of which contribute to enhanced subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. They can also be attained by reflection (Day & Sachs, 2004) on one's teaching practice, facilitated by peer support and systematic inquiry.

Moreover, in self-directed learning, academics establish their own professional development objectives and choose activities that will facilitate the achievement of these objectives. Self-directed professional development places the whole burden on the educator and demands minimal involvement from the university. Self-directed learning activities are most effective when facilitated by motivated educators who possess established teaching competencies and subject expertise.

Universities are often anticipated to furnish resources for self-directed study. Computers and the internet can boost the efficacy of self-directed professional development; nevertheless, even with sufficient access and connectivity, it is most effective for experienced educators seeking to augment their knowledge and skills (Attard, 2014). Although instructors should be incentivized to

engage in continuous, self-directed learning, such activities should not serve as the principal method for delivering professional development to educators. Rather, they ought to be utilized to enhance and augment other forms of professional development.

2.3.4 Domains of Professional Development in Higher Education

As someone who is interested in developing himself or herself professionally, there is no doubt that he or she has identified particular areas or domains for this development. The Ethiopian government has a clear agenda of linking professional development to improving the quality of education (MoE 2018b). The Ministry of Education's Handbook for Professional Training of Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions (MoE 2018b) endorses this agenda as a measure to improve educational quality by providing professional training for academic staff through the Higher Diploma Program (HDP). This document signifies the government's intention to play a directive role in determining the areas for professional growth. One objective is directing HDP leaders and instructors who conduct training in institutions where both experienced and novice staff collaborate. The Handbook appears adaptable, allowing HDP leaders and tutors to modify content emphasis or enrichment to effectively address participants' professional needs and maximize training objectives. These priorities appear to be in four areas:

Understanding higher education: includes issues like features of higher education, the role of reflection, professionalism in higher education, and diversity management;

Managing teaching, learning and assessment: includes issues like understanding learning, instructional planning, assessment, and managing teaching sessions;

Action research: includes issues like concept and characteristics of action research and action research project;

Placement in educational institutions and organizations: includes issues like placement to educational institutions, school placement guidelines and report, and organizational placement guidelines and report.

Despite an apparent embrace of a wide sphere of activity that is possible for professional development, Ethiopian higher education concentrates on only a few areas. In the literature on CPD, there are other domains in terms of the different roles that a teacher can play, like information

technology literacy, using English as medium of instruction, teaching online learning communities, and subject matter knowledge. Recently, academic staff have had a growing interest in incorporating technology into teaching, but many administrators in higher education have concerns that faculty lack the skills necessary to implement e-learning (Bichsel, 2013).

2.3.5 International Practices of Continuous Professional Development in Some Selected Countries' Higher Education

CPD is implemented variably worldwide, encompassing official training courses, coaching and mentoring, as well as informal learning. In England, continuing professional development encompasses a diverse array of activities, ranging from short courses to advanced degrees (Simmons, 2023). Staff utilize scholarship, research, and professional engagement to enhance student learning, which may encompass traditional research (the discovery of new knowledge), innovative application or integration and synthesis of existing knowledge (for instance, in professional practice), or the examination of learning and teaching processes and methodologies (pedagogic development). Academic staff are urged to appreciate their own and others' competencies, acknowledge their obligation to identify personal development needs, and participate in initial and ongoing professional development. New academic staff involved in teaching or facilitating student learning participate in suitable induction and mentorship activities, including observed teaching, and may pursue postgraduate teaching degrees. Upon appointment and throughout their careers, staff participate in CPD to enhance their teaching competencies and critically reflect on their pedagogical practices. The UK Professional Criteria Framework (UKPSF) establishes a system for acknowledging and evaluating teaching and learning support positions in higher education, assuring compliance with established national criteria. Providers may utilize the UKPSF to provide staff recognition, reward systems, and promotion prospects across all academic career trajectories through professional accreditation at applicable Fellowship levels (Associate, Fellow, Senior Fellow, and Principal Fellow). Staff development initiatives are deliberately organized, with adequate resources dedicated to address the requirements of both research and pedagogical advancement, including designated time included in staff workload distribution. Providers ensure the efficacy of their staff development strategies and implement procedures to identify teachers requiring supplementary assistance, offering opportunities,

support, and mentoring to facilitate the enhancement of their skills and competencies to an established standard (<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice>).

Several European nations, including the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Nordic countries, and the Low Countries, have acknowledged the significance of classroom instruction for effective education. They have established teacher development programs for university teachers and doctoral students and professional associations to advance teaching and learning in higher education. Pleschová et al. (2012) have analyzed that “some European countries have already made significant progress in providing initial teacher training for postgraduate students and are increasingly offering opportunities for on-going professional development through accredited programs in teaching and learning for academic staff.” They have introduced a postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma, and master's programs in teaching and learning in higher education. In the same way, academic staff in the UK, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and New Zealand are being pushed harder to put together portfolios of evidence or other ways to show their professional knowledge. These should include examples of how they teach using a variety of learner-centered practices (Sambell et al., 2017). In addition, a growing number of universities are creating incentives for academics to perform highly in teaching through the introduction of institutional award schemes for teaching excellence. These initiatives not only aim to enhance the quality of education but also encourage academic staff to engage in ongoing professional development. By recognizing and rewarding effective teaching practices, institutions are fostering an environment that values the importance of pedagogical innovation and student engagement.

National-level policy initiatives have emerged in certain European countries. In Ireland, the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, initiated in 2011, emphasizes the necessity for professional standards and ongoing professional development for educators. The Higher Education Academy in the UK has established a Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) aimed at augmenting the student learning experience through the enhancement of teaching quality and learner support. In Nordic countries, Belgium, and the Netherlands, numerous universities have implemented educational development programs to improve learning quality (Pleschová et al., 2012).

In numerous African nations, ongoing professional development is essential for the transformation of the education system. Enhancing teachers' professional development is one of four objectives

outlined by UNESCO's (2006) Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa and is broadly recognized as a mechanism for facilitating systemic enhancements in the education system (Mukeredzi & Mandrona, 2013; Ndebele et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2013) as referenced in Ruszayak (2018). In South Africa, the promotion of teacher professionalism is considered a way to mitigate the uneven quality of learning in classrooms (Ruszayak, 2018).

2.3.6 Practices of Continuous Professional Development in Higher Education in Ethiopia

Teachers' education persists beyond pre-service training, and numerous countries have initiated more structured support for educators as they commence and progress in their careers. Continuing professional development includes activities in which teachers engage for the purposes of enhancing life-long learning among themselves and their learners. Countries vary in the practices used in both induction and continuing professional development programs. These programs often emphasize collaboration, mentorship, and reflective practice, allowing educators to share experiences and strategies. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, they can better respond to the evolving needs of their students and educational environments.

Academic Staff's CPD can take many forms. This may encompass: attending lectures or demonstrations; participating in workshops; joining a learning network; collaborating in a school-university partnership; reviewing professional literature; maintaining a professional journal; observing peer instruction and being observed; documenting exemplary practices; engaging in professional discourse with colleagues or other educators; mentoring newly qualified teachers; pursuing graduate and/or post-graduate qualifications; conducting research, among other activities.

It is without a doubt important to give academic staff the skills and knowledge they need and to encourage their dedication to achieving the mission and goals of their institutions. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) acknowledges this reality and implemented the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) in 2004, which is available to graduate assistants, lecturers, and professors, all undergoing identical training (Gebru, 2016). This program is one of the initiatives implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to improve the quality of education at higher education institutions, as noted elsewhere in this report. The course is a one-year licensure training

program designed to enhance the skills and professionalism of teacher educators while coordinating and providing short-term training in research and technology. This initiative aims not only to elevate the teaching standards but also to foster an environment of CPD within the academic community. By equipping educators with the necessary tools and knowledge, the program ultimately strives to enhance student learning outcomes and prepare them for the challenges of a dynamic workforce.

The other program is the English Language Improvement program (ELIP). Given that the medium of teaching in Ethiopian higher education is English, educators must possess the requisite qualifications to fulfill their intended roles effectively. This program is conducted at the English Language Improvement Center (ELIC) and/or through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). These courses are designed to enhance the language proficiency of educators, enabling them to deliver their lessons more effectively and engage with students in a meaningful way. By participating in ELIP, educators can improve their communication skills, which is essential for fostering a productive learning environment.

Furthermore, Ethiopian universities practice job-embedded professional development through online courses, lecture series attendance, annual research conferences, seminars, and training. These initiatives not only enhance the skills and knowledge of educators but also foster a collaborative environment where best practices can be shared. As a result, teachers are better equipped to address the diverse needs of their students and contribute to the overall improvement of the educational landscape in Ethiopia.

2.3.7 Challenges of Continuous Professional Development in University Education

As literature reveals, challenges for academic staff to participate in professional development activities vary at all levels, from individual perception and practice to university strategies and practices (ESC, 2015). These variations highlight the importance of understanding the underlying factors that influence engagement in such activities. By addressing these challenges, institutions can create more effective programs that encourage continuous growth and enhance the overall quality of education.

There are three primary factors that challenge the professional development of academic staff in the literature, namely, time and resources (MacPhail et al., 2018; Mchete & Shayo, 2020), professional support, and financing. Firstly, several studies indicate that many academics complain that they do not have sufficient time for their professional development. They have to work long hours with heavy teaching burdens, and the time for professional development is thus reduced (Smith & Tillema, 2007; Murray, 2008; Dinkelman et al., 2006). Recent studies indicate that the imbalance between research and teaching on an institutional level has obvious consequences in the individual attitudes of university teachers. Firstly, certain values and expectations as well as official requirements and remuneration or promotion schemes result in teaching being considered less important to successful university teachers' careers than research (Postareff & Nevgi, 2015). Therefore, most academic staff commit themselves strongly to research within their discipline and consider that their success as an esteemed expert will be based solely on the work that they carried out as researchers of a particular subject.

Secondly, in relation to professional support, Smith (2010) suggests that, in a competitive environment, people keep quiet about professional questions and challenges, trying to manage alone for fear of losing their jobs or missing out on tenure and promotion opportunities. However, who can support the teacher? Research has identified that expert teacher educators in the field are the right people to support academic staff. Swennen et al. (2010) suggest that teacher educators are in need of role models: expert teacher educators who show them what it means to be a good university teacher and support them in becoming better researchers and university teachers in higher education. At the same time, literature has shown that academic staff's professional development is impacted by the follow-up, guidance, and support of leaders in the context they are teaching at higher education (Fairman et al., 2020).

Despite the lack of research on the CPD of academic staff in Ethiopia, studies have focused on the practice, challenges, and effectiveness of the Higher Diploma program. These studies have evidenced that the program is boring, redundant, and irrelevant to the current needs of academic staff and mere time-consuming practice; externally imposed ones are supply-driven; the modules of HDP were found to be too elementary and repetitive; the modules of HDP lack completeness (Abdissa, 2017; Adula, 2008; Alemayehu & Solomon, 2007; Taye, 2009; Yilfashewa, 2012, 2013). Consequently, there is a growing call for a comprehensive reevaluation of the program to ensure

it aligns more closely with the evolving demands of higher education. Stakeholders emphasize the need for a more engaging and relevant framework that fosters critical thinking and innovative teaching methodologies among academic staff.

2.4 Accountability and academic staffs' Continuous Professional Development in Higher Education

University, as a higher education institution, has a great responsibility towards society in developing a competent graduate who is qualified for the world of work and societal development and well-being, and hence, academic staff are increasingly held to account for providing quality teaching and producing these competent graduates. This accountability emphasizes the importance of effective pedagogy and encourages faculty to engage in CPD. By fostering a culture of innovation and support, universities can better equip their graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in an ever-evolving job market.

Accountability concerns proper behavior, and it deals with the responsibilities of individuals and organizations for their actions toward other people and agencies. Practical settings use the concept, particularly in describing governance and management arrangements in public services and private organizations. Concepts of transparency, liability, answerability, and other ideas associated with the expectations of account-giving often use the term synonymously. Bovens (2005) defines it as: "a social relation in that an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct to some significant other.". Similarly, Huisman and Currie (2004) define it as "answerability for performance or the obligation to report to others, to explain, to justify, and to answer questions about how resources have been used and to what effect.". These definitions provide answers to the following questions: Who is responsible for what, to whom, and how?

Romzek (2000) provides the most comprehensive framework for analyzing types of accountability relationships. She identifies four basic types: hierarchical, legal, professional, and political. Nowadays the last two are the types that are most often found in higher education. Professional accountability is the one in which professionals ensure conformity to standards and codes of conduct checked by professional peers through their institutions (Rasmussen & Zou, 2014). Professional accountability pertains to the degree to which education equips learners to fulfill their daily requirements and the amount to which educators comply with professional standards

(UNESCO, 2017). The inquiry pertains to whether students in the public higher education system recognize the relevance of education to their daily needs and whether educators adhere to ethical standards in their practice.

Romzek observes that the distinction between professional and political accountability is in the origin of the performance criterion, describing as: “Professional accountability systems manifest in work arrangements that provide substantial autonomy to individuals who make decisions grounded in internalized standards of appropriate practice” (Romzek, 2000).

Conversely, Hooge et al. (2012) delineate three phases of accountability: 1) an information phase, 2) a deliberation phase, and 3) a phase of consequences and sanctions. In phase 1, the accouters articulate the rationale for their actions, elucidate their reasoning, and convey information regarding their performance to the accountees; the accountees subsequently evaluate the accouters' performance. During phase 2, both parties engage in discourse regarding the pertinent information and progress toward a conclusive evaluation, which in phase 3 results in either favorable or unfavorable repercussions for the accouters (commendation and advancement, increased autonomy, or public condemnation, formal censure, enhanced regulation, dismissal of management, or ultimately, dissolution of the organization).

Academic staff can be held accountable using diverse methodologies that depend on feedback from various stakeholders. Four principal inquiries exist: To whom are academic staff accountable regarding their engagement in ongoing professional development (peers, administrative entities, community members, parents, students, and external organizations)? Academic staff are held accountable based on student test scores, classroom observations, reviews, surveys, school evaluations, and codes of ethics; the purpose of this accountability is for monitoring and improvement, and the consequences include performance feedback, professional development, financial or career implications, and sanctions (UNESCO, 2017).

Accountability in higher education is crucial for various reasons. Initially, it is essential for guaranteeing the quality and efficacy of educational programs, as institutions and academics are accountable for student learning outcomes and the comprehensive performance of their programs (Chineze & Olele, 2012). Accountability enhances transparency and fosters public trust in the higher education system, allowing stakeholders to observe how institutions and their personnel allocate resources and attain objectives. Third, accountability serves as a catalyst for continuing

enhancement and innovation, prompting institutions and academic to meet or surpass performance benchmarks while addressing identified deficiencies or areas needing improvement.

2.5 Empirical Literature Review

A literature search was conducted by consulting the web at <http://libcat.aau.edu.et> with the important link AAU-ETD using the following search terms: teachers' professional development, CPD in higher education, professional learning community, reflective practice in higher education, induction program for newly recruited academic staff, and higher diploma program. The search covered research articles written in English and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The researcher confined her search to the period 2000-2024. The literature search resulted in a total of 12 articles. The author employed the following criteria to review the scholars' work: a) The article had to be about academic staff working in higher education; b) it had to be about professional development for academic staff; and c) it had to be about at least one of the three parts of this study's conceptual framework for CPD: professional learning communities, reflective practice, and self-regulated learning. Applying these criteria led to the identification of 11 relevant works, comprising nine articles and two master's theses. The author again divided these works into two groups. Group A covers only the Higher Diploma Program (HDP), and Group B covers the training issue of professional development for academic staff. The researcher has designed a table to analyze the scholars' work. The table has six columns with titles: number, name of scholars and year of publication, titles, publisher, major findings and qualitative meta- synthesis. The table is annexed as Appendix A.

An examination of the complete text of the works analyzed indicates a lack of emphasis on the CPD of academic staff. But, as Guskey (2000) strongly argued, professional development that is restricted to a special event or credits each year, like HDP, is a narrow view of professional development. When educators view their task as meeting this time-based mandate, they tend to think of professional development in terms of “How can I get in my hours?” Rather than asking, “What do I need to improve my practice, and how can I get it?” (Guskey, 2000, p. 15). Scholars like Steward (2009) support the argument of Guskey that is, to improve the quality of teaching and learning, professional development should be ongoing workplace learning that is long-term in focus, practice-oriented, and work-based to improve future practice and needs to be embedded in critical reflection and evaluation of workloads. This approach not only encourages educators to

actively engage with their development but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement within educational institutions. By prioritizing meaningful professional development, institutions can create environments where academics feel supported and empowered to enhance their skills and ultimately benefit their students.

Similarly, despite the aforementioned importance of CPD in the theoretical literature part of this study, there is no known research that has been conducted to explore how CPD is understood and practiced and why in Ethiopian universities to improve the quality of education in higher education institutions. This research aims to fill the existing research gap and contribute to the body of knowledge on this critical concept of CPD. Furthermore, academic staff in Ethiopia are left to their knowledge and experience to continue their professional development after completing HDP training, meaning the Ministry of Education (MoE) does not provide consistent materials and training courses for academic staff. This study, therefore, attempts to examine the practices and challenges of CPD for academic staff in the Ethiopian context during and beyond the Higher Diploma Program (HDP).

CHAPTER THREE

3. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the research methodology and design used in this particular study. This study utilized a qualitative case study methodology, involving three universities, to investigate the CPD of academic staff, as well as its practices and challenges within a university context. The chapter begins with the research paradigm and continues to deal with the qualitative research approach, research site, participants in the study, data collection instruments and procedures, and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research paradigm

From different types of research paradigms, a qualitative research paradigm is the most appropriate one for this study because the purpose of the research is to explore how academic staff understand and practice CPD, that is, how they make sense of their real-life context and the practices they have in their real-life context. The qualitative research paradigm is well suited to exploring CPD in higher education because, ontologically, it respects multiple context-specific realities; epistemologically, it views knowledge as constructed through interaction, reflection, and interpretation; and axiologically, it embraces values, reflexivity, and ethical engagement. The research paradigm is based upon the argument that the qualitative approach enables credible investigation into things in their natural settings, attempting to sense or interpret phenomena (in this case, academic CPD) in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The researcher also chooses this paradigm because, ontologically, it respects multiple realities that are context specific; epistemologically, it holds that knowledge is constructed through interaction, reflection, and interpretation; and axiologically, it embraces values, reflexivity, and ethical engagement (Denzin & Lincoln, 2014).

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Approach: A Choice for this Study

Research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2014).

Researchers have proposed various theoretical perspectives on the learning and change processes of teachers in the context of professional development. Models vary from unidirectional (Guskey, 2002) to multidirectional (Desimone, 2009; Ehrenfeld, 2022), with teacher learning viewed as cyclical and dynamic processes. Accordingly, the research approaches are also different types, including quantitative, mixed-methods, and qualitative ones (Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015).

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to investigate academic staff's perceptions and practices related to CPD within three selected universities in Ethiopia, as well as the underlying reasons for their approaches. This approach was chosen for its ability to deeply analyze complex research issues, its receptiveness to experiential insights, and its intrinsic design principles, which not only provide detailed 'cultural snapshots' of distinct academic settings but also serve as a foundation for developing a grounded theoretical basis (Flick et al., 2004). As also stated by Gay et al. (2012), a qualitative research approach is suitable for studies aiming to investigate the context thoroughly to find in-depth understandings about the way things are, why they are that way, and how the participants in the context perceive them. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) express the strength of qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 43).

This researcher selected qualitative research to conduct a thorough investigation of the research questions and to achieve the established objectives by gathering data from academic staff who participated in CPD. In the nutshell, a qualitative research design was selected for this study since the researcher aimed for an in-depth understanding of academic staff's understanding and practices of CPD. This study employed an interpretive approach to understand the personal meanings of academic staff, which stem from their professional development practices. This approach is

appropriate since it reveals participants' understandings and practices regarding continuing professional development.

3.2.2 Rationale for Selection of the Research Design

Every type of empirical research study has either an implicit or explicit research design, which is a logical plan for getting from 'here' to 'there,' where 'here' may be defined as the set of questions to be addressed, and 'there' is some set of conclusions about these questions (Yin, 2018). In other words, it is a plan that guides the researcher in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. For this research, the researcher has chosen the case study design, specifically the multiple case study. Case study research design is the preferred strategy when addressing how or why questions, particularly when the investigator has limited control over events and when the focus is on contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts (Yin, 2003, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The use of a case study research design allows for the collection of substantial data relevant to the study, thereby addressing the three fundamental aspects of qualitative methods: describing, understanding, and explaining the phenomena of interest (Tellis, 1997). Simons outlines the significance of case study as follows:

an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program, or system in real-life context. It is research-based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence-based. The primary purpose is to generate in-depth understanding of a program, policy, institution or system to generate knowledge and/or inform policy development, professional practice and civil or community actions (Simons, 2009, p, 21).

Since the raised research questions focused on exploring an understanding of academic staff's CPD and their practices in their respective institutions, a research design using case studies was employed (Lavarda & Bellucci, 2022). This approach allows for an in-depth examination of various academics' experiences and the specific contexts that shape their professional growth. By collecting qualitative data through interviews and observations, the study aims to highlight effective strategies and identify barriers to CPD in higher education environments.

The focus of this study, that is, the CPD issue, is the main case of the study, having different sub-units within it. The three research sites into which CPD is practiced are multiple cases entertaining the same issue, that is, CPD of academic staff. The decision to use a case study design involves choosing between a single-case design and a multiple-case design (Yin, 2018). If the case is a) a critical test of theory, b) a rare circumstance, c) a typical case, d) revelatory, or e) longitudinal, then Yin says that single-case designs are "justifiable under the following conditions." Conversely, Yin views the evidence from multiple cases as more compelling and robust than that from a single-case design. It also addresses the question related to the researchers' "replication" purpose. A multiple- case study enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. According to Yin (2018), case study designs can be single-case (holistic) designs (Type 1), single-case (embedded) designs (Type 2), multiple-case (holistic) designs (Type 3), and multiple-case (embedded) designs (Type 4) (Yin, 2018, p. 90).

Therefore, the researcher employed the case study design, drawing inspiration from the multiple-case (embedded) design as proposed by Yin 2018. CPD practices involve different tasks, such as planning (which can be self or organizational), practice, reflection, and social interaction. These are cases (embedded) within the main case study of the CPD practice. Same research is done in three different places using similar methods for gathering data and analyzing it using replication logic. This type of research can be called a multiple case (embedded) design or Yin's (2003) Type 4 design. Yin asserts that the evidence from multiple case studies is more compelling, thereby enhancing the overall study's comprehensiveness.

Yin (2003) identifies three categories of case studies: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. The limited research on CPD for academic staff in Ethiopia, including its practices and challenges, let this study to be exploratory in nature. This exploratory case study aims to uncover the underlying factors that influence CPD in Ethiopian higher education institutions. By examining the current practices and challenges faced by academic staff, insights can be gained that may inform future strategies for enhancing professional development in this context.

Furthermore, Johnson and Christensen (2014) categorize case studies into three types: intrinsic case studies, instrumental case studies, and collective case studies. In an intrinsic case study, the researcher's primary interest is to comprehend a specific or singular case. In an instrumental case study, the researcher focuses on comprehending aspects beyond the specific case itself. The

instrumental case study design focuses on understanding the mechanisms and reasons behind the functioning of a phenomenon. Conversely, in the collective case study, the researcher posits that simultaneous examination of multiple cases within a single research study can yield deeper insights into the research topic. The current research is categorized as collective, indicating that the researcher examines multiple cases within a single research issue. In collective case studies, cases are typically examined instrumentally rather than intrinsically.

3.3 Research sites and participants of the study

The selection of sites, participants for interviews and focus group discussions for analysis constitutes a critical initial phase of data collection. This is because it is a crucial stage in determining whose ideas, perceptions, practices, and attitudes would be most important in answering the research questions and achieving the objectives of the study. Finally, the researcher made the decision after carefully considering the criteria described below. These criteria included relevance to the research objectives, diversity of perspectives, and accessibility to engage in meaningful dialogue. By ensuring a balanced representation among participants, the researcher aimed to enrich the quality of the data and provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.3.1 Research sites

Addis Ababa University, Hawassa University, and Ambo University are the three universities purposely selected as sites for the study on the anticipation of availability of a sufficient number and appropriate participants for the study within them. While the three universities currently share a common culture of higher education, they also differ in certain aspects, such as the generation (first, second, and third) and the type of institution (research universities of applied sciences, and comprehensive universities). It is generally believed that each university has its own unique culture, and specific cultures are molded by the shared experiences of participants. The three purposely selected sites are more or less similar in their current official mandate since they all are obliged to enforce their activities on the basis of the same Education and Training Policy and on the Higher Education Proclamation 1152/2019. In addition, they all use the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) for professional academic staff training. To obtain reliable data on the topic under

study and enhance understanding, it is essential to involve purposefully selected participants from each chosen site.

3.3.2 Participants of the Study

Qualitative research relies on a different set of approaches to sampling. Since qualitative studies are concerned with seeing the world through the eyes of respondents and describing the contexts in detail, they are more likely to rely on purposive sampling (Ary et al., 2010; Bryman, 2012). It's also possible for them to use different sampling methods, such as maximum variation sampling, homogeneous sampling, extreme-case sampling, typical-case sampling, critical-case sampling, negative-case sampling, opportunistic sampling, or mixed purposeful sampling (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). These diverse approaches allow researchers to capture a wide range of perspectives and insights, enhancing the richness of their qualitative data. By strategically selecting participants, they can focus on the most relevant cases that contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Bryman (2012) asserts that researchers utilize purposive sampling to deliberately select participants in a strategic manner aligned with the research questions. Snowball sampling involves the researcher identifying individuals pertinent to the study and requesting referrals to others with comparable backgrounds and experiences. In quota sampling, the researcher identifies specific characteristics of a population and establishes quotas based on these characteristics; participants are subsequently selected to fulfill each quota. A distinction exists between sequential purposive sampling, which begins with an initial sample and progressively expands until research questions can be adequately addressed, and fixed or non-sequential purposive sampling, where the sample is predetermined from the outset based on the research questions (Bryman, 2012).

This study employed purposive sampling to recruit participants with the necessary experience or specialized knowledge to address the research questions effectively. In qualitative research, sample size is determined both at the outset of the study and throughout the evolving research design (Higginbottom, 2004). The objective of qualitative research is to comprehend the subjective realities of study participants, which cannot be accomplished through superficial understanding of a large, representative sample of individuals. Samples in qualitative research are not fixed or solely determined by initial conceptualizations in the research design; rather, they are dynamic and emergent (Higginbottom, 2004). It may also be impractical to fully determine the number of

participants needed at the outset of the study. The general rule in qualitative research is that the researcher continues to recruit participants until she is not getting any new information or is no longer gaining new insights, meaning saturation of data collected is far more important than the number of participants (Sharma et al., 2024). But, regarding the number of participants in qualitative studies, a common range is usually somewhere from 8 to 15 participants, but it will vary widely both inside and outside this range. A number of qualitative methodologists, however, provide sample size guidelines for qualitative research designs. Creswell (2007) recommends three to five participants for a case study, 10 for a phenomenological study, and 15–20 for a grounded theory study, whereas Morse (1995) suggests a sample size ranging from six participants for a phenomenological study and 30–50 for an ethnographic study.

Although there are many actors in the CPD practices of academic staff, primary focus is given to academic staff, who can provide deep and detailed insight, to serve as key participants in this research. Hence, academic staff, who were selected by purposive and snowball sampling from the three research sites, were made to be involved in the interviews and focus group discussions. Furthermore, data were also collected from purposely selected academic presidents or their representatives, deans, and coordinators of the Higher Diploma Program, English Language Improvement Program, and Information Communication Technology program. The following table shows a summary of participants in this research.

Table 1: Summary of Research Participants

Participants	Coded as	Addis Ababa university	Hawassa University	Ambo university	Total
Academic president or their representatives	AP/APR	1	1	1	3
Academic deans	AD	1	1	1	3
HDP, ELIP, ICT coordinator	HDPC, ELIPC & ICTC respectively	3	3	3	9
Academic Staff for interview	AS1-5	5	5	5	15
Academic Staff for Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	FGD 1 & 2P1-6	12	12	12	36

Total		22	22	22	66
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3.4 Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

3.4.1 Data Collection Instruments

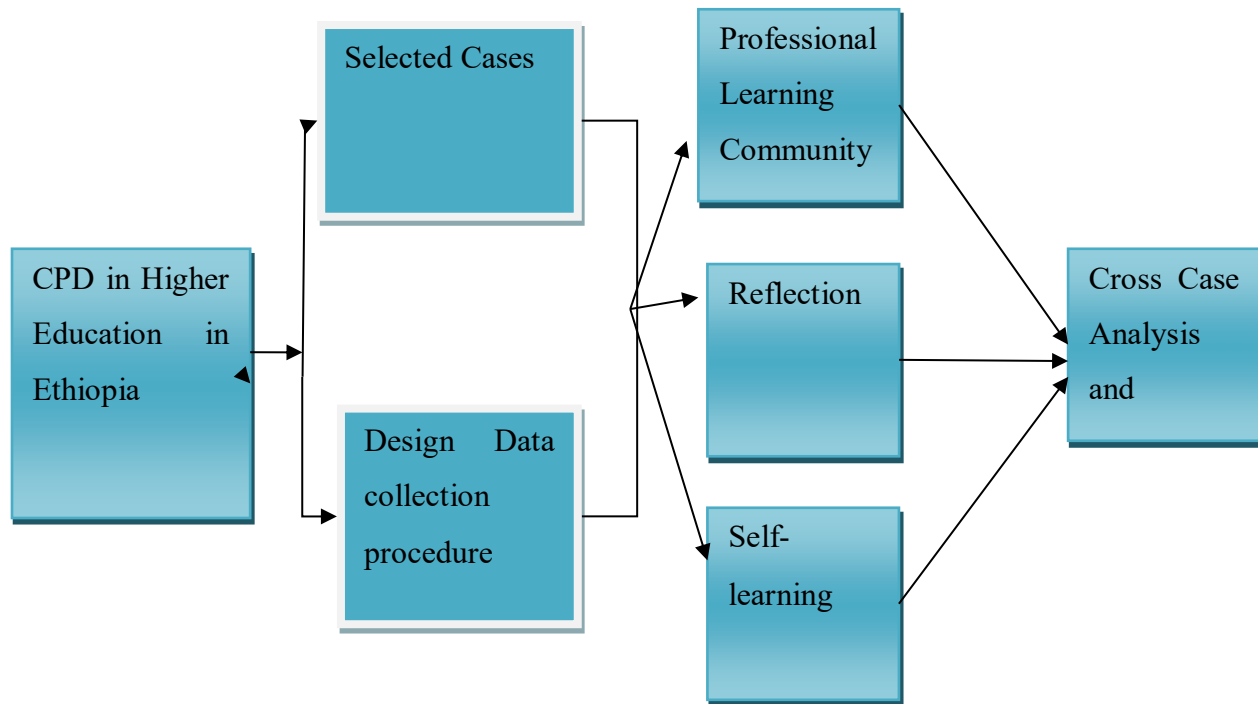
Data serve as the foundation for a research study (Yin, 2012). Data, as Denizen and Lincoln (2018) state, are "*considered to be inert, lifeless, and disorganized, and they wait to be collected processed, and vivified—awakened to meaning through the ministrations of researchers and their specialist, methodic procedures*". The researcher directly collected data from the identified and selected sample population. She collected data relevant to this research questions and objectives from various sources, employing diverse data-collection strategies. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which involved guided conversations with selected samples, as well as focus group discussions. This took place while examining the thoughts, feelings, understanding, practices, and significance of CPD issues among academic staff within their natural context. This type of data establishes the context of qualitative studies. Secondary data were obtained from various written and recorded documents, including policy materials, university reports, HDP portfolios, brochures, and meeting minutes. The data collection guidelines through document analysis were primarily rely on the fundamental research questions. The utilization of diverse data sources enables researchers to corroborate and enhance evidence from alternative sources (Yin, 2003).

3.4.2 Data Collection Procedure

To conduct this study within the selected universities, first, the researcher made ready a letter that requested support from all concerned stakeholders from the College of Education and Language Studies, particularly the Department of Curriculum and Comparative Education at Addis Ababa University. At the initial stage of contacting academic staff at the research sites, the researcher delivered a copy of the letter to the academic vice president of the university and then sequentially to deans, coordinators, and academics. A face-to-face interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were conducted after clarifying the research purpose to the interviewee and participants of the FGD and after gaining the informed consent of all individuals who may be part of this case study. The researcher herself collected all data using the prepared case study protocol. An interview protocol is a form designed by the researcher that contains instructions for the process of the

interview, the questions to be asked, and space to take notes of responses from the interviewee (Creswell, 2012).

Figure 3: Conceptual framework of data collection procedure of the multiple case study



3.4.3 Pilot Testing

Case study research allows researchers to explore phenomena within specific contexts. Pilot studies that use this method are excellent for making researchers more aware of their surroundings because they give them the knowledge, experience, and mindset they need to get ready for larger studies with more people (Mills et al., 2010). The researcher uses principles of question construction to develop excellent interview questions and then pilot tests them. A pilot test of interview questions is a process wherein a researcher modifies an instrument based on feedback from a limited group of individuals who complete and assess the instrument (Creswell, 2012). As Creswell (2012) suggests, *"Conduct a pilot test of your questions, whatever your type of data collection instrument, so that it can provide useful information"* (p. 407). Yin (2003, p. 79) also says that a *"pilot case study will help"* to *"refine... data collection plans with respect to both the*

content of the data and the procedures to be followed." It is pointed out that a pilot study in qualitative research is necessary to determine whether there are flaws, limitations, or weaknesses within the interview design and if it is necessary to make the necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study. This initial step allows researchers to gather preliminary feedback, ensuring that their questions are clear and relevant to the target population. By addressing these potential issues in advance, the pilot study enhances the overall robustness and reliability of the main research effort.

So, a pilot case study was done at Bahir Dar University Peda Campus, which is similar to the main study's chosen research sites in that it has to follow the same Education and Training Policy and the Higher Education Proclamation 1152/2019. The site was also chosen because it is known that, Peda Campus has long history, well- established and has track record of experience and expertise in the field of teacher education. Therefore, suggestions from this prestigious institution is believed to be very important to taste the research design and to increase research familiarity (Mocorro, 2017; Williams-McBean, 2019). Through this process, the researcher was able to identify interview questions that were unclear for generating the depth of information required. The pilot revealed the need to revise certain items and to incorporate additional probing questions that would help provoke richer and more comprehensive responses from participants. Moreover, the pilot study significantly enhanced researcher's practical research skill of interviewing and note- taking.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Case study research produces a lot of data, which means that analyzing qualitative data from case studies is difficult and needs flexibility, skill, and knowledge (Mills et al., 2010). The raw data consists of substantial amounts of textual, visual, and audio files requiring analysis. To present the findings and address the research questions, the researcher must systematically analyze, reorganize, structure, and interpret the collected data. Data analysis consists of reduction and reconstruction in a continuous, ongoing process (Mills et al., 2010). The researcher will interpret these data using certain themes. In general, qualitative data analysis requires coding and searching for relationships and patterns until a holistic picture emerges. Scholars elucidate that, there are steps that a researcher should follow to analyze qualitative data thematically. The process includes familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes,

defining and managing the themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Javadi & Zarea, 2016; Naeem et al., 2023).

To analyze the data obtained from the interviews, focus group discussants, and documents, this researcher employed a deductive thematic analysis method, which is a qualitative research method used to analyze data by applying pre-existing theories or frameworks to identify themes (Proudfoot, 2022). This approach contrasts with inductive analysis, where themes emerge from the data itself without preconceived notions. According to Yin (2003), there are three general analytic strategies, i.e., “relying on the theoretical propositions,” “rival explanations,” and “case descriptions” (Yin, 2003, p. 209). This researcher used the theoretical propositions, especially when doing the cross-case analysis.

3.5.1 Familiarization and Transcription

Before qualitative data analysis begins, the researcher becomes familiar with the data through reading and rereading notes and transcripts and listening repeatedly to audiotapes; this stage is called familiarization (Ary et al., 2010; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). So that, the data can be easily retrieved. This data immersion (familiarization) enabled the researcher to identify significant information relevant to the research questions. For data analysis, this researcher recorded and transcribed the primary data collected from interviews and focus group discussions. In case study research, the transcription process is not about turning the spoken word into text so that it can be analyzed into more meaningful concepts. The transcription process encompasses the process of discovery, description, and analysis to uncover the rules and structures of ordered patterns of interaction (Mills et al., 2010). Besides, the final version of the monograph was edited for language and grammar by a professional editor from English language département ensuring consistency and clarity throughout the monograph.

3.5.2 Credibility and Trustworthiness

The terms validity and reliability have most commonly been associated with rigor in quantitative research, but the concepts of making valid inferences from data and the consistency of the data are also important issues in qualitative research (Ary et al., 2010). Different terms may apply to these criteria in qualitative research. The term "credibility" serves this purpose. When it comes to qualitative research, credibility is like internal validity in quantitative research. It measures how

plausible and accurate a research account is, especially when it comes to how much agreement there is between participants and the researcher (Ary et al., 2010; Mills et al., 2010). It is one of the important considerations in assessing the extent to which a case study or any other type of research study is trustworthy (Ary et al., 2010).

To ensure the credibility of the research, the researcher used multiple sources of data; this is referred to as triangulation. The researcher used data triangulation to examine whether information gathered from one instrument supported information gathered from another. Triangulation can substantially increase the credibility or trustworthiness of research finding (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Besides, the researcher devoted ample time within the research sites in which the research participants are working. This allowed her to gain more clarity and deeply comprehend their perspectives and reactions. In addition, to ensure the trustworthiness of the research, the researcher also used member checking. In the member checking process, the transcribed data were summarized to respondents and confirmed her transcription of what participants said during data collection using their words.

3.5.3 Issues of Responsibility and Ethics with Regard to the Participants of the Study

To ensure ethical conduct and maintain scientific rigor, the researcher adhered to fundamental ethical principles throughout the study. These research ethics are a guiding set of principles developed to assist researchers in conducting ethical studies. Research ethics, as Mills et al. (2010) define it, are moral standards for research practices that involve humans. Bryman (2012) identifies four main areas of ethical principles: (1) whether there is harm to participants; (2) whether there is a lack of informed consent; (3) whether there is an invasion of privacy; and (4) whether deception is involved.

Since interviews and focus group discussions have an ethical dimension and are concerned with interpersonal interaction and produce information about the human condition, ethical approval from Addis Ababa University, Department of Curriculum and Comparative Education, confirmed adherence to guidelines regarding informed consent. This consent form, which the participants of the interview and the researcher have to sign after reading it thoroughly, includes the research purpose, the problem that was addressed, the methods used to gather the data, and the groups who

were involved in the study (see Appendix B). Furthermore, pseudonyms were used, and the collected data were used solely for the study and were not disclosed in any identifying manner.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

4.1 Introduction

The findings from the study on "CPD in Ethiopian public higher education: the case of three universities" are put together and shown in chapters 4, 5, and 6. Each chapter corresponds to one of the study sites where CPD is practiced. Chapter seven provides a cross-site analysis of the findings. The same data collection tools, including semi-structured interview questions, focus group discussion questions, and document analysis, were applied across all three sites. Consequently, each chapter presents the empirical data using the same thematic topics and subtopics.

The findings in each chapter are derived from analyzing data collected using the tools from academic presidents or their representatives, deans, HDP coordinators, ELIP coordinators, ICT coordinators, and academic staff. The deductive thematic analysis was done using the method described in Chapter 3, which included getting to know the data, transcribing it, sorting it, and putting it into different themes and categories. This process resulted in the identification of nine overarching thematic areas to present the result in an organized and systematic manner across the chapters. The key thematic areas are shown in table 2 as follows:

Table 2: Thematic areas of Addis Ababa University

No.	Research questions	Themes
1.	How do academic staff understand and practice CPD in Addis Ababa University?	Academics' Understanding and Individual academic practice Self- learning and Learning as a member of PLC
2.	How do the Addis Ababa University practice CPD?	Updating Need assessment, Planning, Managing, Evaluating and accounting Upgrading
3.	Why do Addis Ababa University and academic staff practice the way they practice?	Institutional reason to practice CPD Academics' reason to practice CPD
4.	How do academic staff account about their CPD?	Accountability in relation CPD engagement Presence of accountability To whom, For what, For why,
5.	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing CPD in the Addis Ababa University?	Enablers for CPD engagement Challenges (individual, institutional and policy related challenges)

4.2 Addis Ababa University, main campus as a context of continuous professional development practices

Founded in 1950 as the University College of Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa University (henceforth, AAU) is Ethiopia's firstborn higher education institution. Later known as Haile Selassie I University, it received its current name in 1974. From its initial 33 students, AAU has grown to an enrollment exceeding 46,873 students and a staff of over 8,762 as of June 2020 (Addis Ababa University [AU], 2020). The university offers 73 undergraduate and 366 graduate programs across ten colleges, two technology institutes, and eleven research institutes, solidifying its trajectory toward becoming a prominent research university (AU, 2020).

AAU's commitment to research is evident in its various research grant programs and the increasing number of publications in reputable journals and books. This focus on research has been formally recognized by the Ministry of Education and labeled the university as a research university whose core function is conducting research.

Besides, AAU, the country's flagship university, is the first Ethiopian university that is an autonomous university. This move is driven by the belief that increased autonomy will lead to a more efficient and effective system, producing competent graduates, enhancing research output, and improving staff productivity (Asgedom & Hagos, 2015). The Ethiopian government aims to

elevate the sector's standing within the regional and global higher education landscape. This push for autonomy encompasses four key areas identified in the literature: academic, administrative, organizational (including staffing/human resources), and financial (Mekonnen et al., 2021).

The university envisions becoming a world-class institution and the leading research university in East Africa. Its mission, as a research-focused university, is to produce competent graduates, conduct problem-solving and knowledge-expanding research, and actively engage in scholarly and community initiatives to contribute to national, continental, and global development. One of its core values is a commitment to the highest academic standards by delivering high-quality programs, fostering excellence in research and scholarly engagement, and integrating community participation into all university functions. Additionally, the university aims to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and improve graduate employability by strengthening the professional capacities of its academic staff (AAU, 2020).

According to the SWOT analysis of AAU's Strategic Plan 2020–2030, the university's main weaknesses are not having enough short-term and professional development trainings in areas like computer skills, English language proficiency, communication skills, and research methods; and not having enough dedicated and skilled workers to bring about change and new initiatives (AAU, 2020, pp. 22, 23). The researcher delves into academics, their respective institutional practices of CPD, and the challenges associated with academic staff's engagement with these programs at AAU's main campus in the following sections.

4.3 Academics' understanding

One of the basic questions of this study was exploring academics' understanding and practice of CPD at their university. Under this basic question, the first sub question is academics' understanding, and the other subthemes are individual academic practice of CPD and their practice as a member of a learning community.

At AAU, CPD, which is a critical aspect of academic life as it allows educators to stay up-to-date with the latest research, pedagogical techniques, and technological advancements, is understood in various ways. In the interview and FGD, this variation is revealed as follows:

X explained:

Academics' understanding of CPD varies greatly. There are academics who perceive it as a program that is designed to update professionals with current knowledge, as it enables them to discharge their duties effectively. However, some academics view it as a top-down mandate that is less important to their field.

The above quote revealed that academics possess a dichotomous perception regarding the necessity of engaging in CPD. There are academics who have the advocated perception of CPD and see it as an important thing in boosting their pedagogical knowledge, in keeping pace with this ever-changing world, and in capacitating them to discharge expected service effectively and efficiently. These findings are consistent with previous research by Hasen and Parvez (2017) and Yaqub et al. (2020), who explained that CPD is an important tool helping academics to fulfill their expected roles in dynamic working situations and globalization.

P said

The academic staff at AAU usually view CPD, like the Higher Diploma Program, as a strategy to improve instructors' pedagogical skills as well as a way of boosting their knowledge of higher education from both the global and national perspectives... When they are doing this (when they participate in any CPD activity), they add their opinion, as it is very helpful to update their knowledge, skills, and values in a very rapidly changing world. So, to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently, instructors must update their knowledge and skills; otherwise, they can't be competitive or adaptable professionals. In general, they believe that it is important to update their knowledge, skills, and values.

Analysis of the document titled Higher Diploma Program (2018) reveals that CPD serves to improve the quality of education in higher education institutions (MoE, 2018). Viewing CPD as a means to ensure quality in higher education is supported by scholars like Santos et al. (2019), who argued that inadequate professional development for academics poses a significant threat to the quality of higher education and, by extension, to society at large. This perspective highlights the importance of ongoing training and support for educators, emphasizing that their professional growth directly influences student outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Therefore, investing

in comprehensive CPD programs is essential for fostering a culture of excellence within academic environments.

AS5 commented:

At AAU if you take HDP once, you are not required to any another pedagogical science training. We advise students without taking supervision training. In my view not only academic staff but also the university or the institutions should reconceptualized CPD again. This is because all the designed one shoot packages like higher diploma program many not be enough to keep pace with this fast-changing situations, since they lack continuity. Generally, I perceive CPD as a very important thing to keep pace with this ever- changing work environment.

One FGD participant shared the following insight: “in my view professional development has paramount importance for both academic and the institutions”.

FGD2P1 shared that:

In my understanding CPD is a very important thing for academics. I will be very happy if there is higher diploma program one, two, three and so on. Because, we only took one higher diploma program that lasted for one year and this may not work throughout our lifespan or our stay at higher education. There may be different knowledge or information that may be phaseout after sometimes. And hence continuous update is a mandatory thing for any type of professional learning.

Some academics understand how important CPD is, but the comments from deans and academics show that some academics are more focused on the HDP requirements than on the program itself, even though the program's main goal is to make sure it follows the rules of higher education. This suggests a disconnect between the intent of the HDP program and the priorities of the academics, who may be prioritizing compliance over genuine educational development. Consequently, this focus on meeting requirements could undermine the potential benefits of the CPD program for academics’ developments and student learning. Scholar like Webster- Wright (2009) elucidate that presence of shared understanding enhances professional learning that foster authentic learning experience.

In addition, comments from participants revealed that there is a need to reconceptualize CPD not only by academics but also by the institutions. This is because, one shoot packages like higher diploma program many not be enough to keep pace with this fast-changing situations. CPD is essential for professionals to remain abreast of the dynamic and swiftly evolving landscape. Single-session professional development programs, although prevalent, frequently inadequately equip professionals for intricate difficulties and hinder sustained advancement. This finding extends the work of Desimone (2023) that explain sessions for effective professional development typically should encourage ongoing learning. This limitation often stems from the lack of in-depth exploration and ongoing support that single-session programs provide, leaving professionals without the necessary tools to address complex challenges effectively. As a result, these brief encounters may fail to foster long-term growth and adaptability in an ever-changing environment.

In addition, comments from academics reveal that CPD programs are perceived less important because they lack content completeness to provide required knowledge and skills to supervise university students. This implies that the current continuing professional development programs may not fully equip participants with the necessary expertise needed for effectively overseeing university students. As a result, this gap in content could hinder the quality of supervision and mentorship provided to those students. This finding aligns with Asregid et al. (2023) who reported that there is lack of training on mentoring university students at Hawassa University. To gain a deeper understanding, it would be beneficial to conduct additional studies to explore content completeness of CPD programs.

4.4 Individual academic practices

The pursuit of CPD has become an integral part of the academic life, as individual scholars and educational institutions alike recognize the importance of staying abreast of the latest advancements, adapting to evolving pedagogical approaches, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning. Academics were asked how they practiced CPD as an individual scholar and as a member of professional learning community.

The findings indicate that academics practice CPD through various activities, such as reading books and published articles, conducting research, and attending trainings. They also engage in various activities to enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitude, such as attending seminars or

conferences as a member of professional learning community (almost all interviewees). The findings revealed that academics also use the online modality to attend training to enriches subject expertise and teaching techniques (AS2 & AS3).

This implies that academics demonstrate a proactive approach to CPD, engaging in self-directed learning activities such as reading books and published articles and conducting research. This suggests an intrinsic motivation for continuous improvement and a recognition of the evolving nature of their profession. These findings align with the work of Kennedy (2005) that identifies a range of models of CPD that support professional autonomy and transform practice. The diverse range of CPD activities undertaken by academics, from attending seminars and conferences to pursuing individual research, highlights a multifaceted approach to professional growth (Kennedy, 2005). This variety caters to different learning styles and allows for a more holistic development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The transcribed data also showed that there is disparity in the individual academic practice of CPD. In the interview, one of the academic staff commented that:

I engaged in CPD through various approaches. I consistently read scholarly published articles and books, which contribute significantly to my professional learning. Additionally, I publish articles, a process that allows me to acquire new knowledge, skill, and insight. Furthermore, I have established international networks, which helped me to pursue my postdoc at Harvard University independently without the support and recognition of AAU. I said this because the university doesn't give leave, even though I did it by taking my sabbatical leave, and even the certificate I brought didn't get any value (no salary increasement or reward). The main benefit I gained from my postdoc was the opportunity to publish articles during the process. This implies that we need to enhance the value of self-initiated learning or engagement (AS5).

FGD1P2 commented that:

In my view there are two types of academic staff who are not bridging; on one hand there are academics who are working by extending their retirement, and these groups are not actively participating in different CPD activities. On the other hand,

there are young academics who are actively updating and upgrading themselves even without expecting the institution to do so. This means that the personal effort of young academics' staff exceeds the institutional effort.

From these findings, it can be suggested that AAU needs to enhance the value of self-initiated learning, given the significant differences in CPD practices among academics. Some actively engage in CPD, while others focus on calming government, society, and students. This disparity indicates that some academic members prioritize external pressures over personal professional development. Therefore, fostering a culture of self-regulated learning could lead to more uniform engagement in CPD across the university. Scholars like Rodríguez-Gómez et al. (2024) claim that encouraging a proactive attitude and self-motivation is key to fostering a culture of continuous learning, which is crucial for maintaining high standards in professional practice. Similarly, Tour (2016) advocates that fostering a culture of self-initiated learning is vital for CPD. It enhances professional growth, aligns learning with individual needs, and supports lifelong learning. Overcoming barriers and creating supportive environments are crucial for maximizing its benefits.

Additionally, these findings have significant implications, highlighting the need to establish clear policies and procedures that outline clear expectations, processes, and accountability measures. Such an effort is crucial in narrowing the disparity in CPD practices. By doing so, organizations can foster a culture of continuous improvement and ensure that all employees have equal access to professional development opportunities. Ultimately, this approach enhances individual growth and contributes to the overall success of the organization.

4.5 Institutional updating practices

The second research question of this study was exploring the institutional updating and upgrading practice of CPD at selected universities. The researcher asked participants about their institution's CPD practices as a learning organization. The pursuit of updating and upgrading CPD programs has become an integral part of institutions alike, as they recognize the importance of capacitating human capital. This commitment enhances the skills of individual employees and fosters a culture of lifelong learning within the organization. By prioritizing professional growth, institutions can adapt more effectively to the ever-evolving demands of their respective fields. As a result, institutions are better equipped to navigate the challenges of an ever-changing environment

(Yilfashewa, 2012). The findings of this study revealed that many things are given to capacitate academics at AAU; this includes face-to-face and online trainings on course development, research, and higher education pedagogy like HDP and ICT. The HDP coordinator explained this as follows:

Every teacher needs to keep their knowledge updated. In addition to higher diploma programs, AAU has collaborated with Arizona University, and teachers are required to take an online course (e-SHE) that enables them to design and deliver online courses in addition to other important skills such as study skills, reading skills, and time management. This course involves how to prepare a lesson plan, how to deliver a course, how to make the lesson interactive, and how to use modern instructional technology. Additionally, there are occasional short-term or periodic trainings offered.

Almost all interview participant explained that at AAU there are staff colloquium through which academics exchange their views.

These findings are consistent with previous research by Lelliott et al. (2022), who reported that online tutorials and modular learning pathways are emerging as flexible alternatives, allowing academics to engage in CPD at their pace. Similarly, Glogowska et al. (2011) reported that a blended approach can offer a flexible and comprehensive way to meet the diverse needs of academics.

The above findings also showed that AAU implements community practice to foster culture of professional learning community. These findings support the work of Wangberg et al. (1995) who claimed that colloquia, by their nature, foster collegiality and build a sense of community among academic staff.

The researcher asked interviewees how they assessed academic needs to prepare tailored, updated CPD programs. Their response varied based on their department and program type.

In relation to this, P explained as follows:

.....We can see this practice in different phases; for example, some years back, the university had conducted a needs assessment. There was a center that supported

teaching and learning; it is under the office of the current academic vice president. This center carried out a thorough needs assessment using two methods. 1. Distributed an online questionnaire to be filled out by academic teachers, but as you know, there was poor online questionnaire participation practice; most academics didn't reply to the need assessment survey. Due to this, teaching and learning center experts went across all campuses and departments and again distributed the questionnaire, and they begged teachers to fill it out. Therefore, we can say that a proper need assessment was done at that time. But recently the university has been assessing the overall global trends...

T elaborated that:

To prepare different trainings, we conduct a needs assessment using institutional email by sending it to all academics, but only a few academics respond to that email. We use these few responses as input for designing the training programs. Besides, during the meeting, we took training ideas. In addition, we do have a training and support team; this team collects different training ideas from different departments. This collaborative approach helps us identify common themes and specific needs across the institution.

There was a noticeable division in opinions, with some academics shared their insight: “as far as my information self-need assessments have not been conducted in this university (AS5)”.

One possible explanation for this finding is that the information on need assessments is not well communicated to academics. Nevertheless, scholar Steinert (2017) stated that conducting a thorough needs assessment is the initial step in designing effective updating programs to identify the specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that academics and staff require to stay current in their fields and meet the changing demands of their roles. Understanding the specific needs enables the design of training programs with tailored content that directly addresses those needs. Such an approach leads to more effective learning and skill development. Similarly, the theoretical assumption of adult learning theory claim that adults are inspired to learn by their needs and interests, which learning can fulfill; thus, these factors should serve as the foundation for structuring adult learning activities (Knowles et al., 2005). Harris (2000) discusses a strategy for identifying professional development needs, highlighting their diversity and interconnectedness.

This need assessment is also important to increase the relevance of CPD programs (Ciampa, 2016). The identification of specific performance gaps and areas for improvement should be based on data-driven insights, ensuring that the updating programs address the most pressing needs and contribute to measurable improvements in teaching, research, and service delivery.

Based on the findings of the need assessment, universities should plan various updating programs to provide for the diverse needs and preferences of their academics. These programs can take various forms, such as face-to-face training workshops, seminars, online courses, mentoring programs, and communities of practice.

In the document analysis of the university's ten-year plan, it has been stated that one of the major objectives is developing the professional capacity of academic staff through diagnosing capacity gaps, preparing training materials, offering training, and running CPD, HDP, and ELIP (AAU, 2020, p. 55). Nevertheless, almost all interviewee participants expressed that HDP and trainings on different issues are delivered consistently. The ELIP program, despite the SWOT analysis indicating that inadequate English language competence is a weakness of the institution (AAU, 2020, p. 22), primarily aimed at enhancing the language competency of students, particularly PhD candidates, rather than academic staff. And hence, it is recommended that the management process must guarantee the timely and efficient delivery of the programs as planned. Furthermore, it is important to consider the integration of digital tools into the academic's development programs. Finally, data should be collected from various sources, such as participant feedback, performance data, and observations, to provide a comprehensive picture of the programs' effectiveness (Salajegheh, 2024).

4.6 Institutional upgrading practices

Upgrading programs represent a more intensive and comprehensive approach to professional development, designed to enhance the skills, knowledge, and abilities of academics to a higher level. These programs often involve formal training, advanced coursework, and opportunities, and they may lead to certifications, licensures, or advanced degrees. The researcher asked what kind of upgrading practices there are at AAU. And they shared these rich insights as follows: “at AAU there are numerous local and international CPD opportunities such as PhD and postdoc opportunity”.

As expressed by T: “there are academic enhancement programs that are offered with certification. For instance, Master Class Training (MCT) and awards a diploma upon successful completion of the program.”

The above quotes revealed that there are different initiatives that are provided for academics to remain abreast of advancements in their respective fields, integrate new pedagogical methodologies, and promote technological skills and research proficiencies. To guarantee the success of upgrading programs, institutions must allocate sufficient resources, encompassing funding, personnel, and infrastructure. Scholars said that CPD programs, like upgrading programs, are very important for encouraging great teaching, making sure that higher education stays high-quality and useful, and calling for constant improvement (Makeeva et al., 2020; Shafi et al., 2020).

Contrary to the above findings, this research found that less effective CPD program named as English Language Improvement Program (ELIPC) stated that:

The English improvement program has gradually faded, with training classes occurring less frequently until they are nearly non-existent. There are no well-structured professional learning opportunities for the academics... The MoE and British Council collaborate to offer a few online trainings, which come with certification. For instance, English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) award a certificate upon successful completion of the program. However, the program suffers significant weakness at the university level.

The above quote revealed a concerning decline in English language support within the university. The fading of the English improvement program and the lack of structured professional learning opportunities, highlights a systemic weakness. While collaborations like those between the MoE and British Council offer valuable online trainings with certification (e.g., EMI and MOOCs), these initiatives appear insufficient to enhance English language proficiency of academics at the university level.

4.7 Institutional reason to practice CPD

The third research question aimed to explore the factors influencing the practices of AAU and academic staff within their institutions. Examining the institutional reasons for specific CPD

practices necessitates a thorough examination of the strategic goals, resource allocations, and organizational culture prevalent within universities (Benedicta, 2021). Understanding these underlying institutional drivers is crucial for comprehending the context within which individual academics engage with CPD. To identify the key driver of that influence on CPD practice at AAU, participants were asked the underlying reason for the institutional way of CPD practice.

In the interview Z1 state that:

There are different institutional reasons to practice CPD of academics: the first one is to enhance teaching and learning as you know CPD equips academics with updated pedagogical approaches, innovative teaching technologies, and subject-matter expertise, ultimately improving the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. The other reason is university run different seminars and conferences; this is done fosters a culture of research and innovation by providing opportunities for academics to develop their research skills, stay abreast of current research trends, and collaborate with colleagues. The aforementioned reasons are important to increase the effectiveness and the efficiency of the institution thereby ensuring quality at the institution.

In the interview, participant X shared the following insight: “the basic reason is to capacitate or update the skills, knowledge and overall competencies of the staff in teaching, research and serve as flagship university for other Ethiopian University”.

In the interview T described that:

The digitization of every service delivered by the university is one of its goals. Therefore, to achieve this goal, different training and upgrading programs are delivered to academics. In addition, these programs take into account the constantly evolving worldwide environment. This ensures that academics are well-equipped to integrate new technologies into their teaching methods and research practices. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, the university aims to enhance both the student experience and academic output.

According to the above quotes, CPD in academic institutions seeks to improve teaching and learning by providing faculty with up-to-date pedagogical strategies, advanced teaching tools, and

subject-matter expertise. This result aligns with Liyun & Zhaolong's (2024) description of CPD, which entails continuous improvement of professional competency, pedagogical knowledge, and educational knowledge through a variety of learning experiences and real-world applications over the course of a person's career. In order to promote a culture of research and innovation and boost the institution's efficacy and efficiency, universities also host conferences and seminars. This result is consistent with Kamal et al. (2022), who claimed that conferences give scholars a chance to showcase their own work, get input from experts and peers, and improve it. These events also create networking opportunities, giving researchers the chance to meet possible partners, exchange ideas, and have conversations that may result in new initiatives and discoveries. Additionally, CPD seeks to digitize services by giving scholars the know-how to incorporate new technologies into research and teaching strategies.

In general, a complex network of institutional structures and contextual factors influence how universities approach CPD. CPD programs that complement strategic objectives, accreditation standards, and performance indicators are frequently given priority by institutions. The kinds of programs provided, the resources allotted, and the degree of involvement of academics can all be strongly impacted by these priorities. Therefore, it is crucial to continuously assess and modify CPD strategies to make sure they satisfy the changing needs of the organization and its teachers.

4.8 Academic staffs' reason to practice CPD

The other subtheme that emerged in the third research question is the factors that drive academics to practice CPD the way they do it. Academics do CPD for various reasons, some of which are internal and some of which are external factors. These reasons depend on the academic's personal values, career goals, and views of the institutional environment. This means that their reasons for pursuing CPD are influenced by both personal desires and external factors, such as workplace culture and opportunities for advancement. As a result, their engagement in CPD is shaped by a combination of what they value personally and how they perceive their professional activity. The participants of the study explained the different driving factors as follows:

Z1 explained that:

There are different personal reasons to practice CPD as academics, to mention the felt gap to play the expected role like teaching students or doing research, their experience, or the beliefs they have about the dynamicity of the knowledge.

P described that:

Continuous learning becomes a question of survival; unless we are capable of being competitive, we can't survive. If you want to succeed professionally in academia, you must update your skills or your knowledge. Although it's not officially required, many feel it's essential today because of the competitive environment. If you are less performing- for instance, if you fail to provide the required task with the required time and mode- it is very difficult for academic staff to get promoted and even to survive. All of this stems from the individual's perspective.

T highlighted that:

There are different reasons to practice CPD in relation to ICT, to mention some: to be competent, to get additional income, and to deliver their course to the expected standard (a standard of 30% of the course should be delivered through an online modality). Additionally, engaging in CPD in relation to ICT allows individuals to stay updated with the latest trends and technological advancements in their field, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness and career prospects. This commitment to learning not only benefits professionals but also improves the quality of service provided to clients and stakeholders.

AS1 states that:

I feel that there is a need for updating and fitting to time requirements. If I tell you my experience, the primary thing that drives my continuing professional development practice is addressing my identified gaps through reflection. Upon finishing a semester or academic year, I carefully evaluate the positive and negative aspects, as well as strategies for improving my professional competence moving forward. I read and refer to many online publications to address my deficiencies.

AS5 reported that:

The teaching methods of twenty years ago are significantly different from those of today. Easy access to information has significantly narrowed the gap between professionals and nonprofessionals. Therefore, to remain relevant, professionals must enhance their knowledge and skills. Students, advancements, time, and space are demanding professional development; otherwise, academics could not be relevant service providers unless they enhance their professionalism through CPD.

The analysis of the above transcribed data revealed that there are various driving forces underlying academics' CPD practice. Academics engaged in CPD due to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Academics underscored the imperative of enhancing their expertise to perform their duties successfully, especially in pedagogy and research. The need to fill identified gaps in knowledge through self-assessment and continuous learning has come out as an important aspect. This reflective approach enables academics to assess their strengths and weaknesses at the end of each academic term and to seek relevant resources to enhance their proficiency. This finding is consistent with Efu (2020), who reported that academic staff are more inclined to participate in CPD when they perceive that the programs correspond with their personal needs and interests and that the acquired information and skills will be directly relevant to their teaching and research endeavors.

The participants' responses revealed a broad concern among academics about being competent in their work environment. Their aspirations, such as the desire to become a better teacher, publish more research, or assume a leadership role, can also motivate them to participate in CPD activities that align with their objectives. These findings align with the work of Gazzard (2016), who stated that participation in CPD is crucial for health and care professionals to uphold a high quality of competence, elevate their professional standing, and attain promotions and increased financial compensation. The learner's cognitive capacity, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and the perceived value of CPD influence its practices.

Participants responses also showed that the other driving force behind practicing CPD is the ever-evolving nature of technological advancements and the institutional demand to provide blended learning. This finding aligns with Caner and Aydin's (2021) research, which emphasized the need for academics to commit themselves to instructional technology in order to create productive learning environments. The study highlights the importance of CPD in meeting institutional

demands and technological advancements, as well as the need for academics to embrace new technologies. This focus on innovation emphasizes how important it is for teachers to take the initiative to enhance their methods of instruction.

4.9 Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

The notion of accountability in CPD engagement is well-established in the higher education sector. Accountability is generally understood as the mechanism by which educational institutions and their staff are held responsible for their actions and performance. This process often involves assessing both student outcomes and institutional practices to ensure that they meet established standards. By promoting accountability, institutions aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement and enhance overall educational quality. Institutions should provide their academic staff with professional development opportunities that match with the institution's objectives and the individual's professional aspirations. The fourth research question of this study focused on determining how academic staff are accountable in relation to their CPD engagement. Participants expressed the issue of accountability in relation to CPD engagement as follows:

Z1 explained that:

The presence of accountability in relation to CPD engagement is evident; nevertheless, the degree of accountability varies based on the type of CPD programs. For instance, in relation updating type of CPD academics might not be accountable by the institution. But for upgrading type of CPD the accountability might be serious. For instance, if one academic fail to complete PhD program s/he is not allowed to reinstate and work as a lecturer in the university.

P stated that:

It is a very difficult question; I can't generally say there is no accountability. But I can dare to say the system of accountability till now in relation to CPD or higher diploma program engagement is fragile. It doesn't clearly show who is accountable for whom or for what when it comes to CPD or higher diploma programs. There is no kind of rule or policy that clearly forces academics to participate in CPD or higher diploma programs.

L described that:

As far as my information goes, it is difficult to say there is direct accountability in relation to language's professional development engagement, but indirectly there are different professional accountabilities. For instance, if academics couldn't teach well using English, or if they didn't publish using English, they couldn't find their career advancement or stay as academic in higher education. This creates an environment where proficiency in English becomes essential for success in academia. Consequently, educators may feel pressured to enhance their language skills to meet these indirect expectations and ensure their continued professional growth.

T stated that “there is no strong accountability yet, but I'm sure there will be soon. However, similar to HDP, it is now mandatory to complete MCT in order to become a teacher at the university level.” Similarly, several academic respondents who participated in the interview and FGD consistently reported that academics are accountable for CPD engagement, including HDP, MA, and PhD upgrades, but their practicality is nominal, allowing academics to teach at higher education without HDP for a decade.

The above quotes revealed the presence of accountability at AAU in relation to CPD engagement with limited functionality. As Maphosa et al. (2015) described, when academics know that their engagement in CPD is monitored and evaluated, they are more likely to participate. This is important to align individual academics' CPD practices with institutional goals. This alignment, as Chineze and Olele (2012) highlighted, is important for quality assurance in higher education. These findings have significant implications for concerned stakeholders to make the existing accountability system strong by setting clear expectations and standards for continuous learning and development.

Participants of this study were also asked for whom and for what activity are academics accountable in relation to CPD engagement. They shared their insight as follows:

Z1 described that:

Every academic is responsible for updating his knowledge, skills, and attitude via CPD; therefore, the accountability spans from self to the department, dean, and

university at large. The activities to which academics are accountable in relation to their CPD engagement can vary widely. These may include attending training programs, workshops, conferences, or online courses. If they use money from the institution, there is also financial accountability. The issue of accountability is linked to performance evaluation, career advancement, and even continued employment. As I told you earlier, if an academic fails to complete the PhD program, he/she is not allowed to reinstate and work as a lecturer at the university. Moreover, management bodies may require demonstration of CPD as a prerequisite for maintaining certification, licensing, or attending another CPD program. For instance, having an HDP certificate is a prerequisite to attending e-SHE learning like MCT.

FGD1P2 stated that

...if someone fails to complete a PhD program locally or institutionally, then the university will not allow them to reinstate. He or she will be automatically out of the system. But this organizational accountability strength varies as leaders exchange meaning, meaning it lacks consistency across all colleges and institutions... There is tight financial accountability that highly focuses on the proper usage of resources and the budget allocated for training purposes...

FGD2P5 explained that:

Mostly as an academic, I am accountable to myself, to my student, and to the institution. I strive to meet the expectation of my institution to provide a high-quality education to my students, which is the main reason for my professional development practice.

Some interviewees shared that the issue of accountability varies across different types of CPD activities. For instance, taking HDP and MCT is becoming a must to work as an academic, whereas low attendance or absenteeism in professional learning activities like seminar and lecture series is tolerable. Other interviewees also reported that the accountability in relation to CPD engagement focuses on attendance and reports.

These findings indicate a loss of academics' accountability in relation to CPD engagement. Since CPD is a program that is designed to ensure quality in higher education, the issue of accountability can be seen in quality dimensions. These dimensions include input, process, output, and impact. The findings show that in the input dimension, there is strict financial accountability, with a strong focus on the proper use of resources and the budget allocated for CPD activities. Additionally, there is accountability for attendance and reports during the process and output dimensions. However, the accountability in relation to the usage or implementation of the acquired knowledge and skills and their impact on academics' professionalism and students learning isn't as strong as the financial one. This implies that ensuring accountability in this area could guarantee the overall effectiveness of CPD practices.

4.10 Enablers for CPD engagement

CPD is a means for academics to stay updated on emerging trends in their fields, maintain knowledge, and improve teaching methods (Manship, 2014). It includes various activities like training, conferences, self-regulated learning, and reflection (Gazzard, 2016). Several enablers influence engagement in these CPD activities, ranging from individual motive to institutional and leadership support. The fifth research question aimed at analyzing perceived enablers and challenges in initiating and developing effective CPD activities in the three public universities. The objective was to analyze perceived enablers and challenges in initiating and developing effective CPD activities in the universities. Participants were asked the different enablers that motivate and let them to pursue CPD in the university to improve their personal professional growth. They shared their insight as follows:

Z1 stated that:

Several factors can enable academics to engage in CPD activities. Individual academics beliefs about the dynamicity of knowledge and recognition of the value of CPD can be considered as enablers. Moreover, the different provisions of the university can be considered as enablers. These include the provision of CPD opportunities with funds and resources like laptops, internet, etc.

As expressed by P: “the commitment of the top manager is another enabling factor; for instance, college-level managers like deans encourage their respective staff to participate actively in different capacity-building training”.

T explained that:

There are different enablers for professional development programs in relation to ICT. To mention some-the presence of awareness-every academic knows the importance of technological knowledge; the presence of infrastructure and the ever-changing world situation can be considered enablers.

FGDP6 stated that:

The presence of home allowance, transport allowance, and stationary cost allowance during the pursuit of a PhD can be considered an enabler. In addition, upon the completion of the upgrade program, for instance, when you complete your PhD program, as soon as you bring a paper, your salary will be promoted. This can be considered a reward.

Academic staff interviewees and FGD1&2 participants highlighted that there are different enablers that drive them to keep learning. These are their interests to enhance their capacity to teach and conduct research: the availability of international networking and funding opportunities that CPD activities offer and the different provisions of the university, like full salary (for local upgrading), promotion of salary upon completion of PhD, laptops, internet, and offices.

As reflected in the above findings, the enablers that allow academics to pursue their CPD vary in level, ranging from personal motivation to their institution and policy level. Furthermore, we can categorize these enablers into three types: technological, professional, and collaborative. These enablers play an important role in shaping CPD practices at AAU.

The finding regarding personal motivation as an enabler reinforced the theory of andragogy, which reported that academics as adult learners take responsibility for their own learning and show a commitment to professional development by actively seeking opportunities to enhance pedagogical and research competency (Knowles, 2005). This finding also aligns with the work of Samko (2024), who reported that positive internal drive for professional development significantly

enhances the efficacy of educational engagement and promotes favorable conditions for instructors' personal development in their professional pursuit. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), this type of self-initiated effort improves not only individual capabilities but also contributes to a culture of lifelong learning within the academics' institution.

This study revealed that participants at AAU consider top-management commitment and the provision of ample resources as enablers to practice CPD. This finding is similar to what Scott et al. (2023) found: institutions that involve academics and build trust by providing substantial support and resources greatly increase academic optimism. The result is the belief that academics can overcome challenges and make a difference in students' outcomes and the quality of the institution as a whole.

The responses also showed that there are different policy enablers that encourage CPD within the institutions. This finding extends the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) by showing that policies can require academicians to engage in professional development activities, allocate funding for development initiatives, and acknowledge those who exhibit a dedication to ongoing learning.

Similar to the finding of Dragan et al. (2018), this study demonstrated that technological advances have changed educational programs through the use of online resources and tools that facilitate continuous learning as well as professional development. This integration enables educators and students to adapt to emerging industrial requirements and improves their competencies.

4.11 Challenges for CPD engagement

Literature indicates that the challenges encountered by academic staff in participating in professional development activities are varied, covering individual perceptions and practices as well as the strategies and practices of institutions (ESC, 2015; Solomon et al., 2023). In their systematic review, Solomon et al. (2023) noted that the challenges hindering academic engagement in CPD could be categorized as individual, institutional, and policy-related problems. This identification is pursued in this phase of the discussion. Participants at various university levels were asked to explain the problems academics encounter in effectively implementing CPD within their institution.

Individual-related challenges

Participants in the FGDs and interviews commonly highlighted several individual-related challenges like lack of time to prioritize CPD activities and lack of commitment and motivation to participate in CPD activities. This might stem from misunderstanding of CPD's purpose and benefits. This misunderstanding extends to both staff and management, leading to dissatisfaction in the profession. Similarly, as expressed by P: "when we come to the challenges, even though the aforementioned enablers are there, there are still some stubborn academics who show some degree of resistance or lack the commitment to any form of training to update themselves. Still, there are many academics who didn't take a higher diploma program in teaching, even though it has been implemented over the past 20 years".

T shared the following challenges: "from an individual standpoint, barriers such as technophobia, frustration, and misconceptions persist, alongside a lack of incentives for developing online courses."

These findings show that there is confusion about the importance of CPD, leading to a lack of motivation, which suggests that stakeholders are not providing enough support to help academics understand and value CPD for their success. Haque et al. (2014) described that motivation serves as a mechanism for generating enthusiasm to attain organizational objectives, which is fulfilled by addressing certain individual needs. Motivation pertains to the achievement of organizational core objectives through the satisfaction of individual employee needs or desires. Similarly, Efu (2020) suggested that management should consider enhancing their understanding of CPD, establishing an enabling process, effectively managing workload, and promoting peer-to-peer learning. Effective and accessible CPD processes enable academic staff members to develop and maintain their knowledge and capacity for high-quality higher education programs.

Institution- related challenges

Participants of this study also expressed several institution-related challenges of planning, implementing, managing, and evaluating CPD activities. Several participants commonly highlighted that the different trainings that are provided to academics are less tailor-made, making their contents less relevant to the current needs of academics. One participant in the first FGD expressed this as follows:

...The primary institutionalized program for CPD of academics is the Higher Diploma Program (HDP). However, its content often lacks relevance for participants with prior educational backgrounds. Additionally, the program lacks support from instructional technology or practical classroom applications, and the trainers are not highly knowledgeable. Besides, it can be said that the content lacks relevance, the approach pursued is very traditional, trainers are not knowledgeable in technology, and the total program is not augmented by technology.

The CPD program at AAU was less tailored to meet the specific needs of individual academics, as indicated by the quote. The engagement in uniform and repetitive CPD content for all disciplines, without assessing changes, has made it less captivating for academics. This finding aligns with the studies conducted by Baker et al. (2018), Qader (2019), Entsie et al. (2020), and Yilfashewa (2012), which indicate a discrepancy between the needs of academics and the efforts in CPD. The challenges affect the understanding and institutional practices of CPD at the university. Similarly, as Taddese and Rao (2021) reported, generic CPD programs that assume one-size-fits-all might not address individual unique challenges faced by academics in different disciplines.

The above quotes also underscore the importance of the integration of technological knowledge to run CPD programs. The finding is consistent with Harper et al. (2014), who reported that technology is not utilized to its full capacity in the professional development programs. This implies that the university should strive to incorporate flexibility of academics' CPD to accommodate diverse needs, relevance, and overall effectiveness of CPD by using technology.

Participants responses also revealed that CPD activities lack practical applicability. Nevertheless, many scholars suggest that effective CPD of teachers should enable them to improve their daily pedagogical practice (Ambon et al., 2024; Entsie et al., 2020; Supovitz & Turner, 2000). Consequently, CPD should go beyond mere theoretical discourse and concentrate on providing academics with the essential tools and knowledge to develop engaging and effective learning experiences for their students.

Besides, CPD trainers should not use the traditional approach but rather, as Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) advocated, effective professional development should integrate active learning strategies. Active learning involves teachers in the development and implementation of instructional strategies, allowing them to participate in the same learning methods they are creating

for their students. This professional development employs genuine artifacts, interactive activities, and other methodologies to deliver profoundly integrated, highly contextualized professional learning. This method departs from conventional educational models and settings that rely on lectures and lack direct engagement with teachers' classrooms and students.

The other problems that participants often brought up with institutions were the lack of advanced technology, a dedicated training center, training that happened at different times, the question of whether one-time training like HDP works every time, the top-down approach of CPD, less accountability for people who don't show up for training, not enough reward and recognition for people who engaged in their self-regulated learning, no analysis of the effects or impacts of CPD, and high bureaucracy of finance. Solomon et al. (2023) reported that CPD at higher education is challenged because institutions don't provide enough support, infrastructure is not fulfilled, accountability is low, and there aren't enough incentives for CPD projects. Clear suggestions come out of the findings: to have effective CPD practice, there is a need to have an agent and system that run CPD for academics, from need assessment to impact analysis.

Unexpectedly, the finding in relation to CPD practice, specifically HDP practice, questions the professionalism of teaching at university. In the interview, one of the academic staff participants reiterated it as follows:

...the problem of higher education CPD is the institution itself because the professionalism of academics should be kept by the university. Some academics are recruited because they have subject matter knowledge and teach at higher education without taking HDP for some years; they are relatives of top managers; or they are assigned by the government. Due to this reason, some higher education institutions space is occupied by non-professionals....

This finding has significant implications for teacher educators to work together, as Tatto (2021) advocated, to strengthen and transform the teaching profession by developing the capacity of institutions ensuring teachers' professional learning that can sustain the teaching profession is important. Similarly, Brown et al. (2002) assert that CPD is key to the professionalizing of teaching in higher education. This continuous professional learning ensures that academics stay up to date with the newest pedagogical trends and technological advancements while also improving their abilities and knowledge.

One academic staff member expressed a lack of structured and proactive mechanisms at the university to support academics' professional development in line with global advancement. In relation to this the interviewee shared his experience as follows:

The other pertinent challenge is that the university system in relation to academics' CPD lags behind the individual practices. As I told you earlier, I pursued my postdoc without the recognition of the university using my sabbatical leave. I can dare to say the system is blind to see and act proactively with the existing changing world...

A key issue in this quote is less emphasis is given to self-regulated learning of academics; this practice discourages academics from actively engaging in future learning. Van Der Sluis et al. (2017) assert that institutional recognition schemes contribute to staff development, enhance academic practice, and reinforce commitment to teaching and learning in university.

Policy- related challenges

Participants of this study also highlighted many policy-related challenges of CPD at higher education. In the interview and in the FGD discussion, they shared their concern as follows:

Z1 explained:

...as a university, there is no consistent fund for different trainings; usually, the trainings depend on projects. Due to this reason, when there is funding from a project, different trainings are given aggressively; if not, the university may struggle to offer any professional development opportunities.

P stated that:

Absence of reward in relation to CPD engagement is another challenge. Nowadays, an attempt has been made to consider higher diploma certificates during promotion. It has been said that a higher diploma certificate should be considered as a requirement for any kind of promotion.

L described that:

It is generally known that academics are frequently underpaid, forcing them to take on extra jobs to satisfy basic needs. This means that time limits make it hard to improve one's language skills, as work and money issues become more important than improving one's profession.

T stated that:

...there is a lack of a clear, comprehensive policy framework to support the digitalization of university-wide services. This problem hinders the holistic integration of technological advancements into academic and administrative operations, meaning in their teaching, researching, and also serving the community.

In addition, in the interview, one participant explained that university-wide CPD programs usually are not given continuously, and also, they are not well organized or well managed.

The above quotes revealed that CPD at AAU is challenged by various policy-related factors, the major one being inconsistent funding and lack of resources. This finding is aligned with the work of Joseph and Uzundu (2024), who reported that a primary challenge of professional development of educators is the inadequacy of financing and resources for supporting comprehensive professional development programs. This implies that adequate financial support or a dedicated CPD fund is necessary to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of CPD programs at AAU.

Many participants commonly highlighted that the reward gained upon CPD engagement and also academic salary demotivate academics to pursue both upgrading and updating CPD programs. This finding is consistent with Solomon et al. (2024), who reported that material incentives affect engagement in CPD programs and academics are becoming reluctant to pursue a PhD at Hawassa University due to the lack of motivating incentives associated with program completion. Similarly, Selemani-Meke (2013) advocated that those inadequate allowances provided to teachers during CPD training, along with substandard conditions of service such as salary, promotions, and accommodation, have affected teachers' willingness to effectively apply what they learn in CPD training at the classroom level. This necessitates that the government and educational stakeholders thoroughly examine the issues that discourage academics from applying insights gained from CPD programs if the benefits of such CPD programs are to be actualized.

Besides, the responses indicated that a clear national and institutional policy framework is necessitated for CPD practices. Scholars advocated that the three educational policy elements (why, what, and how of policy) are important to align with the anticipated practices that define the learning objectives for the designated group affected by the policy. The methodology of policy encompasses any learning supports delineated within the policy. The rationale behind policy pertains to the implicit reasoning as to how the supports may facilitate members of a target group in achieving their learning objectives (Cobb & Jackson, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. HAWASSA UNIVERSITY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the second case, Hawassa University, as one part of the comprehensive case study on CPD within Ethiopian public higher education. This chapter delineates the empirical findings derived from the nine themes and their corresponding categories mentioned previously. To deal with the study issues, a deductive thematic analysis was done employing the methodology described in chapters three, which included familiarization, transcribing, and the categorization and organization of data into distinct themes. This procedure led in the establishment of nine overarching thematic areas to convey the results in an ordered and systematic manner throughout the chapters. The key thematic areas are shown in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3: Thematic areas of Hawassa University

No.	Research questions	Themes
1.	How do academic staff understand and practice CPD in Hawassa University?	Academics' Understanding and Individual academic practice Self- learning and Learning as a member of PLC
2.	How does Hawassa University practice CPD?	Updating Need assessment, Planning, Managing, Evaluating and accounting Upgrading
3.	Why do Hawassa University and academic staff practice the way they practice?	Institutional reason to practice CPD Academics' reason to practice CPD
4.	How do academic staff account about their CPD?	Accountability in relation CPD engagement Presence of accountability To whom, For what, For why,
5.	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing CPD in Hawassa University?	Enablers for CPD engagement Challenges (individual, institutional and policy related challenges)

5.2 Hawassa University, main campus as a context of continuous professional development practices

Hawassa University (HU) is a first-generation university in Ethiopia, established as Awassa College of Agriculture (ACA) in 1976, with an initial enrollment of 217 students. In 2000, it was restructured and elevated to university status, designated as “Debub University,” following the amalgamation of ACA with two other institutions in southern Ethiopia: Wondogenet College of Forestry and Natural Resources, established in 1978, and Dilla College of Teachers’ Education and Health Sciences, founded in 1996. In 2006, it was renamed as "Hawassa University" after the development of its main campus in Hawassa, while Dilla College of Teacher Education and Health Sciences became an autonomous institution (Hawassa University [HU], 2022).

HU is presently one of Ethiopia's first-generation universities, with Nine colleges, three institutes, and seven campuses situated both inside and outside Hawassa City. Four of its seven campuses—the Main Campus, Institute of Technology, College of Agriculture, and College of Medicine and Health Sciences—are situated in Hawassa City, whereas the College of Forestry and Natural Resources, College of Business and Economics, and Daye Campus are located in Wondogenet, Yirgalem, and Bensa Daye, respectively (HU, 2022).

HU serves around 32,000 students in 309 academic programs, including 103 undergraduates, 195 graduate (141 master's, 54 PhD), and 11 medical specialty programs (10 specialties and 1 sub-specialty) under its regular and continuing education offerings. HU has a total of 10,988 employees, comprising 2,213 academic staff, which includes 20 expatriates and 460 females. Recently appointed by the Ministry of Education as one of the eight research universities in Ethiopia, it aims to achieve a position among the top 10 research institutions in East Africa by 2030. In accordance with this objective, HU is dedicated to advancing interdisciplinary education, doing research focused on problem-solving, and delivering research-informed services to the community.

The SWOT analysis of HU’s strategic plan (2021-2030) identifies insufficient staff development programs, the lack of motivation among senior staff to mentor new employees, and inadequate incentives for academics to publish in reputable scientific journals as significant weaknesses of the institution (HU, 2021). Consequently, the researcher found it imperative to investigate the

academic framework and associated institutional practices of CPD, as well as the challenges related to academic staff participation in CPD at HU in Ethiopia.

5.3 Academics' understanding

At HU, the CPD of academics, regarded as a method for improving and maintaining their professional knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, is interpreted in many manners. During the interviews, the HDP coordinators described:

Some educators participate in CPD programs, such as HDP, solely to obtain the required certificate for teaching in higher education. Others perceive CPD as essential only for academics lacking pedagogical expertise or formal education training. Additionally, there are educators who recognize the significance of CPD for all teachers aspiring to enhance their competence and effectiveness in the profession.

Besides X explained that:

Understanding of CPD among academics varies significantly. Some academics view it as a program aimed at updating professionals with current knowledge, thereby enabling them to perform their duties effectively. Conversely, some academics view it as a top-down imposition, considering it to hold lesser significance within their profession.

The aforementioned quotations illustrate that academics possess a dichotomous perspective regarding the necessity of engaging in CPD. Although some academics comprehend the significance of CPD, evidence from the coordinator's comment indicates that they are more preoccupied with the CPD requirement than with the program itself. The principal objective of CPD participation is adherence to the higher education system.

At HU, some academics perceive CPD as an important thing only for those who lack pedagogical training; however, for those who took teacher training, it is less important. One interview participant expressed his opinion:

In my view, all CPD endeavors have a high positive impact on teaching and learning. Especially for those academics who don't have prior pedagogical knowledge, CPD is very important. There are academics who are recruited as graduate assistants, and they pursue their master's and start to teach at higher education without having pedagogical training at this time. CPD programs like HDP are very important (AS1).

As reflected in the above quote CPD of academics is regarded as crucial mainly to academic staff who lacks pedagogical training. However, CPD of academics is important for many more reasons. It is essential to train and improve academics' abilities and expertise in current technologies that are integrated with education and has impact on their performance and students- learning (Dysart & Weckerle, 2015; Hubbard, 2017).

Continuing education is essential for adapting to the evolving responsibilities of academics and addressing issues arising from intense rivalry in student recruitment and retention, as well as globalization (Bachelier, 2015; Lam, 2010). In addition, it is important to enhance the ability to think critically, to enhance discipline specific knowledge and to attain emotional maturity that are expected qualities of academics (Sadovets, 2017). Besides, CPD serves as an effective instrument for assisting academics in meeting their anticipated responsibilities within evolving work environments and globalization (Hasan & Parvez, 2017; Ofojebe & Chukwuma, 2015; Yaqub et al., 2020).

Moreover, one of the FGD1 participant share the following view: "It is a program through which academics evaluate themselves after graduation and try to improve their practice. This can be achieved by improving their knowledge, skills, and attitudes through CPD by reflecting on their current status". This implies that at HU there are academics who are using reflective practice as one approach to their CPD. This finding is consistent with Mathew et al. (2017), reported that the best way to advance both professionally and personally is through reflective practice. This advancement is essential for empowering teachers to carry out their duties effectively and, above all, satisfy the needs of their students.

Furthermore, as one interview participant expressed, "Recognizing that pre-service training lacks longevity, practicality, and contextual relevance, CPD is important" (AS3). This finding is consistent with MacPhail et al. (2018), who reported that educators receive insufficient preparation

and opportunities for professional development to effectively perform their diverse and intricate duties. Therefore, educators should receive essential information and skills training after their recruitment. Lindvall & Ryvea (2019) asserted that the era in which a single degree suffices for an entire career has passed, a notion that is now widely acknowledged, with the majority of educators in high-income nations engaging in various forms of CPD activities.

CPD is a tool used to improve the quality of education in higher education institutions, according to an analysis of the Higher Diploma Program (2018) document sample (MoE, 2018). This study backs up the assertion made by Santos et al. (2019) that a lack of professional development for academics results a serious threat to the standard of higher education and, by extension, to society at large.

5.4 Individual academic practices

Many academics engaged in various CPD opportunities to enhance their teaching, research, and overall expected endeavors (Gazzard, 2016). At HU, academics were asked how they practice CPD individually or in groups in their institution.

The finding revealed that academics at HU engaged in many forms of CPD endeavors to improve their capacity in their varied positions. Participants described that they engaged in both formal and informal events to improve their proficiency. Engagement in formal events includes attending induction, HDP, conferences, seminars, and training on various issues and pursuing further education, meaning upgrading. Furthermore, engagement in informal events includes using e-resources to fill felt gaps, discussing with colleagues, and reading books. As expressed by interview participants: “academics engage in CPD through activities such as reading published materials, doing research and publications, discussing with peers, and participating in educational training sessions, including seminars and conferences”. This finding aligns with Knight (1998) who reported that academics may seek out a wide range of professional development opportunities, from attending conferences and workshops to participating in online courses, engaging in peer-to-peer mentorship programs, or undertaking self-directed learning initiatives.

Moreover, this study’s findings revealed that there are academics who use reflective practice as a tool for their CPD. In relation to this one academics staff who participated in the interviewee shared the following insight as follows:

I learn from my prior experience; for instance, I don't teach a course the way I taught previously. Every semester I try to improve the content, instructional media, and the methods I use by receiving feedback from my students. I gain knowledge from engaging in reflective practice.

This finding showed that reflective practice is used in the CPD processes of academics. This finding is consistent with Mathew et al. (2017), who concluded that reflective practice is the main source of personal professional development and enhancement. In addition, engagement in reflective practice allows educators to critically assess their teaching methods, identify areas for improvement, and adapt their strategies to better meet the needs of their students. Consequently, this ongoing cycle of reflection and adjustment fosters a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

The study also found that some academics use mentorship for their CPD. A participant in FGD2 recounted the following experience:

The university recruited me as a graduate assistant five years ago. The position gives me an opportunity to gain knowledge, develop skills, and learn a lot from the mentorship provided by my previous teachers, who are highly experienced and qualified for professorship. Their guidance has been invaluable, allowing me to navigate both academic challenges and research responsibilities with confidence.

The above quote reflected that mentorship is a crucial approach for early-career academics' CPD to provide personalized guidance and support to their specific needs and goals. This finding is consistent with Cleary et al. (2017), who reported that mentorship is valuable in navigating the complexity of academic life, such as research profiles.

5.5 Institutional updating practices

Institutional prioritization of CPD is paramount for fostering a dynamic and effective higher education environment, enabling institutions to adapt to evolving pedagogical approaches, technological advancements, and societal needs (Makeeva et al., 2020). HU as higher educational institution is expected to foster a culture of CPD among their staff members, recognizing that the quality of teaching and research is directly linked to the ongoing learning and development of their

academic staff. Concerning the institutional carrying out of CPD, the majority of interviewers and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants indicated that HU engages in CPD through two methods: updating and upgrading.

Updating involves a constant process of training in which every academic professional engages throughout their university career. The updating programs encompass induction, HDP, and further training that emphasizes academic scientific writing, research software, and grant project writing, among others (AS1-5; FGD1 & 2). Typically, these trainings are provided to enhance academic research skills or capacity, as one of their anticipated roles is to do research.

Regarding institutional practice of needs assessment, planning, follow-up, evaluation, and feedback for CPD activities: Z1 explained the need assessment practice, saying: “a few years ago, a survey was done, but at that time the culture of responding to the request was not promising”. Similarly, P described that a few years ago, an attempt was made to assess the needs of academics, but now simply training is given on common themes. This implies that conducting needs assessments was not part of the training plan currently. According to Koc et al. (2015), the first step in the academic professional development process is goal-setting, which is based on the needs and interests of the individual. If not, the training could lead to a waste of labor, money, and time. Identifying developmental areas, assessing trainees' cognitive and emotional readiness, setting priorities, making the best use of the budget, using tools and equipment efficiently, and creating institutional strategies are all made possible by a needs assessment. For training to be effective and meet its goals, demand areas must be identified (Yaqub et al., 2020). This claim is consistent with andragogy in practice theory, which holds that adults become motivated to learn when they understand that they need to know "why, what, and how" in order to learn (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 4). Besides, the above findings implied that academics cooperation is required during need assessment. This ensure that CPD is a collaborative endeavor that benefits both individual academics and institutions as a whole. As Entsie et al. (2020) indicate that lack of systemic and comprehensive training need analysis undermines the potential benefits from CPD program.

The data gathered from documents (HDP plan and strategic plan) indicate that the specific needs of individual academics are not assessed. The plan quantifies the number of academics expected to engage in induction, HDP, or other training (University's yearly plan; HDP plan). This suggests that the training plan did not involve conducting needs assesment. Koc et al. (2015) assert that the

initial phase in the professional development process for academics involves establishing goals, which are determined by the interests and demands of the individuals. Otherwise, the training may lead to the wasting of time, resources, and effort.

Focus group participants indicated that numerous training programs lack comprehensive evaluation and follow-up. No attempt was made to assess the session's impact or to offer feedback post-completion (FGD2). This finding aligns with the findings of Earley and Porritt (2014), who determined that assessing professional development necessitates an emphasis on studying the impacts of the professional development in which educators engage. As per Guskey (2000), a methodical analysis of the effectiveness of CPD programs is essential for a number of reasons, including determining how academics view professional development activities, identifying program outcomes, determining whether a program meets participant needs or objectives, replicating and scaling successful programs, and identifying and validating best practices. In the professional development process, CPD assessment has two main purposes: (1) to ensure program accountability and (2) to support continuous program improvement.

The content of CPD varies from college to college. Faculty at health schools have been provided with specialized training in relation their specific field of study, particularly when new drugs and equipment are going to be used (AS4, Interview). Conversely, participants from the College of Education, College of Natural Sciences, and College of Social Sciences reported that there is a lack of discipline-specific content in the CPD (FGD1; 2). Berry (2018) argues that in order for CPD to be effective, academics' technological, pedagogical, and subject-matter expertise must be enhanced. Scholars need to be given learning opportunities that improve their content knowledge in order to become experts in a field. The andragogy theory, which holds that changes in subject matter impact adult learning, is supported by this study's findings (Knowles et al., 2005).

5.6 Institutional upgrading practices

Upgrading refers to the procedure via which academics may select to engage in further study beyond their standard professional responsibilities at certain intervals in their careers, namely to upgrade a bachelor's degree to a master's degree, a master's degree to a PhD, or to pursue postdoctoral studies. The researcher asked participants the kind of upgrading practices there are at HU. And they shared their insights as follows.

In the interviews done with academics explained that there is good opportunity for master's and PhD programs. Similarly, as expressed by T: there is academic enhancement program named Master Class Training (MCT) that is offered with certification, and awards a diploma upon successful completion of the program. This implies that HU is practicing institutional support for CPD ensures that academics remain current in their respective fields, allowing them to deliver high-quality education that meets the demands of a rapidly changing world (Benedicta, 2021). Institutions that prioritize CPD are better positioned to attract and retain talented faculty, enhance their reputation, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of society.

5.7 Institutional reason to practice CPD

Universities, as complex organizations, implement CPD practices for a multitude of strategic reasons, often deeply intertwined with their mission, values, and overall performance objectives. One primary driver is the need to maintain and enhance the quality of teaching and learning, which is central to their reputation and competitiveness in the higher education landscape (Benedicta, 2021). Grasping these fundamental institutional factors is essential for understanding the framework in which individual academics participate in CPD. Participants asked questions regarding the basic reasons behind the institutional approach to CPD practice at HU to ascertain the primary factor influencing it.

As expressed, an interview a respondent: “improving academics' technological knowledge, which is essential for effective teaching and doing research, institutions can achieve their goals.”

P participant expressed that: “CPD is one of the programs implemented by the Ministry of Education to ensure quality; as you may know, HDP is the one. And hence the reason is to ensure quality in higher education”. Similarly, in the first FGD one participant explained that the major reason is to capacitate academics; through their improved capacity, the university can render its service effectively and efficiently and achieve institutional goals.

According to the aforementioned findings, academic institutions' CPD programs seek to improve teaching and learning by providing instructors with up-to-date pedagogical approaches, advanced teaching resources, and subject-matter knowledge. This result is consistent with how Liyun and Zhaolong (2024) define CPD, which is the process of continuously improving one's professional skills, pedagogical knowledge, and educational knowledge over the course of a person's career

through a variety of learning opportunities and real-world applications. Universities regularly host conferences and seminars to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution and to promote a culture of research and innovation. This result is consistent with Kamal et al. (2022), who claimed that conferences give researchers a chance to showcase their work, get input from peers and experts, and improve it. These community practices create networking opportunities, allowing researchers to meet possible partners, exchange ideas, and have conversations that could result in new projects and discoveries. Additionally, by giving researchers the know-how to incorporate new technologies into research and teaching methodologies, CPD seeks to digitize services.

Institutions' approaches to CPD are shaped by a complex web of institutional frameworks and contextual factors. Programs for CPD that are in line with performance metrics, accrediting requirements, and strategic objectives are frequently given priority by institutions. These objectives can have a substantial impact on the types of programs provided, the resources allotted, and the degree of academic involvement. Therefore, it is crucial to continuously assess and modify CPD programs to make sure they satisfy the changing needs of the organization and its teachers.

5.8 Academics' reason to practice CPD

The factors that drive academics to participate in Continuing Professional Development in their particular way are the subject of the third study question's additional subtheme. There are many reasons why academics participate in continuing professional development, including both internal and external factors. These elements depend on the academic's views of the institutional environment, professional goals, and personal values. Personal goals and outside factors, such as workplace culture and career opportunities, influence their reasons for participating in ongoing professional development. A combination of their views about their professional roles and personal values impact their involvement in CPD. The following are the numerous motivating factors that the study participant clarified:

FGD1P2 explained that:

I feel that stopping to study is equal to retirement; learning is a lifetime endeavor. The primary rationale for participating in ongoing professional development activities is the requirement of the profession. Furthermore, it is now obligatory for

research universities to elevate their status to the PhD level. Failure to complete the requirements will result in the termination of your university contract, thereby leading to your dismissal. In addition to upgrading, our university's current status as a research institution necessitates that all academics publish articles, requiring CPD.

ASs also described that

Not engaging in CPD could limit career progression and opportunities for promotion over time. It may also negatively impact teaching and students' development of required competencies if an academic like me seems out of touch with current best practices or information in their field

The finding revealed that many academics are motivated to pursue ongoing professional development because they genuinely want to improve their research, teaching, and general scholarly activities. This finding is consistent with Gazzard (2016) who described that this type of intrinsic motivation stems from a desire for intellectual growth, a passion for their profession, and a commitment to improve their teaching and research skills. This dedication to personal development is frequently motivated by positive outlook for their professions, a desire to provide the greatest education possible for students, and an understanding that the academic environment is always changing.

5.9 Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

The concept of accountability in CPD participation is well established in the higher education sector. Accountability is commonly defined as the process by which educational institutions and their personnel are made answerable for their activities and performance. To ensure adherence to predetermined standards, this process usually involves assessing both student outcomes and institutional procedures. By encouraging responsibility, institutions hope to improve overall educational quality and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Academic staff members should have access to professional development opportunities that complement their career goals and the institution's objectives. This study's fourth research question sought to determine academic staff members' accountability for their dedication to CPD. Participants expressed the issue of accountability in relation to CPD engagement as follows:

FGD1P6 described that:

There is a lack of professional accountability regarding engagement in CPD, particularly concerning updated forms of such development; for example, some academics have taught at Hawassa University for a few years without having completed a higher diploma program. Actually, academics are evaluated by students and the department, but this has an indirect relation with CPD engagement.

FGD2P1 explained, “structurally, academics are requested to attend HDP or to attend a training or seminar... The main thing is what happened if they didn’t attend... nothing. Absenteeism doesn’t have any consequences”. Another two FGD participants described, “academics are highly accountable for missing classes of the first week of the semester and for not doing research. Both of them don’t think there is direct accountability in relation to CPD engagement”.

The findings revealed that at HU there is accountability in relation to CPD engagement, although it has limited functionality. According to Maphosa et al. (2015), academics are more likely to participate in CPD when they are aware that their actions will be observed and assessed. Aligning individual academic CPD activities with institutional goals is crucial. According to Chineze and Olele (2012), this congruence is essential for ensuring quality in higher education. By setting clear expectations and standards for continuous learning and development, these findings have significant implications for pertinent stakeholders looking to improve the current accountability system.

According to some interviewees, the question of accountability varies depending on the type of CPD activity. For instance, in the professional learning events like seminars and lecture series, absenteeism is considered an acceptable thing, taking part in Master Classes in Teaching (MCT) and HDP is becoming more and more necessary for academic positions. According to other interviewees, reporting and attendance are key components of accountability for CPD engagement.

These findings point to a lessened accountability for CPD involvement. The issue of accountability is apparent in quality dimensions since CPD is a program designed to guarantee quality in higher education. Intake, process, output, and impact are all included in these dimensions. The findings show that there is strict financial accountability in the input dimension, with a focus on the proper use of resources and the budget allotted for CPD activities. Attendance and documentation are also

accountable for across the process and output dimensions. However, the accountability for the use or implementation of the gained knowledge and skills, as well as the impact on student learning and academic professionalism, is not as strong as that financial accountability. This implies that ensuring accountability in this area may guarantee the general effectiveness of CPD techniques.

5.10 Enablers for CPD engagement

Academics can maintain their knowledge, enhance their teaching strategies, and stay current on new developments in their fields by engaging in ongoing professional development (Manship, 2014). Training, conferences, self-regulated learning, and reflection are just a few of the activities that are included (Gazzard, 2016). Participation in these CPD activities is influenced by a number of enablers, from personal motivation to institutional and leadership support. Analyzing perceived facilitators and obstacles to starting and growing successful ongoing professional development initiatives across the three public universities was the goal of the fifth research question. Analyzing perceived facilitators and obstacles to starting and growing successful ongoing professional development initiatives in universities was the goal. When asked about the various factors that encourage and permit academics to pursue CPD at the university in order to enhance their own professional development, participants offered the following insights:

Z1 described that:

At HU, there are program and resource enablers. As program enablers, there is a favorable opportunity to pursue master's and PhD programs. Additionally, the institution frequently provides training on various topics. As resource enablers, even though it is not satisfactory, academics are provided with laptop computers, offices, Wi-Fi, and the like.

X explained that:

HU offers upgrading opportunities, including PhD and master's programs both locally and internationally, as well as various training sessions available in virtual and face-to-face formats. A certificate is conferred upon completion. Laptop computers, office spaces, and internet access are made available to all academics.

Participants in FGD1 and FGD2 and interviewees from academic staff stressed that a number of factors drive their ongoing education. The availability of global networking and funding opportunities through CPD activities, as well as other university benefits like full salary for local upgrading, salary promotion upon PhD completion, laptops, internet access, office space, personal interest or motives and presences of qualified and experienced academics who can serve as mentor are all factors that enables academics in practicing CPD to enhance their teaching and research capacities.

The above findings revealed that the factors supporting academics' pursuit of CPD vary in scope, including institutional and policy-level influences in addition to personal motivation. These enablers can also be divided into three groups: collaborative, professional, and technological. The evolution of CPD practices at HU is greatly influenced by these facilitators.

The finding regarding personal motivation as a facilitator supported the andragogy theory, which holds that academics take ownership of their education as adult learners and show a dedication to professional development by actively seeking out opportunities to advance their pedagogical and research skills (Knowles, 2005). This finding is consistent with Samko's (2024) research, which found that a positive internal motivation for professional development significantly increases the effectiveness of educational engagement and creates favorable circumstances for instructors' career advancement. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), this type of self-directed work improves personal skills and cultivates a culture of lifelong learning within the school.

According to this study, participants at HU believe that adequate resources and top-level management commitment help to implement CPD. This finding is consistent with that of Scott et al. (2023), who found that academic optimism is greatly increased by institutions that actively engage academics and cultivate trust through substantial support and resources. This is the belief that teachers can overcome challenges and have a positive impact on student outcomes and the institution's overall quality.

The findings showed that there are numerous policy enablers that support ongoing professional development within the organizations. By showing that policies can require scholars to engage in professional development activities, provide funding for developmental projects, and respect for those who exhibit a dedication to lifelong learning, this finding expands on the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

This study demonstrated how technological innovations have changed educational programs through the use of online resources and technologies that support lifelong learning and professional development, which is in line with the findings of Dragan et al. (2018). This integration improves students' skills and enables educators to adapt to changing industrial demands.

5.11 Challenges for CPD engagement

The challenges preventing academics and their institutions from participating in and developing high-quality CPD practices were another issue that was raised by the research question. The second theme of the fifth research question is closely related to this theme. These problems have been divided into three categories: challenges related to academia, institutions, and policies.

A. Individual-related challenges

There are various difficulties that hinder academics from engaging in CPD. HDP coordinator described as follows:

Some academics lack scholar enthusiasm for engaging in CPD, and also it has been difficult for individual academics to identify and communicate their gaps, which institutional CPD programs could help them with. For example, some academics only participate in HDP training to earn certifications, which are required to teach in higher education.

This study showed that lack of motivation and a misperception of the significance of CPD, suggesting insufficient support from stakeholders to raise awareness and encourage CPD among academics. According to Haque et al. (2014), motivation serves as a stimulant to generate significant enthusiasm for accomplishing organizational objectives, which is achieved by meeting particular human needs. In essence, motivation has to do with meeting the needs or goals of specific employees in order to achieve the main goals of the institutions.

Furthermore, professional development through community practice is not encouraged by the academic culture. This suggests that professional learning is not supported by the institutional culture. According to Lewis et al. (2016), team learning is the best organizational learning strategy because it encourages cooperation and shared accountability among members of the professional learning community.

Shortage of resources for all academics, such as laptops, personal offices, tables, and chairs, as well as the absence of rewards for academics who have effectively participated in CPD, were among the other challenges mentioned by the FGD participants. This result supports the findings of Ofojebe and Chukwuma (2015), who found several obstacles preventing academic staff in Delta State's colleges of education from successfully implementing CPD. This included insufficient funding as well as a lack of infrastructure and equipment. The results of the study show that CPD initiatives need to be implemented effectively throughout Hawaasa University. Effective CPD implementation improves the overall quality of the higher education system and increases the competitiveness of academics and their institutions both now and in the future.

B. Institutional-related challenges

There are numerous institutional challenges to the development of successful CPD were brought to light by this study. According to this study, institutions' inability to put in place relevant CPD programs that address the unique needs of academics is the main challenge. In this context, one interviewee explained that:

The major challenge is You know, researcher, I have twelve years of experience. For instance, "What is research?" is usually the first question asked during research-related training. How many years of training on this subject should I have? This kind of training is ineffective; it is a waste of time to participate in material that does not advance my status. I believe that since I finished my Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) course last year, I ought to enroll in Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) this year. An organizational framework should also be established to supervise and control these academic advancements. Besides, there is no established framework for academic CPD. Despite the absence of a system that holds academic accountable due to the lack of participation in CPD endeavors, individual academics should pursue their own paths to development after completing the HDP.

As shown in the above quote that the CPD program at HU was not tailored to meet the specific needs of individual academics. Engagement in monotonous and repetitive CPD content, devoid of evaluative enhancements, has rendered it tedious for academics. These findings align with the findings of Baker et al. (2018), Qader (2019), Yaqub et al. (2020), and Yilfashewa (2012), who

indicated a discrepancy between the requirements of academics and CPD initiatives. These problems affect the comprehension and institutional practices of CPD at the institutions.

The participants of this study also described that insufficient institutional capacity to deliver CPD that has a content of discipline-specific knowledge is another challenge. Two participants from the Education College and the Natural Science College indicated that many trainings emphasize pedagogical expertise, research skills, and information and communication technology, rather than content knowledge (FGD1). Nevertheless, researchers like Fabriz et al. (2020) have advocated for the use of subjective knowledge in professional development programs to enhance teaching-related self-efficacy, self-concept, and subjective knowledge.

It can be said that the university's institutional framework for overseeing and coordinating CPD programs is insufficient. Despite the literature on professional development in higher education emphasizing the value of continuity, diversity, and collaboration, it was found that CPD initiatives, especially training, were carried out haphazardly rather than intentionally, methodically, and continuously; the real situation was significantly different from these principles (Guskey, 2000). This result is consistent with Yilfashewa's (2012) findings, which showed a discrepancy between Adama University's current procedures and the recommendations made in the literature.

C. Policy- related challenges

This study outlined several policy-related concerns. Firstly, there is an absence of a systematic strategy or subsequent evaluation for CPD that could improve the efficacy and quality of academic CPD initiatives. In this regard, one interviewee stated that "there is no established framework for academic CPD". Upon the completion of the HDP, individuals should pursue their own developmental pathways. Even in the absence of a framework that keeps academics accountable, engagement in CPD initiatives is essential (AS5, Interview). This finding aligns with the reports by MacPhail et al. (2018), which indicates a deficiency in financial, organizational, and institutional capacity to plan, administer, and assess the effectiveness of CPD in higher education.

This study highlighted a persistent issue: academic professionals' low pay, which keeps them from being able to purchase necessities for their families or themselves. This forces academics to engage in other income-generating activities. Since they work as part-time professors, many academics have more than one job. One participant in the focus group discussion explained the problem as follows:

In 2020, Dehub Media highlighted the everyday experiences of a female academic staff worker, encompassing daily duties such as selling chips, laundering clothes, and providing hairstyling services. These actions indicate the presence of undercompensated academic personnel in Ethiopia, affecting their comprehension and implementation of CPD on both individual and institutional levels.

As reflected in the quote the situation affects both individual and institutional CPD engagement significantly. Due to time and financial constraints (such as the need to prioritize income-generating activities over professional development activities) and conference attendance costs, academics may find it difficult to engage in CPD activities on an individual basis.

The overall efficacy of CPD programs may be hindered on an institutional level if an important segment of the academic workforce is experiencing financial hardship because they might not be motivated or able to participate fully in learning and development opportunities. Prior to expecting academics to fully embrace and benefit from CPD programs, institutions should attend to their basic needs. Without sufficient funding and assistance CPD runs the risk of becoming a useless activity rather than a significant endeavor behind institutional advancement and professional development.

In the same way, another policy-related impediment identified by this study is the absence of incentives for enhancing academic standards. The participants in the focus group discussion said that the majority of academics are not interested to pursue a PhD due to the lack of motivating incentives associated with program completion (FGD1).

This might show that the falling interest among academics in pursuing professional development programs, such as PhD programs. The statements reflected academics' motivation to be engaged in other activities that provide financial advantages to alleviate the difficulties of subsisting on their low salary. Consequently, dedicating time to CPD is not as such crucial. This finding aligns with Leibowitz's (2016) assertion that extrinsic incentives may significantly encourage academics to engage in professional development opportunities.

CHAPTER SIX

6. AMBO UNIVERSITY

6.1 Introduction

The third case, Ambo University's CPD, is one of the multiple cases that explore the same issue. This chapter deals with the third case, Ambo University's main campus, as part of the overall case study of CPD in Ethiopian public higher education. The chapter presents findings based on the nine themes and the respective categories indicated in previous two chapters. To deal with the study issues, a deductive thematic analysis was done employing the methodology described in chapter three, which included familiarization, transcribing, and the categorization and organization of data into distinct themes. This procedure led to the establishment of nine overarching thematic areas to convey the results in an ordered and systematic manner throughout the chapters. Table 4 displays the key thematic areas in the following way:

Table 4: Thematic areas of Ambo University

No.	Research questions	Themes
1.	How do academic staff understand and practice CPD in Ambo University?	Academics' Understanding and Individual academic practice Self- learning and Learning as a member of PLC
2.	How does Ambo University practice CPD?	Updating Need assessment, Planning, Managing, Evaluating and accounting Upgrading
3.	Why do Ambo University and academic staff practice the way they practice?	Institutional reason to practice CPD Academics' reason to practice CPD
4.	How do academic staff account about their CPD?	Accountability in relation CPD engagement Presence of accountability To whom, For what, For why,
5.	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing CPD in Ambo University?	Enablers for CPD engagement Challenges (individual, institutional and policy related challenges)

6.2 Ambo University, Main Campus as a context of continuous professional development practice

Ambo University (AU) is located in Ambo, the capital of West Shewa Zone of Oromia Regional State. With a population of about hundred thousand, Ambo is situated only 114 km west of Addis Ababa. Ambo University, founded in 1939 EC, is among the earliest institutions of higher education in Ethiopia (Ambo University [AU], n.d.). Throughout its history, Ambo University, which began as an educational institution, has undergone several stages of development. The Imperial Government of Ethiopia expanded educational establishments in strategic regions, such as Ambo, in 1924, offering basic education in buildings built by the French. Ambo's school was shut down from 1928 to 1933 as a result of the fascist Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1928. The Ethiopian government reopened schools and started teaching agriculture in Ambo after the Italian invasion ended in 1933. In 1939, Ethiopia established its first agricultural school, with four German teachers and a Swedish director (AU, n.d.).

The school was renamed Ambo Agriculture and Forestry Secondary School in 1951, and it has continued to use this name ever since. It was promoted to an institute in 1960 and started providing two-year General Agriculture post-secondary diploma programs. It changed its curriculum to conform to other junior colleges after receiving Junior College accreditation in 1969.

The college celebrated its golden jubilee in 1989 after being named Ambo College of Agriculture in 1984. Two more diploma programs in Chemistry and Biology Laboratory Technology were added in 1995, increasing the number of academic programs. Undergraduate degree programs in fields such as crop production, animal production, applied chemistry, applied biology, and cooperatives were first offered by the college in 1996 (AU, n.d.).

AU was promoted to an independent university college in 2009, with 82 academic departments, nine colleges, institutes, and schools, and 51 graduate and 85 undergraduate programs. The university prioritizes high-quality education and hopes to rank among Ethiopia's most prestigious establishments, distinguished in research, academics, and community service. The Ministry of Education in Ethiopia has implemented the HDP to improve the quality of education in higher education institutions by focusing on the professional development of academic staff (MoE, 2018). At AU, similar to other Ethiopian universities, CPD is implemented through training initiatives

such as induction training, the HDP, and the ELIP (AU, 2021). In addition, CPD practices involve activities such as workshops, seminars, conferences, online courses, research projects, and collaborations with industry partners. These are opportunities for academic staff to enhance their knowledge and skills to stay current in their respective fields in the university.

In the strategic plan of the university (2021-2030), one of the focus areas is providing opportunities for academics to receive hands-on training and provide CPD training in a comprehensive and consistent manner and ensure ownership of the program. Therefore, it is imperative to study how this planned activity is practiced and how it is challenged by different hindrances. It's important to understand this planned activity's practices and the difficulties it encounters. The implementation process will be improved, and possible areas for improvement will be identified from the insights. The university can increase the overall efficacy of its CPD programs by taking proactive measures to address these issues.

6.3 Academics' understanding

At Ambo University, providing CPD training in an intensive and consistent manner is one of the focus areas of the strategic plan (2021-2030). This study's primary objective was to investigate how university academics comprehend and practice CPD. Academic understanding and their participation in CPD, as well as their roles in a learning community, are the two sub- questions that make up the main question. The researcher asked academics how they understand and practice CPD individually or as a member of a learning community, and they responded as follows:

Z1 described as follows:

CPD, to my understanding, is pursuing any kind of opportunity to upgrade one's own experience, understanding, and knowledge through on-job training. Though it needs assessment, I think the majority of the staff are aware of what CPD is and how it is important in narrowing the skill/knowledge gaps.

P explained that:

There are academics who understand CPD is very important. One-time knowledge may not be sufficient to be effective throughout one's career. I am sure of its

importance; there is no question. However, there are some academics who consider it less important to their profession.

Most interview participants commonly highlight that the CPD program is a vital process for teaching academics to continually develop and update their knowledge and skills in their field. It is important to academics' profession as it ensures they stay current, provide high-quality services, and adapt to changing demands. CPD promotes growth, competence, and career advancement. According to an analysis of the Higher Diploma Program (2018) document, CPD is understood as it improves the quality of education in higher education institutions.

According to the findings revealed above, academics have differing opinions about the value of engaging in CPD. Some academics advocate for CPD, seeing it as crucial to improving their knowledge of education, adjusting to a world that is changing every time, and being able to successfully and effectively carry out their professional duties. The findings are consistent with earlier research by Hasen and Parvez (2017) and Yaqub et al. (2020), which described that CPD is an essential tool that helps academics fulfill their expected duties in changing work environments and globalization. Some other academics view CPD only relevant for academics who did not took pedagogical science. Nevertheless, CPD is also necessitated due to the dynamic nature of knowledge and creation, technological advancements, and evolving research methodology (Qadhi & Floyd, 2021). All these factors necessitate that academics proactively engage in learning to maintain their expertise and contribute meaningfully to their field.

Insufficient professional development for academics puts a serious risk to the quality of higher education and, by extension, to society at large, according to scholars like Santos et al. (2019), who support the idea that CPD is a way to maintain quality in higher education. According to this perspective, educators' professional development has a direct impact on student performance and institutional efficacy, underscoring the need for ongoing training and support. As a result, taking part in extensive CPD programs is essential to fostering an excellence culture in educational environments.

6.4 Individual academic practice

The other concern of this research was to explore how CPD was practiced at Ambo University. At the university, academics are engaged in a variety of continuous programs to ensure their

competency in their required roles. The engagement is both individually and in groups as a member of the learning community. And also, they engage in informal and formal continuous professional learning. Participants of this study shared their insight as follows:

P explained that

Academic practices at the individual level include reading published materials, participating in online courses, and watching various YouTube videos for themselves to enhance their knowledge.

FGD1P1 shared the following insight:

Academics during seminars and conferences argue and debate different ideas; this is a crucial practice to share ideas with each other. Academics also do self-evaluation, reflect on their practice, and learn from it. Besides, they might also receive feedback from their students, and then they plan how to improve in the future. Personally, when I prepare a PowerPoint, I think about how I should deliver the course in a better way and how I should assess students' learning. During this process, I read various books and consulted with experienced or knowledgeable individuals. Every single one of these things benefits my career in some way.

Many interviewees expressed their practices of reading, doing research, and attending training to enhance subject matter knowledge and teaching techniques, having professional discussions underscoring its significance to enhance their proficiency.

The above quotes revealed that CPD is not merely an optional add-on but an indispensable component of an academic's career, as Ndebele (2014) advocated. Individual academics engaged in CPD for a multitude of reasons, all of which contribute to their personal and professional growth, as well as the advancement of their fields. Academics who actively pursue CPD opportunities are better equipped to adapt to the evolving demands of their profession, enhance their teaching effectiveness, and contribute meaningfully to their respective fields (Benedicta, 2021).

Moreover, the above findings showed that CPD provides academics with opportunities to expand their knowledge base, develop new skills, and refine their existing expertise, enabling them to remain at the forefront of their discipline and professional growth, which are highly valued

qualities in the academic profession. The findings align with Zhu and Li (2019), who advocated that CPD of academics should include an emphasis on the need to support, train, and encourage academic staff members to conduct research, work collaboratively, and apply for grants.

To sum up academics at AU practice CPD through reflective practice (as advocated by Segal (2023)); self-regulated learning (as supported by Porter and Freeman (2020)); and Professional Learning Community (PLC) (as advocated by Stoll et al. (2006)) which are considered as valuable approaches for professional development in academia, offering benefits such as improved teaching practices, enhanced collaboration, and personal growth.

6.5 Institutional updating practices

Educational institutions also play a crucial role in fostering a culture of CPD among their faculty members, recognizing that the quality of teaching and research is directly linked to the ongoing learning and development of their academic staff. The second research question of this study examined the institutional practices of updating and enhancing CPD at selected universities. The researcher asked participants regarding their institution's CPD practice as a learning organization. Participants shared their insight as follows:

P explained that

AU offers a wide range of professional development activities for academic staff members at various levels. University-level practices encompass in-person and virtual training, workshops, and seminars. Professional discussion about daily tasks or expected duties is also one of the department and college-level techniques.

FGD2P4 described that

At AU there was one platform named Wednesday Forum, which is designed for academics to discuss different issues and share their knowledge and experience as a learning community. The unfortunate aspect is that the program's continuity suffers significantly when the initiative-taker leaves to pursue his PhD program.

From the document analysis, the finding revealed that short and continuous professional training courses in teaching methods (induction training), HDP training, and English language improvement training are being provided (Ambo University Strategic Plan: 2021-2030).

As one can understand from the findings institutional practice of CPD is highly confined with episodic training program representing the length of time over which the professional development engagement spans. The main point of the issue is that professional development limited to special events, such as episodic informational updates presented didactically or annual training and credits like HDP, represents a narrow perspective on professional growth (Guskey, 2000). When educators perceive their responsibilities as fulfilling these time-based mandates, they often contemplate professional growth in terms of "How can I complete my hours?" Instead of asking, "What must I enhance in my practice, and how can I obtain it?" (Guskey, 2000, p. 15). Scholars such as Steward (2009) and Webster-Wright (2009) support Guskey's assertion that enhancing the quality of teaching and learning necessitates CPD, characterized by long-term, practice-oriented, and work-based learning aimed at improving future practices, and must be integrated with critical reflection and evaluation of workloads.

Regarding training, respondents were asked about their involvement in the preparation and evaluation of the training programs they attended; nevertheless, they responded that the institution solely determined the timing, substance, and format of the training. Besides, after the training had been delivered, nobody followed up academics, whether they put in to practice what academics got from the training or not. In relation to the practice of planning and evaluating the impact of training one interviewee explained as follows:

A few years ago, a list of topics of training was sent to the department from which academics are expected to tick based on their need. And trainings were scheduled on selected topics. However, currently trainings are given in a top-down approach, top managers decide everything.... In relation to evaluating the impact of training, no one evaluate it (AS3).

From the data, one can understand that academics view the need for assessment and evaluation of the impact of training as crucial for designing effective training. However, the current practices fail in doing these things. In line with this, scholars like Mann and Webb (2022) claim that effective CPD can be designed if designers understand teachers' needs or take them into consideration when designing the program. Similarly, Yaqub et al. (2020) noted that detecting demand areas plays an important role in training to reach its goals and be effective.

In relation to the impact evaluation of CPD, every scholar agrees that evaluating the impact of CPD is essential. A systematic assessment ensures that CPD leads to notable improvements in professional practice, quality of instruction, and, eventually, student and organizational outcomes (Borg, 2018). Impact assessment is crucial for guiding ongoing improvements in CPD programs, enhancing their quality, and demonstrating their importance to participants, institutions, and stakeholders. Without assessment, it is difficult to determine the effectiveness of CPD programs or to identify ways to improve them to better support organizational goals and professional development (Hosseini et al., 2023). Therefore, it is recommended that evaluating the impact of CPD using models like the Donald Kirkpatrick (1959) model is required to provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating training effectiveness.

6.6 Institutional upgrading practices

Upgrading programs are a thorough and demanding approach to professional development that aims to improve academics' abilities, competencies, and knowledge. These programs usually include formal instruction, extra coursework, and opportunities that could lead to graduate degrees, certifications, or licenses. The researcher asked about Ambo University's upgrading practices. Almost all participants of the study commonly highlighted that there is a good opportunity for academics to pursue their master's degree and PhD program, both domestically and abroad.

From the document analysis, the data showed that a goal has been set to have a teacher ratio of 0:70:30 (no first degree, 70 percent second degree, and 30 percent third degree teachers) in all fields of education and training to ensure that there are qualified and sufficient teachers. Accordingly, the current ratio, excluding foreign teachers, is 21:64:15, based on the information provided by the institution's teachers in the 2012 fiscal year. The results show that significant efforts should be made in the next ten-year plan to improve the ratio of teachers with first-degree degrees and increase the number of teachers with third-degree degrees. In this regard, long-term and short-term trainings have been provided to strengthen academics' development in all fields of education, and 220 teachers are currently pursuing their long-term training at the second-degree level, 209 at the third-degree level, and 55 at the specialty level, both domestically and abroad.

The findings revealed that there is effective practice of upgrading academics to enhance professional capabilities and open up new opportunities. These findings align with the work of

Ramani et al. (2019) who support this by describing CPD program designs focused on facilitating change and improvement.

6.7 Institutional reason to practice CPD

The third research question sought to investigate the factors affecting the practices of AU and its academic personnel inside their institutions. Analyzing the institutional factors influencing certain CPD practices requires a comprehensive assessment of the strategic objectives, resource distributions, and organizational culture existing inside universities (Benedicta, 2021). Understanding these essential institutional factors is essential to comprehending the framework in which individual academics participate in CPD. Participants were asked to find out the primary factor influencing CPD practice at AU and the rationale for the institution's approach to CPD.

During the interview, Z1 stated that:

Things move fast or change from time to time, and so do the teaching methods, approaches, strategies, etc. Hence, it is a must for the academic staff to make the necessary adjustments to narrow down the skills/knowledge gaps to offer courses properly. This is a time when science and technology have advanced and teaching methods/modalities have come to change greatly. Hence, it needs to equip the academic staff with the necessary awareness about how to use technology for education.

P elaborated that:

One thing is the dynamicity of the world or knowledge. The ever-changing policy, curriculum, and other factors require us to update ourselves to keep pace with this changing world. Adaptation to this environmental change is mandatory to survive as an academic.

L described that:

In my view, institutions can achieve their goals by improving academics' language proficiency, which is important for effective teaching and academic writing. One of the reasons is to share the skills of academic staff; the other is to improve the ability,

attitude, skill, and knowledge of the staff for the sake of the student. The resources available and the education policy are reasons for the way practice.

In the interview AS participants highlighted that the directions given or set by the MoE inform the way of practice of CPD at university. In addition, participants in the interview highlighted that the culture at the national level lets the university to practice CPD the way it practices.

The finding revealed that the ever-existence of advancement, dynamicity of knowledge, organizational culture and policy guide lines influence university to practice the way it practices. These findings align with the work of Liyun & Zhaolong's (2024), which is the continuous improvement of professional competence, pedagogical expertise, and educational knowledge through a variety of learning opportunities and real-world applications over the course of a person's career. Universities regularly host conferences and seminars to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution and to promote a culture of research and innovation. This result supports the claims made by Kamal et al. (2022), who claimed that conferences give academics the chance to showcase their work, get input from peers and experts, and improve it. These gatherings make it easier for researchers to network, meet possible partners, exchange ideas, and have conversations that could result in new projects and discoveries. Additionally, by giving researchers the know-how to incorporate new technologies into research and teaching methodologies, CPD seeks to digitize services.

Institutions' approaches to CPD are shaped by a complex web of institutional frameworks and contextual factors. Programs for CPD that are in line with performance metrics, accrediting requirements, and strategic objectives are frequently given priority by institutions (Mercado & Shin, 2022). These objectives can have a substantial impact on the types of programs provided, the resources allotted, and the degree of academic involvement. Therefore, it is essential to continuously assess and modify CPD programs to make sure they satisfy the changing needs of the organization and its teachers (Mercado & Shin, 2022).

6.8 Academics' reason to practice CPD

The factors influencing academics' participation in CPD practices are the subject of the third study question's additional subtheme. There are many reasons why academics participate in CPD,

including both internal and external factors. The researcher asked the participants in the study why academics practice the way they do. Respondents shared their ideas as follows:

Z1 expressed that:

One can see the reason from an institutional and academic perspective. From an institutional perspective, since CPD is a measurement taken to ensure quality in higher education, MoE sets different activities. In addition, things move fast or change from time to time, and so do the teaching methods, approaches, strategies, etc. Hence, it is a must for the academic staff to make the necessary adjustments to narrow down the skills and knowledge gaps to offer courses properly. From academics' perspective, the need for self-improvement to remain relevant and effective is the major reason for their practice.

P said that:

One important issue is the dynamic nature of knowledge and the world we live in. Continuous changes in policies, curricula, and other contextual factors demand that academics regularly update their skills and understanding. Adapting to these ongoing changes is essential for remaining effective and relevant in the academic profession.

In the interview, as participants stated that CPD is crucial for maintaining knowledge and competence, especially in an online system. It provides continuous opportunities for academic staff, promoting professional development, staying updated, and valuing lifelong learning and adaptability. It is essential for academic staff.

As reflected in the above response, the factor that affects the academic way of engagement in CPD is affected by institutional drive and also personal initiative to maintain professional competitiveness. This finding is consistent with Gazzard (2016), who reported that for many academics, the drive to engage in CPD stems from a genuine desire to enhance their teaching, research, and overall scholarly endeavors.

Furthermore, according to participant responses, the ongoing advancements in technology and the need for institutions to provide blended learning are additional incentives for participating in CPD.

This finding is in line with Caner and Aydin's (2021) research, which emphasized the need for academics to focus on instructional technology in order to create productive learning environments. The study emphasizes the need for academics to embrace new technologies and the value of CPD in meeting institutional needs and technological advancements. This focus on innovation emphasizes how important it is for teachers to actively enhance their teaching methods.

6.9 Accountability in relation CPD engagement

Accountability in higher education is crucial for fostering a culture of continuous improvement and enhancing educational quality. Institutions should provide staff with professional development opportunities that align with the institution's objectives and individual aspirations. This study's fourth research question sought to determine academic staff members' accountability for their dedication to CPD. The following is how participants expressed their concern about accountability in relation to CPD engagement:

P shared the following insight:

Yes, there is accountability, especially professional accountability. The other accountability is visible, meaning the culture is do not touch me, and I will not touch you. The legislation clearly states that all academics have to teach, do research, and serve the community by capacitating him/herself. But the reality is far from this... surprisingly, even though different CPD activities like seminars, training, conferences, and workshops are prepared and attendances are taken, academics are not accountable for absenteeism. No measurement will be taken for not attending these CPD programs. Academics also don't have self-motivation.

One participant in the interview shared the following insight: "the platform is not so strong; simple attendance and reporting are there in relation to CPD engagement, but I did not see any measurement taken in relation to that taken attendance or report."

In the FDGs, participants commonly highlighted that moral or ethical accountability is highly practiced than institutional accountability. In addition, participants reported that there is high accountability for finance if the training is funded. No one check the impact of training.

The aforementioned comments demonstrated that AU has accountability for CPD participation, although with limited capabilities. According to Maphosa et al. (2015), academics are more likely to participate in CPD when they are aware that their actions will be observed and assessed. Aligning the CPD practices of individual academics with the goals of the institution is crucial. According to Chineze and Olele (2012), this congruence is essential for ensuring quality in higher education. By setting clear expectations and standards for continuous learning and development, these findings have significant implications for concerned stakeholders looking to improve the current accountability system.

6.10 Enablers for CPD engagement

Through CPD, academics can maintain their knowledge, improve their teaching strategies, and stay up to date with developments in their fields (Manship, 2014). Activities include conferences, self-directed learning, training, and reflection (Gazzard, 2016). A number of facilitators influence participation in these CPD activities, including leadership support, institutional support, and personal motivation. Analyzing the perceived advantages and disadvantages of starting and growing effective CPD initiatives at the three public universities was the aim of the fifth research question. Analyzing perceived enablers and impediments to starting and growing fruitful CPD programs in higher education was the goal. To be engaged in CPD, participants offered the following insights into the elements that support and enable their pursuit of ongoing professional development at the university:

According to Z1,

AU had resource and programmatic enablers. There is a positive opportunity to participate in master's and doctoral programs as program facilitators. Additionally, they frequently provide instruction in other areas. They are provided with laptops, office spaces, Wi-Fi, and other comparable resources available.

According to X,

AU offers opportunities for advancement, including master's and doctoral programs both domestically and overseas, as well as a variety of training sessions that are available both in-person and virtually. Upon completion, a certificate is given.

Almos all academics have access to laptop computers, office spaces, and internet connectivity.

According to the academic staff's interviews and the participants in FGD1 and FGD2, a number of factors drive their ongoing education. In addition to other university benefits like full salary for local upgrade, salary promotion upon PhD completion, laptops, internet access, and office space, the availability of international networking and funding opportunities through CPD activities also piques their interest in enhancing their teaching and research capacities.

The results show that a variety of factors, such as institutional and policy-level determinants and personal motivation, contribute to academics' participation in CPD. These facilitators fall into three categories: technology, professional, and collaborative. These facilitators have a major influence on how CPD practices are developed at AU.

The finding regarding personal motivation as a facilitator supported andragogy theory, which holds that adult learners take charge of their education and show a dedication to professional growth by actively seeking out chances to improve their research and pedagogical skills (Knowles, 2005). This result is consistent with the work of Samko's (2024), who described that a strong internal motivation for professional development significantly raises student engagement in the classroom and creates favorable circumstances for academics' CPD. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), this type of self-directed work improves individual competencies and cultivates a culture of lifelong learning in educational institutions. According to this study, AU participants believe that strong managerial commitment and adequate resources make it easier to implement continued professional development. This result is consistent with Scott et al. (2023), who found that schools that actively engage teachers and cultivate trust through a wealth of resources and support greatly increase academic optimism.

This is the belief that teachers can overcome challenges and have a positive impact on student outcomes and the general excellence of the institutions. The results showed that a variety of policy enablers support ongoing professional development in the institutions. This study expands on the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) by showing that governments can require scholars to engage in professional development, provide funding for developmental projects, and honor those who are dedicated to lifelong learning. In line with the findings of Dragan et al. (2018), this study demonstrated how technological advancements have affected educational programs through the

use of online resources and technology that support professional development and lifetime learning. Students' competencies are improved by this integration, which also enables teachers to adapt to changing industry demands.

6.11 Challenges for CPD engagement

Another problem that this research sought to answer with research data was the obstacles that academics and their institutions face when trying to engage in and create high-quality CPD practices. This theme is closely related to the fifth research question's second theme. These issues have been separated into three groups: academic, institutional, and policy-related challenges.

A. Academics- related challenges

There are numerous possible obstacles that keep academics from taking part in CPD. The HDP coordinator provided the following explanation for this:

There is a misunderstanding about the importance of CPDs. Some academics, for example, only take part in HDP training to obtain the certifications required to teach in higher education. There is a lack of interest among scholars to participate in CPD. Individual academics have found it difficult to recognize and communicate their gaps; structured CPD programs could assist them in this regard.

This finding suggests a lack of enthusiasm and a misunderstanding of the importance of CPD, indicating that stakeholders are not doing enough to help academics become more aware of and supportive of CPD. According to Haque et al. (2014), motivation is a process that creates a great deal of excitement to achieve organizational goals, which are met by attending to specific human needs. At its core, motivation is about meeting the needs or desires of individual employees in order to achieve the organization's core goals.

Furthermore, the academic culture does not promote professional development through mutual learning. This implies that the institutional culture does not support professional learning. As Lewis et al. (2016) described, it can foster a culture of collaboration and shared accountability among members of the professional learning community, team learning is the most effective organizational learning strategy.

Other issues raised by the FGD participants included the lack of resources, including laptops, personal offices, tables, and chairs, as well as the lack of incentives for academics who have successfully engaged in CPD. The findings of Ofojebe and Chukwuma (2015), who stated a number of barriers impeding academic staff in Delta State's colleges of education from effectively implementing CPD, are consistent with this finding. This included a lack of equipment and infrastructure in addition to inadequate funding. The study's findings demonstrate the necessity of successfully implementing CPD initiatives across Ambo University. Implementing CPD effectively raises academics' and their institutions' competitiveness now and in the future while also improving the overall quality of the higher education system.

B. Institutional- related challenges

This study highlighted a number of institutional-related obstacles to the development of effective CPD. This study indicates that the primary obstacle is the incapacity of institutions to implement pertinent CPD programs that serve to the particular requirements of academics. One interviewee shared the following insight:

Opportunities for demand-driven training are limited. Moreover, the weak culture of professional learning communities poses a significant challenge to CPD. For example, during research training sessions, the most common initial question is often, “What is research?” This raises concerns about the adequacy and duration of training that academics receive in this area. Engaging in training programs that do not enhance our current professional capacity is inefficient and results in a loss of time.

Interview participants commonly highlighted that it is also necessary to set up an organizational structure to monitor and manage academics’ professional developments. Furthermore, academic CPD lacks a defined framework. Besides, there is no system in place to hold academics accountable for not participating in CPD activities. In addition, everyone should investigate their development paths after completing HDP.

The aforementioned quote illustrates how AU's CPD program was not customized to fit the unique requirements of individual academics’ need. For academics, participating in repetitive and boring CPD material without any evaluative benefits has become tiresome. This result is consistent with research by Baker et al. (2018), Qader (2019), Yaqub et al. (2020), and Yilfashewa (2012) that

found a mismatch between academics' need and CPD programs. These issues have an impact on how institutions understand and implement CPD.

Another issue raised by the respondent was the lack of institutional capacity to offer discipline-specific CPD programs. Interview participants commonly highlighted that most trainings prioritize pedagogical expertise, research skills, and information and communication technology over content knowledge. However, in order to improve teaching-related self-efficacy, self-concept, and subjective knowledge, researchers such as Fabriz et al. (2020) have argued for the use of subjective knowledge in professional development programs.

One could argue that the institutional framework of the university for managing and arranging CPD programs is inadequate. It was found that CPD initiatives, particularly training, were implemented haphazardly rather than purposefully, methodically, and continuously. The actual situation differed greatly from these principles, even though the literature on professional development in higher education emphasized the importance of continuity and collaboration (Guskey, 2000). This outcome is in line with Yilfashewa's (2012) research, which revealed a mismatch between Adama University's current practices and the literature's suggested practices.

C. Challenges related to policy

There are also policy-related challenges in addition to challenges related to individual academics and institutions; participants in this study also highlighted obstacles to CPD programs related to policies that govern the university. As one interviewee participant described, "First of all, there is no systematic approach or follow-up assessment for CPD that could enhance the effectiveness and caliber of academic CPD programs." (AS1). As expressed by another respondent, "Lack of budget and absence of responsible stakeholders for the purpose of professional excellence and there is no established framework for academic CPD and also there is no professional accountability that holds academics responsible for their action in relation to their CPD engagement." This finding matches what Masoumi et al. (2019) and MacPhail et al. (2018) discovered, which is that there is not enough support from institutions, organizations, or funding to effectively set up, run, and assess the success of CPD in higher education.

The low salary of academic professionals, which prevents them from being able to afford necessities for themselves or their families, is a persistent problem that participants in the FGD1

commonly highlighted. This lets academics spend their time in other sources of income activities and also affects the existing practice of CPD. In relation to this FGD participant elaborated, saying: "...When trainings are scheduled for academics, mostly the concern is not the knowledge but asking what material incentive is in it..." This implies that if a significant portion of the academic workforce is struggling financially, it may affect the overall effectiveness of CPD programs at the institutional level because they may not be motivated or able to fully participate in learning and development opportunities. This result supports Leibowitz's (2016) claim that academics may be greatly motivated to participate in professional development opportunities by extrinsic incentives.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of commonalities and differences among Addis Ababa University, Hawassa University, and Ambo University in practicing CPD. When a multiple case research design is employed, each case is typically analyzed in its entirety before conducting a cross-case analysis to identify both similarities and differences. When cross-site analysis is done, it will involve the analysis and synthesis of the commonalities, differences, and patterns across cases that share a common focus or goal. This effort rebuilds the participants' experiences and represents the many perspectives present in the situation (Gay et al., 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

7.2 Commonalities across cases

A. Academics understanding

Despite their differences, the three universities shared significant common practices and challenges. In the single-case analysis of the previous chapters, the first research question sought to address academics' understanding and practices of CPD. This question is composed of two themes: academics' understanding and academics practices of CPD.

CPD has become an essential mechanism for sustaining academic excellence. However, for CPD initiatives to be meaningful and impactful, there should be a shared understanding among academic staff, institutional leaders, and policymakers regarding its purpose and value. Regarding academics' understanding, variation in conceptualization of CPD among academics is observed in the three universities. There are academics who have the advocated perception of CPD and see it as an important thing in boosting their pedagogical knowledge, in keeping pace with this ever-changing world, and in capacitating them to discharge expected service effectively and efficiently in all research sites. However, some academics view CPD as a top-down mandate that is less important to their field. They argue that it often overlooks the unique needs and realities of their

specific disciplines. Professionals, feeling their expertise and insights undervalued in the broader conversation about educational practices, may resist this perspective.

As reflected above, there is variation in the conceptualization of CPD. This finding aligns with Solomon et al. (2023), who reported that conceptualization of CPD varies across time and space. Nevertheless, a shared understanding is essential for practicing CPD effectively. When academic staff, administrators, and external stakeholders have a common understanding of the goals, expectations, and value of CPD, it creates alignment and coherence in how professional growth is pursued and supported. Shared understanding helps ensure that CPD initiatives are relevant, context-specific, and collaboratively designed, rather than seen as isolated or top-down mandates. It also fosters a culture of collective responsibility, where staff feel motivated to participate, share knowledge, and support one another's development. Without this shared foundation, CPD efforts risk being fragmented, misunderstood, or underutilized. Similarly, Stoll et al. (2006) delineates that shared beliefs and understandings are crucial for effective practice of professional learning.

Some participants at AAU and HU reflected that CPD program like HDP is important for academics who didn't take pedagogy. Nevertheless, pedagogy in higher education is indeed evolving, with a strong shift toward digitalization (Santoveña-Casal & López, 2023), innovation, relational approaches, and creative, student-centered learning (Dawo & Sika, 2021). It is therefore imperative to reconceptualize CPD at Ethiopian higher education to ensure that it accommodate the evolving higher education pedagogy because of technological advancement, societal change and teaching method change.

B. Individual academic practices

CPD is indispensable for academics, representing a commitment to lifelong learning and the enhancement of professional competencies (Scott et al., 2023). Regarding individual academic practices of CPD, there are both commonalities and differences in the three research sites. Commonly mentioned practices include reading books and published articles, conducting research, and attending trainings. They also engage in various PLC activities to enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitude, such as attending lecture series, seminars, or conferences as a member of a professional learning community.

This implies that academics demonstrate a proactive approach to CPD, engaging in self-directed learning activities such as reading books and published articles and conducting research. This suggests an intrinsic motivation for continuous improvement and a recognition of the evolving nature of their profession. These findings align with the work of Kennedy (2005), which identifies a range of models of CPD that support professional autonomy and transform practice. The diverse range of CPD activities undertaken by academics, from attending seminars and conferences to pursuing individual research, highlights a multifaceted approach to professional growth (Kennedy, 2005).

C. Institutional updating and upgrading programs

CPD has become crucial in academia as academics and educational institutions recognize the need to stay up to date on new developments, adjust to evolving teaching strategies, and foster a culture of lifelong learning. The second research question of this study was exploring the institutional updating and upgrading practice of CPD at selected universities. Universities, as centers of higher education, are increasingly recognizing the vital role of CPD programs in maintaining and enhancing the quality of their academics (Marshall, 1998). These programs, encompassing both updating and upgrading initiatives, are essential for educators to remain current in their respective fields, adopt innovative pedagogical approaches, and effectively address the evolving needs of students and the academic community (Farrugia, 1996).

The findings of this study revealed that many things are given to capacitate academics at the three universities, and there are commonalities; this includes pursuing master's and PhD degrees and face-to-face and online training on course development, research, and higher education pedagogy like HDP and ICT.

In all the research sites the HDP remains the primary, and often only, structured CPD program, with a "one-size-fits-all" approach. HDP has evolved from a foundational training initiative into the sole proxy for teacher development. This analysis argues that while the HDP provides a necessary baseline for pedagogical competence, its status as the "only" structured and institutionalized program, combined with a "one-size-fits-all" program design, significantly diminishes its efficacy and fails to address the complex, evolving needs of modern academic staff. This finding is consistent with Semela (2011), who described that HDP often fail to address the specific, nuanced needs of different faculties and disciplines.

Both Ambo and Hawassa University conducted need assessment manually a few years ago. But now they are no longer actively practice it. To put it differently, systematic, data-driven needs assessment is either absent or inconsistently practiced in these universities. According to Koc et al. (2015), the first step in academics' professional development is setting goals, which are based on the needs and interests of the participants. The practice of needs assessment at research sites is not robust enough to effectively design tailored CPD programs. This suggests that to make training relevant to academics, needs assessments should be conducted. It offers a rational method for identifying professional gaps that require improvement, assessing the cognitive and emotional preparedness of participants, and ensuring efficient use of time, finances, and other resources. According to Yaqub et al. (2020), detecting demand areas plays an important role in training to reach its goals and be effective. In addition, this claim aligns with andragogy in practice theory, which states that adults are motivated to learn by being in situations where they see a need “why, what and how” to learn (Knowles et al., 2005, p.4).

The practices of CPD planning at all university include setting session numbers and expected participants, with follow up typically based on attendance and reporting. Nevertheless, scholars like Guskey (2000) claim that CPD plan should prioritize the substantive quality ('what') and the pedagogical rationale ('why') of the intervention over the superficial metric of participant volume, as high attendance rates are insufficient indicators of genuine instructional improvement or organizational change.

Systematic evaluation of professional development activities to assess the impact on practice and outcome is crucial. This evaluation is crucial for ensuring the effectiveness of trainings, guiding future investments, and promoting accountability and resource utilization. Borg (2018) claims that professional development activities have various impacts on institutional systems and workers, and evaluating their impact is crucial for determining their effectiveness. From these findings, it can be suggested that professional development activities should be evaluated to ensure their effectiveness and to guide future practices.

D. Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Accountability is important to foster institutions a culture of continuous improvement and enhance overall educational quality. In all research sites accountability is consistently focused on process metrics (attendance, reports) and finance, with little or no evaluation of the impact on teaching

practice or student learning. This problem of accountability can be recognized in quality dimensions because CPD is a program created to guarantee quality in higher education. Input, process, output, and impact are some of these dimensions. In all research sites demonstrate that there is strict financial accountability in the input dimension, with a particular emphasis on the appropriate use of resources and the budget allotted for CPD activities. Accountability for attendance and reports during the process and output dimensions is another. However, the financial accountability is stronger than the accountability for how the acquired knowledge and skills are used or implemented and how they affect students' learning and the professionalism of academics. This suggests that guaranteeing accountability in this area could ensure that CPD procedures are generally effective.

E. Challenges for CPD engagement

The decreasing level of academic skills presents a serious threat to sustainability as higher education institutions work to stay relevant in a knowledge economy that is globally competitive. Many people believe that the main way to keep academic staff at the forefront of their fields and pedagogical best practices is through CPD. However, there is frequently a big gap between the availability of training and its actual implementation and its effectiveness. The three research sites commonly challenged by lack of tailored, relevant, and non-repetitive content; insufficient integration of technology and policy-level issues, especially low academic salaries, which force staff into other income-generating activities, reducing time and motivation for CPD. This echoes a common critique in higher education literature where CPD is frequently delivered through a "one-size-fits-all" model (Semela, 2011). By failing to account for the specific disciplinary needs or the varying career stages of academic staff, these programs are often perceived as administrative box-ticking exercises rather than genuine learning opportunities. When content is repetitive or generic, it fails to engage academic staff, leading to a phenomenon known as "training fatigue." This suggests that for CPD to be effective, it should shift from a deficit model, which assumes all staff lack the same skills, to a growth model that personalizes learning pathways based on individual academic needs and prior experience.

7.3 Differences

A. Individual academic 's and institutional updating and upgrading practices

The differences in individual academic practices of CPD exist among the three research sites and also among academics in the same university. At AAU, academic staff present and attend monthly research colloquia to share their insights. Whereas at Ambo University and Hawassa University, academics practice as members of the learning community through seminars, lecture series, and professional dialogues. This finding aligns with the claims of Wangberg et al. (1995), who stated that colloquia inherently promote collegiality and develop a sense of community among academic staff. HU and AU should share this best practice to enhance community practice. This suggests that it is imperative to AU and HU to share this best practice, given that research colloquia are crucial for academics' professional development as they enhance research skills, promote collaboration, and integrate research into teaching. They also provide opportunities for networking and addressing gender disparities, contributing to a more inclusive academic environment (Cordingley, 2015).

From these research findings, it can be suggested that all three universities need to enhance the value of self-initiated learning, given the significant differences in CPD practices among academics. Some actively engage in CPD, while others focus on calming government, society, and students. This disparity indicates that some academic members prioritize external pressures over personal professional development. Therefore, fostering a culture of self-regulated learning could lead to more uniform engagement in CPD across the university. Scholars like Rodríguez-Gómez et al. (2024) claim that encouraging a proactive attitude and self-motivation is key to fostering a culture of continuous learning, which is crucial for maintaining high standards in professional practice. Similarly, Tour (2016) advocates that fostering a culture of self-initiated learning is vital for CPD. It enhances professional growth, aligns learning with individual needs, and supports lifelong learning. Overcoming barriers and creating supportive environments are crucial for maximizing its benefits.

Reflective practice as a means of professional development is reflected by interview participants from HU and AU, but not by participants from AAU. This implies that there is a need to nurture reflective practice at AAU. Nurturing reflective practice is a powerful driver of professional development for academics. As Knights et al. (2007) described, reflective practice has rich potential to enhance workplace learning that can improve professional practice.

AAU, in its capacity as a premier research-oriented institution, exhibits a distinct institutional culture regarding CPD that is increasingly defined by a research-centric ethos. Unlike AU and HU institutions where CPD may remain focused primarily on foundational pedagogical skills, AAU exerts a more pronounced institutional push toward activities that enhance scholarly output, such as advanced research methodologies, grant writing, and high-impact publication strategies. While this drive toward research-related development is not yet universal across all departments, with some faculty maintaining a more traditional focus on teaching, the overarching institutional trajectory clearly prioritizes the cultivation of a sophisticated research profile. This shift reflects AAU's strategic ambition to strengthen its status as a leading knowledge producer, framing professional growth not merely as an administrative requirement, but as a critical vehicle for global academic competitiveness and scientific innovation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to conclude the study by summarizing the key findings in relation to exploration of the practices and challenges of CPD of academic staff in three selected Ethiopian public universities as well as the valued contribution of the study. Finally, a number of important suggestions are made.

8.2 Summary

Based on the detailed chapters provided, here is a summary of the major findings regarding Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in Ethiopian public higher education, specifically focusing on Addis Ababa University (AAU), Hawassa University (HU), and Ambo University (AU).

1. Perceptions and Understanding of CPD

The research finds a significant conceptual gap among academic staff. While many recognize CPD as vital for improving pedagogical skills and keeping pace with global technological trends, a substantial number of academics view it as a "top-down mandate."

- Many participants focus on meeting the requirements of the Higher Diploma Program (HDP) for the sake of certification rather than authentic professional growth.
- There is a tension between subject-matter expertise and pedagogical training; some instructors prioritize their specific field of study over the "generic" teaching skills offered in CPD programs.

2. Current Practices: Individual and Institutional

- Academics engage in self-regulated learning through reading published research, attending seminars, and utilizing online resources (like the e-SHE program). However, this is inconsistent and depends heavily on personal motivation.

- The Higher Diploma Program (HDP) remains the primary vehicle for CPD. While universities offer some ICT and research training, other programs like the English Language Improvement Program (ELIP) have "faded" or become poorly structured.
- Training is often criticized for being "episodic" (one-off sessions) rather than a continuous, integrated part of the academic career.

3. Key Challenges and Barriers

The study identifies challenges at different level that hinder effective CPD:

- **Individual:** A "lack of time" is the most cited barrier, as academics are often overwhelmed by heavy workloads or underpayment, which forces them to prioritize income-generating activities over professional learning. Others suffer from "technophobia" or a lack of commitment.
- **Institutional:** There is a lack of needs assessment. Training is often "one-size-fits-all" and lacks discipline-specific content. Universities generally lack dedicated training centers and systematic follow-up to see if training is actually implemented in the classroom.
- **Policy-Related:** The study highlights a lack of a clear, comprehensive national policy framework. Funding is inconsistent, and there is no strong link between CPD participation and meaningful rewards or career advancement beyond the initial HDP.

4. The Accountability Deficit

One of the most critical findings is the fragility of accountability.

- While there is strict accountability regarding the use of funds and resources (inputs), there is almost no accountability regarding the impact of CPD on teaching quality or student learning (outputs).
- Attendance at seminars and non-mandatory workshops is often low and widely tolerated, indicating a lack of institutional enforcement.

5. Enablers and Motivations

Despite the challenges, several factors drive CPD engagement:

- The intrinsic motivation that is a personal desire to remain relevant in a competitive, globalized academic environment.
- The institutional support like access to "upgrading" opportunities (PhD and Master's programs) is a major motivator.
- Technological Resources: Provision of laptops, office space, and internet connectivity are viewed as essential enablers for professional development.

6. Cross-Case Analysis

The study concludes that while all three universities (AAU, HU, AU) share similar struggles, their practices vary based on their specific histories, contexts and leadership.

- The Need for Reconceptualization: The study argues that CPD must shift from a "mandated burden" to a "participatory model" based on Adult Learning Theory, which emphasizes autonomy, relevance, and internal motivation.
- Tailored Content: Future CPD should move away from generic pedagogy and toward discipline-specific training that addresses the unique needs of different departments.
- Digitalization: There is a strong call to integrate modern technology and blended learning more deeply into the CPD framework to ensure sustainability.

8.3 Conclusion

The findings of this study have provided valuable insight into understanding and practices, and challenges of CPD at Ethiopian Public higher education specifically in selected research sites. With regards to understanding of academic staff on the need of participating in CPD revealed that there is no common understanding as to what CPD is and its importance to academics' professional practice. The findings from the three universities revealed varied perception of CPD among academics. While CPD is acknowledged as a vital tool for enhancing pedagogical knowledge and adapting to the technological advancements, its effectiveness is affected by a focus on institutional requirements rather than authentic learning or development, the limitations of single-session programs like HDP, and concerns about content completeness. Addressing these challenges is essential to fully leverage the potential of CPD in improving the quality of higher education.

Regarding academics' practices of CPD the findings revealed that academics at the research sites engaged in various CPD activities, a disparity exists in their approaches, with some driven more by external pressures than personal development. This inconsistency undermines the potential of CPD to uniformly enhance teaching practices and subject expertise across the universities.

In relation to institutional practices of CPD, the findings underscored the importance of flexible CPD approaches, such as online and face- to- face trainings, in accommodating the diverse needs of academics. However, the varying responses regarding needs assessment highlighted a potential communication gap within the selected universities. A thorough and data-driven needs assessment is crucial for designing tailored and relevant CPD programs that address specific performance gaps and contribute to measurable improvements in teaching, research, and community service delivery. Ultimately, aligning CPD with the principles of adult learning theory, where activities are structured based on academics' needs and interests, is essential for fostering effective professional learning and skill development.

This study highlighted that academics are driven to engage in CPD by a combination of internal desires and external requirements. They seek to deepen their expertise, particularly in pedagogy and research, and proactively address knowledge gaps through continuous learning and self-assessment. The increasing importance of technology and blended learning in education further emphasizes the critical role of CPD in enabling academics to adapt and innovate in their teaching methods. CPD in academic institutions plays a vital role in enhancing teaching and learning by equipping academics with updated strategies, advanced tools, and subject-matter expertise. This improves institutional efficiency and enables them to achieve institutional goals and ensure quality.

The analysis of research sites, concerning accountability of academics in relation to CPD engagement, reveals a loose accountability, despite its formal requirement. While academics are expected to pursue HDP, MA, and PhD upgrades, the practical enforcement of these requirements is weak, leading to situations where academics might teach for extended periods without fulfilling these requirements. This loose of accountability undermines the professionalism of teaching at higher education.

The finding reveals a critical gap in understanding the significance of CPD among academic staff, leading to demotivation due to insufficient support from stakeholders. This lack of awareness undermines the potential for professional excellence, as motivation is crucial for achieving

organizational objectives by addressing individual needs. Without effective and accessible CPD processes, academic staff may struggle to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge and skills for delivering high-quality higher education programs.

The CPD program in the three universities faces significant challenges, including a lack of tailoring to individual academic needs, uniform and repetitive content, and a lack of assessment and relevance, lack of clear policy that guides the programs, weak integration of CPD with technology and classroom practices. In addition, lack of advanced technology, a dedicated training center, a top-down approach, loose accountability, and a lack of reward and recognition for self-regulated learning are some revealed challenges.

8.4 Implications

This study has far-reaching implications for future actions on the CPD of academics in higher education context. For instance, effective CPD practice requires a common understanding. There is alignment and coherence in the pursuit and support of professional growth when academic staff, administrators, and external stakeholders share a common understanding of the objectives, standards, and value of CPD. Instead of being viewed as separate or top-down mandates, shared understanding helps guarantee that CPD initiatives are pertinent, context-specific, and collaboratively designed. Additionally, it promotes a culture of shared accountability, which encourages employees to engage, exchange knowledge, and assist one another's growth. CPD initiatives run the risk of becoming dispersed, misinterpreted, or underutilized in the absence of this common basis. Furthermore, Reconceptualization of CPD at Ethiopian higher education is recommended to ensure that it accommodate the evolving higher education pedagogy because of technological advancement, societal change and teaching method change.

It is necessary to reduce the gap in academics' participation in CPD. Inequalities in CPD participation can result in disparities in teaching quality, knowledge, and abilities between departments or individuals, which eventually impacts the overall academic standard and the educational experience for students. All academics will have equal opportunities to advance their careers if this gap is narrowed regardless of their position, discipline, or institutional support. It encourages diversity, enhance teamwork, and contributes to the development of a more inventive and cohesive academic community. To guarantee that CPD is available, fair, and significant for all

academic staff, it is imperative to address obstacles like workload, ignorance, or restricted access to resources.

A one-size-fits-all approach frequently overlooks individual and contextual differences because academics have a wide range of roles, career stages, disciplinary needs, and professional goals. Customized CPD guarantees that the information is applicable, useful, and in line with particular leadership, teaching, or research duties. Because participants are more likely to invest in development activities that align with their needs and goals, it also promotes motivation and engagement. Customizing CPD increases the impact and sustainability of professional development by enabling institutions to respond to local issues, emerging trends, and institutional priorities.

Adopting a more inclusive and responsive approach is crucial to improving the efficacy of CPD programs in all three universities. Differentiated and context-specific content should be incorporated into programs to accommodate the various needs of academic staff. Creating a transparent, institution-wide CPD policy will offer direction, organization, and responsibility. The gap between theory and practice can be closed by incorporating contemporary technology and coordinating continuing education activities with real-world classroom procedures. Continuous learning and innovation can be encouraged by setting up specialized training facilities furnished with the newest technology. Additionally, ownership and engagement can be increased by moving away from a top-down strategy and toward a more participatory model that values academics input. Furthermore, putting in place mechanisms for following, recognizing and rewarding self-directed learning will promote a culture of ongoing development and high standards in the workplace.

Lastly, it is believed that with regards to practices and challenges of CPD of academic staff in research university and university of applied science context this study provides some useful evidence and ways forwards whilst acknowledging that further research and more detailed study relation to CPD of academic staff in comprehensive university, technical and vocational education and training, liberal art college and fine art college is necessary to prepare institutionally tailored CPD framework of higher education in Ethiopia.

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List of publication and presented papers

Published Articles

1. Continuous professional development in higher education: a systematic review of its conceptualization, trends and challenges (2011- 2020)

Published by **Bahir Dar Journal of Education**

2. Academics and their respective institution practices of continuous professional development: a case of Hawassa University

Published by **Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education**

Presented Paper

Cooperative learning in Ethiopia orthodox church education: potential lesson to modern education

Presented at **21st International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (ICES 21)**

Appendix A

Table 1: Empirical review of CPD in higher education from 2000 to 2024

No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings	Qualitative meta- synthesis
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1.	Adula Bekele Hunde (2008)	Application of Higher Diploma Program training skills in classroom instruction: The case of Education Faculty, Jimma University (Ethiopia)	Ethiopia Journal of Education & Science	Higher Diploma Program (HDP) graduates are not utilizing a student-centered approach in their classroom teaching at the desired level. The failure to implement HDP training skills at the classroom level can be attributed to physical constraints, including large class sizes, insufficient learning materials, and a misalignment between course content and allocated time. Additionally, a lack of interest from both instructors and students, as well as the absence of structured follow-up support to encourage the application of training skills, contributed to this failure.	The study exclusively examines the Higher Diploma Program (HDP), emphasizing the necessity for its enhancement, material revision, implementation, and evaluation. This research aims to identify the key areas that require enhancement and to establish a framework for ongoing assessment. By addressing these components, the study seeks to elevate the overall quality and effectiveness of the Higher Diploma Program.
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No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings	Qualitative meta- synthesis
2.	Abdissa Ayana Bift(2017)	The Role of Higher Diploma Program in Improving Trained Teachers' Classroom Teaching Methods: Focused on Selected CTE of Oromia	Global Journal of HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: G Linguistics & Education	HDP Graduates are fully aware of what kind of teaching- learning process they should be fostering. The respondents tell us that they do employ the methods advocated in the HDP whenever possible The HDP graduates are convinced of the intrinsic value of the program but they are not sure of the extrinsic worth it has in terms of their career program.	Again, the study focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is important for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation.

3.	Addis Tsegaye Zegeye (2008)	Higher Diploma Program for Teacher Educators: Impact and Practice. T Gondar College of Teachers' Education	Addis Ababa university	The teacher educators benefited from t h e HDP training. i.e., the training has an impact on teacher educators' teaching performances. The prevailing practice of the components of HDP was poor. Thus, it is difficult to say that the components of HDP are fully practiced in the college. Many factors affect the implementation of the components of HDP.	Again, the study focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is important for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation
No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings	Qualitative meta- synthesis

4.	Addisu Leyew (2006)	Teacher Educators' Professional Development: Perceptions and Practices Of The Higher Diploma Program (HDP) In Adama University		Addis Ababa university	HDP is highly bureaucratized. HDP is not found to be context-sensitive HDP informs teacher educators about specific techniques in a prescriptive format without consideration of the context of their teaching.	Again, the study focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is important for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation
5.		Teachers' Professional Development in Ethiopia through Higher Diploma Program (HDP)		Institute of Educational Research	Teachers in higher education institutions were forced to attend the HDP- meaning it is externally imposed one. HDP seemed to have certain drawbacks. Modules were found to be too elementary and repetitive There were no solid criteria to elect HDP leaders and tutors. HDP module is incomplete, it lacks some important contents.	Again, the study focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is important for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation
No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings		Qualitative meta- synthesis

6	Alemayehu Bishaw and Solomon Melesse (2007)	Instructors' Stages of Concern and Levels of Use of Active Learning Strategies: The Case of HDP Programs of Three Higher Learning Institutes in Amhara Region	The Ethiopian Journal of Higher Education	Instructors' concerns regarding active learning strategies diminish their competence in implementing specific elements of the strategy. Consulting instructors regarding professional training has not significantly impacted their personal concerns or competencies in applying active learning strategies across all stages of concern and levels of use, with one exception. The average differences between instructors' teaching experience and their concerns and levels of use are not statistically significant. Short term trainings that instructors took concerning curriculum development, evaluation, instructional leadership, teaching methods, etc. have no effect on their stages of concern and levels of use of active learning strategies.	The study focuses on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and trainings and the findings are important for the improvement of HDP and other trainings and their material revision, implementation and evaluation.
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No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings	Qualitative meta- synthesis
7.	Aytaged Sisay Zeleke (2012)	CPD Program for Higher Education Academics in Ethiopia. Views, Perceived Needed Competencies and Organization in Focus	Greener Journal of Educational Research	Continuous short-term professional development trainings appear to be questionable. The perceived requirements of academic staff in terms of staff development programs that focus on the enhancement of knowledge and research and teaching skills. The structure, modalities of delivery, training or workshop providers, site, time, follow-up, reward and recognition, and necessary conditions and support suggested could be utilized as a starting point for the same purpose.	The study focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is essential for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation. This research aims to identify the key areas that require enhancement and to establish a framework for ongoing assessment. By addressing these components, the study seeks to elevate the overall quality and effectiveness of the Higher Diploma Program.

8	Demewoz Admasu Gebru (2016)	Effectiveness of higher diploma program for early career academics in Ethiopia	Studies in Higher Education (Routledge): Taylor and Francis group	HDP handbook does not fully take into account the Ethiopian context. The methods (that are presented in HDP manual) are not effectively implemented by the trainers themselves. The actual exercise of HDP should look into the application of concepts covered, the background of trainees, and the right attitude to be developed.	This study also focuses only on Higher Diploma Program (HDP) and it is important for the improvement of HDP and its material revision, implementation and evaluation
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No.	Name of scholars and year of publication	Title	Publisher	Major Findings	Qualitative meta- synthesis
9	Yilfashewa Seyoum(2012)	Staff Development as an Imperative Avenue in Ensuring Quality: The Experience of Adama University	Education Research International Hindawi Publishing Corporation	Training was the dominantly used mode of professional development practices. The provision of support from colleagues and program leaders as well as the consideration of adequate time, in practice were not fulfilled. Academic staffs have unfavorable attitudes toward the professional development training currently in place. The existing system of professional development was a top-down approach, which is dominantly characterized by donor driven than demand driven.	Study focuses on CPD programs: Higher Diploma Program (HDP), English Language Improvement Program (ELIP), and Academic Development and Resource Center (ADRC). And it is important for the improvement of these programs. But the most promising strategy for sustained CPD (professional learning community self- learning and reflective practice) are not analyzed.

10	Yilfashewa Seyoum (2013)	Academic Staff Development Dreams and Realities: The Case of Haramaya University	The Ethiopian Journal of Education	Trainings like (ADRC and HDP) were the dominantly used mode of professional development practices. There is significant difference between what was planned and the implementation PD activities. Respondents' perceptions towards the principles of the professional development programs were positive. Respondents were involved in the various the professional development programs because it was institutional development plan and national priorities not their interest or need.	Study focuses on CPD programs: Higher Diploma Program (HDP), English Language Improvement Program (ELIP), and Academic Development and Resource Center (ADRC). And it is important for the improvement of these programs. But the most promising strategy for sustained CPD (professional learning community self- learning and reflective practice) are not analyzed
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11	Dereje Taye Wondem	HDP: A centrally initiated and successfully institutionalized professional development program for teachers in Ethiopian public universities	Cogent Education	The research delineated attributes of HDP that facilitate its institutionalization. This encompasses evidence-based program design and execution, robust moderation systems, systematic institutional capacity enhancement, leader engagement, the preparation and utilization of tools or artifacts, and adaptability to continuous changes.	The attributes of HDP that facilitate its effective institutionalization can serve as a lesson for future policy reform initiatives within the Ethiopian higher education system. S
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Appendix B

Informed Consent

Interview protocol

Interview Protocol for the Research entitled “*continuous professional development in public higher education in Ethiopia: the case of three selected universities*”

Consent Form

University/Institute: _____

Name of Interviewee: _____ Qualification: _____ Date: _____

Department: _____ Years of Service: _____ Phone: _____

This interview is designed to seek information about the practices and challenges of continuous professional development in public higher education, how it is perceived within higher education institutions including information about the nature, opportunities and challenges in its practice. The purpose is to illuminate the thoughts, feelings, understanding, practices and the meaning of practices of academic staffs' continuous professional development issues within their naturally occurring setting. To facilitate note-taking, the researcher would like to audio tape our conversations today.

Please note that, the information you provide in this interview will be used only for the purpose of the research identified above and by no means jeopardize your private personality as a result of breaking confidentiality. The collected comments, experience and suggestions from you and others will be summarized, coded, and analyzed to full-fill the intention of improving practices of continuous professional development in public higher education.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. By checking YES option below, you indicate that you have read and understood the information provided above and have decided to participate.

Yes, I agree to participate ☐ ; No, I don't agree to participate ☐

Thank you in advance for your willingness to be interviewed

Medhanit Adane Solomon

PhD candidate in Addis Ababa University

Tools for data collection

Interview questions

No.	Research Question	Strategies for data collection	Clarifying Probes for the interview & the focus group discussion
1.	How do academic staffs understand and practice continuous professional development in the three universities?	Interview Focus group	How do you understand the continuous professional development program and its importance to your profession and how do you practice it? How do you develop your profession individually and/or in group as learning community?

No.	Research Question	Strategies for data collection	Clarifying Probes for the interview & the focus group discussion
2	How do the three universities practice continuous professional development?	Interview Focus group	What constitutes CPD in this university (please indicate any activities done in the university to improve the knowledge, skill and attitude of the academic staffs)?

			How does the university assesses gaps of academic staffs that can be filled by CPD activities; plan CPD; implement CPD and manage CPD?
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<i>No.</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Strategies for data collection</i>	<i>Clarifying Probes for the interview & the focus group discussion</i>
3	Why do the three universities and academic staffs practice the way they practice?	Interview analysis Focus group	What are the main reasons that led to the university and academic staffs to practice the way they practice?

No.	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Strategies for data collection</i>	<i>Clarifying Probes for the interview & the focus group discussion</i>
4	How do academic staffs account about their continuous professional development?	Interview analysis Focus group	Is there any accountability that accounts, academic staffs in relation to their CPD engagement in the university? Regarding your professional development: to whom are you accountable; for what activities or basis are you accountable; for what purpose academic staffs are held accountable; with what consequences academic staffs are held accountable?

No.	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Strategies for data collection</i>	<i>Clarifying Probes for the interview & the focus group discussion</i>
5	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing	Interview analysis	What motivates you to be engaged in professional development activities?

	continuous professional development in the three universities?	Focus group	What rewards do you/other academic staff receive from the institution for being engaged in professional development activities? What provisions are available to academic staffs for their professional development activities? What are perceived challenges in initiating and developing an effective continuous professional development in this university?
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Other topics discussed:

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Documents obtained:

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Post interview comments or leads:

Documents

<i>N o.</i>	<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Strategy for data collection</i>	<i>Leading theme for document analysis</i>
1.	How do academic staffs understand and practice continuous professional development in the three universities?	Document analysis	How CPD is being understood in different documents (Policy materials, University's legislation, University's reports, HDP portfolios, reflection diaries of academic staffs, brochures and minutes of meetings); is it considered as important, for what purpose, how different documents reflect its practice?
2	How do the three universities practice continuous professional development?	Document analysis	Is there evidence of a positive learning environment at the university? Is there evidence that academic staffs are encouraged to participate in learning community activities? Is there evidence that academic staffs are accountable in relation to their CPD engagement? Is there evidence that clearly shows practices of continuous professional development of academic staffs meaning how does the university assess gaps that can be

			filled by CPD activities; plan CPD; implement CPD and manage CPD?
3	Why do the three universities and academic staffs practice the way they practice?	Document analysis	Why do the university and academic staffs practice the way they practice? /What are the reasons for their practice/.
4	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing CPD in the three universities?	Document analysis	What are the enablers and challenges in practicing CPD in the university, which are identified in documents like: University's reports, agendas, and minutes of meetings?

Appendix C

Ethical consent letters

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የትምህርት ምክር ቤት
የትምህርት ምክር ቤት



Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Curriculum
and Instruction

☎ 251 11 123 97 16 ☎ 1176 ☎ 00251(11) 242719 e-mail: cped@aaau.edu.et

Date: February 14, 2022
Ref. No. C&I/5/72/14

To: _____

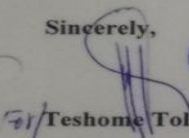
Subject: Cooperation

Mrs. Medhanit Adane is a PhD Student (ID.No. GSR/2501/10) at Addis Ababa University, College of Education & Behavioral Studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She is now doing on her PhD research project entitled "Continuous Professional Development in Higher Education in Ethiopia" as well as an article on "Teachers' Epistemological belief vis-à-vis their Classroom teaching acts."

I would be most grateful if you extend to her all the necessary assistance regarding this matter.

Thank you for your kindness

Sincerely,


Teshome Tola (PhD)
Chairperson, Department of Curriculum and Instruction



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Date: February 14, 2022

Ref. No. C&I/25 /22/14

To: _____

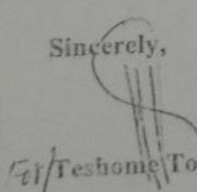
Subject: Cooperation

Mrs. Medhanit Adane is a PhD Student (ID.No. GSR/2501/10) at Addis Ababa University, College of Education & Behavioral Studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She is now doing on her PhD research project entitled "Continuous Professional Development in Higher Education in Ethiopia" as well as an article on "Teachers' Epistemological belief vis-à-vis their Classroom teaching acts."

I would be most grateful if you extend to her all the necessary assistance regarding this matter.

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Handwritten notes and signatures in Amharic script, including names like "Teshome Tola" and "Medhanit Adane".

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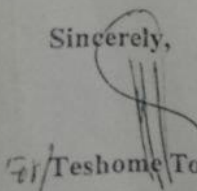
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Appendix D

Transcribed data of Addis Ababa University

1. Academic President (v/center of Excellence) (AP/APR)

Academics' Understanding

Academics understand CPD as a program which is designed to update professionals with current knowledge and as it enables them to discharge their duties effectively.

Individual academics practice of CPD

It depends on different factors, but it can be said that all activities that are done to enhance academics' professional knowledge, skills and attitude can be considered as academics' practices of CPD.

Institutional updating practices

At Addis Ababa university many things are done to capacitate academics this include face-to- face trainings on research, higher education pedagogy like HDP and ICT. Virtuality, the university is giving training with attachment or cooperation of Ministry of Education and Arizona University on how to design and teach online courses. In addition, the university run also different CPD activities like seminars, conferences, workshops, lecture series and experience sharing.

In order to design these different updating programs, the gaps are identified either by performance report, expected roles of academics or research. And, the identified gaps will be part of the institutional plan and the dean follow up and manage the CPD of each academic unit or department.

Institutional Upgrading Practices

The university provides upgrading programs for academics, the major upgrading programs are PhD programs and postdoc programs. Whenever these opportunities are available the university posted the notice through institutional email and also on notice board and those who are interested will apply and join the programs and upgrade themselves.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

There are different institutional reasons to practice CPD of academics: the first one is to enhance teaching and learning as you know CPD equips academics with updated pedagogical approaches, innovative teaching technologies, and subject-matter expertise, ultimately improving the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. The other reason is university run different seminars and conferences, this is done fosters a culture of research and innovation by providing opportunities for academics to develop their research skills, stay abreast of current research trends, and collaborate with colleagues. The aforementioned reasons are important to increase the effectiveness and the efficiency of the institution thereby ensuring quality at the institution.

Individual academics reason to practice CPD

There are also different personal reasons to practice CPD as academics, to mention the felt gap to play the expected role like teaching students or doing research; their experience or the beliefs they have about the dynamicity of the knowledge.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

The presence of accountability in relation to CPD engagement is evident nevertheless the degree of accountability varies based on the type of CPD programs. For instance, in relation update type of CPD academics might not be accountable by the institution. But for upgrading type of CPD the accountability might be series. For instance, if one academic fail to complete PhD program s/he is not allowed to reinstate and work as a lecturer in the university.

To whom

Every academic is responsible to update his knowledge, skills and attitude via CPD therefore the accountability spans from self to the department, dean and to the university at large.

For what activities are academics accountable

The activities to which academics are accountable in relation to their CPD engagement can vary widely. These may include attending training program, workshops, conferences or online courses. If they use money from the institution there is also financial accountability. **But there is no impact accountability.**

With what consequence are academics accountable

The issue of accountability linked to performance evaluation, career advancement and even continued employment. As I have told you earlier, if one academic fail to complete PhD program s/he is not allowed to reinstate and work as a lecturer in the university. More over management bodies may require demonstration CPD as prerequisite for maintaining certification, licensing or attending another CPD programs. For instance, having HDP certificate is prerequisite to attend e-SHE learning.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Several factors can be enablers academics to engage in CPD activities. Individual academics belief about the dynamicity of knowledge and recognition to the value of CPD can be considered as enabler. Moreover, the different provisions of the university can be considered as enablers. These include: provision of CPD opportunity with fund and resources like laptop, internet etc.

Challenges to engage in CPD

The main challenge is to identified specific gaps in different discipline and preparing tailor made CPD which is relevant to all groups.

The other challenge includes lack of awareness and motivation, lack of resources especially in relation to technological apparatuses to learn individually or in group. And also lack of consistent fund for different trainings; usually, they depend on projects. Due to this reason, when there is funding, different trainings are given aggressively; if not, the university may struggle to offer any professional development opportunities. This inconsistency can lead to gaps in skills and knowledge among staff, making it essential for faculty and administrators to seek alternative funding sources or collaborate on projects that can provide the necessary resources for training.

2. Academic Deans (AD)

Academics' Understanding

Academics understanding about CPD varies highly. There are academics who perceive is as a program which is designed to update professionals with current knowledge and as it enables them to discharge their duties effectively. In contrast there are academics who perceive it as something imposed from the top and as if it has lesser importance to their profession.

Individual academics practice of CPD

Individual academics' practice varies based on their interest. There are academics who practice CPD through reading different published books or research works. And/or use different online sources like listening YouTube.

Institutional updating practices

At Addis Ababa University, there are different initiatives that are considered to improve the knowledge and skills of academic staff. This includes face-to-face trainings on research and higher education pedagogy like HDP and ICT. Virtually, the university is giving training with the attachment or cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Arizona University on how to design and teach online courses. In addition, the university also runs different CPD activities like seminars, conferences, workshops, lecture series, and experience sharing.

I am not sure that there is formal system designed to identify skill and knowledge gap to be addressed by CPD in order to design t updating programs.

Institutional Upgrading Practices

The university provides upgrading programs for academics, the major upgrading programs are PhD programs and postdoc programs. Whenever these opportunities are available the university posted the notice through institutional email and also on notice board and those who are interested will apply and join the programs and upgrade themselves.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The basic reason is to capacitate or update the skills, knowledge and overall competencies of the staff in teaching, research and serve as flagship university for other Ethiopian University.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

I do not think there is an issue of accountability. Anyone willing and interested can participate in any available CPD activities either by quota system or by interest. Those unwilling and uninterested can never participate or can drop any time from the program with no consequence.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Numerous factors encourage academics to participate in CPD activities. Individual academics interest and recognition to the value of CPD can be considered as enabler. Moreover, the different provisions of the university like promotion can be considered as enablers.

Challenges to engage in CPD

Misunderstanding on the part of both the staff and the top management about CPD, dissatisfaction of staff in the teaching profession, lack of time, lack of CPD guidelines including strong accountability.

3. Higher Diploma Program Coordinator (HDPC)

Academics' Understanding

The academic staff at Addis Ababa University usually view Continuous Professional Development like Higher Diploma Program as a strategy to improve instructors' pedagogical skills as well as a way of boosting their knowledge of higher education from both the global and national perspectives.

Academics view Higher Diploma Program of course also other continuous professional development activity as requirement or a rule to work in higher education, in general they are expected to do so. When they are doing this (when they participate in any continuous professional development activity) they add their opinion as it is very helpful to update their knowledge, skills and values in a very rapidly changing world. So, in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently instructors must update their knowledge and skill otherwise they can't be competitive or adaptable professionals. In general, they believe that it is important to update their knowledge, skill and values

Individual academics practice of CPD

Academics do different activities to enhance their professional knowledge, skills and attitude. These include attending trainings, doing research, reading different books.

Institutional updating practices

At Addis Ababa university there are also some other activities that are done in order to update academic staff. As you know Addis Ababa university has gained its autonomy, so there is an effort on the part of the office of the vice president. That, every teacher has to update his/ her knowledge.

In addition to higher diploma program, Addis Ababa university has collaborated with Arizona University and teachers are required to take online course (e-SHE) that enables them to design and deliver online courses in addition to other important skills like studying or reading skills and how to manage time. This course involves how to prepare lesson plan, how to deliver course, how to make the lesson interactive, how to use modern instructional technology. Moreover, there are also other short-term trainings or periodic trainings that given now and then. These trainings given to academics to acquaint them with important skill like plagiarism check. The university library is under the office of the university vice president, and this office is responsible for such kind of training. In addition to this the university has also an expert who is working in the office of registrar. He is very clever and provides training in relation to instructional training. So, from this one can understand how the university is aspiring to improve the overall productivity of Addis Ababa University. Particularly with the current idea of university autonomy, the university wants to see itself as flagship university of the country and want to be competitive with other university in the world internationally and hence it gives more emphasis capacitate academics not only by higher diploma program but also by providing different trainings.

We can see this practice in different phases for example some years back the university had conducted need assessment. There was a center that support teaching learning, it is under the office current vice president. This center had conducted a very comprehensive need assessment through two ways: on one hand, distributed online questionnaire to be filled academic teachers but as you know there was poor online questionnaire participation practice most of academics didn't replay the need assessment survey and due to this teaching learning center experts went across all campuses and departments and again distributed questionnaire and they begged teachers to fill out the questionnaire. Therefore, we can say that there was a time proper need assessment was done. But recently the university is assessing the overall global trends. The global trends are given more weight, what is happening overall the world is gaining more weight particularly after the occurrence COVID 19 it has been recognized that teachers have to know how to apply or utilize online learning. Due to this instead of conducting need assessment it is generally a known fact that every university teacher should learn how to use e- learning. It was this the extension of this activity which was started after COVID 19 that the university today increased its activity and work collaboratively with Arizona University, this is an organized learning in the form of distance learning actually it takes between seven days to three weeks depending on the speed of every

teacher. So, this is online delivery that I heard from those who participate in the program. As you know the number of students is decreasing from time to time and technology is expanding rapidly so everybody should know different alternative mode of delivery, that is, how to deliver course by online modality. So, this e- learning is unescapable. For instance, Addis Ababa University is administering Graduate Admission Test (GAT), it is a kind of online testing many couldn't do that because they are lacking the skills. I remember that two or three years ago many candidates who came from Gambella University to join the different département in the college of Education they didn't know how to use computers or how to take courses online test or this graduate admission test, so it is really essential as a nation we have to think how to improve ourselves in this area.

Institutional Upgrading Practices

The university provides upgrading programs for academics, the major upgrading programs are PhD programs and postdoc programs. Whenever these opportunities are available the university posted the notice through institutional email and also on notice board and those who are interested will apply and join the programs and upgrade themselves.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

If one university fails to teach students very well, if you see the situation today students have many easy accesses of the information. So, it is very demanding for a teacher today to know more than their students how to use technology. Besides, in order to tackle professional challenges academics should be knowledgeable, for instance students may use Artificial Intelligence AI to easily answer question or to write their term paper or project paper so the teacher should be in a position ahead of his students. Last time I was facilitating higher diploma program at ASTU, every year I deliver for 15 teachers they told me how it is critical to be competitive because some of their students might know that even better than their teacher. So, it is difficult to check whether the report is written by AI or properly written by the students' effort. To check this, the teacher should be well equipped with technology. You know, unless and otherwise teaching staff keep their pace with this ever-changing world the situations might be difficult to render their service effectively and efficiently.

Individual academics reason to practice CPD

Continuous learning becomes a question of survival; unless we are capable of being competitive, we can't survive. If you want to succeed professionally in academia, you must update your skills

or your knowledge. Despite not being a requirement, everyone feels it is a must today due to competition. If you are less performing, for instance, if you fail to provide the required task with the required time and mode, it is very difficult for academic staff to get promotion and even to survive. All of this comes from the perspective of the individual.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

It is very difficult question; I can't generally say, there is no accountability. But I can dare to say the system of accountability till now in relation to continuous professional development or higher diploma program engagement is very weak. It doesn't clearly show who is accountable for whom or for what, when it comes to continuous professional development or higher diploma program. There is no a kind rule or policy that clearly force academics to participate in continuous professional development or higher diploma program. If somebody say I don't like to participate in higher diploma program, there is no a strategy or a kind of policy to force this person or to make him accountable. In this case I dare to say the system of accountability is poor. But it is difficult to say totally there is no accountability. Because as an academics you must discharge the mission of the university that is research, teaching and community service. For effective delivery of these service continuous professional development is required. In one way or in other way the system of accountability is there. But when it comes to specifically in relation to participation in higher diploma program or continuous professional development is very weak. But I hope now the university is working with autonomous status to implement it fully, new strategies on different issues have been developed right now. In the future, I am sure the line of accountability will be here. And, of course autonomous university must a string system of accountability and how strategy put in place; the day will come that clearly show who is accountable for whom and what should be done for those who don't want to participate; who is active participant and what should be done to encourage them; how we can recognize the participation rate of academics and so on.

And the academics will be accountable to college dean or academic vice president in relation to participation in continuous professional development. Not only accountability but also the system of reward should be there, until now academics are receiving only the certificate.

Very recently there is an attempted by the university to put in place the system of accountability, for example the office of vice president wrote circular letter that clearly state that in order to take the e-learning course which has been delivered in collaboration with Arizona university, completing and having higher diploma certificate is pre-requisite. So, only those academics who have graduate of HDP can participate in this online learning. Everybody was in panic, those academics who didn't take HDP for long time they start to take it, around 19 academics are completing the program this year.

As I told you there is an assumption as it is requirement (rhetoric) the requirement is not so strict, it is based on voluntary base. Until now there is no anything that forced them to participate in Higher Diploma Program but they believe that Higher Diploma Program can contribute to improve to their level of Knowledge and skills and this value is the way they conceptualize Higher Diploma Program or any other capacity building trainings. Particularly those academics from natural science like from medicine and engineering department, since they don't have adequate pedagogical skills like how to teach; how to construct test and how to manage their classroom or how to do action research, they really appreciate it more than those from education field or social science field. Even those from social science who had incorrect assumption like they have taught more than 10 or 20 years and feel as they know everything and there is no need as such to participate in Higher Diploma Program, I personally observed that after completing they liked it very much. Even they themselves reflected that oh we were not teaching our students in good way.

By the way now a day the time or the situation like technological advancement and globalization demand to be engaged in continuous professional development.

Enablers for CPD engagement

There are some enablers factors that motivate academics to be engaged in professional development activities for example the university is committed to provide continuous professional development in different ways; it encourage academic staff to participate in different capacity building activities; the commitment of the top manager is another enabling factor for instance college level manager like deans encourage their respective staff to participate actively in different capacity building trainings. The existence different accesses like computer, internet and laptop etc., it may not be as good as developed nations but currently Addis Ababa university currently has broad band, such access may be enabling factors.

Challenges to engage in CPD

When it comes to the challenges, even though the aforementioned enablers there are still some stubborn academics who shows some degree of resistance or lacks the commitment to any form of training to update themselves. Still, there are many academics who didn't take higher diploma program in teaching, even though it has been implemented over the past 20years. Secondly lack of well qualified trainers particularly when it comes to e-learning or online learning that instructors with instructional technology background. There are many teacher educators who are trained in different education fields like in curriculum, geography, history or physics etc. But really what we are lacking is those academics who are well trained in instructional technology. In the future I believe that particularly for education college to higher post graduate academics of instructional technology who are equipped with both pedagogical knowledge and technological knowledge. Generally, we don't have this kind of person. There is a single person who is working in instructional technology area his background is computer science, that means he lacks pedagogical knowledge.

The other challenge goes with the infrastructure which is present for academics learning needs improvement. Stills academics are using very oldish technological apparatus for both students and their own learning. More computers and computer labs are required for both academics and students' learning. The capacity of the laptops which have been utilized by instructors needs to be improved.

Absence of reward in relation to continuous professional development engagement is another challenge, now a days attempt has been made to consider higher diploma certificate during promotion. It has been said that higher diploma certificate should be considered as requirement for any kind of promotion.

English Language Improvement Program Coordinator (ELIPC)

Academics Understanding

Academics' perceptions of the value of enhancing their English language skills vary based on several factors, such as their field of study, desired careers, institutional expectations, and attitudes toward language acquisition. Let me share a personal story with you. I recall that some academics were attending the program with their students while I was giving training for PhD students. This experience highlighted the diverse approaches to language learning within academia, as some academics actively sought to improve their skills alongside their students.

Individual Academic Practice

Academics could participate in different CPD programs aimed at enhancing their English language proficiency individually and also in groups as members of a learning community. As concerned stakeholders, we also offer them access to English MOOCs. These Massive Open Online Courses provide flexible learning opportunities that allow participants to engage with diverse materials and collaborate with peers from around the world. By leveraging these resources, academics can improve their language skills and foster a sense of global community and shared knowledge.

Updating programs

The program to improve English has slowly lost steam, with training classes happening less often and less until they are almost nonexistent. There are no well- structured professional learning opportunities for the academics. The program isn't working well or being organized because it doesn't have a clear administrative oversight or a designated training center. Because of this, academics don't get much help. A few online trainings are available that are offered in collaboration with MoE and British Council with certification. For instance, English as Medium of Instruction

(EMI) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) awards a certificate upon successful completion of the program. But, at university level the program is highly weakened.

Upgrading programs

There is one program named English as Medium of Instruction (EMI), which is provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) with International Collaboration (British Council) and is designed to improve university teachers' language proficiency. The program will provide a certificate upon successful completion. This certification not only enhances the teachers' skills but also equips them to deliver high-quality instruction in English, thereby benefiting students in a globalized academic environment. Participants will engage in various training modules that focus on both language and pedagogical strategies.

Institutional Reason to practice CPD (ELIP)

English is used as medium of instruction at university therefore capacitating academics is important to achieve institutional goal. I don't know the reason behind the program is less emphasized now.

Reasons Why Academics Recognize the Importance of English Proficiency

Academics teach their course in English; therefore, they need to communicate effectively with their students. In addition to disseminating their research findings, most academic journals publish their articles in English. The goal of academics' language improvement is to facilitate international networking and collaboration. This emphasis on English proficiency enhances their academic interactions and opens up opportunities for participation in global conferences and workshops. Ultimately, by mastering the language, they can share their insights and contribute to a broader discourse within their fields.

Accountability

As far as my information, it is difficult to say there is direct accountability in relation to language's professional development, but indirectly there are different professional accountabilities. For instance, if they couldn't teach well using English, or if they didn't publish using English, they couldn't find their career advancement or stay as academic at higher education. This creates an environment where proficiency in English becomes essential for success in academia.

Consequently, educators may feel pressured to enhance their language skills to meet these indirect expectations and ensure their continued professional growth.

Challenges

Overconfidence or Underestimation CPD programs: some academics may overestimate their English proficiency, assuming it is sufficiently adequate for research and teaching, even when linguistic limitations hinder clarity, precision, and impact. This misplaced confidence can lead to stagnation in language development, as they may not actively seek improvement.

Furthermore, it is generally known that academics are frequently underpaid, forcing them to take on extra jobs to satisfy basic needs. This means that time limits make it hard to improve one's language skills, as work and money issues become more important than improving one's profession or English.

Information Communication Coordinator (ICTC)

Academics understanding (ICT)

Current academics are aware of the university's goal and legislation and are digitizing all university services. Therefore, academics are aware that having technological knowledge is an important thing. This understanding enables them to integrate digital tools into their teaching methods, which enhance the learning experience for students. As a result, there is a growing emphasis on professional development programs that focus on improving technological skills among faculty members.

Individual practice (ICT)

There are courses that are released on our portal in collaboration with Arizona University and China; these courses are important to help academics in designing online courses. Academics can learn these courses at their self- pace. They provide valuable insights into effective online teaching methods and innovative course design strategies. By participating in these courses, academics can enhance their skills and better engage their students in a digital learning environment.

Updating (ICT)

To prepare different trainings, we conduct a needs assessment using institutional email by sending it to all academics, but only a few academics respond to that email. We use these few responses as input for designing the training programs. Besides, during the meeting, we took training ideas. In addition, we do have a training and support team; this team collects different training ideas from different departments. This collaborative approach helps us identify common themes and specific needs across the institution. By combining feedback from both the email responses and departmental input, we strive to create more targeted and effective training programs that address the diverse requirements of our academics. Based on this collected information we design trainings using hybrid or blended modality.

Currently, especially after the university became autonomous, top managers are informing academics that the digitalization of every service is a must. It is a must for every academic to take Master Class Training (MCT). This training aims to equip academics with the necessary skills to navigate and implement digital tools effectively in their teaching and research. As a result, academics are increasingly expected to adapt to new technologies and integrate them into their curricula to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Upgrading (ICT)

There are academic enhancement programs that are offered with certification. For instance, Master Class Training (MCT) awards a diploma upon successful completion of the program.

Institutional reason to practice CPD (ICT)

The digitization of every service delivered by the university is one of its goals. Therefore, to achieve this goal, different training and upgrading programs are delivered to academics. In addition, these programs take into account the constantly evolving worldwide environment. This ensures that academics are well-equipped to integrate new technologies into their teaching methods and research practices. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, the university aims to enhance both the student experience and academic output.

Individual academics reason to practice CPD (ICT)

There are different reasons to practice CPD in relation to ICT, to mention some: to be competent, to get additional income, and to deliver their course to the expected standard (A standard of 30%

of the course should be delivered through an online modality). Additionally, engaging in CPD in relation to ICT allows individuals to stay updated with the latest trends and technological advancements in their field, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness and career prospects. This commitment to learning not only benefits professionals but also improves the quality of service provided to clients and stakeholders.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement (ICT)

There is no strong accountability yet, but I'm sure there will be soon. But nowadays, just like that of HDP, taking MCT became mandatory to be a teacher at the university level. Additionally, there are other courses that focus on the ethical use of AI. These courses aim to prepare educators to navigate the complexities of technology in the classroom while fostering a responsible approach to AI integration. As the landscape of education evolves, understanding these ethical considerations will become increasingly vital for both teachers and students alike.

Enablers

There are different enablers for professional development programs in relation to ICT. To mention some: presences of awareness: now every academic knows the importance of technological knowledge; presence of infrastructures, and world ever changing situation can be considered as enablers.

Challenges

The challenges associated with ICT Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs can be examined from the perspectives of various stakeholders. From an individual standpoint, barriers such as technophobia, frustration, and misconceptions persist, alongside a lack of incentives for developing online courses.

At the institutional level, the absence of a dedicated training center remains a significant constraint, as computer labs, originally intended for general use, are repurposed for teacher training.

From a policy perspective, there is a lack of a clear, comprehensive policy framework to support the digitalization of university-wide services. This problem hinders the wholistic integration of technological advancements into academic and administrative operations meaning in their teaching, researching and also serving the community.

Academic staff (AS1-5)

Academics' Understanding

It is a means to update one's professional quality. It has been used as a tool to share ideas and improve the skills and values of academics (AS1)

CPD helps me to be effective in teaching and learning or teaching method (AS2,3)

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to my understanding is pursuing any kind of opportunity to upgrade one's own experience, understanding knowledge through on-job training (AS4).

Continuous professional development as the term itself tells you something, professionals should develop their skill, knowledge or attitude in order to render appropriate service. Normally in this dynamic world since there are enormous technological advancements, I think continuous professional development is mandatory for any service provider. This because everything is changing time to time, for instance if you see the advancement of technology, it is enormous. So, academics should update themselves with these technological advancements.

At Addis Ababa University if you take HDP once, you are not required to any another pedagogical science training. We advise students without taking supervision training. In my view not only academic staff but also the university or the institutions should reconceptualized continuous professional development again. This is because all the designed one shoot packages like higher diploma program many not be enough to keep pace with this fast-changing situations, since they lack continuity. Generally, I perceive continuous professional development as a very important thing to keep pace with this ever- changing work environment.

Individual academics practice of CPD

I practice through reading Published material, doing research and publication, discussing with friends attending educational training (seminar, or conference) (AS1-5 all interviewees)

I engaged continuous professional development through various approaches. I consistently read scholarly published articles and books, which contributes significantly to my professional learning. Additionally, I publish articles a process that allows me to acquire new knowledge, skill and insight. Furthermore, I have established international networks which helped me to pursued my postdoc at Harvard University independently without the support and recognition of Addis Ababa University. I said this because the university doesn't give leave, even I did it by taking my sabbatical leave, even the certificate I brought didn't get any value (no salary increasement or reward). What benefit I got from my postdoc is the articles I published during the process. So, this is to mean that the value which is given for self- initiated learning or engagement needs improvement.

If you see the disparity of the individual academics practice of continuous professional development is very high. There are academics who actively engage themselves in various professional development activities on the contrary there are academics who spent much of their time by calming government, society, students and all the contemporary situations (AS5).

I attend online training to enriches subject expertise and teaching techniques (AS2 & AS3)

Institutional updating and Upgrading practices

At Addis Ababa university many things are given on various issues like HDP, short term training on research method and grant writing etc (AS1-5 all interviewees).

Addis Ababa University uses various approach to update or upgrade academics to mention some giving well organized continuous professional development like higher diploma program, scheduling lecture series, monthly seminar series, and training on various issues (AS5).

On the top of everything if you see the training practice that are given at Addis Ababa university they are top- driven meaning which lacks need based assessment and which couldn't address the

individual need of academics. As far as my information self-need assessments have not been conducted (AS5).

If you see the follow- up and support of the top management when there is fund for the training program it is good, otherwise the follow up or the support which is given for the continuous professional development is not that much (AS5).

Institutional reason to practice CPD

I think that is a trend at national level.

It's critical for academics to practice CPD to be a successful educational institution in light of the development of technology and its effects on how students learn. Academics need it to update them.

In order to equip the trainee or instructor with required competency.

In order to achieve their goals, the instructors should develop their profession.

In order to acquaint the instructors with required competency the university provides training.

CPD is practiced to ensure professionally stay current with evolving knowledge in their field, promote career growth and advancement, adapt to the changing demand of the society and the market and ensure the quality and continuous teaching and researching.

Individual academics reason to practice CPD

I feel that there is a need for updating and fitting to time requirement. If I tell you my experience, the primary thing that drives my Continuing Professional Development practice is addressing my identified gaps through reflection. Upon finishing a semester or academic year, I carefully evaluate the positive and negative aspects, as well as strategies for improving my professional competence moving forward. I read and refer many online publications to address my deficiencies.

(AS1).

I am living in this dynamic world so I have to update with my knowledge with recent information (AS2, 4).

The main reason I practice CPD are my aspiration for professional development, the importance of staying update. I also value lifelong learning and adaptability (AS3).

The teaching methods of twenty years ago are significantly different from those of today. With easy access to information, the gap between professionals and nonprofessionals has narrowed significantly. Therefore, in order to remain relevant, professionals must enhance their knowledge and skills. Students, advancements, time, and space are demanding professional development; otherwise, academics could not be relevant service providers unless they enhance their professionalism through CPD.

The reason that lay behind professional development practice quest the professionalism of teaching and supervising students. I said this because academics who have good performance in their discipline specific knowledge are recruited to teach and supervise students without taking the ‘how to do it’ this quest the professionalization of teaching. In Ethiopian context on the date of recruitment, an academic may assigned as supervisor. In my view every academic should be trained for every service he or she is providing in higher education. Sole subject matter knowledge is enough to render the service (teaching, doing research, supervising students and serving the community) effectively and efficiently. In international context in order to be supervisor for graduate or under graduate students you need to have certificate of supervision that ensures as you have the required skill and knowledge. There is also program named teaching in higher education context. So, all these things should be done to keep the professionalism of academics.

The other reason for decreased continuous professional development is economic factors. I have got the opportunity to visit international university which have continuous professional development center, if you see that one it is huge investment that might be difficult for Ethiopia context (AS5).

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

In the university, even if it is not strong there is accountability of staff regarding their CPD engagement like HDP as well as MA and PhD upgrading education, getting minimum requirements, tracking and reporting CPD activities (AS1).

There is accountability but its practicality is nominal, meaning you might find academics who are teaching at higher education even for more than a decade without taking HDP(AS2).

There is accountability for attendance and report (AS3, AS4)

In relation to continuous professional development engagement and accountability, nothing is there both teachers who took and didn't take higher diploma program are working together for many years. Besides no one accounts academics whether you publish or not; Whether you attend monthly seminar or lecture series or not. This shows the value which is given for continuous professional development endeavors. If you see the promotion guideline of the university, you can't continuous professional development as a one criterion. If so, the value given for it will be improved (AS5).

Enablers for CPD engagement

I am motivated to continuously learn and develop professionally as it improves my passion and ability for both teaching and research. I would also like to promote my career ranks. It allows me to better mentor students and help them achieve their full potential. There are also many funding opportunities available for conferences and other CPD activities which help win awards, offset costs. The engagement in CPD activities provides me the opportunity to contact and with professionals, prominent scholars, and researchers locally and from abroad to learn from their expertise and experiences in research, publication, and community services (AS1).

My personal interest and beliefs to be confidential and effective professional motivate me to be engaged in CPD (AS2, AS3)

To adapt myself with the change and context to share experiences with colleague (A4)

For me the opportunity I have got internationally by far exceeds the opportunity I got from Addis Ababa University (AS5).

Challenges to engage in CPD

The only continuous professional development program which is well managed and implemented is higher diploma program which is given for one year, but like that of preservice education program after completing it, no impact analysis or update has been done. If you take my case, I took it at 2007E.C given that the information I got during that time might not work today after a decade. But, every year I report as I took higher diploma program. The other challenge is considering it as it works every time for every department, as far as my understanding contents of higher diploma program are not as such relevant for those academics whose background is education or who took pedagogy course. For these academics' higher diploma program is done only for the sake of report given that no value is added on academics' knowledge or skill (AS1).

The main challenge is the university doesn't give recognition for self- initiated continuous professional development engagement. University wide trainings are not given continuously and also the are not well organized and also well managed (AS2).

The value which is given for completing certain continuous professional development is very less, this decreases the commitment of academics to participate in professional learning (AS3).

The various professional endeavors like trainings, the contents are not selected felt or assessed need of individual academics. For instance, if training is designed to show how to open email or how to write publishable article it is irrelevant for me put it differently inability of the institution to prepare tailor driven CPD activities(AS4)

The organizational culture also doesn't encourage to work or to learn together. For instance, if you see an international context sole publication is not acknowledged rather published article collaboratively has high credit. The problem of higher education CPD is the institution itself because the professionalism of academics should be kept by the university. Some academics are recruited because they have subject matter knowledge and teach at higher education without taking

HDP for some years; they are relatives of top managers; or they are assigned by the government. Due to this reason, some higher education institutions space is occupied by non-professionals. The other major challenge that makes continuous professional development less valued is the inability of the institution to relate engagement of continuous professional development with incentives or promotions. The other related challenge is since academics are low paid workers in Ethiopian context, they invest much of their time by doing income generating activities. Due to this reason even, there are academic who are leaving the profession without upgrading their career (AS5)

The other challenge is most of the continuous professional development activities are not owned by academics they are top- driven ones and also absence of fund for professional development activities is another challenge, for instance when there is no fund from SIDA the higher diploma program will be prolonged for next semester or totally stop. In short it is project based.

The other pertinent challenge the university system in relation to academics' continuous professional development lag behind the individual practice. As, I have told you earlier, I pursued my postdoc without the recognition of the university. I can dare to say the system is blind to see and act proactively with the existing changing world. The Bureaucracy of finance is another persistent challenge that hinder us to design and deliver various trainings (AS5).

FGD 1. Focus Group Discussion Participant (FGDP1-6): Conducted July 2, 2024

FGD1 Addis Ababa University

- 1. How do academic staffs understand and practice continuous professional development in the four universities? FGD**

First speaker (16 years of experience)

In my view professional development has paramount importance for both academic and the institutions.

In my experience at secondary school level the school systematize the program and plan implement, manage and evaluate the process. In higher education is the future is quite different. At Addis Ababa university it is not only higher diploma program which is practiced as continuous professional development. If you see the practice at higher education it varies from individual self-learning to university wide trainings. The individual academics read and do research and very body is publishing. As you know doing research develop your skill and Knowledge. Even though this is out of the intent of CPD by the institution; even though there are no initiatives, professionals are working on developing their knowledge and they publish locally and internationally. This is the major line through which academics equip themselves what their profession demand. In my case I attend trainings, conferences and online learnings through this I professional develop and I hope the profile of the university will develop with me. When I come to higher diploma program it pursues traditional way of continuous professional development. The reason is that it is top- driven or doner- driven which the academics didn't participate starting from planning to implementation, even after completion no one check its actual implementation. **Generally**, I can dare to say the self- learning of academics exceed the institutional practice.

FGD speaker 5 (34-minute speaker)

In my view there are two types of academic staff who are not bridge, in one hand there are academics who are working by extending their retirement and these groups are not actively participating in different continuous professional development activities. On the other hand, there are young academics who are actively updating and upgrading themselves even without expecting the institution to do so. This to mean that the personal effort of young academics' staff exceeds the institutional effort.

2. The institutional practices of Addis Ababa University include the following activity (FGD)

Second speaker 1

In order to capacitate academics Addis Ababa university use both upgrading and updating.

Upgrading: PhD and postdoc opportunity

Updating: online like e-SHE and face to face training like HDP and the different trainings that are implemented to capacitate academics; research conference; seminar; lecture series.

To be honest such practices like e- SHE gives us important knowledge about e- learning, both how to teach and also how to learn. This e-SHE training lasts for two weeks and you will be certified up on the accomplishment. Generally, the different updating practices include: doing research through which you can learn different thing (Adaptive research, Thematic research and women research).

At Addis Ababa University induction is not given the reason is that, academics are recruited if and on if they are PhD holder or Assistant professors who have published expected number of research work!

Second speaker 2 (24 year of experience)

At Addis Ababa university there are numerous local and international continuous professional development opportunities. Internationally for instance, there are postdoc and fellowship. These types are better than the local in their experience, exposure and also economically. Locally, everybody is expected to take higher diploma program and we tool it.

3. Why do the four universities and academic staffs practice the way they practice?

First speaker (16 years' experience)

For me, I believe that, stopping learning is being retired, learning is lifelong. The main reason for being engaged in continuous professional development activities the profession demands it. Besides, as a research university upgrading to PhD level now becomes mandatory. Again, if you fail to complete you will terminate your contract from the university, meaning you will be fired. Not only upgrading but also now a days since our university is research university, publishing articles is mandatory for all academics all these demands professional learning of academics.

Third speaker

My field is Tiratricol Art, therefore, whenever you receive new script, you need to be good learner of that characteristics. Otherwise, you can't be effective professional. For instance, in order to act some historical event effectively, you have to be good learner. Therefore, continuous professional learning is a compulsory thing.

4. How do academic staffs account about their continuous professional development? (FGD)

Speaker two:

It is better to say there is no organizational accountability for continuous professional development engagement especially for the updates type of continuous professional development, for instance still there are academics who didn't take higher diploma program but taught at Addis Ababa University for more than ten years. But there is organizational accountability for upgrading type of continuous professional development. For instance, if someone fails to complete PhD program locally or institutionally then the university will not allow even to reinstate. He or she will be automatically out of system. But this organizational accountability strength varies as leaders exchange meaning it lacks consistency across all colleges and institutions. For instance, at college of Ethiopian studies there is tight implementation of the organizational accountability.

Besides there is tight financial accountability that highly focus on the proper usage of resources and budget allocated for training purpose. Furthermore, there is also professional accountability through which academics account themselves and engaged in professional learning to improve their teaching standard, their ability in doing and publishing research and in serving the community. But surprisingly there is no any type accountability that accounts the impact of the delivered or provided professional development program.

Speaker three

The university provide upgrading opportunities for academics in local university or international university. So, pursuing education to PhD level is mandatory. If you fail to complete PhD program even you can't reinstate as instructor in the university.

sixth speaker

There is no organizational accountability the hold academics for not upgrading or updating themselves to the expected standard. But, because of professional behavior or professional ethics and also the issue of moral, everybody strives to pursue education to PhD level and also to complete it.

Fifth speaker

In relation to accountability now a days different rules and regulations that forces to upgrade and also to publish are coming. But a few years a go there was no a kind of organizational accountability due to this reason there are academic staff who were retired with master's degree without having publications.

5. What are the enablers and challenges in practicing continuous professional development in the four universities?

Second speaker

Enablers

The university provides numerous opportunity both in upgrading and updating. In case of upgrading, provide chance to pursue PhD with your full salary if it is local and if it is abroad full salary for one year and half salary for the coming four or six years. It can be said that the full financial support of the university can be considered as reward. And, in the case of updating provide different trainings. These different trainings have certificate that can be considered as reward and important to work at higher education effectively. Besides, the university provide research fund through which the academics benefited both by gaining knowledge through research and also, they are benefited economically. In order to encourage academics, there is incentives for those academics who published in reputable journals. For very few academics, there is also coverage of conference paper.

The other enabler might include the provisions important resources like laptop, office, internet access, different resources required for training etc.

Sixth speaker

The presence of home allowance, transport allowance, stationary cost allowance during pursuing PhD can be considered as enabler. In addition, up on the completion of upgrade program for instance when you complete your PhD program as soon as you bring a paper your salary will be promoted. This can be considered as reward.

Fourth speaker

The presence of digital library that has advanced technological equipment is a good thing or enabler who want to pursue continuous professional development.

Almost all speakers

Reward in relation to CPD engagement

Up on completing different trainings there is certificate,

Up on publishing on reputable journal there is incentive

Challenge

Second speaker

The primary institutionalized program for continuous professional development is the Higher Diploma Program. However, its content often lacks relevance for participants with prior educational backgrounds. Additionally, the trainers are not highly knowledgeable they come out among us, and the program is not supported by instructional technology or practical classroom applications. Furthermore, the Higher Diploma Program emphasizes pedagogy exclusively, with little to no focus on subject-specific content or contemporary ideas like instructional technology. As a result, many academics do not want to attend it willingly rather just to fulfill the requirements that are expected from them. Generally, it can be said that the content lacks relevance, the approach pursued is very traditional, trainers are not knowledgeable in technology and the total program is not augmented by technology.

Since university instructors are low paid workers much of their time is occupied by doing other income generating activities. For instance, most of academics spend their time in teaching other private colleges or they are busy in doing consultancy activities. This economical constraint let them not to focus on their professional development activities mentally and physically.

As I have told you, doing research is one way through which academics learn different professional competencies, but the financial bureaucracy or hassle doesn't initiate you to do so.

Sixth Speaker

Another significant challenge is the lack of accountability. For example, although the university organizes various seminar and lecture series as part of professional development programs,

nonattendance carries no consequences. As a result, many academics refrain from participating in these continuous professional development initiatives.

In upgrading program for instance in pursuing PhD the relationship between the candidate and the advisor is not that much supportive. Most advisors are not trained in advising students. In addition, the provision is not as good as international university. For instance, if you see the experience of developed countries, when you start PhD immediately you will receive key of an office which have all the required resource. In Ethiopia this experience is present in few departments but it doesn't expand across all departments.

FGD 2 Addis Ababa

1. How do academic staffs understand and practice continuous professional development in the four universities? FGD

Speaker one (ten years' experience):

In my understanding continuous professional development is a very important thing for academics. I will be very happy if there is higher diploma program one, two, three and so on. Because, we only took one higher diploma program that lasted for one year and this may not work throughout our lifespan or our stay at higher education. There may be different knowledge or information that may be phaseout after sometimes. And hence continuous update is a mandatory thing for any type of professional learning.

Speaker two (5years experience):

As the previous speaker said the importance of continuous professional development has no doubt, it is important for any professionals. Let me tell you my practice, most of the time I prefer to learn from online source. Sometimes if there is something that I cannot understand even from the online I ask my friends to get more clarification of concepts. In this way I practice continuous professional development. The other means of practicing continuous professional development is from reflecting on my past experience. For instance, when I repeatedly teach one course depth of my

understanding increase from time to time. In addition, there is regular seminars at Addis Ababa university, through attending these seminars we share and gain knowledge.

Speaker three (nine years):

Most of the time I learn by reading contemporarily published articles.

2. The institutional practices of Addis Ababa University include the following activity (FGD)

Speaker Two:

As higher education continuous professional development is practiced through self- learning, professional dialogue or experience sharing, lecture series, higher diploma program, seminars, trainings, collegial discussions and reflection.

3. Why do the four universities and academic staff practice the way they practice?

Speaker one:

The reason for my practice of continuous professional development is students' feedback. Most of the time after I give mid- examination, I ask students to give me feedback and the repeated comments from different sections or from different students will inform my continuous professional development practice. The other reason for my continuous professional practice is easy access. If you take reason for using online learning is its easy accessibility. The other reason for my professional development practice is absence of formally organized means of continuous professional development. This leads you to pursue your own way.

4. How do academic staffs account about their continuous professional development? (FGD)

Speaker two:

Rhetorically, it might present but practically there is no strong accountability that account us in relation to our CPD engagement.

Speaker five:

Mostly as an academic, I am accountable to myself, to my student and to the institution. I strive to meet the expectation of my institution to provide a high-quality education to my student which is main reason to my professional development practice.

5. What are the enablers and challenges in practicing continuous professional development in the four universities?

Speaker three

The enablers can be the availability of international networking and funding opportunities that CPD activities offer and the different provisions of the university, like full salary (for local upgrading), promotion of salary upon completion of PhD, laptops, internet, and offices. Even though, different trainings and higher diploma program is delivered for academics but there is platform that enables them to practice what they gained by the training. For instance, there fifty students in my class so, it will be difficult to implement differentiated instruction or to implement the different active learning strategies that I learned for higher diploma program. Besides, as you know action research is a means to solve classroom problem that is why we learned it as one section in higher diploma program. Nevertheless, if you see many researches in higher education, they are basic research that are less important to solve classroom problems.

Speaker four:

Different trainings are given to update academics with new knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, these trainings are given randomly, there is no any department or unit to plan, implement, and also

to evaluate the impact of training. Therefore, there should be an agent which responsible for teachers' continuous professional development.

Speaker five:

There is no motivation for those academics who actively participate in continuous professional development or there is no reward for active participation in continuous professional development participation or engagement. Why I attend seminar or any other training activities if I am treated equally with those who did not attend. Even many academics attend continuous professional development activities simply to get certificate which is found upon completion.

Speaker Six:

The major challenge to be engaged in CPD is our low salary. Honestly speaking, I am sure one day I will leave the profession due to this I do not want to spend time to update or upgrade my knowledge or skills. Many academics are chauffeur ride, or they are merchant or consultant for non- governmental organization. They have to additional income generating job to satisfy their basic need.

Speaker five:

For better future action education should be freed from politics and allocation of the required resources and budget is required.

Appendix E

Transcribed data of Hawassa University

Transcribed data of Hawassa University

Academic President (v/center of Excellence) (AP/APR)

Academics' Understanding

Academics generally understand that CPD is critical or demanding for their expected role in the university. Especially if the type of CPD approach is a bottom-up approach, meaning if the CPD program is designed based on a request or felt gap, they view it as very critical, and even the institution might face a large number of trainees in one session, which might be challenging for the trainer.

Individual academic practice

Academics engage in continuing professional development through activities such as reading published materials, doing research and publications, discussing with peers, and participating in educational training sessions, including seminars and conferences.

Institutional Updating

At our university, CPD initiatives include attending conferences, workshops, and seminars; engaging in research activities; and participating in training programs such as online (e-SHE) and offline training. Induction, multidimensional short-term training in research methodology and grant writing, etc.

Need assessment

A few years ago, a survey was done, but at that time the culture of responding to the request was not promising, but now it is based on requested demand from the needy.

CPD planning at Hawassa University differs among colleges, and the absence of a standardized strategy and resources leads to inconsistencies. The quality assurance stakeholders plan in a supply-driven manner without departmental input.

Follow up

Department heads and colleges are required to provide training attendance and reports.

Institutional upgrading practices

At Hawassa University there is a good opportunity for academics who want to pursue their PhD nationally and internationally.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The primary motivation stems from the desire to achieve the national objective. CPD is a program that is practiced to ensure professionals stay current with evolving knowledge in their field, promote career growth and advancement, adapt to the changing demands of society and the market, and ensure the quality and continuity of teaching and research with good quality.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

The profession by nature demands this or continuous professional development and also to develop their professional career, to gain knowledge, to be competent, and to transfer knowledge to others. To achieve these goals, professionals must engage in lifelong learning, attend workshops, and seek mentorship opportunities. This commitment not only enhances their skills but also fosters a culture of collaboration and innovation within their field.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

There is hierarchical accountability: academics are accountable to the department and then to the dean, and academics are also accountable to their students.

Enablers for CPD engagement

At Hawassa University, there are program and resource enablers. As program enablers, there is a favorable opportunity to pursue master's and PhD programs. Additionally, they frequently provide training on various topics. As resource enablers, even though there are not enough laptop computers, offices, Wi-Fi, and the like, they are provided.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Some of the challenges of academics include lack of commitment, inadequacy of financial provisions for CPD activity, lack of resources, materials, or facilities to give different trainings, and disparity among departments: it is strong on the health and education campus; on other campuses, it is not as prominent.

Academic Deans (AD)

Academics' Understanding

Understanding of CPD among academics varies significantly. Some academics view it as a program aimed at updating professionals with current knowledge, thereby enabling them to perform their duties effectively. Conversely, some academics view it as a top-down imposition, considering it to hold lesser significance within their profession.

Individual academic practice

The practices of individual academics differ according to their interests. Academics engage in continuous professional development by reading various published books and research studies. Utilize various online sources, such as listening to content on YouTube. These platforms provide valuable insights and diverse perspectives that can enhance their understanding of different fields. Additionally, attending conferences and workshops further allows them to network and exchange ideas with peers.

Institutional Updating

At Addis Hawassa University, there are different initiatives that are being considered to improve the knowledge and skills of academic staff. This program includes face-to-face trainings on research and higher education pedagogy like HDP and ICT. Virtually, the university is providing training, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Arizona University, on how to design and teach online courses. In addition, the university also runs different CPD activities like seminars, conferences, workshops, lecture series, and experience sharing. These activities enhance the professional development of faculty and foster a culture of continuous learning and collaboration within the academic community. By engaging in these initiatives, staff members are better equipped to adapt to evolving educational demands and improve the overall quality of instruction provided to students.

Institutional upgrading practices

The university offers upgrading programs for academics, primarily consisting of PhD and postdoctoral programs. The university disseminates information about available opportunities via institutional email and notice boards. Interested individuals may apply to participate in the programs to enhance their skills.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The basic reason is to capacitate or update the skills, knowledge, and overall competencies of the staff in teaching and research. This ensures that they remain effective educators and researchers in an ever-evolving academic landscape. By fostering continuous professional development, institutions can enhance the quality of education and innovation within their programs.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

The need for academic staff to continuously improve themselves and their careers is highlighted by the ever-changing demands of the modern world. Academics must constantly update their knowledge and modify their practices to stay effective and relevant as the social and educational landscapes change. Universities have begun to encourage their faculty members to participate in continuous professional development (CPD) programs in recognition of this. Outside entities or organizations frequently support this involvement, in addition to internal encouragement. In addition, a growing number of academic staff members are stepping up to help and guide their peers, which promotes a cooperative culture of development and mutual learning within the organization.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement is evident; however, the degree of accountability varies depending on the type of CPD programs. For instance, the institution may not hold academics accountable for updating the type of CPD. However, for upgrading the type of CPD, a series of accountability measures may be implemented. For example, if an academic fails to complete a PhD program, they are not permitted to reinstate and serve as a lecturer at the university.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Hawassa University offers upgrading opportunities, including PhD and master's programs both locally and internationally, as well as various training sessions available in virtual and face-to-face formats. A certificate is conferred upon completion. Laptop computers, office spaces, and internet access are made available to all academics. These resources aim to enhance the learning environment and support research initiatives. Additionally, the university fosters collaboration with industry partners to ensure that programs remain relevant and aligned with current job market needs.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Despite the recognized value of continuous professional development (CPD), several challenges hinder its effectiveness and sustainability. Financial constraints and limited budgets often restrict access to quality training opportunities and resources. In addition, a lack of motivation among staff—sometimes stemming from heavy workloads or unclear incentives—can reduce engagement in CPD activities. Logistical issues, such as scheduling conflicts, limited availability of training sessions, or inadequate facilities, further complicate participation. Even when CPD programs are successfully completed, a recurring concern is the lack of proper implementation of the skills and knowledge acquired, which undermines the overall impact of such initiatives on teaching and learning practices.

Higher Diploma Program Coordinator (HDPC)

Academics' Understanding

Some educators participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs, such as Higher Diploma Programs (HDPs), solely to obtain the required certificate for teaching in higher education. Others perceive CPD as essential only for academics lacking pedagogical expertise or formal education training. Additionally, there are educators who recognize the significance of CPD for all teachers aspiring to enhance their competence and effectiveness in the profession.

Individual academic practice

Academics practice CPD through reading, experience sharing, and attending training.

Institutional Updating

At Hawassa University, induction is given for newly recruited academic staff, and the other is one-year HDP training based on the department quota, since it is difficult to give training for all academic staff in a year.

Trainings are given frequently to academics on research, statistics, and important software. These trainings are crucial in capacitating academics in their research.

Need assessment

A few years ago, an attempt was made to assess the needs of academics, but now simply training is given on common themes.

Plan

Every year, as an institution, the number of academics who will take HDP is planned.

Follow up

There is attendance during the training session and a report at the end, but both of these things don't have any consequence.

Reward

Effective engagement or dropout doesn't have any consequence. I remember, among my trainees, the one who was actively involved—I gave him a book as a reward from my personal initiatives.

Institutional upgrading practices

Hawassa University provides both PhD and master's programs for academics who wish to pursue their education.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The continuous professional program is one of the programs implemented by the Ministry of Education to ensure quality; as you may know, HDP is the one. And hence the reason is to ensure quality in higher education.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Working at higher education requires constant learning; this is impossible without the capacity to stay competitive. Continually improving your knowledge and abilities is crucial for academic success. Despite not being required, there is a general belief that, given the competitive environment, it has become indispensable. Academic staff members' chances of advancement and general job security can be severely hampered by underperformance, such as not finishing assignments in the allotted time and format. This viewpoint is based on personal experience.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Academics are not expressly required by law or policy to pursue higher diploma programs or engage in ongoing professional development. There is no plan or procedure in place to force someone to participate in a higher diploma program or to hold them responsible if they show a reluctance to do so. In this case, I have to say that the accountability system is deficient. However, it cannot be said that there is a complete lack of accountability. Fulfilling the university's mission, which includes teaching, research, and community service, is an expected role for academics. The efficient provision of these services depends on continuous improvement. In one form or another, the accountability system is in place.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Although the availability of computers, the internet, and laptops may not be the same as in developed countries, Hawassa University currently provides broadband, which may be a contributing factor.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Since HDP is given based on the quota given to that department, you might find academics who teach at higher education without taking HDP.

People often underestimate the significance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Some academics only participate in HDP training to get the certifications required to teach in higher education. Academic participation in continuing professional development (CPD) is inadequate. It has proven challenging for individual scholars to identify and describe the gaps that formalized CPD programs could fill.

English Language Improvement Program Coordinator (ELIPC)

Academics' Understanding

The perceptions of academics regarding the importance of improving their English language skills differ due to various factors, including their area of study, career aspirations, institutional requirements, and personal attitudes toward language learning. There is a need to be engaged in CPD endeavor that focus on language proficiency.

Individual academic practice

Both individually and in a learning community, academics can participate in various CPD programs aimed at enhancing their English language skills. There are English MOOCs available to them to improve their language skills. These massively open online courses provide flexible learning experiences that let students engage with a range of resources and work together with classmates around the world. By making use of these resources, students can improve their language skills and develop a sense of global community and knowledge.

Institutional Updating

At the university level, the program has significantly diminished. Training sessions have become less frequent until they are almost nonexistent, and the effort to improve English proficiency has progressively decreased. The academics' learning opportunities are not well organized. The lack of a designated training center and clear administrative oversight is causing problems for the program's organization and functionality. Academics consequently get little support. The British Council and the Ministry of Education collaborate to offer a number of certified online training courses. For instance, upon successful program completion, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) offer certificates. On the other hand.

Institutional upgrading practices

In relation to English, there are upgrade programs except for English department academics.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The university's use of English as the primary language of instruction emphasizes how crucial it is to improve academic skills to achieve institutional goals. I don't know why the program is currently receiving less attention.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Academics must communicate effectively with their students because they teach in English. In addition to disseminating research findings, most academic journals publish their articles in English.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

My understanding is that there are a number of indirect professional responsibilities involved, but it is difficult to claim direct accountability with regard to language development.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Availability of programs like MOOCs & EMI and availability of resources like laptops, Wi-Fi, & offices.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Overconfidence or improper assessment CPD programs: Although linguistic barriers can hinder clarity, precision, and overall impact, some academics may have an exaggerated view of their English proficiency, thinking it is sufficient for research and instruction. This unjustified confidence could prevent people from pursuing opportunities for improvement, which would hinder language development.

Furthermore, it is well known that academics frequently receive insufficient pay, which forces them to look for additional work to cover their basic expenses. Because professional and financial concerns frequently take precedence over the advancement of one's career or English proficiency, time constraints can impede the improvement of language skills.

Information Communication Coordinator (ICT)

Academics' Understanding

Academics recognize the significance of fulfilling their expected responsibilities, particularly in teaching and research. And they are aware that technology helps them to do their day today effectively and efficiently.

Individual academic practice

Academics engage in technological enhancement programs via in-person instruction and participation online. Scholars also engage with YouTube and refer to various electronic sources.

Institutional Updating

The university provides different trainings, like the training on the title, master class for teaching online courses, and computer skills—during COVID, when things went online, how to use the online platform.

Institutional upgrading practices

Regarding ICT, upgrade programs exist, excluding those for the computer science and ICT department's academics.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

In my view, by improving academics' technological knowledge, which is essential for effective teaching and doing research, institutions can achieve their goals.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

In this digitalized world, technology enables academics to play their expected role (teaching and researching) effectively and efficiently.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

There is moral or ethical accountability. I haven't encounter professional or structural accountability in relation to training engagement.

Enablers for CPD engagement

To enhance academics technological knowledge, the Internet, an office, and a laptop are available.

Challenges for CPD engagement

I think the university lacks proper planning and lacks the commitment to implement what was planned.

Academic staff (AS1-5)

Academics' Understanding

In my view, all CPD endeavors have a high positive impact on teaching and learning. Especially for those academics who don't have prior pedagogical knowledge, CPD is very important. There are academics who are recruited as graduate assistants, and they pursue their master's and start to teach at higher education without having pedagogical training at this time. CPD programs like HDP are very important (AS1).

In my view, preservice education is not enough, so CPD is very important (AS2).

As my profession (lecturer), it is crucial as it ensures they stay updated with advancements in their field, improving teaching methods and content delivery (AS3).

CPD is a very important program for academics to update knowledge and transform my knowledge to students (to make their teaching relevant) (AS4).

In my understanding, CPD is a system through which people enhance their capacity and a means of empowering workers (AS5).

Individual academic practice

I practice from my prior experience; for instance, I don't teach a course the way I taught previously. Every semester I try to improve the content, instructional media, and the methods I use by receiving feedback from my students. I gain knowledge from engaging in reflective practice. Even though I am doing this, I don't have a portfolio or any other document (AS1).

Through listening and learning, through discussion with colleagues, and through learning media like online (AS2)

To update myself, I use different readings, and I take both online and in-person courses (AS3).

Individually, I read different published material for myself to enhance my knowledge and also discuss different issues with my friends (AS4).

I practice CPD by actively learning opportunities through self-study and workshops. I engage with colleagues to enhance my knowledge (AS5).

Institutional Updating

Different trainings are given for academics on various issues like academic writing, winning proposal writing, and using different statistical software (AS1).

In our university, CPD endeavors encompass attending conferences, workshops, and seminars; engaging in research activities; and participating in training activities (AS2).

It was training and aggregating, but less was done in this university (AS3).

Continuous training on various issues and upgrading Providing online (e-SHE) and offline training Provide training, conferences, and workshops (AS4).

The various activities, like workshops, seminars, conferences, and collaborative projects (AS5),

Need assessment

A few years ago, a closed questionnaire was distributed, and we ticked our interests. Training was given on selected themes. Currently, this type of training experience is not available (AS1 & 2).

The faculty dean typically manages CPD by facilitating opportunities and coordinating nominations from departments; however, there are instances of favoritism and biases in sending staff for training, leading to inappropriate selections (AS).

But no institutional reward and also accountability (AS1).

Institutional upgrading practices

Almost all interviewees responded that there are master's and PhD programs.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The consideration of current CPD programs is enough to ensure quality (AS1).

Academics' reason to practice CPD

To deliver my course effectively and efficiently (AS1).

Not engaging in CPD could limit career progression and opportunities for promotion over time. It may also negatively impact teaching and students' development of required competencies if an academic like me seems out of touch with current best practices or information in their field (AS 1, 2 & 3).

Only training is the reason for scarcity of resources or other external exposures (AS3).

My personal willingness and interest to be competent through factual knowledge and skills (AS4)

Because we are living in an ever-changing world that demands updated knowledge that fits the time (AS5).

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

There is no direct accountability to CPD engagement, but indirectly we are accountable to the department and our students for the service we are providing (AS1 & 3).

I am accountable to myself, students, and the community (AS2).

While we are not formally evaluated on our professional development, there would likely be consequences if an academic staff member made little effort to continually update and improve their skills. If one academic could not be committed, he/she will not have the required ability to provide his/her service efficiently and effectively. This will indirectly impact academics' jobs (AS5).

Mostly as a university student, I am accountable to myself, to my student, and to the institution. I strive to meet the expectation of my institution to provide a high-quality education to my students, which is the main reason for my professional growth (AS4).

Enablers for CPD engagement

Almost all interviewees responded that the provision of a laptop, office, and internet.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Training is given continuously in the center, but the chance is not given fairly; the main reason for this malpractice is just to use the incentive of the training knowledge (AS1).

There is a narrow opportunity for demand-driven trainings. In addition, the poor culture for professional learning community is a challenge for CPD (AS2 & 3).

The major challenge is You know, researcher, I have twelve years of experience. For instance, "What is research?" is usually the first question asked during research-related training. How many years of training on this subject should I have? This kind of training is ineffective; it is a waste of time to participate in material that does not advance my status. I believe that since I finished my Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) course last year, I ought to enroll in Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) this year. An organizational framework should also be established to

supervise and control these academic advancements. Besides, there is no established framework for academic CPD. After the completion of HDP, everyone should explore his own ways of development... even if there is no system that holds academics accountable if they are not engaged in CPD endeavors (AS5).

Focus Group Discussion Participant 1 (FGDP1-6)

Academics' Understanding

First speaker

CPD is a program through which academics capacitate themselves for their expected role. To put it differently, I understood it as a critical program to enhance academics' knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Second speaker

It is a program through which academics evaluate themselves after graduation and try to improve their practice. This can be achieved by improving their knowledge, skills, and attitudes through CPD by reflecting on their current status.

Individual academic practice

First speaker

As academics, we read different published materials. In addition to these readings, we participate in trainings, seminars, lecture series, and conferences.

Second speaker

Academics can practice CPD in two ways; in one way, by attending different programs that are prepared by the university. Second, academics can improve their knowledge and skills through self-regulated learning without being pressurized by external bodies.

Institutional Updating

First speaker

Different kinds of training are given to academics on pedagogical elements like induction and HDP. And, since one expected role is like research software and academic writing.

Need assessment

Speaker four (female)

The trainings use both top-down and bottom-up approaches. If you see the top-down approach, there is room to contextualize it.

Institutional upgrading practices

Almost all FGD participants responded that there is a good opportunity to pursue master's and PhD degrees.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

Sixth speaker (19 years of experience)

It is obvious that the major reason is to capacitate academics; through their improved capacity, the university can render its service effectively and efficiently and achieve institutional goals.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Second speaker

I feel that stopping to study is equal to retirement; learning is a lifetime endeavor. The primary rationale for participating in ongoing professional development activities is the requirement of the profession. Furthermore, it is now obligatory for research universities to elevate their status to the PhD level. Failure to complete the requirements will result in the termination of your university contract, thereby leading to your dismissal. In addition to upgrading, our university's current status as a research institution necessitates that all academics publish articles, requiring continuous professional development.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Sixth speaker

There is a lack of professional accountability regarding engagement in continuous professional development, particularly concerning updated forms of such development; for example, some academics have taught at Hawassa University for a few years without having completed a higher

diploma program. Actually, academics are evaluated by students and the department, but this has an indirect relation with CPD engagement.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Challenges for CPD engagement

The main problems with continuous professional development are that people often don't see any benefits from participating in CPD activities; they gain little value after completing advanced training, like earning a PhD; and there is a small gap in knowledge and skills between the academic staff and those running the program.

Second speaker

The institutional capacity to provide discipline-specific, content-knowledge-focused continuing professional development programs is lacking. Training prioritizes pedagogical knowledge, research skills, and ICT over content knowledge, according to two participants from the Education College and Natural Science College.

Third speaker

In 2020, Debub Media highlighted the everyday experiences of a female academic staff worker, encompassing daily duties such as selling chips, laundering clothes, and providing hairstyling services. These actions indicate the presence of undercompensated academic personnel in Ethiopia, affecting their comprehension and implementation of continuous professional development (CPD) on both individual and institutional levels.

The recognition given for the teaching profession and the incentive given for PhD completion do not encourage academics or motivate them to be engaged in CPD or to upgrade to PhD level.

It will be best if all HDP content is given in the classroom. Only its action research session has a practical section. Otherwise, it will be very similar to preservice education.

Focus Group Discussion 2 Participant (FGDP1-6)

Academics' Understanding

First speaker

We teachers are working in an ever-changing world; therefore, there is no question about the importance of CPD.

Speaker five

As far as the presence of dynamism of knowledge, CPD of academics is a must.

Individual academic practice

First speaker

I read different published materials and attend different trainings. I also create professional networks and involve different activities in this type of engagement. I learn a lot.

At the department, we do have a culture of professional dialogue; we learn a lot when we exchange ideas.

Fifth speaker

The university recruited me as a graduate assistant five years ago. The position gives me an opportunity to gain knowledge, develop skills, and learn a lot from the mentorship provided by my previous teachers, who are highly experienced and qualified for professorship. Their guidance has been invaluable, allowing me to navigate both academic challenges and research responsibilities with confidence.

Institutional Updating

Sixth speaker

Trainings are given on various topics like qualitative software, SPSS, SAS, how to write a grant, and how to write an article. It is difficult to say all are donor-driven or bottom-up. Sometimes informally we discuss it with top managers, and they prepare the training.

Needs Assessment

I received an email that requested training' needs. I don't know how many of us responded to that email.

What I want to remind you is that the practice highly varied among colleges. The College of Education and Health Science implements some good practices. If you consider Health College, it has a CPD center.

Practice

The other practice includes motivational speech. We learn from the lived experience of academics; when they share their experience, we learn a lot. There are also public lectures, seminars, annual workshops, conferences, and experience sharing. Publishing in a reputable journal becomes mandatory.

We also received ICT training.

Institutional upgrading practices

Almost all participants responded that there is a good opportunity to pursue master's and PhD programs.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

Second speaker

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is undertaken to maintain professional currency with growing knowledge in one's field, foster career progression, respond to societal and market demands, and ensure quality and ongoing education.

Sixth speaker

To improve teaching and learning by improving knowledge, skills, and abilities of academics, and also it is the direction of the Ministry of Education.

Sometimes trainings are given to use the allocated budget.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Second speaker

Discontinuing to study is equal to retirement; education is a lifelong pursuit. The principal justification for engaging in continuous professional development activities is the obligation of the profession. Moreover, it is now mandatory for research universities to attain PhD-level status.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Speaker five

Academics are highly accountable for not missing the first week of class at the start of the semester and for not doing research. I don't think there is direct accountability in relation to CPD engagement (this is also the idea of the first speaker).

Speaker six

In short, there is only moral or ethical accountability; there is no professional accountability.

First speaker

Structurally, academics are requested to attend HDP or to attend a training or seminar... The main thing is what happened if they didn't attend... nothing. Absenteeism doesn't have any consequences.

Enablers for CPD engagement

First speaker

Almost all participants responded that there is a certificate upon completing different trainings, and upon publishing in a reputable journal, there is an incentive.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Second speaker

Trainings are given in a nominal way, without being well organized.

Other issues raised by the FGD participants included a lack of incentives for academics who have successfully participated in CPD and a shortage of supplies like personal offices, tables, chairs, and laptops.

Speaker Three

The issue of professionalism comes next to recognition. The government promised to make teaching the choice of profession; nevertheless, because of its low salary, it doesn't gain recognition till now.

Speaker two

To prepare a bottom-up approach, the teachers are not responsive. I have practiced this problem.

Speaker Five

There is unfair distribution of training opportunities. Only those who have relationships with top managers will use the opportunity.

The low salary of academics is challenging even to satisfy their basic needs. This lets them not have time that can be spent for CPD purposes.

Even though there are elites of education, trainings are given without a well-organized plan for the sake of the report and so the budget will not be burnt out.

First speaker

After training is given, no facilitation is done by top managers to practice the gained knowledge.

Sometimes a participant might attend training to get the incentive.

Appendix F

Transcribed data of Ambo University

Transcribed data of Ambo University

Academic President (v/center of Excellence) (AP/APR)

Academics' Understanding

Continuous Professional Development to my understanding is pursuing any kind of opportunity to upgrade one's own experience, understanding knowledge through on-job training. Though it needs assessment, I think the majority of the staff are aware of what CPD is and how it is important in narrowing the skill/knowledge gaps.

Individual academic practice

Individual academics learn in various ways. They learn with others by participating in trainings, seminars, and conferences and doing research with others as academics, and individually they read different published works.

Institutional Updating

A variety of activities have been given by the university to the academic staff. For instance, training on competency-based teaching and assessment was given to academic staff of all campuses of AU in 2016. Besides, about 130 academic staff members have been taking HDP training this year. A number of academic staff have been engaged in different CPD activities within the university as well as at different external national or international organizations (e.g., GIZ, Ethiopian Science Academy).

Though not given recently, the university has been providing induction trainings to the newly employed staff members.

Need assessment

Trainings like HDP have been made to be part of the professional development approaches since a long time ago. Hence, the university is working toward providing and certifying each and every member of the academic staff.

Other trainings will be based on the assessment/follow-ups made on teaching and learning and on the discussions and evaluations of the progress reports made from time to time.

There are also CPD works that are demanding that the time needs to satisfy.

The immediate/gradual problems that may appear and become visible lead to immediate measures that need to think of CPD issues.

Plan

CPD planning in Ambo University varies from one college to another; a lack of standardized approaches and resources results in inconsistencies. It is without participation of the department that the quality assurance stakeholders plan in a supply-driven way.

Rearward

A certificate is given upon completion of updating CPD activities.

Institutional upgrading practices

As a program, Ambo University provides both upgrading opportunities, like PhD and master's opportunities, locally and internationally.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

Since CPD is a measurement taken to ensure quality at higher education, MoE sets different activities. In addition, things move fast or change from time to time, and so do the teaching methods, approaches, strategies, etc. Hence, it is a must for the academic staff to make the necessary adjustments to narrow down the skills/knowledge gaps to offer courses properly. This is a time when science and technology have advanced and teaching methods/modalities have come to change greatly. Hence, it needs to equip the academic staff with the necessary awareness about how to use technology for education.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

The need for self-improvement.

The need for professional development.

The need to update oneself/make necessary adjustments with the dynamics of the world.

The university's invitation for engaging the academic staff for CPD.

The initiation of the academic staff to support other academic staff.

The initiation came from external bodies or organizations.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Of course, yes. However, there is no such serious and visible accountability. Certain CPD certificates serve as competitive criteria for promotions and positions.

Enablers for CPD engagement

As a program, Ambo University provides both upgrading opportunities, like PhD and master's opportunities locally and internationally, and different updating trainings both virtually and face-to-face. Upon completion, a certificate is awarded.

As resources, laptop computers, offices, and internet access are provided for all academics.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Financial constraints/budget.

Lack of motivation.

Logistics issues.

Lack of implementation of what is gained through CPD.

Academic Deans (AD)

Academics' Understanding

I think academics understand CPD as something imposed by top managers and as if it has less importance to their profession.

Individual academic practice

As academic staff, I practice it through professional learning communities, meaning learning from one another and using online systems (both reading published works and listening to YouTube). And I hope that other academics practice CPD similarly.

Institutional Updating

The other is the updating program, including HDP, induction trainings, teaching methods training, short-term skill and knowledge enhancement trainings, conferences, workshops, etc.

Needs Assessment

I am not sure that there is a formal system designed to identify skill and knowledge gaps to be addressed by CPD. The CPD initiatives operate according to convention.

Reward

In principle, the first and most rewarding is the skill and knowledge, and the attitudinal gap is addressed as a result of CPD. But there are some rewards provided as a result of CPD engagement, including exemption for 3 credit hours from the total required credit hours; certificates and diplomas are also provided for participation.

Institutional upgrading practices

Some initiatives aim to enhance the skill and knowledge of AU staff. The major one is the upgrading program, which provides the staff the opportunity to develop vertically from lower-level rank to upper-level rank.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

The basic reason is to capacitate or update the skills, knowledge, and overall competencies of the staff in teaching, research, and community service activities.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

As I understood it, it is the need for capacitating self in the profession that should motivate staff for the program, and CPD can be an opportunity for publications, promotions, and certification.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

I do not think there is an issue of accountability. Anyone willing and interested can participate in any available CPD activities either by quota system or by interest. Those unwilling and uninterested can never participate or can drop any time from the CPD program or engagement.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Upgrading and updating educational opportunity and internet and laptop facilities for self-learning.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Misunderstanding on the part of both the staff and the top management about CPD, dissatisfaction of staff in the teaching profession, lack of time, lack of CPD guidelines including accountability.

Higher Diploma Program Coordinator (HDPC)

Academics' Understanding

There are academics who understand CPD is very important. One-time knowledge may not be sufficient to be effective throughout one's career. I am sure of its importance; there is no question. And also, there are some academics who consider it less important to their profession.

Individual academic practice

Ambo University offers a wide range of professional development activities for academic staff members at various levels. University-level practices encompass in-person and virtual training, workshops, and seminars. Professional discussion about daily tasks or expected duties is also one of the department and college level techniques. Academic practices at the individual level include watching various YouTube videos, participating in online courses, and reading published materials for themselves to enhance their knowledge

Institutional Updating

A good thing is that individual initiations are very important, because different institutional updating programs can achieve their objective if academics are participating in CPD activities with interest. When we come to the different updating activities: HDP, training on research, and training on technology. But it doesn't mean that these are sufficient to update trainings to academics.

At the department level as a learning community, we discuss how to develop course materials, how to manage the course, what methodology we are going to use, and how to assess students learning. During this time, we share the best experiences of others.

What we lack is we don't have recorded data about our CPD day-to-day activity.

No need assessment; the plan is top-down and cascades to institutions or colleges and then to the department.

As a reward, promotion in an academic professional career, like from lecturer to assistant professor and then to associate professor and so on.

Institutional upgrading practices

When we come to upgrading programs, anyone who is interested in pursuing a PhD or master's degree has enough opportunity.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

One thing is the dynamicity of the world or knowledge. The ever-changing policy, curriculum, and other factors require us to update ourselves to keep pace with this changing world. Adaptation to this contextual change is mandatory to survive as an academic.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

They must possess the necessary competence to fulfill their expected roles. Academic staff should engage in professional development activities to improve their knowledge and teaching abilities. Such participation helps them to provide their students with the highest quality education using innovative teaching approaches and the latest information on their courses. It also benefits their research and community service and allows them to take on wider roles at the university.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Yes, there is accountability, especially professional accountability. The other accountability is visible, meaning the culture is don't touch me, and I will not touch you. The legislation clearly states that all academics have to teach, do research, and serve the community by capacitating him/herself. But the reality is far from this. For instance, there are academics who feel that covering a course within two or three days is right. The main reason for less engagement of academics in their professional development is low salary, which is not enough to cover their life expenses. There are academics who are Bajaj drivers, salespeople, etc. You see, in order to ensure professional accountability, this issue should be addressed.

Surprisingly, even though different CPD activities like seminars, training, conferences, and workshops are prepared and attendances are taken, academics are not accountable for absenteeism. No measurement will be taken for not attending these CPD programs. Academics also don't have self-motivation.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Upgrading educational opportunities and facilities like WiFi, offices, and laptops. Besides, upon completion of HDP, there is a certificate; upon completion of a PhD or master's degree, there is a salary increase.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Many CPD activities, especially after COVID-19, are not full-fledged; the different trainings are not given as previously done. Maybe this is the influence of the pandemic. Except for HDP, other trainings are given when a fund is available, and even then, they are not systematic. Even the trainers may not have the required understanding except for HDP. Occasionally, individuals may spontaneously initiate training sessions.

The other is when trainings are given, their impact has never been evaluated, not only university-wide but also outside the university. Academics may attend trainings, but when they come back, they don't share their experience. The follow-up of top management in this regard is not as strong. In this regard, the role of top managers is simply selecting the trainee and sending them to the training site. They don't know what it is; they don't follow up to share it with others, and they don't evaluate the impact of the training on academic practice.

Budget constraint is the main challenge.

The value and the respect that are given to the profession are, from time to time, declining. I think everybody is seeking another alternative to leave the profession.

Low salary and inadequate allowance for home and transport, etc., lead academics not to focus on their professional development but to tackle their life challenges.

There are academics who didn't know the president for years; this loose communication affects the professionalization of academics. Because it is difficult to have shared understanding for professional excellence if the communication is not strong.

English Language Improvement Program Coordinator (ELIPC)

Academics' Understanding

Academics understand it as it is important to play their expected role effectively, especially their teaching role and research role.

Individual academic practice

Academics practice language improvement programs through face-to-face training and virtually attending Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Academics also listen to YouTube and read different e-sources.

Institutional Updating

We gave training on titles, classroom English, and academic writing.

Institutional upgrading practices

In relation to English, there are upgrade programs except for English department academics.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

In my view, institutions can achieve their goals by improving academics' language proficiency, which is important for effective teaching and academic writing. One of the reasons is to share the skills of academic staff; the other is to improve the ability, attitude, skill, and knowledge of the staff for the sake of the student. The resources available and the education policy are reasons for the way practice.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

They are expected to play their expected role effectively and efficiently.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

There is moral or ethical accountability.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Internet, office, and laptop are available. Additionally, the presence of colleagues around provides opportunities for learning.

Challenges for CPD engagement

I think the university lacks proper planning and lacks the commitment to implement what was planned.

Lack of individualized offices: 3-5 academics are placed in one office, which is not comfortable for self-study or learning.

Information Communication Coordinator (ICT)

Academics' Understanding

Academics understand the knowledge of technology as it is important to play their expected role effectively, especially their teaching role and research role.

Individual academic practice

Academics practice technology improvement programs through face-to-face training and virtually attending online courses. Academics also listen to YouTube and read different e-sources.

Institutional Updating

Ambo University give different trainings on different titles like Master Class for Teaching online MCT

Institutional upgrading practices

In relation to ICT, there are upgrade programs except for computer science department academics.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

In my view, institutions can achieve their goals by digitalizing every service it provides, which is important for effective teaching and academic writing.

One of the reasons is to share the skills of academic staff; the other is to improve the ability, attitude, skill, and knowledge of the staff for the sake of the student.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

They are expected to play their expected role effectively and efficiently.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

There is moral or ethical accountability.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Internet, office, and laptop are available. Additionally, the presence of colleagues around provides opportunities for learning.

Challenges for CPD engagement

I think the university lacks proper planning and lacks the commitment to implement what was planned. The département of ICT and computer science is giving training as community service.

Lack of individualized offices: 3-5 academics are placed in one office, which is not comfortable for self-study or learning.

Academic staff (AS1-5)

Academics' Understanding

It is the way of checking my competency in my work; in other words, it is a way or method of developing knowledge and skills that is important to my profession. This helps me to be effective in teaching and learning and doing research. (AS2, 3, 5)

A CPD program is a vital process for teaching academics to continually develop and update their knowledge and skills in their field. It is important to academics' profession as it ensures they stay current, provide high-quality services, and adapt to changing demands. CPD promotes growth, competence, and career advancement (AS1,4).

Individual academic practice

All interviewees read published material, do research and publish articles and book chapters, discuss with friends, and attend educational training (seminars or conferences).

I practice through discussion with colleagues because no one is self-sufficient; in other words, there is a need to cooperate (AS1).

I took online training to enrich subject expertise and teaching techniques (AS2 & 5).

Institutional Updating

Almost all interviewees responded that induction, HDP, and short-term trainings on pedagogy, research methods, grant writing, etc., are given.

In our university, CPD endeavors encompass attending conferences, workshops, and seminars; engaging in research activities; and participating in training activities (AS4).

Needs Assessment

I have no practical experience that the university has tried to assess the gaps of academic staff except one instance that they sent an assessment form (AS1).

No need assessment; simply they arrange training programs that can help the trainee to acquire knowledge (AS3).

Institutional upgrading practices

Almost all interviewees responded that giving opportunities for those who want to upgrade themselves to PhD or master's level.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

To enhance the capacity of its human resources to capacitate, well-equipped guarantees and meet its goals and objectives in general (AS1).

It is based on the direction given or set by the MoE; the university is practicing the way they practice (AS4).

I think that culture at the national level lets the university practice the way it practices (AS2 & 5).

Academics' reason to practice CPD

CPD is an important program because knowledge is uncertain and should be revised to access the latest and proven information (AS1).

It is a program that makes me competent at the end of the day (AS2).

As I told you earlier, I practice through an online system. The main reason is there is no continuously provided opportunity for academic staff from the department or college (AS3).

The main reasons I practice CPD are my aspiration for professional development and the importance of staying updated. I also value lifelong learning and adaptability (AS4 & 5).

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Is there accountability?

I do believe that for any activities that are done in the university, there should be accountability. As far as my experience goes, it is difficult to say there is direct accountability for CPD engagement, but due to professional ethics, we engaged in the different activities of CPD (AS1).

In the university, even if it is not strong here, there is accountability of staff regarding their CPD engagement, like HDP and induction, as well as MA and PhD education, getting minimum requirements, and tracking and reporting CPD activities (AS2).

The platform is not so strong; simple attendance and reporting are there in relation to CPD engagement, but I did not see any measurement taken in relation to that taken attendance or report (AS3).

To whom

Mostly as a university student, I am accountable to myself, to my student, and to the institution (AS1 & 5).

I strive to meet the expectation of my institution to provide a high-quality education to my students, which is the main reason for my professional growth (AS2).

I didn't see any accountability in relation to CPD (AS3).

I am accountable to my university (AS4).

For what?

Maybe to read, listen to lessons, or attend trainings and to attend (AS1).

Improving my knowledge, skills, abilities, and other (AS2 & 3).

Respect professional ethical principles (AS4).

As a university instructor, I am accountable for staying updated with research, improving teaching methodologies, and engaging in personal development activities to enhance students' learning outcomes. Participating in workshops and conferences by my own effort and seeking opportunities for pedagogical training and development (AS5).

Enablers for CPD engagement

In relation to programs, there are frequent trainings and HDP training with its room, coordinators, and facilities (AS1).

Training materials and financial provisions for training (AS2&3)

There is a good opportunity to pursue master's and PhD programs (AS4&5).

Challenges for CPD engagement

First of all, there is no systematic approach or follow-up assessment for CPD that could enhance the effectiveness and caliber of academic CPD programs (AS1)

Workload on academics and continuously increasing life expenses that can't be afforded by our low salary mandate us to work other income-generating jobs, and hence we lack time to spend on professional development (AS1 & 3).

Absence of rewards individually or in groups for those individuals who develop professionally (AS2)

There is a narrow opportunity for demand-driven trainings. In addition, the poor culture in the professional learning community is a challenge for CPD (AS4).

Lack of budget and absence of responsible stakeholders for the purpose of professional excellence and there is no established framework for academic CPD and also there is no professional accountability that holds academics responsible for their action in relation to their CPD engagement. (AS5)

Focus Group Discussion 1 Participant (FGDP1-6)

Academics' Understanding

First speaker (15 years' experience)

In my opinion, continuous professional development is crucial for academics, as everything is subject to constant change. To adapt to this changing situation, CPD is critical.

Second speaker (4 years' experience)

HDP is important to equip academics with pedagogical skills like classroom management, teaching methodology, and assessment skills. We education college academics are responsible for other college academics for effective implementation of academics.

Third speaker (17 years' experience)

The importance of HDP or CPD has no question to play in our expected role.

Individual academic practice

First speaker

Academics during seminars and conferences argue and debate different ideas; this is a crucial practice to share ideas with each other. Academics also do self-evaluation, reflect on their practice, and learn from it. Besides, they might also receive feedback from their students, and then they plan how to improve in the future. Personally, when I prepare a PowerPoint, I think about how I should deliver the course in a better way and how I should assess students' learning. During this process, I read various books and consulted with experienced or knowledgeable individuals. Every single one of these things benefits your career in some way.

Institutional Updating

First speaker

In the context of higher education, the formal CPD program for academics is HDP; after they are certified by it, they go to self-learning using different methods. Institutionally the HDP program is given through quota; you can't give HDP for all campuses in a year. Due to this, the program is given on a quota basis. This HDP program is very relevant to academics who have not received pedagogy training.

Third speaker

Need Assessment: A few years ago, a list of training titles was sent to the department, and academics ticked their interest, and then tailored trainings were given to academics during break time. The other is we informally discuss with top managers the training title.

Institutional upgrading practices

Almost all FGD participants

There is a good opportunity for master's and PhD programs.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

Fifth speaker (2 years' experience)

The university provides frequent trainings.

Besides thematic areas for research being identified and different research being conducted by academics, this is a good platform for their professional learning.

Experience sharing

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Sith speaker

To be competent and play the expected role.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

First speaker

I think the moral or ethical accountability is highly practiced than institutional accountability. In addition, participants reported that there is high accountability for finance if the training is funded. No one check the impact of training.

Fifth speaker

Academic staff are accountable to develop their skills in relation to teaching and learning and just for the development of their profession because at the end of the semester, students evaluate teachers, so we can say that academics are accountable to their students.

Enablers for CPD engagement

Fifth speaker

The resource provisions are things like laptops, desktop computers, and the certificate.

Challenges for CPD engagement

First speaker

After HDP is completed, the implementation of the program as delivered in concept during the training is rare. If you see the experience of secondary schools, there are fixed two hours for CPD every week, and there are continuous modules for different years. Whereas at higher education, once there is certification of CPD throughout the career, there is no other opportunity to take other rounds of CPD programs. In my view it should be continued.

Third speaker

As I have told you earlier, the importance of CPD is not in question; nevertheless, it is not implemented properly. I conducted a study on the effective implementation of HDP to impartially fulfill my master's degree; the finding showed that there is no effective implementation of the program. Initially, the program had been funded centrally; later, when the university became responsible for funding it, the program faced challenges.

Fifth speaker (5 years of experience)

When every day comes and when I open my computer, I first check what is new today about political issues. If there was peace in the country, we might be engaged in CPD activity; therefore, the absence of peace leads you to think only of issues of security and survivalism, not other things in our country.

Sixth speaker

There is a responsible department or agent who records academic professional development engagement and gives rewards and recognition based on the recorded document.

Focus Group Discussion 2 Participant (FGDP1-6)

Academics' Understanding

First speaker (2 years' experience)

There are academics who feel that having subject matter knowledge is enough to teach, but that is not correct.

Individual academic practice

Third speaker (12 years' experience)

I reflect on my practice; after reflection, I read different references and listen to YouTube.

Institutional Updating

Fourth speaker (10 years of speakers)

By inviting experienced teachers from Addis Ababa University, sometimes trainings are given on software.

At Ambo University there was one platform named Wednesday Forum, which is designed for academics to discuss different issues and share their knowledge and experience as a learning community. The unfortunate aspect is that the program's continuity suffers significantly when the initiative-taker leaves to pursue his PhD program.

Institutional upgrading practices

Second speaker (7 years' experience)

There is a master's and PhD opportunity.

Institutional reason to practice CPD

Sixth speaker

The guideline of the Ministry of Education and institutional interest to capacitate the human resources.

Academics' reason to practice CPD

Third speaker

Academic staff should have to engage in professional development endeavors to improve our expertise and pedagogical abilities. Such training ensures that we deliver the greatest quality education to our students through innovative teaching methodologies and the most current information regarding our courses. It enhances our research and community service, enabling us to assume broader responsibilities inside the university.

Accountability in relation to CPD engagement

Sixth speaker

There is ethical accountability, is there? But even though you didn't improve, if you fulfilled the minimum, like covering your course, there is no professional accountability.

Enablers for CPD engagement

First speaker

Nowadays, thanks to technology, there is easy access to information if we want to update ourselves. The university, even though the network is not so good, provides an office, a computer, and Wi-Fi for self-regulated learning.

Ambo University also has a locational advantage because it is very near to Addis Ababa University. Well-known professors are invited to come and give training to academics, and they do.

Challenges for CPD engagement

Third speaker

The literature supports the continuation of CPD programs after HDP completion. Experts from MoE informed us that they are currently conducting studies on the issue. This discontinuity

There is no system to follow up on whether academics are updating or developing themselves or not after completion of the CPD program.

The other is a misconception about CPD. CPD can't be achieved overnight. Even though I have 12 years' experience, I learn something new every day; therefore, it should be kept in mind that a one-year HDP program is not enough to ensure the professional development of academics. For me, I can say that HDP is not institutionalized because it doesn't have a good center that can serve academics to develop their profession.

The other is the impracticality of lesson plans at universities affecting reflective practice negatively. If I have a plan, I will have the opportunity to reflect on what was good or successful in my class and what was not, and why.

First speaker

It will be excellent if MoE can prepare supportive packages. So, academics might use it based on their need. The other challenge is there is reward and recognition, but it is not enough. It will be better if MoE can correlate CPD engagement with career development.

Sixth speaker

The consistency of CPD activities highly depends on the person who took the initiative when the person leaves the role discontinued for instance if you see Wednesday form when the person left to pursue PhD it became discontinued. When trainings are scheduled to academics, mostly the concern is not the knowledge but asking what material incentive is in it.