

## Strengthening a Learning-Centered College/University Classroom in Ethiopia: Current Wisdom in Teacher Professional Development

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to show increased concern in the new ways of structuring schooling in college/university classroom to address the learning needs of students. Accordingly, the cognitive view of motivation serves as a conceptual framework to understand students' learning. In the past decade, we have seen the Higher Diploma Programme (HDP), which was developed as a result of the study into the quality and effectiveness of teacher education in Ethiopia focused on teaching techniques in Ethiopian college/university classrooms, a movement that emphasizes active learning, practicum, action research, reflection, and managing learning. Relatively little emphasis was paid on student's motivational beliefs that are presumed to occur in instructional settings. The reform seemed to reflect time-worn assumptions about learners and learning that may limit teacher's ways of thinking about the role of the college/university student in the classroom (refer appendix). Fortunately, this state of concern is very much similar with the state of classroom learning in the early 1980s. This intensive focus on teaching techniques, but largely ignoring students' motivational beliefs that occur in instructional settings may lead teachers to the conclusion that a focus merely on instruction is one-sided. Hence, efforts must be made to strengthen a more balanced discourse that emphasizes the subtle nuances and complexities of learning within any discussion of teaching. One change that could begin to maximize students' learning would strengthen "learning-centered" classroom. To strengthen "learning-centered" classroom the theoretical review focuses on how students' motivational beliefs and teachers' behavior/instructional factors influence students' motivation to learn. The review concluded that a learning-centered perspective regards the classroom as a dynamic setting where pedagogical practices and learners' motivational beliefs meet and where the quality of this interaction influences the learning needs of students that are presumed to occur in college classrooms. Presumably if the next generation of teachers designed their classroom environments to be in accord with these recommendations, future generations of university/college students would be much more motivated than the current one. Hence to achieve this expectation, a continuous professional development programme for college/university teachers which focuses on student motivational beliefs is urgently needed. Action to strengthened learning-centred classroom is vital to improve the quality of teacher professional development in Ethiopia. Finally, the review has implication concerns voiced the current wisdom about teacher professional development in Ethiopia.

**Keywords:** professional development, learning-centered classroom, university teaching, college classrooms

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## Introduction

Historically, education in Christian Ethiopia was mainly carried out by the Coptic Orthodox Church. In medieval times, church-based education was restricted to boys; mainly the priests' own sons (Pankhurst, 1990) and was based on the reading and recitation of religious texts. Writing was almost entirely limited to religious matters. Schools of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church remained the only educational institutions up until the mid-twentieth century. It produced the nation's elites: scholars, artists, religious leaders and teachers (Teshome, 1990). Apart from teaching its own future servants, the church also functioned as a pre-school where many Christian children were learning to read and write, often as a prerequisite to enter first grade in school. For centuries there has simultaneously been education in the mosque about the Koran, mainly for Muslim boys, but increasingly also for girls. This education continues today and has several parallels with church education.

Documentary evidences show that modern education in Ethiopia started in 1908 with the opening of the Minilike II School (Negash, 1990), as contrasted to religious education. The inception of higher education in Ethiopia may be traced back to the establishment in 1950 of the university college of Addis Ababa, now Addis Ababa University (Bahiru, 1991). Additional colleges were established in different parts of the country in between 1950 and 1960. These include the College of Engineering(1952) and the Institute of Building Technology (1954) in Addis Ababa; Haromaya College of Agriculture (1952) and Gonder Public Health College (1954) (Teshome, 2007).

In the late 1960s, Bahir Dar College of Teacher Education and Hawassa College of Agriculture were established under the Auspices of Haileselassie I University (HSIU) (Teshome, 2007). Other institutes and colleges such as Bahir Dar Polytechnique Institute and Jima College of Agriculture were also opened and run in collaboration with foreign countries ( like Canada, Sweden, USSR, USA) and international organizations ( such as WHO, USAID, and UNESCO).

Ethiopian higher education is expanding rapidly. From 1999-2016, colleges and institutions merged to form universities and others developed into universities by expanding their programmes. There has been a remarkable expansion effort both by the public and private sectors in a short time. Even though such achievements are appreciable, there are a number of critical issues to be addressed. The issue of quality is the most important one. Cognizant of this fact the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE, 2003) had conducted extensive research to find out the quality and effectiveness of teacher education system in Ethiopia. The major findings arising from the study were:(1) the professional competence of teachers is deficient, (2) the methods of teaching are teacher-centered, (3) teachers do not match up to standards and expectations of their profession, (4) assessment techniques do not adequately identify difficulties in order to enhance students learning, and (5) there is lack of professionalism and ethical values in the teacher education programme.

The teaching-learning process in use in Ethiopian schools can partly be traced to the educational approach used by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This pedagogical approach also fitted well with local understandings of how children best learn, mature and become 'good' citizens (Poluha, 2004). The distinguishing feature of the teaching-learning approach in the church is the mastery of what is essentially a stable body of knowledge passed through the generations-there is little sense of knowledge as dynamic and changing, of the need for creativity and invention for the personal construction of knowledge (Bridges & Ridley, 2000 cited in Poluha, 2004). Ethiopian teachers conceptualized learning as the transmission of knowledge which ideally took place through memorization, imitation and repetition, methods which were understood as the best means to obtain the main educational goal, namely to fill the students with the required information (Poluha, 2004).

Poluha (2004) emphasized that the perception of knowledge expressed in the Ethiopian education system, defined it as something bounded and unchangeable, and that the way in which it was communicated was hierarchical. The main mode through which teaching was conducted was through lectures where teachers tried to "fill" the students with all that they themselves knew. Students were not expected to take their own initiatives in class, or be critical, or argue for a point of view in any subject. Student participation in school meant that students responded to rather than asked questions, and that they responded with the right word or concept; that they memorized what they had heard as well as the notes given to them; and that they reproduced all they had learnt during the lectures.

Although the Ethiopian script has a history of about 2000 years, lack of qualified teachers are one of the major problems encountered in educating the then societies (Poluha, 2004). Evidence has shown that scarcity of well educated, qualified, and experienced academics is still a serious problem in Ethiopian higher education systems (Fisher & David, 1998). With the exception of faculty of education (in Ethiopian universities), academicians are not trained to be teachers; there is hardly any form of professional development of the university teachers. Fisher and David (1998) emphasized that most of the teachers engaged in Ethiopian higher education are non-trained in teaching methodologies. The absence of pedagogical orientation is a problem making higher education teachers unable to behave gently in classrooms and present their topics properly. Adane (2000) supported this explanation suggesting that many of the higher education instructors were not trained to be teachers. Although it may sound paradoxical, it is common to find higher education instructors, in different Ethiopian HEIs who view themselves as chemists, biologists, geographers, historians and the like rather than as educators, however they are there to train teachers how to teach (Dawit & Alemayhu, 2001). Evidence is not also lacking to show that any of them have lack of pedagogical know-how (HERQA, 2007; Reda, 2001). In this regard, there was an urgent need for higher education teachers in Ethiopia to receive training in pedagogic techniques to further improve their teaching performance.

In light of these serious problems observed in the Ethiopian education system, the overhaul of the education system (MoE, 2003a) has offered a direct challenge to the teacher education institutions to redefine their roles and to become active agents for change within the

classroom, within their communities and ultimately within Ethiopian society. The MoE (2003a) has declared that the major purposes of the current Ethiopian education system are the production of good caring citizens who're enterprising problem-solvers, endowed with a belief in democratic principles. To meet these long-term purposes, passive learning is replaced by a commitment to active, learner-focused education. This requires the education system to develop higher order thinking skills among students (Reda, 2015). In a recent wave of changes, priority is given to continuous assessment, project-work, practical experience, and actual work (MoE, 2003b). To achieve these objectives teachers were trained in active learning methods and in the importance of continuous assessment in college/university classrooms.

Currently, in Ethiopia the educational paradigm shift implies change in what is valued in society, and what knowledge society thinks should be learned in schools. Teachers are essentially agents for positive societal change. Those adhering to the shift in educational paradigm can very effectively work to empower communities that endure lack of opportunities (MoE, 2003b).

In the context of teacher education in Ethiopia the paradigm shift involves (MoE, 2003a): (1) teaching which makes changes- in ideas and directly people's lives, (2) taking the real world into the classroom and taking teachers out into the real world, and (3) democratizing teacher education-giving teachers, students and citizens confidence to make decisions and take initiative, to take control of their world. Therefore, the overhaul of the education system (MoE, 2003a) offers a direct challenge to teacher education institutions to redefine their role and to become competent in: a) subject matter and the content of teaching; b) managing change within the classroom; c) areas relating to the school and the education system; and d) the values, attributes, ethics and abilities essential to professionalism in upholding the professional ethics and producing responsible citizens within their communities and ultimately within Ethiopian society.

The Ministry of Education (MoE, 2003a) further emphasized that these competencies guide the nature, organization and management of the teacher education programme, provide a means of measuring educational progress, and serve as a standardized base from which other more experienced teachers can measure their own practice. This part of the reform is seen as an attempt to point out the truths to the teacher educators and the ways forward for their educational practice. The teacher educators should therefore become the vanguard or spearhead of educational initiatives and innovations. Action to professionalize the teacher educators is therefore vital.

In this regard, a programme, that is of the academic standing of a higher diploma (potentially the first half of a master's degree) was established in 2003 to meet the identified needs of teacher educators. The Higher Diploma Programme started in all teacher education institutions in Ethiopia from 2003, to meet the identified needs of teacher educators and support the implementation of teacher education system overhaul (TESO) program.

The Higher Diploma Programme (HDP) was developed as a result of the study into the quality and effectiveness of teacher education in Ethiopia (Livingstone et al., 2000 cited in MoE, 2011), which identified the needs of teacher educators in Ethiopia. It is a precondition for licensing as a teacher educator (MoE, 2003b). The Higher Diploma Programme is carried out largely on-the-job for one academic year and emphasizes the key elements of the role of the teacher educators as well as ensuring competence in the learning and teaching methods and assessment modes required in the teacher education institutions. It provides teacher educators with a practical programme to support their development as effective teachers and reflective practitioners with enhanced professional status, to be able to model active learning and continuous assessment, manage change and make a difference in the education system.

The HDP continually develops in line with government policies and strategies. For example, the ESDP IV and the Growth and Transformation Plan 2010/11 – 2014/15 (GTP) revealed that the significant expansion in tertiary education has resulted in the need for more trained teacher educators, to guarantee the quality and to achieve the sector goals, and to meet the demand for the HDP. Those who educate the teachers must themselves be of high quality, be highly competent and be educated for the specifics of their role to produce better teachers and to improve the learning of all students in Ethiopia. The programme provides teacher educators with support for their development as effective and reflective practitioners with enhanced professional status.

In the past decade, for example, we have seen, the Higher Diploma Programme (refer Appendix), which was developed as a result of the study into the quality and effectiveness of teacher education in Ethiopia (Livingstone et al., 2000 cited in MoE, 2011). The focus has primarily centered on teaching techniques in Ethiopian college and university classrooms namely active learning, the value of out-of-class learning/practicum, action research; reflection, managing learning, time management, and the importance of continuous assessment on college/ university campuses (MoE, 2003b, 2008, 2011). Relatively little attention has been committed to emphasize on students' characteristics that occur in instructional settings.

The links between the instructional factors and students' motivational beliefs were not made explicit in the HDP. The principal concern of the HDP is with the knowledge and strategies of teaching techniques necessary for efficiency. Disproportionately little emphasis was placed on the emotional factors that might promote or impede teaching efficiency. The HDP seemed to reflect time-worn assumptions about learners and learning that may limit teachers' ways of thinking about the role of the college/university student in the classroom. There has been a plethora of criticism regarding this early view on classroom learning. Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, and Campione (1983), for example, emphasized that classroom learning is often discussed solely in terms of cognition and the various cognitive and metacognitive processes that are involved when students learn in academic settings. In fact, Brown and his associates (Brown et al., 1983:78) quote noted both the problem and the state of the field in the early 1980s; and what they said may apply to HDP:

Bleak though it may sound, academic cognition is relatively effortful, isolated, and cold. Academic cognition is cold, in that the principal concern is with the knowledge and strategies necessary for efficiency, with little emphasis placed on the emotional factors that might promote or impede that efficiency.

Brown and his associates (Brown et al., 1983) further noted that most of the early models and research on academic cognition did not address issues of motivation or emotion and how these factors might facilitate or constrain cognition and learning. Basically, motivation was irrelevant to these cold views of cognition as they concentrated on the role of cognition and learning.

Motivational models and constructs were cognitive-especially in social cognitive models of motivation-but the links between the motivational constructs and the cognitive tasks and models were not made explicit in the theoretical models of motivation. Fortunately, this state of affairs has changed dramatically over the last 30 years of research. Efforts to apply the results of motivational research to education produced a greater emphasis on the cognitive aspects of motivation. Thus, today, a cognitive emphasis with a focus on the self-system dominates motivational theory and research (Schunk, 1990 cited in Elliott et al., 2000). Interest in students' motivational beliefs and their roles in motivation have grown immensely. Viewing motivation and motivational beliefs as interacting mechanisms have important theoretical and practical implications for educators (Elliott et al., 2000; Schunk, 1990 cited in Elliott et al., 2000).

Cognitive researchers now recognize the importance of motivational constructs in shaping cognition and learning in academic settings (e.g., Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999), and motivational researchers have become interested in how motivational beliefs relate to student cognition and classroom learning (e.g., Pintrich, 2000). This integrative work on academic cognition and motivation has provided a much more accurate and ecologically valid description of classroom learning. Given these advances in scientific knowledge, the understanding of classroom learning is not only more generalizable, but it is also more readily applicable to problems of instructional improvement. Thus, the cognitive view of motivation serves as a conceptual framework to understand student's motivation to learn.

The purpose of this review is to summarize how useful are the various motivational constructs to understand students learning in the classroom. Given space considerations, this paper does not represent a comprehensive review of the existing research in this area; rather, it attempts to highlight the following key features. This paper first discusses the conceptual framework to enhance students learning; then it considers how classroom organizational factors are related to personal motivational beliefs and instructional factors. From this analysis, generalizations are proposed for integrating student motivational beliefs and instructional factors to strength learning-centered classroom. The paper forwarded concluding remarks and implications.

## 2. Conceptual Framework for Enhancing Student Motivation to Learn

Motivation is defined as an internal state that arouses us to action, pushes us in particular directions, and keeps us engaged in certain activities (Weiner, 1990; Baron, 1992; Schunk, 1990 cited in Elliott et al., 2000; Eggen and Kauchak, 1997). Eggen and Kauchak (1997) further revealed that just as a force moves an object, motivation moves a person. When our students pay attention, turn in their work, and study for tests, we say they are motivated. If they do not do these things, we say they are not. This notion is not technically true, however. More accurately, they are not motivated to perform the tasks we set out for them; simply, their goals are not the same as our goals. Our job as teachers is to try to increase their inclination to perform meaningful learning tasks, and this our frame of reference in this article.

Student motivation is critical for learning. Learning enables us to acquire new knowledge and skills, and motivation provides the impetus for showing what we have learned. Therefore, motivation related to learning could be defined as the purpose for doing activities that will lead to learning. Motivation has always been tied to learning activities and often has been inferred from the outcomes of learning. Researchers have found a strong, positive correlation between motivation and achievement (Ugurogulu & Walberg, 1979; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993). Motivated students typically have positive attitudes toward school, cause fewer management problems, and describe school as satisfying.

Efforts to apply the results of motivational research to education produced a greater emphasis on the cognitive aspects of motivation. Thus, today; a cognitive emphasis with a focus on the self-system dominates motivational theory and research. For example, students' motivational beliefs such as causal attributions, self-efficacy, locus of control, and cooperative learning are all used to explain human motivation (Schunk, 1990) and are discussed in this paper. Thus, a good place to begin to understand students' motivation and learning is to examine the cognitive view of motivation.

The review employs the cognitive view of motivation (Ames & Ames, 1989 cited in Dembo, 1994) as a conceptual framework, in which the teacher is concerned with cognitive-meditational process-the personal explanations for success and failure and informational processing that occur in instructional settings. As a result, motivation is reflected in how students think about their goals, the task and their feelings about completing the task.

The cognitive approach seeks to understand why students choose to engage in academic tasks. Teacher and student beliefs influence teachers' classroom decisions and students' engagement in academic activities. How teachers view motivation will influence their perceptions of what they can do or should do to establish a classroom environment that will enhance student motivation. The cognitive view of motivation provides important insights for understanding, diagnosing and remediating motivational deficiencies. Thus, Dembo (1994) strongly believed that if teachers realize how much student motivation is influenced by students' self-perceptions that are changeable; they will assume more responsibility for the

way students behave. This responsibility can encourage teachers to make modifications in classroom organization and instruction that increase student motivation to learn. Pintrich and Gareia (1992 cited in Dembo, 1994) argue that motivational beliefs help students form an intention to learn, while cognitive strategies are used to enact learning. This statement emphasizes the interaction between motivation and cognition. Many of the factors that contribute a motivation pattern are identified in the framework for enhancing student motivation to learn (refer the figure shown below): student’s motivational beliefs and teacher behaviors/ instructional factors. The discussion about the relationships between student’s motivational beliefs and teacher behaviors/ instructional factors follows along the following two lines.

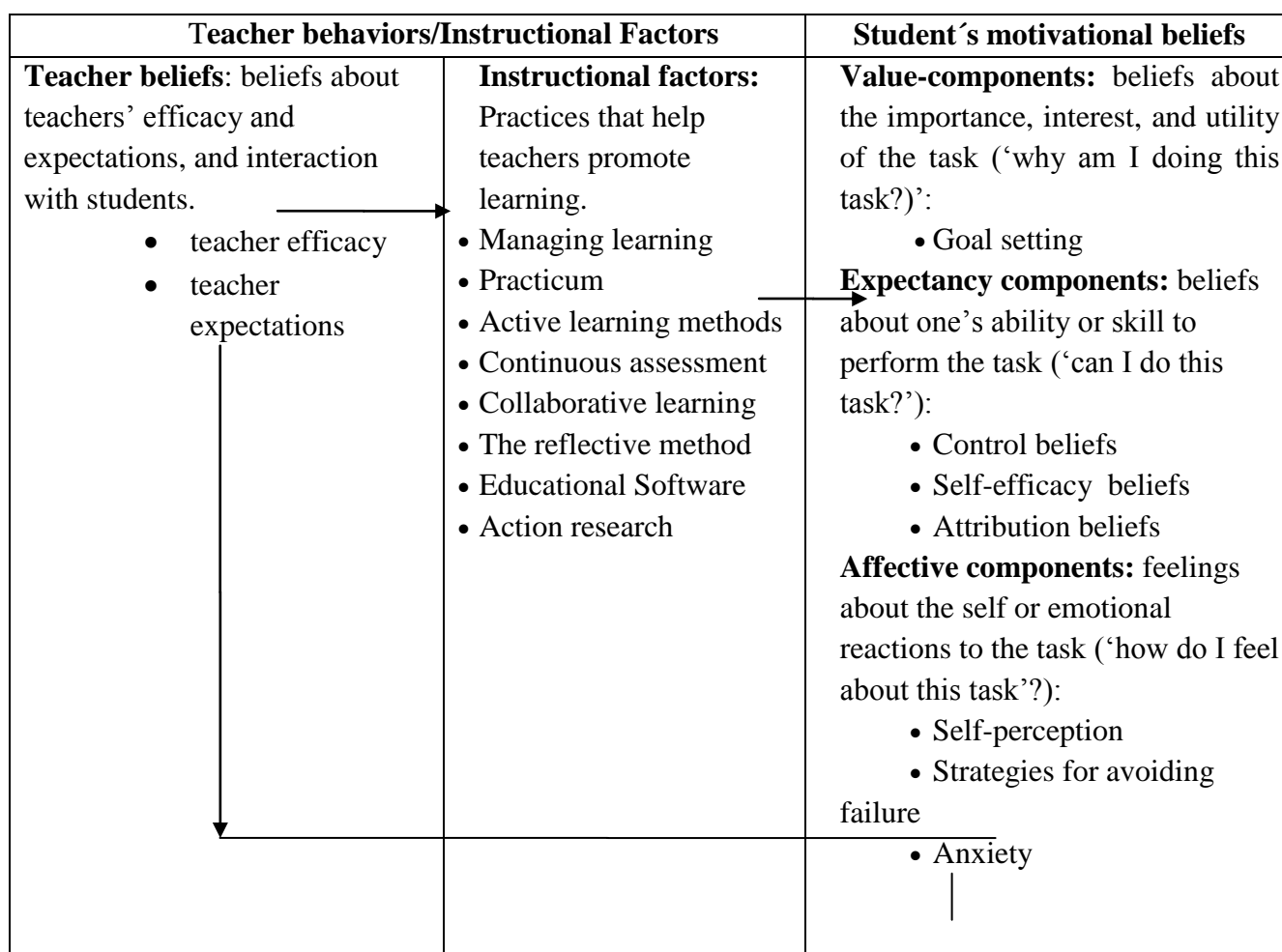


Figure: A Framework for Enhancing Student Motivation to Learn.

*What can students do to promote learning in college/university classrooms?* Students are not always motivated to learn more or to use what they know already. Some do just enough to get by instead of using every opportunity to learn all they can. Others stop making any attempt to succeed academically altogether. If we wish to create good thinkers, we need to understand academic motivation better and to consider new ways of structuring schooling to enhance rather than destroy academic motivation.



Motivational researchers have made many suggestions for increasing students' motivation. Teachers must be aware that academic motivation is influenced by students' beliefs and perceptions as well as by classroom practices. For example, students' expectations for success and failure and how students explain their performances to themselves influence future performance (Weiner, 1992). Moreover, classroom practices such as offering rewards and setting goals also have a considerable impact on students' motivation (Alderman, 1990 cited in Elliott et al., 2000).

Some of the many models of learning theories are particularly relevant to the traditional college classroom. For example, Weiner's attribution theory and Bandura's self-efficacy theory show college students' attributions for success or failure (Weiner, 1992) and their beliefs about their own abilities, or self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), influence students' motivation and goals for academic work. Self-efficacy beliefs are positively related to adaptive cognitive and self-regulatory strategy use as well as actual achievement in the classroom. Accordingly, students who feel capable and confident about their capabilities to do the course work are much more likely to be cognitively engaged, to try hard, to persist, and to do well in the course.

There have been a number of constructs and theories proposed about the role of control beliefs for motivational dynamics. For example, early work on locus of control (Lefcourt, 1976; Rotter, 1966) found that students who believed that they were in control of their behavior and could influence the environment (an internal locus of control) tended to achieve at higher levels. Connell (1985) suggested two aspects of control beliefs: an internal source and an external source or powerful others. Students who believe in internal sources of control are assumed to perform better than do students who believe powerful others (e.g., faculty, parents) are responsible for their success or failure. In the college classroom, Perry and his colleagues (e.g., Perry, 1991; Perry & Dickens, 1988; Perry & Magnusson, 1989; Perry & Penner, 1990) have shown that students' beliefs about how their personal attributes influence the environment-what they label perceived control-are related to achievement and to aspects of the classroom environment (e.g., instructor feedback).

Moreover, some theories expand our view beyond the individual student and focus on the social context of learning. Approaches to learning that promote social constructivism, or learning within a social context, and that feature active group constructions of knowledge (Jaworski, 1994) provide an ideal environment for some learners. Approaches to learning that create awareness of students' social conscience and that promote an awareness of possibilities for social transformation through action, such as conscientization (Freire & Faundez, 1989), can stimulate learning, particularly for students from traditionally disadvantaged groups. And the theories of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) and learning styles (Kolb, 1981) help us challenge time-worn assumptions about learners and learning that can exclude students and that limit our ways of thinking about the role of the college student in the classroom. In terms

of self-efficacy beliefs, results from correlational research (Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990) are very consistent over time and in line with more experimental studies of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is one of the strongest positive predictors of actual achievement in the course (Pintrich, 1999). Students who believe they are able to do the course work and learn the material is much more likely to do well in the course.

The most important point that emerged from the review revealed that self-efficacy is a significant positive predictor of student self-regulation and cognitive engagement in the course. Students who are confident of their capabilities to learn and do the course work are more likely to report using more elaboration and organizational cognitive strategies. These strategies involve deeper cognitive processing of the course material-students try to paraphrase the material, summarize it in their own words, or make outlines or concept maps of the concepts in comparison to just trying to memorize the material. In addition, students higher in their self-efficacy for learning also are much more likely to be metacognitive and try to regulate their learning by monitoring and controlling their cognition as they learn. Accordingly, positive self-efficacy beliefs can boost cognitive and self-regulatory strategy use over the course of a semester.

The review further tells us much about learning in college; for example, we know that students can develop realistic attributions regarding success and failure that lead to positive study behaviors when working with teachers. It has also demonstrated that individuals' beliefs about the contingency between their behaviors and their performance in a situation are linked to student learning and achievement. In a classroom context, this means that students' motivational beliefs about the link between their studying, self-regulated learning behavior, and achievement will influence their actual studying behavior.

*What can Teachers do to promote learning in College/University classrooms?* Motivation is a recurring dilemma for beginning and veteran teachers alike. In a review of more than 83 studies involving beginning teachers from nine countries, Veenman (1984) found that only classroom management ranked ahead of motivation as a concern. Experienced teachers usually come to grips with classroom management, but they continue to wrestle with the problem of motivation. It is a major factor influencing the difficulty and satisfaction that teachers experience in their jobs.

The concept of motivation has been subject to myth that can lead to appropriate educational practices. According to Elliott and his associates (2000, p. 333) "...teachers motivate students. Realistically, the best teachers can do is make conditions for learning as attractive and stimulating as possible and by matching tasks to students ability. By doing so, one can encourage students' self-motivation". They further emphasized that if teachers match a task with student's ability, having that student imagine successful performance will produce more effective behavior, which then will aid motivation for the next task. Eggen and Kauchak(1997) emphasized that a teacher contributes a great deal to students' desire to learn and to take responsibility and control for their own learning. A teacher will not be 100%

successful all the time, but with a positive, proactive approach to motivation, he or she can influence the way students view themselves and learning.

Social constructivist approaches to learning have been applied through classroom practices such as collaborative learning, problem-based learning, and peer learning groups. Most often, students who participate in these innovative instructional approaches perceive a more meaningful learning experience and in some cases actually learn more than students in conventional learning situations.

Research with regard to theories of learning styles (Kolb, 1981) and multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) have validated the existence of the various ways of learning and the existence of various types of intelligence. Accordingly, from the literature focusing on theories of learning and research, we can identify several general practices that help teachers promote learning for college/university students. These include (1) social learning experiences, such as peer teaching and group projects, particularly those that promote group construction of knowledge, allow a student to observe other students' models of successful learning, and encourage him or her to imitate them (Bandura, 1997), (2) varying instructional models that deviate from the lecture format, such as visual presentations, site visits, and use of the Internet (Branch, 1997; Sheffield, 1977 both cited in Elliott et al., 2000), (3) varying expectations for students' performance, from individual written formats to group work that includes writing and presentation, interpretation of artistic work, and performance of actual tasks at a work site (Good & Brophy, 1978; Brophy & Good, 1970; Reda, 2008), (4) overt use of socio-cultural situations and methods that provide authentic contexts and enculturation into an academic disciplinary community (Bruner, 1996 cited in Elliott et al., 2000); and (5) course material that demonstrates learner diversity such as diverse cultures, ethnic groups, social classes, and gender (Nieto, 1996; Manning & Baruth, 1996). If college/university classes could incorporate just a few of these practices, they would develop into more learning-centered communities and would move toward meeting the learning needs of a greater portion of their students.

The review discussed a variety of teaching techniques that help teachers promote learning and a substantial list of students' motivational belief that can influence student's motivation to learn. Elliott et al. (2000) offered four concluding remarks from the examination of the theoretical and research-based information on motivation: (1) students differ in how they are motivated and what motivates them; (2) differences in motivation can lead to important differences in learning; (3) no single theory of motivation adequately informs educators how to motivate students; and (4) over the course of development, students generally become more in control of and responsible for actions that influence their level of motivation for learning.

In sum, classroom instructional factors that occur daily in the classroom influence students' learning and motivation. Over the course of students' educational experience, they will have hundreds of interactions with their teachers and many opportunities to learn new information. These learning interactions play a major role in what students know, but perhaps even more

important, they influence the development of students' motivation to learn, as well as their curiosity and sense of efficacy or competence. In the long run, these characteristics lead to the development of learners who assume control over what they learn and do so with a strong desire toward understanding what they learn.

### **3. Discussion**

The main purpose of this review has been to strengthen a learning-centered college/university classroom in Ethiopia to enhance the learning needs of the students. The discussion regarding this central issue is presented along the following lines.

The theoretical and applied research on motivation that was reviewed in this article provided information about the role that teaching and classroom structure can have on students' motivation to learn. The existing literatures on student's learning and motivation have addressed the all-important issue of learning by college students. One change that could begin to maximize student's learning would be to strengthen "learning-centered" campuses. To strengthen such a campus, the existing literature focuses on how student's motivational beliefs and teacher's instructional factors meet and how the quality of this interaction influences the learning needs of students that are presumed to occur in college/university classroom (Barr & Tagg, 1995).

Although literature exists to describe innovations in the classroom designed to foster learning-centered classroom, we are not sure whether instructors in Ethiopian colleges and universities can apply these innovations to help students learn best. Up to most recently, of course, none of the educational institutions in Ethiopia has designed a form of training program for strengthening learning-centred classrooms in colleges/universities to enhance students' motivation and learning. In the past decade, for example, we have seen, the Higher Diploma Programme (refer Appendix), which was developed as a result of the study into the quality and effectiveness of teacher education in Ethiopia (Livingstone et al., 2000 cited in MoE, 2011) focused on teaching techniques in Ethiopian college and university classrooms, a movement that emphasizes active learning, the value of out-of-class learning/practicum, action research; reflection, managing learning, time management, and the importance of continuous assessment on college/ university campuses (MoE, 2003, 2008, 2011), but it has been little committed to emphasize on students' motivational beliefs that occur in instructional settings. Some of the comments from teacher educators about the importance of HDP support this anticipation (MoE, 2008:11-12):

My teaching is now quite different. Active learning, student-cantered teaching and continuous assessment are not new in theory for us but actually how it is carried out no-one knew. The HDP has shown us how to do it.

There is a change in my teaching particularly in active learning. I have been trying to make students learn giving them different materials and discussion in groups and pairs. The other change is on self-reflection.

My teaching is now much more student-centred and there is much more student participation.

I have learnt to assess my students; I use more assignments, group work, exercises, and reports of fieldwork and laboratory sessions.

I have found the active learning methods interesting and am able to apply it in the classroom. I used to stick to any one of teaching and now I try different techniques involving the students more. Action research has been useful so that we can solve problems ourselves...

What is astonishing in these comments is that a teacher's goal in applying the instructional variables to the classroom is to increase students' self-efficacy and sense of control and help them develop self-regulation. However, that teachers make a difference in student characteristics is not a theme of the HDP. A teacher contributes a great deal to students' desire to learn and to take responsibility and control for their own learning, but the question of how he or she can influence the way students view themselves and learning is less emphasized in the HDP. The HDP has been little committed to emphasize on students' characteristics that occur in instructional settings (refer appendix). The links between the instructional factors and students' motivational beliefs were not made explicit in the HDP. The principal concern of the HDP is with the knowledge and strategies of teaching techniques necessary for efficiency (MoE, 2011).

The HDP seemed to reflect time-worn assumption about learners and learning that may limit teachers' ways of thinking about the role of the college/university student in the classroom. Regarding to this time-worn assumption on classroom learning, Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, and Campione (1983) noted the problem suggesting that early views on classroom learning did not address issues of motivation or emotion and how these factors might facilitate or constrain cognition and learning. However this state of affairs has changed dramatically over the last 30 years of research. Today; a cognitive emphasis with a focus on the self-system dominates motivational theory and research. Students motivational beliefs such as causal attributions, self-efficacy, and locus of control are all used to explain classroom learning and motivation (Schunk, 1990 cited in Elliott et al., 2000).

In a similar vein, cognitive researchers (e.g., Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999) and motivational researchers (e.g., Pintrich, 2000) have become interested with integrative work on academic cognition and motivation to provide a much more accurate and ecologically valid description of classroom learning. For the cognitive view of motivation, human behavior is not only a 'result' or 'product' of cultural influences; people are also free, active, and rational individuals who are capable of exercising their own will. Activity is a process of the individual's goal-directed interaction with the environment. Human motivation, emotion,

thought, and reactions cannot be separated from human activity, which is determined by individual, socioeconomic, environmental, political, and cultural conditions, and also changes these conditions (Shiraev and Levy, 2007). In fact, human psychology develops within human activity and manifests through it (Vygotsky, 1932 cited in Shiraev and Levy, 2007). Thus, it is well worth the time and effort for teachers and prospective teachers to learn as much as possible about this integrative work on academic cognition and motivation to strengthen a learning-centered college/university classroom in Ethiopia. To achieve this expectation in the years to come, a continuous professional development programme for teachers and prospective teachers which includes student motivational beliefs and classroom organizational factors deserve special attention (refer conceptual framework cited in the table above).

Accordingly, the theoretical review provides a different picture of student's motivational beliefs and teachers' beliefs that occur in instructional settings to enhance students' motivation and learning. These components seem to be important in student's motivational beliefs and teachers' behaviours: value components; expectancy components; affective components; and teachers' behaviors.

Specifically, value components of the model incorporate students' goals for engaging in a task as well as their beliefs about the importance, utility, or interest of a task. Essentially, these components concern the question (e.g., Why am I doing this task?). Value components concern whether students care about the task and the nature of that concern. These components should be related to cognitive and self-regulatory activities as well as outcomes such as the choice of activities, effort, and persistence (Pintrich, 1999). Accordingly, two basic value components seem relevant in instructional settings to enhance students' motivation and learning: goal orientation and task value.

Expectancy components refer to students' beliefs about their ability to perform the task (e.g., can I do this task?). If students believe that they have some control over their skills and the task environment and if they are confident in their ability to perform the necessary skills, they are more likely to choose to do the task, be cognitively involved, persist at the task, and achieve at higher levels. Different motivational theorists have proposed a variety of constructs that can be categorized as expectancy components. The main distinction is between how much control one believes one has over the situation and perceptions of efficacy to accomplish the task in that situation (Weiner, 1990; Petri, 1991; Schunk, 1989). Hence three aspects of student's motivational beliefs influencing motivation in instructional settings deserve special attention namely control beliefs, attribution beliefs, and efficacy beliefs.

Affective components incorporate students' emotional reactions to the task (e.g., how do I feel about this task?). Affective components include students' emotional reactions to the task and their performance (i.e., anxiety, pride, and shame) and their more emotional needs for self-worth or self-esteem, affiliation, and self-actualization (Veroff & Veroff, 1980). In terms

of the links between cognition and affect, there has been a long history of research on the causal ordering of cognition and affect (Weiner, 1986). Accordingly, three aspects of student characteristics seem relevant in instructional settings to enhance students' motivation and learning: self-perception of competence, strategies for avoiding failure, and anxiety.

Teacher behaviors, on the other hand, include teachers' efficacy and expectations, and interaction with students, appeared as influential factors in motivation throughout the instructional process. Hence two aspects of teacher behavior deserve special attention: teacher efficacy and teacher expectations (Good & Brophy, 1978; Brophy & Good, 1970; Reda, 2008). Oxford and Ehrman (1993) suggested that teachers need to identify and comprehend these significant individual differences in motivational beliefs (such as value components; expectancy components; and affective components) in their learners if they are to provide the most effective instruction possible. Seen from this angle, learning theorists and researchers have made many suggestions for increasing students' motivation. Some of these include techniques for changing students' perceptions and beliefs. Others focus on changing classroom tasks and practices (Pressely & McCormic, 1995).

A recent decade of intensive focus on teaching styles and methods, but largely ignoring students' characteristics that occur in instructional settings, has led higher education teachers to the conclusion that a focus merely on instruction is one-sided. Currently, efforts are being made to strength a more balanced discourse that emphasizes the subtle nuances and complexities of learning within any discussion of teaching (Barr & Tagg, 1995). In fact, some suggest shifting from an instructional paradigm in higher education that focuses on increasing and improving instruction to a learning paradigm that emphasizes students' learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995).

In a learning paradigm, teachers no longer presume that every student learns the same way or that widely accepted teaching practices necessarily result in optimal levels of learning for students (Barr & Tagg, 1995). In a learning-centered perspective, Barr & Tagg (1995) increasingly regard the classroom as a dynamic setting where pedagogical practices and learners' characteristics meet and where the quality of this interaction influences outcomes that are presumed to occur in college/university classroom. In many respects the specified conceptual framework reflects commonly on what can students and teachers do to promote learning in college/university classrooms. When the emphasis is on students' learning, college or university students begin to share responsibility for learning, and the college's or university's professionalism is measured by the learning success of the classroom. As a result, strengthening learning centered classrooms helps to develop the knowledge base that college or university need to promote the partnership in teaching and learning.

Since motivated students are obviously the most desirable to teach, it is well worth the time and effort for teachers and prospective teachers to learn as much as possible about motivation. Hence, teacher educators may find the specified conceptual framework of learning useful to reinforce learning-centered classroom. And researchers and students will

find useful discussions of college/university classroom phenomena as well as possibilities for their own research on college or university students' learning.

Furthermore, this review is intended to serve as a primary resource for those whose interest is in academic learning on the college or university campus. College or university campus will find the suggestions for enhancing learning, as well as the framework behind those suggestions, useful as they conceive their classes.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Presently, we have seen a focus on teaching techniques in Ethiopian college and university classrooms, a movement that emphasizes active learning, the value of out-of-class learning/practicum, action research; reflection, managing learning, time management, and the importance of continuous assessment with little emphasis on students' motivational beliefs that occur in instructional settings. This state of emphasis with a focus on teaching techniques did not address issues of motivation or emotion and how these factors might facilitate or constrain cognition and learning. Thus, the disproportionately small amount of attention paid to students' motivational belief is surprising. In light of this serious problem present in teacher professional development, this review has offered a direct challenge to Higher Education Institutions to strengthen learning-centered college/university classroom in Ethiopia.

Strengthening learning centered classrooms helps to develop the knowledge base that college/university needs to promote the partnership in teaching and learning. To achieve this expectation, efforts must be made to strengthen a more balanced discourse that emphasizes the subtle tone and complexities of learning within any discussion of teaching. This part of the reform is seen as an attempt to point out the advances in scientific thinking to the college/university teacher educators and the ways forward for their instructional improvement. The college/university teacher educators should therefore become the spearhead of instructional initiatives and innovations.

Action to professionalize the college/university teacher educators is vital to improve the quality of teacher professional development programme in Ethiopia. In this regard, to strengthen learning-centered college/university classroom in Ethiopia, college/university teacher educator professional development on understanding student motivational beliefs and teacher behaviors/ instructional factors is urgently needed.

The review further concluded that a learning-centered perspective regards the college/university classroom as a dynamic setting where pedagogical practices and learners' motivational beliefs meet and where the quality of this interaction influences the learning needs of students that are presumed to occur in classroom. Hence if the next generation of college/university teacher educators designed their classrooms to be in accord with these



recommendations, future generations of university/college students would be much more motivated than the current one.

## 5. Implications

Current theories and research on students learning and motivation support to balance teacher's and student's roles to put learning-centered classroom into practice. Accordingly, the review forwarded three implication concerns voiced the current wisdom about teacher professional development in Ethiopia.

1. Current theories and research on students learning and motivation revealed that teacher professional development program is in a state of flux with its future hanging precariously in the balance for teacher's and student's roles for strengthening learning centered classrooms. Some of them focus on techniques for changing students' motivational beliefs. Others focus on changing classroom tasks and practices. Therefore, colleges/university must work hard to put in place learning centered classrooms that enables students to ensure adequate mastery of learning. To achieve this expectation, college/university teachers and their students need to be equipped both with motivational beliefs and classroom tasks and practices. This integrative work on academic cognition and motivation will readily applicable to solve problems of instructional improvement in college/university classroom.
2. The review revealed that the HDP has little emphasis (refer appendix) on students' characteristics that occur in instructional settings. The links between the instructional factors and students' motivational beliefs were not made explicit in the HDP. The principal concern of the HDP is with the knowledge and strategies of teaching techniques necessary for efficiency, with little emphasis placed on the emotional factors that might promote or impede teaching efficiency. But now the time has come to adopt a broader perspective. Accordingly; the understanding of students' learning demands teachers to learn more about students' motivational beliefs and classroom instructional techniques. The more that teachers know about their students as individuals, and the more that they know about motivation, the more effective teaching will be and the more students will learn. To produce this condition in college/university classroom requires teachers to develop as much knowledge about students' motivational beliefs and what affects their motivation as possible.
3. Most of the literature related to student motivation to learn deals with pedagogical techniques. Students' motivational beliefs related to learning are largely ignored. As a corrective to current teacher professional development, the review has a clear signal that teacher professional development programmes need to devote much more attention to students' motivational beliefs to strengthen learning centered classroom. In doing this, they should take a holistic conceptual framework involving pedagogical techniques and students motivational beliefs for enhancing student motivation to learn.

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## **Appendix: Organization of Higher Diploma Programme for Teacher Educators Handbook (Ministry of Education, 2011).**

### **The Aim of the Higher Diploma Programme:**

The aim of the Higher Diploma Programme for teacher educators is to improve the quality of education in Ethiopia through a licensing programme that will develop the skills and professionalism of teacher educators.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. The Objectives of the Higher Diploma Programme**

The programme will enable teacher educators to:

- support the implementation of the GTP
- identify their own needs and become a professional, reflective teacher educator demonstrating high standards of professional ethics
- develop teaching as a skill, based on sound theoretical knowledge and experience
- role model good practice and contribute to institutional and community development
- provide a high quality learning experience for student teachers
- be involved in action research, collaborative learning and team work
- address gender issues and social inclusion

### **1.2. Delivery of the Higher Diploma Programme**

The objectives will be achieved through the delivery of four modules; using student centred learning and continuous assessment.

**Module 1. The Reflective Teacher Educator (30 hours)**

**Module 2. Managing learning (60 hours)**

**Module 3. Action Research (30 hours)**

**Module 4. School/Organisation Placement (12 hours)**

Candidates are expected to complete **60 hours of independent study** which can include additional reading, research and professional conversations:

### **1.3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Higher Diploma Group members**

The success of the Higher Diploma Programme depends partly on establishing an effective and mutually supportive group of candidates with the Higher Diploma Leader (HDL) and the Higher Diploma Tutors (HDTs).

**The Higher Diploma Leader is responsible for:**

- Leading the programme
- Running two hour timetabled sessions each week
- Organising a weekly meeting with other HDL(s) and HDTs to plan and share work
- Training HDTs for leadership
- Having at least 2 professional interviews with each candidate
- Liaising with CTE/University staff, local schools, REB, MoE, VSO and IFESH as appropriate to arrange Higher Diploma activities
- Continuous assessment of candidates by a regular check of completed work with written constructive feedback (recommended every week)
- Providing informal support for candidates outside formal sessions
- Coordinating arrangements for moderation visits
- Attending Higher Diploma workshops organised by MoE and/or moderating universities
- Liaising with other education initiatives in the institution, i.e. ELIC, ADRC, CPD, Gender & HIV & AIDS
- Follow up on Higher Diploma Programme graduates to assess the impact of the programme on teaching and learning and to identify CPD needs

**Higher Diploma Tutors will:**

- Normally be a candidate for the Higher Diploma at the same time as being a tutor on the programme
- Assist the HDL plan the twice weekly taught sessions
- Support, and increasingly take a lead in the delivery of the taught sessions
- Facilitate and take a lead in group discussions and feedback
- Observe candidates' lessons and give constructive feedback
- Assist the HDL to assess candidates' performance and written work
- Show initiative in planning and undertaking research assignments
- Provide support for candidates, including professional interviews
- Participate in HDP workshops organised by MoE and/or moderating universities

**Higher Diploma candidates will:**

- Commit themselves fully to the Programme
- Attend all taught sessions on time
- Participate actively in group work
- Complete lesson plans and evaluations, the reflective activities and other activities during taught sessions
- Cooperate with the HDL and HDTs to ensure the smooth running of the HDP
- Prepare materials ready for the taught sessions as required

- Complete and hand in all the assignments on time
- Complete the module assessment and self-assessment at the end of each module
- Complete the portfolio for the final assessment on time.

#### **1.4. Assessment in the Higher Diploma Programme**

Assessment for the Higher Diploma is consistent with the aims and objectives of the programme and is criterion based **for** learning. It shows what candidates can do and need to develop to meet their own objectives, identified in their Continuing Professional Development plan, and the overall objectives of the HDP. Continuous assessment and self-assessment are the key methods used. This provides teacher educators with a model of assessment that will help them implement successfully the new teaching and learning methods they will acquire. Teacher educators will either complete the HDP successfully, in which case they will **pass**; or they will be **referred (should they fail to carry out the roles and responsibilities – see above)** in which case they will have to repeat those sections of the HDP they have not completed successfully in order to **pass**. One of the reasons for referral would be if unexplained or unacceptable attendance were to fall below 80%. There will be regional moderation across CTE/University of the Portfolios of all candidates to ensure standardisation and quality assurance.

#### **1.5. Award of the Higher Diploma for Teacher Educators**

Successful completion of the HDP will be based on evidence provided in the Portfolio. The Portfolio will be developed by candidates during the programme, supported by the HDL. The final Portfolio of Evidence for moderation should include:

- 10 reflective activities showing development of reflective thinking and its effect on practice
- 8 lesson plans (excluding Projects and the School Placement) showing development of active learning and assessment techniques
- Records of 4 formal lesson observations of the candidate by the HDL or HDT
- Managing Learning Project
- School/Organisation Placement Report
- Action Research Project
- Continuing Professional Development Plans
- All End of Module Self Assessments and the Final Self Assessment

#### **1.6. Supports for the HDP Candidates**

The central support for each CTE/University is the moderating university to which each CTE/University is assigned. Your HDL will request the assistance from the moderator should there be any issue that cannot be dealt with within the CTE/University. The moderator at this university will be able to answer any questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of HDP team members in their satellites. Access to information, phone individual guidance, and practical help may be obtained through or email. In addition:

- Workshops are planned for sharing experience and moderation of work
- Moderation and support visits will be carried out throughout the year.

In addition, within each CTE/University support will be provided through:

- The HDP Handbook
- The Higher Diploma group members, who will function as a mutually supportive team
- Continuous self-assessment and CPD
- Regular professional interviews between HDLs, HDTs and candidates at least once each semester
- Regular observation of candidates' teaching by the HDL or HDT with one to one feedback at least twice each semester

### **1.7. Characteristics of the programme**

The HDP is standardized across all institutions and has the flexibility to be related to the school cycle, subject specialism and particular interest of the candidates. It is based on practice, both in the CTEs, Universities and in schools. The focus is on the learning process and relates directly to teaching methodology and the requirements of the pre-service programme and the practicum. The Higher Diploma candidates work as a group, supported by Higher Diploma Leaders and Tutors. The group is responsible for generating ideas, focusing discussions, making mutual teaching observations, providing peer support and feedback and presenting research findings. Active, participatory learning is fundamental to the course. The course can be completed in one academic year. Candidates attend weekly sessions, have lesson observations and feedback, spend time in a local school or local organisation, complete an action research (classroom based) project showing that their work for the Diploma has a significant impact on their own teaching practice. They also have professional meetings with the Higher Diploma Leader or Tutor. Reflection on classroom practice and research should lead to continuing and sustainable improvement in their teaching. Candidates carry out their normal teaching commitments at the same time as completing the HDP since most of the work is based on their own teaching and other professional activities. Continuing assessment as well as peer and self-assessment contribute to completing the portfolio of evidence which is the start of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plan for teacher educators.

### **1.8. Assessment for Learning**

Candidates are expected to use continuous/formative assessment in their teaching, giving frequent feedback to students enabling them to set further targets to improve learning. This enables teachers to:

- design and use assessment as a tool for learning and progression



- assesses work in a fair and equitable manner
- enables learner to take ownership of and involvement in the assessment process
- enables monitoring of the learning process
- uses feedback as a tool for progression
- adheres to working within the systems and quality requirements of the institution

An outcome of self-assessment is professional development. Just as we need to produce a plan to improve professional performance so we need to promote professional development as a continuous and life-long process. Continuous Assessment and **assessment for learning** is a key feature of the Higher Diploma as it is a vital part of teaching and learning.

### **1.9. School Placement Module**

Teacher educators on the Higher Diploma Programme are required to spend one week or the equivalent in a first cycle, second cycle, or secondary school according to the level for which the teacher is preparing students. The objectives for this placement are to investigate and reflect on the organisation and management of a local school and to understand the challenges that teachers face. As part of the placement HDP candidates teach and evaluate two lessons. To help with CPD, school teachers are encouraged to observe the candidates lessons and share in the evaluation.

### **1.10. Organisation Placement Module**

Candidates on this module are required to spend one week in a local organisation which relates to their subject knowledge and experience. The objectives for this placement are to carry out a training needs analysis; to organise, deliver and evaluate a training and development workshop to meet the needs of the employees in the organisation. Candidates are encouraged to develop a link between their university and the organisation.

### **1.11. Candidates have to complete two research projects:**

- Managing Learning Project (6 sessions showing a variety of tasks to enhance understanding )
- Action Research Project (classroom research) action taken to solve a problem they encounter in their own teaching

The work is based on their own teaching and reflection on their classroom practice.

### **1.12. Principles underlying the HDP**

- The development of Reflective Practitioners is a priority of the HDP.
- Being professional
- Reflective teaching implies concern with the aims, objectives and outcomes along with technical efficiency

- It is a cyclical process through which teachers monitor, evaluate and revise their practice.
- It requires open-mindedness and accountability
- It requires competence in methods of evidence-based classroom enquiry to develop and support higher standards of teaching
- It encourages collaboration and dialogue

### **1.13. Session Observations**

All candidates are observed formally on at least four occasions with written feedback and discussion. Additional short informal observations for specific purposes may also be arranged. The programme is flexible enough to allow team teaching, micro teaching and peer observation.

### **1.14. Professional Interviews**

There will be a minimum of two professional interviews with each candidate during the course.

### **1.15. Action Research**

Action Research is concerned with changing practice in the classroom. It helps the reflective teacher-educator to deal with real challenges found in their own classrooms and therefore controls the development of their own teaching practise. It provides professional challenge at all levels and has had a real impact on learning and teaching in CTE/Universities. Some excellent Action Research Projects have explored, suggested and implemented solutions to problems within their institutions leading to more effective teaching and learning.

### **1.16. CPD Plan and End of Module Self-Assessment**

The HDP is the beginning of continuing professional development (CPD) plan for teacher educators. All candidates write their own CPD plan to be developed as they continue their career. Professional Development also offers personal fulfilment both from processes of enquiry, training and study and from the pleasures of accomplishment. This is particularly true if it is undertaken with like-minded colleagues who give mutual support, encouragement and challenge. The result is higher levels of understanding, deeper insights, with additional skills and knowledge.