SPECAL ISSUE

An Investigation into the Practice of Community Based Education (CBE) Field Activities: Perceptions, Supervision and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This survey examined the management of Community Based Education (CBE) field activities at Jimma University (JU). The study used both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected from students and academic staff through structured questionnaire. Qualitative data were gathered from top university officials: deans and college/institute CBE coordinators via in-depth interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed into frequencies and percentages, while qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively and interpreted based on themes. The results showed that the management of CBE field activities was surrounded by setbacks, such as lack of awareness and commitment from some instructors, wrong perception and little commitment of some students, staff concerns about the adequacy of CBE workload, overlapping schedules and low payment for CBE supervision, shortage of budget and logistics, community fatigue, duplication of activities, reluctance of some officials (college deans, CBE coordinators and top authorities) and lack of participatory approach in supervisor assignment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the management of CBE field activities needs improving. Uniform workload and schedule across colleges/institutes and programs for identical CBE courses, regular staff induction with emphasis on CBE issues, and adequate orientations to students are necessary. Participatory approach in supervisor assignment and maximizing the commitment of all CBE actors are also recommended.

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Higher education should primarily aim to assist community development although the approaches and strategies adopted to realize this goal can vary with variations in context (Council on Higher Education, 2006). Accordingly, universities have the responsibility of producing competent personnel through appropriate training modes which equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes (Staton, 2008, cited in Badat, 2009). Universities can infuse with their training schemes and research activities issues of the community in which they operate. This kind of education, which uses the community as a learning milieu, is called Community Based Education (CBE)-an educational strategy that integrates community services with instruction aiming to enhance learning experience, instill civic responsibility and strengthen community capacities (http://www.cas.usf.edu.service).

CBE is based on the idea that education should serve the community by producing professionals who can solve critical societal problems. Firstly, CBE enables students to research, analyze, prioritize and act upon the problems prevailing in the community. In this way, they can significantly contribute to local development endeavors by mobilizing the community towards achieving development goals or solving problems prioritized for planned intervention (Glasser et al, 2010). Secondly, it provides students with real life learning experiences since they gain a great deal of knowledge from the community. They acquire a considerable understanding of the culture, customs, traditions, norms, needs and problems of the community to which they are assigned (CeVe, 1990). This enables them to be sensitive and responsive to community needs, concerns and challenges. Thus, upon graduation, candidates will have been better equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes that help them to actively engage with the pressing needs of the community and contribute a substantial share to local, national and international development efforts (Badat, 2009).

Aware of these worthwhile benefits, Jimma University has been exercising this innovative educational approach for decades. As a result, it is referred to as a National Pioneer in CBE. CBE aims to achieve educational relevance to community needs by exposing students to the real world so that they develop team spirit through participation in integrated training, research and service delivery (http://www.ju.edu.et/?q=philosophy-jimma-university-community-based-education). Therefore, as stated in its mission statement, Jimma University aspires to train competent professionals at undergraduate and graduate levels through its innovative CBE agenda the components of which are Community Based Training Program (CBTP), Team Training Program (TTP), Development Team Training Program (DTTP) and Student Research Project (SRP). CBE is believed to play a pivotal role in the University's endeavors to address critical community needs and contribute a meaningful share to development efforts of the country. Generally, CBE occupies a key position in the educational programs of Jimma University.

Statement of the problem

As articulated in various documents, training professionals with knowledge, skills and attitudes which meet international standards and ensuring that research is directly linked with societal needs and development schemes are among the core values of Jimma University that pertain to CBE. Therefore, CBTP, TTP, DTTP and SRP

activities are not viewed as casual experiences but as compulsory undertakings integral to the University's education, training and research programs. This fact is captured in one of the underpinnings of Jimma University's CBE: "The students' work during CBE training is a 'real work' that is related to their educational needs and also forms part of the requirement for obtaining a degree." (http://www.ju.edu.et/?q=philosophy-Jimma-university-community-based-education).

In line with the importance attached to it, the execution of CBE is carefully managed and is done through concerted efforts. CBTP, TTP, DTTP and SRP undertakings are thus accomplished according to specific schedules, based on defined financial and logistic provisions and through planned supervisory follow-up. Evaluation also takes place at the end of the implementation of each CBE course as a quality assurance mechanism. As CBE is a joint venture, evaluation is done by supervisors, students and other stakeholders. This being the case, however, despite the commitment of the University to ensure quality in CBE implementation, little is known about the state of affairs (strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities) in its implementation. End-of-program evaluations do not seem comprehensive enough to give a complete picture of how the program is running. In other words, research studies on the various aspects of CBE, including the quality of supervision, are hardly available. Therefore, conducting a study on the nature of CBE execution in general and the quality of supervisory undertakings in particular is vitally important. This study, therefore, attempted to examine the management of CBE field activities at Jimma University with specific focus on perceptions, supervision and challenges. Specifically, it aims to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are supervisors, deans, college/institute CBE coordinators and the top university leadership aware of the requirements and practical operation of CBE field activities?
2. What is the status of the supervision of CBE filed activities?
3. How do instructors, deans, college/institute CBE coordinators and the top university leadership perceive the workload, credit hours and perdiem allocated for CBE courses?
4. What are the major challenges encountered in the management of CBE filed activities?
5. How do students perceive the orientation, resource provision, time allotment, supervision and overall support pertaining to CBE filed activities?

Research objectives

The study tried to:

1 Examine the awareness level of supervisors, deans, college/institute CBE coordinators and the top university leaders with regard to the requirements and execution of CBE field activities;
2 Assess the quality of the supervision of CBE filed activities;
3 Find out the perception of instructors, deans, college/institute CBE coordinators and the top university leaders about the workload, credit hours and perdiem allocated for CBE field activities;
4 Find out the major challenges encountered in the management of CBE field activities;
5 Assess students' perception about the orientation, resource provision, time allotment, supervision and overall support pertaining to CBE field activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods

The study adopted mixed methods approach. Mixed methods approach is useful to gain a fuller understanding of a given issue by combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to cross-check one set of findings against the other (Cresswell, 2003; Dornyei, 2007). Quantitative method was used to describe the status of the supervision of CBE courses. Descriptive method, a scientific method which involves describing an issue, a phenomenon, an event, a situation etc without manipulating it in any way, is used to study behaviors that are observed, beliefs that are held, situations that are prevailing, phenomena that are occurring and trends that are developing (Best & Kahn, 2003). Thus, descriptive method was employed in this study to describe the existing condition of the supervision of CBE courses at Jimma University as it existed. On the other hand, qualitative method was used to cross-check quantitative findings using data generated through face-to-face interviews. While quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed separately, the findings are combined and synthesized in the discussion section.

Sources of data

The data required for this study were collected from three groups of sources. One set of data was collected through questionnaire from a sample of Jimma University students selected from the class of 2012. Secondly, some academic staff members of the University (the head, one senior instructor and one recently hired instructor from each department) participated in the study by filling out questionnaire. The third set of data was gathered from college/institute deans, college/institute CBE coordinators, and top university officials of Jimma University who supplied relevant information through in-depth face-to-face interview.

The selection of the above sources of data was done based on some underlying assumptions. Student respondents were taken from the class of 2012 because it was believed that their involvement in CBE activities from first year of entry till graduation had given them ample experience so that they were considered appropriate sources of data. On the other hand, department heads, CBE coordinators, deans of colleges/institutes and higher university officials were chosen on the grounds of their active involvement in CBE management and supervision. And, by a same token, academic staff members were involved in the study for it was thought that their experiences as instructors at Jimma University, no matter how short, could have equipped them with some awareness and experience pertinent to CBE.

Sampling techniques

Different sampling methods were used to select respondents for the study. Extreme case sampling technique was used to select instructors; one recent employee and one senior instructor were selected purposively from each department. This technique was used to capture the maximum variability of CBE supervision related experiences among academic staff members. On the other hand, heads of departments, college/institute deans, college/institute CBE coordinators and top university officials were selected purposively for they were deemed appropriate sources of data due to their active involvement in CBE management and supervision. Finally, the sample size for student respondents (taken from 40 departments which yielded 780 possible pair-wise comparisons between departments) was computed to achieve 95% CI, with an alpha level of $0.05/780=6.4*10^{-5}$, and prevalence of 50%. That is, the proportion of

students who were satisfied with the execution of CBE courses was assumed to determine the sample size calculated as:

$$n = \frac{Z^2}{d^2} p(1-p) = \frac{Z^2}{4d^2} = \frac{3.83^2}{4*0.05^2} \approx 1467$$

However, since the population was finite, the final sample size was determined as:

$$n_f = \frac{n_o}{1+\frac{n_o}{N}} = \frac{1467}{1+\frac{1467}{3517}} \approx 1036$$

The final sample size was then distributed proportionally to the population of prospective graduates of each department among the class of 2012.

Data collection instruments

Two instruments – structured questionnaires (questionnaire for academic staff members and questionnaire for students) and in-depth interview checklist were used in this study. The questionnaires were used for they were believed to be useful instruments to elicit data on a wide range of topics from a large number of respondents (Kumar, 1996). Secondly, the interview checklist was used since it helps to obtain detailed information through face-to-face interaction with the informant (Nunan, 1992).

Data processing and analysis

Data were entered using EpiData and exported for further cleaning and analysis to SPSS version 16.0. Tables were used to present quantitative data in the form of frequency distributions and percentages. On the other hand, qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively and interpreted based on certain themes.

Ethical considerations

In this study, care was taken to meet ethical standards. Firstly, participation in the study was voluntary since it was believed that the respondents' willingness was important to obtain reliable data. Secondly, interviews were conducted according to the interviewees' choice of venues and schedules. Maximum care was also taken to avoid questions that could have affected the feelings of the respondents. In addition, participation was anonymous and all the data obtained from the respondents were used only for the purpose of the study.

RESULTS

Analysis of quantitative data

Analysis of responses of academic staff

Distribution of respondents

A sample of academic staff members were taken from five colleges and two institutes of Jimma University. Some of them held official positions while others did not

assume any official positions. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents by college/institute and official position.

Table 1: Respondents' distribution by college/institute and official position

Official Position		College						
		CSSL	**CPHMS**	**CAVM**	**BECO**	**JiT**	**CNS**	**IEPDS**
Official Position/ Instructors	No.	20	19	20	8	7	12	2
	%	74.1	63.3	95.2	72.7	77.8	63.2	66.7
Department Head	No.	6	9	0	3	2	6	1
	%	22.2	30.0	.0	27.3	22.2	31.6	33.3
CBE Coordinator	No.	1	2	1	0	0	1	0
	%	3.7	6.7	4.8	.0	.0	5.3	.0
Total	**No.**	**27**	**30**	**21**	**11**	**9**	**19**	**3**
	%	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

As shown in Table 1, out of 120 academic staff members, 27, 30, 21, 11 and 19 were, respectively, from the College of Social Sciences and Law (CSSL), College of Public Health and Medical Sciences (CPHMS), College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (CAVM), College of Business and Economics (BECO) and College of Natural Sciences (CNS). The remaining 9 and 3 were affiliated to Jimma Institute of Technology (JiT) and Institute of Education and Professional Development Studies (IEPDS) respectively. Some of these respondents assumed official positions while others did not.

Of the 27 respondents from CSSL, the majority, 20(74.1%), held no official positions, whereas 6(22.6%) were department heads and 1(3.7%) was a CBE coordinator. Out of the respondents of CPHMS, 19(63.3%) held no official positions, while 9(30%) were serving as heads of departments. Unlike each of the other colleges where there was only one CBE coordinator, two CBE coordinators took part in the study from CPHMS. From CAVM, 20(95.2%) lecturers and 1(4.8%) CBE coordinator filled out the questionnaire. However, none of the respondents from this college was head of departments. Like in the CSSL, the majority of the respondents from BECO, 8(72.7%), JiT, 7(77.8%), CNS, 12(63.2%), and IEPDS, 2(66.7%), did not assume any official positions. BECO, JiT, CNS and IEPDS were respectively represented by 3(27.3%), 2(22.2%), 6(31.6%) and 1(33.3%) respondents who held department head

positions. On the other hand, whilst 1 CBE coordinator from CNS participated in the study, no CBE coordinators from BECO, JiT and IEPDS took part in it.

Generally, except CAVM from where no department head took part in the study, the two institutes (see Table 1 above) and BECO from where no CBE coordinator participated, the respondents varied in terms of holding official positions. This shows that, in most cases, respondents were drawn from all college/institute level CBE agents (instructors, department heads and CBE coordinators).

Respondents' service years and their exposure to CBE

Serving in Jimma University as an academic staff gives one CBE experience. However, difference in the length of service years can bring about discrepancies in exposure to CBE supervision and related activities. Thus, Data were generated on the service years of the respondents and regarding their exposure to CBE activities (Table 2).

Table 2: Respondents' service years and their exposure to CBE (n=118, n=116, n=111 for the 1st, 2nd & 3rd items respectively)

Items		No.	%
Service year at JU	≤2 years	35	29.7
	3 to 10 years	75	63.6
	>10 years	8	6.8
	Total	**118**	**100.0**
Awareness Raising Training	received	53	45.7
	never received	63	54.3
	Total	**116**	**100.0**
Orientation on CBE after recruitment DR	Yes	55	49.5
	No	47	42.3
		9	8.1
	Total	**111**	**100**

Table 2 illustrates that the majority of the respondents, 75(63.60%), served at Jimma University for 3-10 years followed by respondents who served for less or equal to 2 years, 35(29.7%), whereas few respondents, 8(6.8%), served for more than ten years.

Respondents, who took part in CBE awareness raising trainings, 63(54.3%), outnumbered those who did not, 53(45.7%). On the other hand, the data on the third item in Table 2 indicate that 55(49.5%) of the staff members reported that they received orientations on CBE issues following their employment; 47(42.5%) said that such orientations were not made available, while the remaining 9(8.1%) did not remember whether or not they participated in such orientations. The number of respondents who claimed that they did not receive CBE orientation plus that of those who did not remember, 56(50.6%), slightly exceeds the number of respondents who reported having received CBE orientation.

Supervisor assignment

In CBE undertakings, students work under the supervision of their instructors. Therefore, supervisor assignment is one of the activities carried out during the implementation of CBE field activities. This study thus attempted to find out how supervisors assignment is undertaken in different departments (Table 3).

Table 3: Supervisor assignment (n=112, n=108 for the 1st & 2nd items respectively)

Items		by dept head's decision	by CBE coordinator's decision	by lots at dept level	by course team leaders	on voluntary basis	Total
How CBTP courses handled	No.	46	43	12	6	5	112
	%	41.1	38.4	10.7	5.4	4.5	100.0
How SRP handled	No.	58	13	23	6	8	108
	%	53.7	12.0	21.3	5.6	7.4	100.0

Instructors, regardless of their CBE experiences, can be assigned to follow up students deployed to communities to carry out CBTP, TTP and DTTP activities, or to guide final year students in their research projects. This shows that supervisor assignment is an important issue in the implementation of CBE. The items in Table 3 thus focus on how CBE supervisors are assigned.

Accordingly, the data demonstrates that the majority, 46(41.1%), of the respondents reported that supervisors were assigned for CBTP courses by the decision of the department head while the second majority, 43(38.4%), revealed that supervisor assignment was done by CBE coordinators. The practice of supervisor assignment by lots at department level was reported only by 12(10.7%) respondents, whereas decision by course team leaders and participation in CBE supervision on voluntary basis were reported as rare cases. The responses regarding senior essay/thesis advisor assignment, 58(53.7%), also indicated that department heads took the maximum share. Senior essay/ thesis advisor assignment through the participation of CBE coordinators, 13(12%), by lots, 23(21.3%), by the decision of course team leaders, 6(5.6%), and on voluntary basis, 8(7.4%), thus seem rarely practiced.

Supervisors' rating of their involvement in CBE phases

The implementation of CBE courses is accomplished in phases: instrument development, field visit, data collection, data analysis, report writing, symposium presentation, action plan modification, intervention and demonstration of findings. Supervisors are thus required to actively follow up students' activities in each phase. In this study, academic staff members were asked to rate their supervisory support in each CBE phase as very high, high, medium, low or very low (Table 4).

Table 4: Rating of one's level of participation in CBE supervision (n= 115 for the 1st & 2nd items; 114 for 3rd & 4th items; 113 for the 5th, 6th , 7th & 8th items and 112 for the 9th item)

Activities	very high		high		medium		low		very low		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
participation during instrument development	19	16.5	44	38.3	34	29.6	14	12.2	4	3.5	115	100.0
participation during field visit	27	23.5	43	37.4	37	32.2	6	5.2	2	1.7	115	100.0
participation during data collection	21	18.4	42	36.8	34	29.8	13	11.4	4	3.5	114	100.0
participation during data analysis	20	17.5	40	35.1	34	29.8	14	12.3	6	5.3	114	100.0
participation during report writing	19	16.8	40	35.4	34	30.1	14	12.4	6	5.3	113	100.0
participation during presentation/symposium	34	30.1	42	37.2	29	25.7	5	4.4	3	2.7	113	100.0
participation during action plan modification	29	25.7	41	36.3	30	26.5	10	8.8	3	2.7	113	100.0
Participation during intervention activity	20	17.7	43	38.1	22	19.5	19	16.8	9	8.0	113	100.0
participation during demonstration of outputs/findings	17	15.2	41	36.6	26	23.2	16	14.3	12	10.7	112	100.0

As Table 4 depicts, 19(16.5%), 44(38.3%) and 34(29.6%) of the respondents respectively rated their participation during the preparation/instrument development phase of CBTP as 'very high', 'high' and 'medium'. On the other hand, while 14(12.2%) rated their participation at this phase as 'low', the fewest, 4(3.5%), assigned 'very low' to it. The respondents who had high ratings of their participation (very high + high) constitute the majority of the sample, i.e. 63(54.8%), whereas those who rated their participation as low (low + very low) form the minimum, 18(15.7%). Similarly, 70(60.9%) of the total of respondents (N=115) claimed that their participation during field visit was high, while very few, i.e. 8(6.9%), assigned low ratings to their participation at this phase. The 'high' column of Table 4 indicates that 42(36.8%), 40(35.5%), 40(35.5%), 42(37.2), 41(36.3%), 43(38.1%), and 41(36.6%) of the totals, who gave information on the respective issues, respectively, rated their participation during data collection, data analysis, report writing, presentation/symposium, action plan modification, intervention and output demonstration as high. Generally, the data in the table illustrate that most of the supervisors evaluated their supervisory participation at the different phases of CBE activities as high.

In fact, the number of respondents who assigned low ratings to their supervisory participation, although small, should not be overlooked. This is because even few flaws in supervision can have a detrimental effect on the overall conduct of CBE, a training program Jimma University takes pride in.

Frequency of supervisory visits

The study also attempted to investigate the frequency of supervisory visits made by instructors in each CBE phase. Thus, the academic staff members who participated in this study were asked to self-rate the frequency of supervisory visits they made in each CBE phase. The findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Frequency of supervisory visits (n=115 for the 1st, 5th & 8th items; 114 for the 6th & 7th items and 113 for the 9th item)

Activities	rarely		few days		often		very often		always		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
frequency of supervision during preparation	4	3.5	23	20.0	34	29.6	28	24.3	26	22.6	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during field visit	2	1.7	21	18.3	35	30.4	30	26.1	27	23.5	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during data collection	6	5.2	21	18.3	35	30.4	30	26.1	23	20.0	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during analysis	8	7.0	24	20.9	36	31.3	28	24.3	19	16.5	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during report writing	9	7.8	23	20.0	32	27.8	24	20.9	27	23.5	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during presentation	2	1.8	14	12.3	22	19.3	27	23.7	49	43.0	114	100.0
frequency of supervision during action plan modification	7	6.1	14	12.3	24	21.1	35	30.7	34	29.8	114	100.0
frequency of supervision during intervention activity	11	9.6	20	17.4	25	21.7	33	28.7	26	22.6	115	100.0
frequency of supervision during demonstration of outputs	12	10.6	18	15.9	27	23.9	28	24.8	28	24.8	113	100.0

As can be seen from Table 5, many respondents revealed that they often supervised their students during instrument preparation, [34(29.6%)], field visit [35(30.4%0)], data collection [35(30.4%)], data analysis [36(31.3%)], report writing [32(27.8%)], presentation/symposium [22(19.3%)], action plan modification [24(21.1%)], intervention [25(21.7%)] and output demonstration [27(23.9%)]. Correspondingly, a good number of respondents reported that they made supervisory visits very often during instrument preparation, [28(24.3%)], field visits [30(26.1%)], data collection [30(26.1%)], data analysis [28(24.3%)], report writing [24(20.9%)], presentation/symposium [27(23.7%,)], action plan modification [35(30.7%)], intervention [30(28.7%)] and output demonstration [28(24.8%)]. On the other hand, a reasonably high number of respondents claimed that they always made supervisory visits during instrument preparation, [26(22.6%)], field visit [27(23.5%)], data collection [23(20.0%)], data analysis [19(15.5%)], report writing [27(23.5%)], presentation/symposium [49(43.0%,)], action plan modification [34(29.8%)], intervention [26(22.6%)] and output demonstration [28(24.8%)].

Views on CBE workload and perdiem

The respondents also provided data on their views regarding the workload calculated and perdiem paid for them for supervisory services. The findings are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Views on CBE workload and perdiem (n=111, n=113 for the 1st & 2nd items respectively)

Items		No.	%
Workload appropriate?	appropriate	26	23.4
	appropriate but needs modification	38	34.2
	not appropriate	47	42.3
	Total	**111**	**100.0**
Per diem satisfactory?	very satisfactory	2	1.8
	satisfactory	21	18.6
	ambivalent	15	13.3
	unsatisfactory	46	40.7
	very unsatisfactory	29	25.7
	Total	**113**	**100.0**

Concerning the appropriateness of the workload allocated for supervision and the perdiem paid for supervisors involved in CBE supervision, the findings in Table 6 demonstrate the following situations: of the 111 respondents, 26(23.4%) maintained that the workload allocated for CBE supervision was appropriate and 38(34.2%) commented that it needed some modification, but 47(42.3%), the majority, remarked that it was small. That is, most of the academic staff members who participated in the study believed that the workload allocated for CBE supervision was incompatible with the activities a supervisor had to accomplish.

Similarly, the respondents who felt that the perdiem paid for CBE supervisors was unsatisfactory constitute 46 (40.7%), while those who argued that this perdiem was very unsatisfactory account for 29 (25.7%) of the 113 respondents. Here, the number of respondents who reported inadequacy of the perdiem being paid, 7 (66.4%), was three times more than that of those who responded in favor of the payment, 23 (20.4%).

Schedule and resource provision

CBE courses are implemented according to specific schedules and their execution requires provision of ample resources. However, supervisors may have concerns about the adequacy of time allocation, schedules and resource allocation. With this rationale, the academic staff members who participated in this study were asked to indicate their views about the time allocation, the schedule and the resource provision pertaining to CBE field activities (Table 7).

Table 7: Schedule and resource provision ,(n=115, n=112 & n=114 for the 1st, 2nd& 3rd items respectively)

Items		No.	%
Time allotted for CBE courses sufficient	yes	31	27.0
	sometimes	50	43.5
	no	34	29.6
	Total	**115**	**100.0**
Schedules overlap	No, not at all	6	5.4
	yes, but rarely	64	57.1
	yes, most of the time	42	37.5
	Total	**112**	**100.0**
Guideline, references, manuals available	yes	35	30.7
	no	79	69.3

Total	**114**	**100.0**

As Table 7 indicates, the majority, i.e. 81(70.5%), of the 115 staff members argued that the credit hours allocated for CBE courses were sufficient, but 34(26.6%), much less than half, stated that the credit hours were insufficient. Secondly, of the 112 respondents, 64(57.1%) reported that CBE schedules rarely overlapped with their other commitments, while 42(37.5%) expressed that the overlap happened most of the time. Very few, 6(5.4%), reported no overlap of CBE schedules with other duties supervisors had to carry out. The last issue in the above table is availability of CBE guidelines, references and manuals. Of the 114 respondents, 79(69.3%), much more than half, revealed that CBE guidelines, references and manuals were not available, while 35(35%) expressed that these resources were available.

Analysis of students' responses

Background information

Student respondents were also selected from the five colleges and two institutes of the University. They were taken from both graduate and undergraduate programs. Table 8 below summarizes student respondents' background information by college/institute and study program (undergraduate vs graduate).

Table 8: Background information of student respondents

Items		Sex					
		Male		Female		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
College/Institute	JiT	83	97.6	2	2.4	85	100.0
	CPHMS	39	81.3	9	18.8	48	100.0
	BECO	148	90.8	15	9.2	163	100.0
	IEPDS	21	87.5	3	12.5	24	100.0
	CNS	83	92.2	7	7.8	90	100.0
	CSSL	153	84.5	28	15.5	181	100.0
	CAVM	139	97.2	4	2.8	143	100.0
	graduate	95	86.4	15	13.6	110	100.0
Duration of stay	2 Years	90	85.7	15	14.3	105	100.0
	3 Years	456	90.3	49	9.7	505	100.0
	4 Years	81	85.3	14	14.7	95	100.0
	5 Years	59	98.3	1	1.7	60	100.0
Program	graduate	90	86.4	15	13.6	105	100.0

undergraduate	**666**	**90.7**	**68**	**9.3**	**734**	**100.0**

As shown in Table 8, a total of 839 students (undergraduate and graduate) responded to the items of the questionnaire concerning respondents' background. Of these, 85(83 males and 2 females), 48(39 males and 9 females), 163(148 males and 15 females), 24(21 males and 3 females), 90(83 males and 7 females), 181(153 males and 28 females) and 143(139 males and 4 females) were from the various departments of JiT, CPHMS, BECO, IEPDS, CNS, CSSL and CAVM respectively. In terms of study program, 734 were undergraduate and 105 graduate students in the stated order. The table also shows that five hundred and five (505), the majority of the undergraduates, attended a three-year study program, whereas 95 and 60 underwent four and five academic years respectively. In other words, all the 105 graduate students spent two academic years in the University.

Based on the above information, one can conclude that the respondents, drawn from the various departments under the different colleges and institutes, were from a variety of academic disciplines. In addition, it is possible to deduce that these respondents had a good deal of CBE experience since they had been involved in CBTP, TTP or DTTP activities for 2, 3, 4 or 5 years

Students' views of orientation, resource provision and time adequacy

Students' awareness, resource provision and time allocation are among the factors which affect the supervision of CBE activities. To raise students' awareness about the philosophy, strategies and practical execution of CBE, the provision of adequate orientations is imperative. Allocating sufficient resources and enough time is also necessary. With this in view, an attempt was made to find out students' views regarding the adequacy of orientations given, resources provided and time allocated to facilitate CBE activities. The data pertaining to these variables are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Orientation, resource provision and time adequacy (n=772, n=886 & n=874 for the 1st , 2nd and 3rd item respectively)

		No.	%
Orientation	yes	626	81.1
	no	93	12.0
	don't remember	53	6.9
	Total	**772**	**100.0**
Guidelines, references and manuals available	Yes	427	48.2
	No	459	51.8
	Total	**886**	**100.0**
Time allotted sufficient	Yes	269	30.8
	somehow	416	47.6
	No	189	21.6
	Total	**874**	**100.0**

Table 9 summarizes the data pertaining to provision of CBE orientation for students, availability of CBE guidelines, references and manuals, and adequacy of the time allotted for CBE activities. Of the 772 students who responded to the item on CBE orientation, 626(81.1%) revealed that they received orientation on CBE matters, while only 93(12%) claimed that they were not oriented into CBE. The rest, 53(6.9%), could not remember whether or not they received CBE orientation. In other words, while 459(51.8%) stated that they were provided with CBE guidelines, references and manuals, the remaining 427(48.2%) indicated that such resources were not available. Concerning time allotment, 269(30.8%) of the sample students believed that the time allotted for CBE activities was sufficient. On the other hand, the respondents who said that the time was somehow sufficient were 416(47.6%) followed by 189(21.5%) who claimed that the time was insufficient. Thus, based on the belief expressed by the majority of the respondents, 685(78.4%)-'yes' and 'somehow' responses taken together-one can infer that CBE guidelines, references and manuals were fairly available for students. Generally, the responses in Table 9 illustrate that while CBE orientations appeared to be insufficient, student complaints about time allotment and availability of resources did not seem so grave.

Frequency of supervisory visits

The frequency with which instructors follow up students at the various stages of CBE impacts on the quality of overall supervision. In this study, it was not only instructors who self-rated the frequency of supervisory visits they make at the different CBE phases (Table 5). Students also rated the frequency with which their instructors supervise them during the different phases of CBE. See the findings on this issue in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Frequency of supervisory visits (n=886 for the 1st , 5th ,6th & 8th items; 888 for the 2nd & 4th items; 887 for the 3rd & 7th items and 115 for the 9th item)

	Rarely		Few Days		Often		Very Often		Every Day		Total	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Preparation	240	27.1	348	39.3	190	21.4	65	7.3	43	4.9	886	100.0
Field visit	266	30.0	330	37.2	161	18.1	77	8.7	54	6.1	888	100.0
Data collection	179	20.2	331	37.3	186	21.0	105	11.8	86	9.7	887	100.0
Analysis	172	19.4	329	37.0	216	24.3	114	12.8	57	6.4	888	100.0
Report writing	174	19.6	328	37.0	186	21.0	121	13.7	77	8.7	886	100.0
Presentation/Symposium	193	21.8	293	33.1	178	20.1	131	14.8	91	10.3	886	100.0
Action plan modification	204	23.0	295	33.3	232	26.2	110	12.4	46	5.2	887	100.0
Intervention	215	24.3	297	33.5	217	24.5	113	12.8	44	5.0	886	100.0
Demonstration of output	210	23.7	276	31.2	209	23.6	116	13.1	74	8.4	885	100.0

As illustrated in Table 10, the frequency of supervisory visits made by instructors during different CBE activities mainly fell under the 'few days' response category followed by the frequencies indicated under the 'rarely' (for instrument preparation, field visit, presentation/symposium) or 'often' response options. For example, 348(39.3%), 330(37.2%) and 293(33.1%) of the students revealed that instructors supervised their students for few days during instrument preparation, field visit and presentation/symposium in the stated order, while 240(27.1%), 266(30%) and 193(21.8%) reported that rare supervisory visits were made by instructors during each CBE activity. In other words, 588(66.4%), 596(67%) and 486 (nearly 55%) of the respondents respectively indicated that supervisors made inadequate supervisory visits during each CBE phase.

On the other hand, according to 331(37.3%) [N=887], 329 (37%) [N=888], 328(37%) [N=886] and 295(33.1%) [N=887] respondents, supervisors made few visits during the activities of data collection, data analysis, report writing and action plan modification respectively, whereas 186(21%), 216(24.3%), 186(21%) and 223(26.2%) respectively revealed that instructors often supervise students during data collection, data analysis, report writing and action plan modification. A similar trend was revealed regarding intervention and output demonstration phases.

Conversely, the ratings of 'very often' and 'every day' were chosen by few respondents. Based on this and the facts described above, one can conclude that student respondents held that they received inadequate assistance from their supervisors during CBTP, TTP or DTTP activities. This finding appears to be somehow contradictory with the finding from instructors' responses (Table 5).

Support from supervisors, deans, CBE coordinators and department heads

In the supervision of CBE courses, the involvement of college/institute deans, CBE coordinators and department heads is crucial. Thus, the quality of support these bodies provide to students should be assessed. With this rationale, students were asked to rate the readiness of instructors/supervisors and the quality of support from deans, CBE coordinators and departments heads (Table 11).

Table 11: Ratings of overall support (n=876, n=881 for the 1st & 2nd items respectively)

Items	Very Poor		Poor		Good		Very good		Excellent		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%	No	%
Readiness & commitment of supervisors	122	13.9	231	26.4	372	42.5	124	14.2	27	3.1	876	100.0
Overall support from deans, CBE coordinators and dept. heads	128	14.5	238	27.0	380	43.1	98	11.1	37	4.2	881	100.0

As shown in Table 11, 122(13.9%) and 231(26.4%) of the student respondents rated their supervisors' readiness and commitment as very poor and poor respectively, while relatively a good number of them, 372(42.5%), considered supervisors' readiness and commitment as good. On the other hand, 124(14.2%) of the students rated it as very good, but only 27(3.1%) described it as excellent. The respondents' evaluation of the overall support they received from deans, college CBE coordinators and department heads was also comparable with their ratings of instructor readiness and commitment. Likewise, many of them, 380(43.1%), rated the overall support from deans, CBE coordinators and department heads as a good one.

Analysis of qualitative data

As indicated earlier, qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews held with six top officials of Jimma University (the President, the Vice President for Academic, Research and Students Affairs, the Administrative Vice President, the Senior Director for research and CBE, the College level research and Postgraduate Program coordinators, Central CBE Director, and Director of School of Postgraduate), seven college deans (D_1, D_2, D_3, D_4, D_5, D_6 and D_7) and seven CBE co-coordinators (C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4, C_5, C_6 and C_7). The interviewees were also from different academic disciplines: Agricultural Sciences, Business and Economics, Educational Planning and Management, Natural Sciences, Public Health and Medical Sciences, Social Sciences and Law, and Engineering and Technology.

The interviews were partly intended to obtain data on schedules, credit hours of CBE courses, supervisor workload, per diem, assignment of supervisors and major problems encountered in CBE implementation which in one way or another affect the supervision of CBE courses. Thus, the data analysis in this sub-section focuses on these themes.

Regarding CBE workload similarity, the first official (T_1) stressed that uniformity was maintained across colleges/institutes and similar programs, while the second (T_2) stated: "SRP and CBTP are similar, 3 credits, throughout the university as endorsed by the Senate and for DTTP there are some differences. Currently the colleges agreed…to avoid the variation. SRP is 3 credit hours for undergraduate and 6 for postgraduate." The third and the fourth top officials (T_3 and T_4) explained that although there could be slight practical differences, attempts had been in place to assign uniform credit hours and workloads for the same CBE courses for all the curricula were endorsed by the University's Senate. Similarly, while T_5 stated that the workload and credit hours were the same throughout institutes and colleges, T_6 said: "… I am sure that CBE exists in all programs, but I cannot say that CBE courses are uniformly designed in all the programs. There might be flexibility in terms of student assessment and other components."

Asked to state the schedule for the different CBE courses, T_1 remarked that although CBE was implemented uniformly across the university previously, recently, flexibility was encountered in the implementation of CBTP I, CBTP II and DTTP due to shortage of transportation and community fatigue. On other hand, T_2 elaborated on the issue as "CBTP is given throughout the year for the sake of sharing logistics except year one to be offered after completion of the year's courses. Similarly, DTTP is given at the end of first year either in June or September before second year. SRP is given in the final year for undergraduate and postgraduate students, the postgraduates mainly at the end of the courses in many fields." On the other hand, while T_3 commented: "CBE scheduling especially CBTP is currently a very difficult and serious problem that

challenges us". According to T_4, the schedule was prepared jointly by colleges and other bodies concerned and usually implemented outside the formal academic calendar ('outside the formal calendar' may mean 'after other courses in a semester are completed'). Whereas T_5 said: "Please check [the schedules] on the calendar issued by the registrar", T_6 reminded that the schedules are indicated in the CBE guideline and should be implemented accordingly.

The next question was concerning supervisor workload, perdiem and supervisor assignment. T_1 explained that college coordinators prepared schedules for CBE activities, assigned supervisors and students, and supervised the field work. This informant, who did not give details about the workload and perdiem allocation for CBE courses revealed that his office was involved in overall coordination and provision such as arranging transportation. On his part, T_2 asserted that supervisor assignment was done by colleges and the workload was determined by the Senate while perdiem is proposed by colleges and endorsed by the executive body. The third official revealed that due to government policy, effecting perdiem was an area of difficulty, while T_4 said that supervisors were assigned by departments. According to the 4th official, in principle, senior and junior instructors should be paired together so that the former could be mentored by the latter. On the other hand, T_5 pointed out that supervisors were assigned according to the guidelines set forth by the University, but T_6 noted that since supervisor assignment was done by departments, he was not involved in this undertaking.

In other words, most of the top officials held that the credit hours allocated for CBTP, TTP and DTTP are sufficient as long as the implementation was done according to the schedule (T_1 justified his claim arguing that it was not only the number of hours that matters since the candidates' competencies in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes was more critical it). However, T_6 expressed concern that the time allotted for students to engage in field work was not sufficient. Concerning workload, T_1 and T_6 explained that there were complaints from instructors previously although the issue has been addressed in the new academic policy. On the contrary, while T_2 argued that the workload is appropriate, T_3 confessed: "I have no idea about the loads, I cannot say anything". On the other hand, T_4 maintained that although the workload was low due to resource constraints, helping students to become part of the community should also be considered an incentive in itself.

Asked to mention some of the challenges to CBE implementation in general and the supervision of CBE courses in particular, the officials enumerated the following: poor supervisor commitment (T_1 and T_2 respectively stated it as, "[It is] due to carelessness and dissatisfaction with payments [perdiem and workload]", and "The … commitment of staff differs; as from the tracer study, it is decreasing for the reason we do not know"), budget deficiency (no budget allocated by government), inadequate awareness among some staff members, scarcity of logistics, community fatigue (but T_4 preferred to say 'staff fatigue'), some students considering CBE courses as a means for grade compensation, reluctance of colleges/institutes to strictly follow up supervisors (instances where supervisors do not go to the fields at all observed), complicated managerial tasks (large numbers of students and teachers), unsatisfactory intervention activities and inadequate interaction with stakeholders.

Most deans also reflected that the workloads for the same CBE courses were uniform across most departments. However, D_5 indicated that few instances of differences had been observed although uniformity was achieved later, while D_7 revealed that the

situation existed in one of the departments under his college "To my knowledge, the only difference is in pharmacy, the others are the same. I do not know why the difference comes but now they are taking measures to correct." Regarding the schedules of CBE courses, D_1, D_2, D_3 and D_4 (D_5 preferred to say: "The CBE co-coordinator can give better details on this"), revealed that CBTPI and CBTPII were offered to undergraduate students at the ends of the first and the second terms (the latter with some flexibility for logistic reasons) of the first and second year programs respectively with the principle of n-1, where n refers to the number of study years. These informants also clarified that DTTP and TTP (the latter for BECO) were offered to graduate students during the end of the first year (with some irregularities due to logistic problems). It was also found out that undergraduate students, in most cases, took SRP in the second semester of the final year. However, D_2 noted that his college proposed encouraging students to submit research titles at the end of the 2nd year (except students of one school where the undergraduate program takes five years), wrote proposals during their summer vacation and completed the thesis early in the second term of the final year so that they could get ample time to study for the final semester exams and prepare for graduation. However, D_6 stated: "It is like other colleges, CBTPs are given at the end of each year or in the beginning of the next year." According to D_7, CBE courses are offered according to the following schedule: "CBTP I at the end of the first year, CBTP II at the end of second year, CBTP III at the end of the third year, CBTP IV at the end of the fourth year, TTP during the final year of all disciplines, DTTP in the final year in the graduate program and SRP in the final year for undergraduate students."

The majority of the deans provided inherently similar responses regarding CBE workload and perdiem: "The workload considered for supervisors for CBTP is 2 credit hours, and supervisors are paid perdiem for 35% of 16 days depending on the current rate and distance from Jimma University," (D_1); "The credit hour allotment for CBTPs for the supervisors beyond the perdiem is 2 credit hours like any other colleges, while it is 3 credit hours for DTTP. The perdiem is uniform across colleges and institutes," ((D_2); "For a 3 credit hour CBTP course, the supervisor workload is 2, but for SRP [3 credit hours], it is 0.5 per week per student," (D_3), "…CBTP activities have 2 credit hours workload and the supervisors are paid perdiem for the number of days they supervise students on field work, of course based on the guideline" (This view on perdiem payment was also held by D_7); as for SRP, each advisor earns 0.5 credit hours per advisee," (D_4). However, D_5 referred the question to another person saying: "CBE coordinator can give detailed information on this. I think there is somehow common understanding among the implementers of CBE program at the university level".

The experiences reflected by most of the deans concerning supervisor assignment did not show considerable variations. According to D_1, two supervisors (juniors paired with seniors) were assigned for a group of about 20 undergraduate students; department heads, the college dean and the CBE coordinator were responsible for the overall co-ordination. As stated by D_2, D_6 and D_7, supervisors were assigned by college CBE coordinators in collaboration with department heads, but in one institute, "Supervisors are assigned only by the CBE coordinator regularly focusing on senior instructors -no chance is given to junior staff … a practice which we are thinking to correct soon" (D_3). As detailed by D_4, each CBTP team contained students from all departments of the college and a group of instructors from the respective departments did the supervision (with a belief that multidisciplinary teams perform better), whereas SRP advisors were assigned by departments on the basis of specialization, research experience and instructors' interests.

With regard to the adequacy of CBE credit hours, workload and perdiem, all the deans generally held that the credit hours were enough if supervisors were dedicated and demonstrate genuine commitment, but while three of them believed that the workload was appropriate, the rest expressed concerns as follows: "Proposal preparation stage of SRP should be given credit if Jimma University wants to achieve its noble goals - pretty as they appear on paper," (D_4), "There are complaints about workload from teaching staff. The workload needs revision. I think it [the workload] is OK. CBE is cost-intensive course by nature" (D_5). Again, the issue of perdiem was a point of contention among the deans. While D_1 claimed that the perdiem given to supervisors was appropriate (D_4 and D_5 did not comment on this issue), D_2 felt that it was not enough to motivate supervisors. However, D_3 expressed: "The problem is the perdiem issue which has no clear cut guideline that could be used to react to staff complaints. We give 17 to 20 days perdiem of 35% for CBTP which always disappoints the staff."

The deans also suggested some solutions that help the achievement of improved CBE implementation and management. D_1 recommended adequate financial and logistic provision, positive attitude and dedicated ownership of CBE from top management, efforts to obtain budget from the Ministry of Education and/or various funding sources, regular program evaluation (D_7 similarly stressed the need for research to identify a better and simpler approach) and enhanced awareness and commitment from all implementers. D_2 suggested consistent induction for newly hired staff, expanding Jimma University's rich of CBE experiences and firm ownership of the program by all CBE actors. Similarly, D_3 underlined that the top management should be committed to effective CBE implementation and that it is necessary to create more committed people through consistent workshops. This informant also stressed the need for capacitating the Central CBE Director's Office so that it could be efficient and problem-solving, and argued that this office be as strong as it should be, with the same status as the office of the Academic Vice President. Again, while D_4 suggested revising the CBE implementation strategies, D_6 recommended diversifying CBE sites and allocating more fund. Finally, D_5 reported community concerns: "Stakeholders suggest that the University develops a more institutional and less adhoc relationship with the community in which the University works more closely with farmers and community workers in addressing structural problems from its core mandate of applied knowledge provision. They ask the University to give proper information or feedback to the society. This will increase the relevancy of the University role for the community. Such a framework facilitates or provides the right awareness of students, and approach to farmers that stakeholders see lacking."

The CBE coordinators also provided views regarding the schedules, supervision, credit hours, workload and problems encountered in CBTP, TTP and DTTP management. Likewise, most co-coordinators revealed that the schedules and workloads for the same CBE courses were uniform across programs in the same college/institute, while C_5 and C_7 believed that there could be differences in credit hour and workload allotment for identical CBE courses within a single college/institute: the former expressed this as, "Differences sometimes exist due unharmonized curriculum at JU level," while the latter stated it as, "There is lack of uniformity in load allocation of CBE courses from program to program in the college. I was not in office during curriculum development of the majority of the programs, but I think it could be due to less involvement of CBE officials during curriculum development and ratification".

On the other hand, whereas some coordinators confirmed the information given by most deans about the schedules for various CBE courses (CBTP I in the second term

of Year I, CBTP II during the second term of Year III, SRP during the second term of the final year and DTTP at the end of Year I of graduate programs), C_4 like D_4 (both from the same college) stated that SRP was undertaken in two semesters, i.e. students were required to develop their research proposal in the first term of the final year and completed the project in the second term of the same year. Although D_5 referred the question regarding schedules to C_5, the CBE coordinator in the respective college, the latter could not provide clear details concerning the schedules for the different CBE courses. In related terms, while C_6 reported that CBTP I, CBTP II, CBTP III, CBTP IV and SRP were offered during the beginning of Year II, end of Year II, end of Year III, beginning of Year V and second semester of Year V respectively, C_7 provided general information: "CBTP every year except graduating class students, DTTP-a second year course for postgraduate programs, and TTP and SRP to final year students."

The responses given by the CBE co-coordinators pertaining to supervisor assignment and workload showed slight differences. As to C_1, C_2 and C_6, supervisors were assigned by departments while CBE offices received the names of supervisors from departments and coordinate supervision. According to these informants, department heads, the college CBE coordinator and the college dean formed the supervisory team of a college. However, C_3's response, i.e. "Supervisors are assigned in collaboration with the department [only one department], priority is given to instructors with minimum teaching load, no discrimination based on seniority," was different from the one given by his dean/D_3 who said, "Supervisors are assigned only by the CBE coordinator regularly focusing on senior instructors-no chance was given to junior staff,…a practice which we are thinking to correct soon." On the other hand, while C_4 and C_5 indicated that supervisors were assigned according to the guidelines set forth by the University, C_7 did not mention how supervisor assignment was undertaken in his college.

Two (2) credit hours for CBTP, 0.5 for SRP and 3 for DTTP (with few differences in regards this course), were mentioned by most co-coordinators concerning workloads, but C_7 uttered: "Up to 6 credit hours is allotted for CBE courses, and the workload of supervisors is computed as one-fifth of the number of field supervisions. As for the perdiem, supervisors will earn 210 ETB for their involvement in CBE activities."

All the co-coordinators appeared to believe that the workload for CBE courses was appropriate, but they differed in their responses regarding the credit hours allocation and the perdiem paid for supervisors. For instance, while C_1, C_2, C_5 and C_6 (C_6 suggested the number of supervisees under a supervisor be considered in allocating workload) claimed that the workload and the perdiem were fairly appropriate, C_3 expressed concerns about the credit hour allocated for DTTP (3 credits) was inadequate. C_4 on his part argued that the perdiem instructors were being paid for CBTP and DTTP supervision needs improvement. As to C_7, the perdiem was a critical issue: "The credit hour allotted for CBE courses and the workload counted for supervisors is fine. However, there is a problem with regard to the perdiem-it is the main complaint of the supervisory team."

While the major constraints to CBE implementation mentioned by top officials and deans were also raised by CBE co-coordinators, the latter mentioned additional ones which included: poor documentation of activities and achievements, little awareness on the part of the community, "absence" of clearly defined guidelines and financial procedures, lack of innovative methods (same survey instruments year after year), lack of awareness among CBE coordinators about CBE philosophy and dishonesty in

awarding grades. Regarding the last point, C_7 pointed out that some supervisors gave good grades to cover their weakness/absence during supervision and to avoid complaints. Of these problems, lack of awareness among CBE coordinators about CBE philosophy and dishonesty in awarding grades affected the supervision of CBE courses negatively.

DISCUSSION

The evidences regarding orientations/trainings on CBE matters indicate that many staff members received awareness raising orientations/inductions following their employment. However, those who did not take such orientations and those who could not remember whether they received orientation or not together, outnumbered the staff members who had opportunities to take part in trainings. Overall, although one can presume that the respondents' service at Jimma University could acquaint them with CBE and involve them in CBTP, TTP, DTTP and SRP supervision, the fact that some of the respondents claimed that they did not get any awareness raising orientations should not be overlooked since it does not comply with one of the guiding principles of Jimma University: ".... Both students and teachers must have a clear understanding of the purpose of the activities [CBE activities] and the expected results" (Jimma University DTTP Workshop 2005:10). This can have a detrimental effect on the quality of the supervision of CBE filed activities.

Obviously, supervisor assignment is an important undertaking in the implementation of CBE field activities. According to the responses of the academic staff members, CBTP, TTP, DTTP and SRP supervisors are usually allocated by the decision of department heads although some respondents reported that CBTP, TTP and DTTP supervisors were assigned by college/institute CBE coordinators. While there can be some degree of collaboration between department heads and CBE coordinators in handling supervisor assignment, selection of supervisors through the involvement of course team leaders and decisions by lots appeared to be rarely practised. This practice can have harmful consequences on the management and supervision of CBE field activities.

One of the CBE core principles states that Community Based Education activities are implemented in phases: instrument preparation/proposal development, field visits, data collection, data analysis, reporting, presentation/symposium, action plan modification, practical intervention, output demonstration, etc (Jimma University 2005, p. 10). At each stage, active supervision is instrumental, and supervisors are expected to devote considerable time and commitment to fulfill their supervisory roles. Regarding this, most of the instructors who filled out the questionnaire rated their supervisory participation during each CBE phase as 'high', whereas few of them rated it either as 'low' or 'very low'. In this regard, most of them claimed that they effectively supervised, at all stages, students engaged in CBE activities. Only few of them confessed that they supervised students for a few days or rarely. The case of staff members who made inadequate supervisory visits should be taken seriously since even few flaws in supervision can jeopardize the quality of CBE supervision and complicates the management of CBE field activities. This finding is thus partly consistent with facts reported in a DTTP workshop (Jimma University, 2005) concerning the constraints in CBE implementation.

The responses of most of the instructors also show that there were problems in supervisor workload, schedule and resource availability. Accordingly, to most of them, the workload allocated for CBE supervision was incompatible with the activities a supervisor has to accomplish. They also indicated that CBE activities interfered with their teaching tasks due to schedule overlaps. Similarly, the majority felt that the perdiem paid for CBE supervisors was unsatisfactory, and expressed views that resources like CBE guidelines, references and manuals were inadequately available. Instructors' concerns about payment and resource matters can negatively affect their supervisory commitment. This in turn can have a negative impact on the management of CBE field activities.

Students, like instructors, expressed views about their participation in CBE orientation, availability of resources and adequacy of the time allotted for each CBE course. Their responses revealed insufficient participation in CBE orientation (the number of students who reported not having participated in such orientations plus that of those who forgot whether or not they received orientations or not exceeds the number of respondents who took part in CBE orientation) and availability of CBE guidelines, references and manuals. The students' responses regarding orientations and resource availability, in most respects, bear similarities with the responses of instructors on the same issues. Here, it should be noted that if some students do not get a chance to participate in CBE orientations, their level of awareness can be called into question. This can also have negative effects on the management of CBE field activities.

Student respondents held that they received inadequate assistance from their supervisors during CBTP, TTP or DTTP activities. Most of them reported that supervisors visited their supervisees rarely or only for a few days, but they rated the readiness and commitment levels of deans, CBE coordinators and department heads as good. This finding appears to be somehow contradictory with the finding from instructors' responses since most of the teachers claimed that they discharged their supervisory duties effectively (see Tables 4 and 5). However, this finding is in agreement with the responses of most top officials, deans and CBE coordinators. This implies that instructors on the one hand and students, deans and CBE coordinators on the other, had different perceptions of effective supervision. This can be the result of inadequate awareness raising orientations.

Evidences obtained from interviews proved that attempts were made to maintain uniform workload and schedule across programs for identical CBE courses. However, although CBE courses are endorsed by the University's Senate with maximum care to ensure inter-curricular uniformity, flexibilities occur in the implementation of these courses, especially DTTP and TTP due to practical reasons (e.g. logistic problems). It was also found out that not all interviewees could articulately explain the schedule for the different CBE courses. It should be noted that CBE forms part of all the University's programs (Jimma University DTTP Workshop 2005:pp.10-11), and top officials, deans and college/institute level CBE coordinators are expected to be conversant about this program.

Most top officials, deans and CBE coordinators viewed the credit hour allotment for CBE courses and the incentives (the workload counted for supervisors and the perdiem they receive for CBE supervision) as appropriate. However, some expressed belief that the workload and the perdiem were insufficient. One interviewee, for example, argued that the number of supervisees under a supervisor should be considered in effecting payment for workload. Another interviewee also argued that the perdiem was one of

the problems that affect the implementation of CBE. Generally, it appears that supervisor workload and perdiem were matters of contention among people involved in CBE implementation and a source of complaint among supervisors. This condition can negatively impact on the management of CBE field activity in general and in its supervision in particular. This is in line with the finding of a tracer study (Jimma University 2013, p. 38) which concluded that the implementation of TTP at Jimma University, despite significant success, had encountered some problems.

The study also indicated that CBTP, TTP and DTTP supervisors were mostly assigned by department heads in collaboration with CBE coordinators of the respective colleges/institute (but SRP supervisors were usually assigned by department heads). In this undertaking, junior staff members were often paired with senior ones to facilitate experience-sharing in which the former learn from the latter. Nevertheless, there was also a practice where supervisors were assigned only by the department head and chance was given only to senior instructors. It was also identified that one dean and the respective CBE coordinator, although they worked for the same unit, gave different responses regarding supervisor assignment. This raises a question on the presence of team work in supervisor assignment and follow-up.

Finally, the qualitative findings showed that the management of CBE field activities appeared to be negatively affected by low commitment on the part of some supervisors, budget deficiency (no government budget), scarcity of logistics and inappropriate perception among some students (the view that CBE courses are for compensating CGPA deficits) resulting in reduced commitment. Reluctance of some colleges to strictly follow up supervisors, limited commitment from top officials and weak management from the central CBE coordination, lack of clearly defined financial procedures and differences in perceptions among CBE implementers about the credit hour allocated for CBE courses, schedule assigned for CBE activities, workload considered for supervisors and perdiem paid for CBE supervision also seemed to exert negative impacts on the management of CBE field activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Firstly, the findings of the study indicated that variations were encountered in the management of CBE field activities due to problems related logistic provision. On the other side, the University made awareness raising trainings available for instructors and students. However, some instructors and students claimed that they were not given such orientations. This can have negative impacts on students' attitude and commitment as well as on instructor awareness and commitment causing difficulty in the management of CBE field activities.

Secondly, the study revealed that instructors' view of effective supervision, adequacy of workload counted for supervisors and perdiem paid for supervision seemed different from that of deans, CBE coordinators and top officials. On the other hand, while instructors considered their CBE supervision effective, students rated it as inadequate. These discrepancies in perception can have detrimental effects on the management of CBE field activities. It was also found out that supervisor assignment was usually done by department heads and sometimes through the collaboration of department heads and CBE coordinators. Course team leaders rarely took part in this undertaking. This practice does not seem participatory enough and can have adverse

impacts on the CBE supervision which complicates the management of CBE filed activities.

Thirdly, the findings indicated that the commitment of few top officials, deans, CBE coordinators and some instructors/supervisors did not seem to meet expectations. This has undesirable implications for the management of CBE field activities. On the other hand, instructors reported inadequacy of time, schedule overlaps and resource constraints in the execution of CBE courses. This view can negatively effect on the supervision and management of CBE field activities.

Generally, the management of CBE field activities appeared to be under the negative influence of inadequate awareness and commitment of some CBE actors, wrong perception and little commitment of some students, shortage of budget and logistics, reluctance of some college deans and CBE coordinators to discharge their responsibilities, lack of clearly defined financial procedures and differences in perceptions among CBE implementers about the credit hour allocated for CBE courses, schedule assigned for CBE activities, workload considered for supervisors and perdiem paid for CBE supervision .

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

1. The University should give induction to new employees consistently with particular focus on CBE matters.
2. The University needs to arrange forums for discussions with academic staff members to reach common understanding on CBE schedule, workload, perdiem and supervision. This is vital to improve instructors' commitment to discharge their supervisory responsibilities efficiently.
3. Instructors should know that CBE course are as important as other courses and supervise their students thoroughly.
4. It is necessary that college deans and CBE coordinators oversee the process of CBE supervision at all phases.
5. It is advisable that department heads and CBE coordinators ensure that awareness raising orientations enable students to gain clear understanding about the philosophy, goals, strategies and relevance of CBE.
6. Department heads should involve course team leaders in supervisor assignment since this ensures participatory decision making and helps reduce staff dissatisfaction.
7. All CBE actors need to exert maximum efforts and demonstrate better commitment so that Jimma University remains a champion in Community Based Education.

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