

## The Perception of Prospective Teachers toward Stakeholders' Experience in Practicum: The Case of Bahir Dar University

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Abstract	Article Information
<p>The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of the summer modality secondary education prospective teachers of Bahir Dar University toward the role execution of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university instructors in prospective teachers' practicum. With this intention, the research was done employing the descriptive survey research design where both the quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to tackle the research problem. When the quantitative data were collected using questionnaire from 152 prospective teachers, the qualitative data were obtained employing focus group discussion with 20 prospective teachers. Then, the analysis of data collected from prospective teachers about their perception toward the role execution of stakeholders in practicum revealed that prospective teachers and cooperating teachers executed their anticipated roles less than what was expected of them to the extent of statistically significant difference. Nevertheless, the university instructors accomplished their set roles almost as what was foreseen of them.</p>	<p><b>Article History:</b>  <b>Received</b> : 15-04-2015  <b>Revised</b> : 20-06-2015  <b>Accepted</b> : 24-06-2015</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b>  Practicum  Perception  Experience  Prospective teacher  Stakeholders</p> <p><b>*Corresponding Author:</b>  <b>Kindie Birhan Fenta</b>  <b>E-mail:</b>  <a href="mailto:kindaybir@gmail.com">kindaybir@gmail.com</a></p>
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### INTRODUCTION

Education is a vital instrument for development and one of the basic human rights (Hutchins cited in Ayalew Shibeshi, 2009). In the same token, Koye Kassa (2014) discussed that education can be considered as the key to the development of personal and national potential and all kinds of rights and powers of humankind. The increment of awareness of the importance of education to the development of the individual and societal standards has aroused in people and nations a conscious effort at devoting their limited resources to acquiring quality education. Likewise, TGE (1994) has stated that as a very important factor to human development, education is a high priority in the overall development endeavor of the government of Ethiopia. Hence, it seems fair to take in that education enables individuals and society to make all-rounded participation in the development process by acquiring relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes.

So that education plays its role in the development endeavor of a country, it needs to maintain the quality of teachers for the attainment of the quality of education of a country largely depends on the quality and commitment of its teachers (Oliveria and Farrell cited in Ayalew Shibeshi, 2009). Similarly, MacKinnon and Scarff-Seatter (1997) stated that the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of education which directly depends upon the quality of the teacher. On the other hand, Ibukun cited in Koye Kassa (2014) argued that the quality of human resources in the form of teachers often dictates the extent of the effectiveness of educational programs.

In the new modality of secondary education teacher training of Ethiopia, Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT), candidates are being given a one year professional courses and practicum experience before joining the teaching force both in winter and summer modality (UNESCO, 2013). Hence, it is clear to see that practicum has been vividly stated as integral part of the new modality of teacher education of Ethiopia. This is the indicative that practicum has got emphasis in this program so that student teachers acquire experiential professional knowledge, skills and attitude that would make them fit for the professional requirement. Moreover, with regard to the emphasis given to practicum in Ethiopian teacher education, the current education and training policy of Ethiopia states that so as to maintain quality in teacher education it would be necessary to make teacher education and training components emphasize on practical training along with basic knowledge, professional code of ethics and methodology (TGE, 1994). This intention seems to go in line with what Vick (2006) stated that practicum, although varied in intent and approach, has always been integral to teacher education programs and represents the time during which students are ideally provided opportunities to integrate theory and practice in the workplace.

In linking theory and practice through practicum best practice can be achieved by securing strong involvement from school and university staff and well designed in-field experiences. According to Xavier Fazio and Louis Volante (2011), practicum experiences ultimately consist of a period of observation, modeling, teaching, reflection, and

critique with the supervision of an experienced professional colleague (cooperating teacher).

In order to put practicum into effect, prospective teachers, cooperating teachers and university teachers have been designated as key stakeholders who are expected to establish relationships among themselves and play roles identified to them in teacher education practicum of Ethiopia (MoE, 2011). Of course, execution of expected roles of these stakeholders in practicum is not running without any challenge. This is for the fact that according to Bloomfield cited in Jeanne and Suzie (2014), there is a range of time and resource pressures experienced by staff and they highlight the importance of common understandings between key stakeholders in the practicum. Moreover, Allen and Peach (2007) noted that there is typically very limited ongoing communication between stakeholders and this can increase the gap that student teachers face between the in-field and on-campus components of their course. In advancing a similar argument, Driscoll, Benson and Livneh (1994) suggested that a number of the perceived shortcomings in many teacher education programs both result in and are maintained by inadequate collaboration between the partners. Accordingly, it becomes logical to see that this teacher education program may face a sort of difficulty emanating from inadequate role execution of stakeholders of practicum.

In the summer modality of the add-on program of the secondary teacher education of Ethiopia, prospective teachers of Bahir Dar University were placed in secondary schools for practicum in 2013/14 winter time. So as to enable the practicum program attain its purpose, all stakeholders have been given clearly identified roles to play in the practicum implementation process (MoE, 2011). Of course, there is a possibility of stakeholders to accomplish given roles in prospective teachers' practicum as expected or otherwise. However, as far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned, there is no research conducted to assess the extent of efforts made by each stakeholder in carrying out its expected role in these trainees' practicum. Therefore, it is reasonable to assess the extent of effectiveness of each stakeholder in executing its role in the practicum. Accordingly, this research was conducted to answer the following basic research questions:

- What is the perception of prospective teachers toward their own experience in executing expected roles in their practicum?
- What is the view of prospective teachers toward the experience of cooperating teachers (mentors) in implementing expected roles in prospective teachers' practicum?
- What is the observation of prospective teachers toward the experience of university instructors in accomplishing expected roles in prospective teachers' practicum?
- What are the factors that affect the role execution of stakeholders in prospective teachers' practicum?

In this research, with the intention to investigate prospective teachers' perception toward stakeholders' experience in executing expected roles in prospective teachers' practicum, the result of the study contributes to understanding the status of role execution of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university instructors

in practicum. Moreover, what has been investigated enables to comprehend the issues that impeded or support integration of theory and practice in practicum. Furthermore, the paper adds to emerging literature in authorizing the student voice in teacher education.

However, this research was not without any limitation for there was inconvenience created to gather more in-depth qualitative data from prospective teachers who were busy enough taking intensive on-campus courses in a short period of summer time.

#### Definition of Terms

**Stakeholders:** Prospective teachers, university instructors and school teachers (mentors) who directly involved in prospective teachers' practicum.

**Experience:** Activity or role execution of stakeholders in prospective teachers' practicum.

**Perception:** prospective teacher's observation or view of stakeholders' practicum experience.

**PGDT:** Post graduate diploma in teaching

**P-total:** Total number of prospective teachers who rated experience of themselves.

**C-total:** Total number of prospective teachers who rated experience of cooperating teachers.

**U-total:** Total number of prospective teachers who rated experience of university instructors.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. When the quantitative method was a dominant approach to address the research problem, the qualitative one was used to substantiate the quantitative data.

In this study which was conducted at Bahir Dar University, subjects of the study included 445 the summer modality secondary education prospective teachers of 10 programs (Amharic, English, Civic and Ethical Education, Geography, History, Sport Sciences, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics) who were placed in secondary schools for practicum in 2013/14 winter time.

Of the 10 departments, the researcher selected five departments (Amharic, Geography, English, Chemistry and Biology) employing cluster random sampling method. All 152 trainees from selected clusters, Amharic (27), Geography (13), English (15), Chemistry (69) and Biology (28) were included in the sample.

So as to collect quantitative data from perspective teachers, questionnaire was developed by the researcher from the reviewed related literature including the practicum guide for secondary school teacher education of Ethiopia (MoE, 2011). The questionnaire contained statements with five point likert type scale where for favorable statements strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) were scored. The values were reversed for unfavorable items. The Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) reliability coefficient of the scale was computed and found to be 0.895. Finally, the questionnaire containing 30 items, 10 for each group of stakeholders was used to collect data.

Focus group discussion was designed to address issues that the questionnaire could not reveal. It was

conducted with 20 randomly selected prospective teachers and the data collected were used to substantiate the quantitative data.

of the perception of prospective teachers. Moreover, the qualitative data were analyzed to substantiate the quantitative data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Data Analysis Procedure**

The data obtained through questionnaire were scored and analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and t-test. In doing so, quantitative analyses were performed using SPSS (version 20).

When descriptive statistics were employed to describe the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation of the data obtained from trainees, inferential statistics were used to determine the t-test statistics of the perception of prospective teachers toward the experience of stakeholders in practicum. Independent sample t-test was computed to uncover the observation of trainees as a function of gender, CGPA and teaching experience of trainees. In addition, a one sample t-test was employed to compare rated mean values with expected mean values

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

Table 1 depicts that the mean score of 148 subjects on the perception of trainees toward their own experience in practicum was 28.77 out of 50 (57.54% of expected role was performed by prospective teachers). This table also shows that the mean score of the view of 150 participants towards the experience of cooperating teachers was found to be 28.53 out of 50 (57.06% of expected role of cooperating teachers was accomplished). Moreover, it has been disclosed in the same table that the mean score of the observation of 149 participants toward experience of university instructors in practicum was 29.44 out of 50(58.88% of roles of university instructors was executed).In general, the mean scores revealed that all stakeholders executed almost less or equal to 58.88 % of roles expected of them in practicum.

**Table 1:** Descriptive statistics of the perception scores of the subjects

Stakeholders	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>P-Total</b>	148	28.77	6.79	11	50
<b>C-Total</b>	150	28.53	7.93	10	50
<b>U-Total</b>	149	29.44	7.40	10	50

Table 2 portrays that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(146) = -0.99, P > 0.05$ , there was no statistically significant difference between male and female trainees' perception toward their own experience in practicum. Both of them revealed that they performed less than expected. Likewise, the table shows that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(148) = 0.44, P > 0.05$ , there was no statistically significant difference between the perception of male and female trainees toward the experience of

cooperating teachers in practicum. All subjects witnessed that cooperating teachers performed less than expected. Moreover, this table displays that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(147) = -0.75, P > 0.05$ , there was no statistically significant difference between the observation of male and female participants toward university instructors' experience in practicum. In here also both sexes confirmed that university instructors performed almost as expected.

**Table 2:** Independent sample t-test statistics of the perception of prospective teachers toward experience of stakeholders in practicum across gender

Sex	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
<b>P-Total</b>						
Male	122	28.52	6.95			
Female	26	29.96	5.95	146	-0.99	0.33
<b>C-Total</b>						
Male	123	28.67	8.53			
Female	27	27.93	4.40	148	0.44	0.66
<b>U-Total</b>						
Male	122	29.22	7.74			
Female	27	30.40	5.68	147	-0.75	0.45

\* $P < 0.05$ = statistically significant difference

As shown in table 3, at 0.05 alpha level,  $t(146) = .91, P > 0.05$ , there was no statistically significant difference between the perception of experienced and non-experienced student teachers toward their own experience in practicum. All participants revealed that they performed less than expected. It has also been indicated in this table that at 0.05 alpha level,  $t(148) = 0.69, P > 0.05$ , there was no statistically significant difference between the perception of experienced and non-experienced trainees toward practicum experience of

cooperating teachers. Both of them witnessed that cooperating teachers performed less than expected. Moreover, the table shows that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(147) = -2.08, P < 0.05$ , there was statistically significant difference between the observation of experienced and non-experienced trainees toward experience of university instructors in practicum. Non-experienced trainees perceived greater performance of university instructors than experienced ones did.

**Table 3:** Independent sample t-test statistics of the perception of prospective teachers toward experience of stakeholders in practicum across teaching experience

Teaching experience		N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
P_Total	Yes	127	28.98	6.89	146	0.91	0.37
	No	21	27.52	6.15			
C-Total	Yes	128	28.72	8.12	148	0.69	0.49
	No	22	27.45	6.84			
U_Total	Yes	129	28.95	7.62	147	-2.08	0.04*
	No	20	32.60	4.85			

\* $P < 0.05$ 

Table 4 displays that at 0.05 alpha level,  $t(146) = 1.27$ ,  $P > 0.05$ , prospective teachers who scored  $< 3.00$  and  $> 3.00$  CGPA did not show statistically significant difference in their rating of the experience of themselves. Both trainees indicated that they performed less than expected roles in practicum. The table also portrays that at 0.05 alpha level,  $t(148) = 1.86$ ,  $P > 0.05$ , prospective teachers who scored CGPA  $< 3.00$  and  $> 3.00$  did not reveal statistically significant difference in their rating of the experience of cooperating teachers in practicum. Both

trainees revealed that cooperating teachers performed less than expected roles in practicum. Similarly, the table discloses that at 0.05 alpha level,  $t(147) = -0.43$ ,  $P > 0.05$ , prospective teachers who scored  $< 3.00$  and  $> 3.00$  CGPA had no statistically significant difference in their rating of the experience of university instructors in practicum. That is to mean that both trainees confirmed that university instructors performed roles in practicum almost as expected.

**Table 4:** Independent sample t-test statistics of the perception of prospective teachers toward experience of stakeholders in practicum across CGPA

CGPA		N	Mean	Sd	df	t	Sig.
P-Total	$< 3.00$	46	28.83	6.89	146	1.27	.21
	$> 3.00$	102	28.29	6.72			
C-Total	$< 3.00$	47	30.30	7.40	148	1.86	.07
	$> 3.00$	103	27.73	8.07			
U-Total	$< 3.00$	46	29.04	7.73	147	-.43	.67
	$> 3.00$	103	29.61	7.30			

\* $P < 0.05$ 

Table 5 shows that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(147) = -2.20$ ,  $P < 0.05$ , the experience of prospective teachers in performing what was expected of them in their practicum revealed statistically significant difference. Prospective teachers' rated mean (28.77) toward their experience in practicum was less than that of expected mean (30) i.e. trainees performed less than what was expected of them. This same table also displays that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(149) = -2.26$ ,  $P < 0.05$ , the experience of cooperating teachers in carrying out identified roles in practicum showed statistically significant difference. It is to mean that prospective teachers' rated mean (28.53)

toward experience of cooperating teachers was less than that of expected mean (30) i.e. cooperating teachers performed less than what was expected. Likewise, the table shows that at 0.05 level of significance,  $t(148) = -0.93$ ,  $P > 0.05$ , the experience of university instructors in performing what was expected of them in practicum did not show statistically significant difference. Trainees' rated mean (29.44) toward experience of university instructors was less than that of expected mean (30), however, university instructors performed almost what was expected of them in practicum.

**Table 5:** One sample t-test statistics of the comparison of prospective teachers' perception rating score with expected score toward stakeholders' experience in practicum

Stakeholders	N	Rated Mean	Expected Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
P-Total	148	28.77	30	6.79	147	-2.20	0.029*
C-Total	150	28.53	30	7.93	149	-2.26	0.025*
U-Total	149	29.44	30	7.40	148	-.93	0.354

\* $P < 0.05$ 

## DISCUSSION

In this research attempt was made to investigate the perception of student teachers toward experience of themselves, cooperating teachers and university instructors in practicum. Accordingly, the study revealed the following results.

As the descriptive statistics disclosed, trainees, student teachers and university instructors executed 28.77 (57.54%), 28.53 (57.06%) and 29.44 (58.88%) of expected roles in practicum respectively. These statistics seem to inform that the role accomplishment of stakeholders was less than what was expected of them in practicum (less or equal to 58.88%). Consequently, it seems probable to take in that there was limitation in

trainees' acquisition of the required experiential professional qualification from their teaching practice.

The endeavor to see the effect of some variables such as gender, CGPA and teaching experience of trainees on the perception of trainees toward the experience of stakeholders in practicum revealed that in case of gender, statistically significant difference was not observed between the views of male and female participants toward the experience of trainees, cooperating teachers and university instructors in performing anticipated roles in practicum. That is to say that both sexes ascertained that, as per the result of one-sample t-test statistics, when the role accomplishment of trainees and cooperating teachers was less than what was expected, that of university instructors was almost as expected. Probably, as the qualitative data informed, it seems likely to see that due to the common problems encountered of both sexes such as absence of assigned mentors and inadequate provision of feedback from those few assigned mentors both sexes had almost similar observation (less than expected role execution) toward the experience of student teachers and cooperating teachers in practicum.

Consequently, it would be likely to think that prospective teachers might have encountered a difficulty of securing the required experiential professional qualification for the reason that Mawer (1996) and Tannehill and Zakrajsek (1990) noted that success for the student teacher on teaching practice is directly related to the quality of mentoring received.

However, as the mean values informed, the observation of female trainees toward their own role accomplishment (29.96) was greater than what male ones (28.52) noticed. Accordingly, it seems probable to say that female trainees could execute their role in practicum better than their male counter parts.

Whereas, in case of cooperating teachers, the mean values disclosed that male respondents rated greater performance of cooperating teachers (28.67) than what female ones did (27.93). Hence, it seems probable to take in that male trainees secured better professional support of cooperating teachers than female counter parts.

Even though there was similar observation of participants toward university instructors' experience in practicum, the mean value of female respondents indicated greater role performance of university instructors (30.40) than what male ones did (29.22). Hence, it seems likely to see that female trainees were to some extent better than that of male ones in securing professional support of university instructors.

In case of teaching experience, both experienced and non-experienced trainees had nearly similar observation (performance of less than expected) toward their own experience in practicum. Yet, the mean values informed that experienced student teachers tended to rate themselves better accomplished anticipated roles (28.98) than non-experienced student teachers rated (27.52). It seems for the reason that, as qualitative data indicated, experienced student teachers even in the absence of mentors used their experience as opportunity to carry out the required tasks which non-experienced ones lost.

Likewise, in case of cooperating teachers, the result showed that both experienced and non-experienced trainees had almost similar observation (role accomplishment of less than what was expected) toward the experience of cooperating teachers in practicum. However, when the mean perception scores toward experience of cooperating teachers (experienced= 28.72 and non-experienced= 27.45) were considered, they revealed that experienced trainees rated greater role performance of cooperating teachers in practicum than what non-experienced ones did. The reason for better observation of experienced teachers toward experience of cooperating teachers, as the qualitative data showed, seems that some experienced student teachers could negotiate with experienced professional colleagues to support them as mentors. But non-experienced student teachers who did not have acquaintance with experienced secondary school teachers could not easily negotiate with them to get professional support. Hence, it seems logical to take in that at least some experienced student teachers were advantageous than non-experienced trainees in obtaining the support of cooperating teachers.

In this same case, the observation of experienced student teachers toward experience of university instructors in practicum was different from that of non-experienced ones to the extent of statistically significant difference. Accordingly, as mean values disclosed, non-experienced student teachers tended to regard university instructors better accomplished anticipated roles (32.60) than experienced teachers did (28.95). This seems probable to mean that non-experienced student teachers tried to utilize the professional support of university instructors better than what experienced ones attempted. Because, in line with this, the qualitative data disclosed that non-experienced student teachers gave greater value to practicum than what experienced ones did. This seems likely to enhance the effort of non-experienced trainees than experienced ones in appropriately utilizing the professional support of university instructors in practicum.

In case of undergraduate CGPA, it was disclosed that both student teachers who scored < 3.00 and >3.00 CGPA had nearly alike observation (performance of less than expected) toward their own experience in practicum. However, trainees who had <3.00 (28.83) CGPA revealed their greater role accomplishment in practicum than what those who had > 3.00(28.29) CGPA exposed. Hence, it seems probable to say that prospective teachers who had <3.00 CGPA tried their best to secure the professional support of cooperating teachers as well as university instructors better than what the trainees who had >3.00 CGPA did.

Likewise, both student teachers who scored < 3.00 and >3.00 CGPA had nearly alike observation (performance of less than expected) toward the experience of cooperating teachers in practicum. However, participants who had <3.00 (30.30) CGPA revealed greater role accomplishment of cooperating teachers than those who had > 3.00(27.73) CGPA disclosed. Probably, in this case, it seems likely to say that prospective teachers who had CGPA < 3.00 tried their best to effectively utilize the professional support of mentors.

Both student teachers who had < 3.00 and >3.00 CGPA had nearly similar perception (performance of

almost what was expected) toward the experience of university instructors in practicum. However, trainees who had > 3.00(29.61) CGPA revealed greater role accomplishment of university instructors than what those who had <3.00 (29.04) CGPA disclosed. It seems probable that with the help of better academic achievement, probably they had, those student teachers who had >3.00 CGPA easily understood and materialized the given professional support of university instructors than what those who had <3.00 CGPA did. The qualitative data that some university instructors did not give feedback after trainees' reflection on practicum seems to show the probability that those particularly low academic achiever trainees encountered difficulty to materialize their roles in practicum.

The one sample t-test statistic revealed that the rated mean value (28.77) of the perception of prospective teachers toward their own experience was less than the expected mean value (30). From these statistics it seems fair to reflect that prospective teachers failed to accomplish as much as anticipated roles in practicum. To justify this, it seems possible to think that poor professional support offered to trainees contributed to this limitation. This might be so for the reason that, as the qualitative data informed, there was limited stakeholder communication, largely between student teachers and cooperating teachers for mentors were not assigned to more trainees. This finding is similar with the findings of Allen and Peach (2007) who pointed out that there was typically very limited ongoing communication between stakeholders and this could increase the gap that student teachers faced between the in-field and on-campus components of their course. In the same token, Anderson (2007) stated that if any member of the triad falls short of his/her responsibilities this can have profound effects on the teaching practice and most importantly the student teacher.

The result also uncovered that the rated mean value (28.53) of the perception of prospective teachers toward the experience of cooperating teachers was less than what was expected (30). The absence of mentor assigned for the majority of trainees and poor commitment of those few mentors assigned to support trainees seem to be the causes for insufficient role accomplishment of trainees in practicum. In this case, the qualitative data secured from the majority of trainees ascertained that mentor was not assigned for the majority of trainees in their practicum and those mentors assigned to only few trainees showed poor willingness to support them. While articulating the reason for poor support of assigned mentors, the majority of respondents qualitatively reported that absence of credit given to mentors either in terms of money or even teaching load contributed to absence and poor support of assigned mentors.

Of course, some university instructors and particularly experienced student teachers were not free from this blame. This was so, as per qualitative data, for the reason that some university instructors did not offer feedback after trainees' reflection on practicum and particularly, experienced student teachers disregarded the value of practicum to them.

Above all, it seems likely to see that absence and poor willingness of mentors to offer professional support to trainees played negative role in acquainting trainees with

staff, in providing assistance to trainees to apply varied teaching-learning strategies in classroom teaching, in arranging frequent classroom observation and post teaching conference schedule, in planning lesson cooperatively with mentors, in sharing professional experience to student teachers and in creating conducive environment in which trainees could learn more by asking mentors varied questions related to practicum. Hence, it seems possible to infer that lack of adequate professional support from mentors as well as some university instructors and poor willingness of particularly experienced trainees to actively participate in practicum contributed to the existence of insufficient professional experience of trainees. This argument seems so for the findings of Allen and Peach (2007) confirmed that there was typically very limited ongoing communication between stakeholders and this could increase the gap that student teachers faced between the in-field and on-campus components of their course.

On the other hand, the result of the study revealed that the experience of university instructors in executing given roles in practicum was nearly as expected. However, still, the rated mean value (29.44) of the perception of respondents toward the experience of university instructors was less than the expected mean value(30). From what was reported qualitatively it seems probable to understand that the rated and expected mean variation resulted from limited role execution of some university teachers in provision of immediate oral as well as written feedback and in arranging post reflection and post supervisory conference with mentees and mentors. This is the investigation that goes, only to a lesser extent, in line with the findings of Fekede Tulli (2009) that university supervisors failed to provide the required support to student teachers in practicum. On the other hand, although not all of them, more of university instructors offered expected professional support to trainees during their supervisory work in clusters where trainees reflected on their practicum work. This is likely to contribute to success of accomplishing given roles of university instructors for Goodman (1985) confirmed that the quality of field experience improves when supervisors are more involved.

## CONCLUSIONS

The result of the study was that when student teachers and cooperating teachers accomplished given roles less than what was expected of them in student teachers' practicum to the extent of statistically significant difference, although there were some limitations, university instructors accomplished anticipated roles almost as what was expected with no statistically significant difference between their perceived and expected roles.

As it was ascertained by the data, different factors contributed to less than expected role accomplishment of prospective teachers as well as cooperating teachers in practicum. The major factors contributed to less than anticipated roles accomplishment of student teachers and cooperating teachers comprise of absence of assigned mentors to the majority of prospective teachers, lack of interest and commitment of those few assigned mentors to support mentees, lack of interest and commitment of particularly experienced student teachers to practicum, failure of some university instructors in provision of immediate oral as well as written feedback to trainees

after supervisory work and in arranging post reflection and post supervisory conference with mentees and mentors, absence of high concern of school principals and district education department officials to practicum and infrequent supervision trainees obtained from university instructors (only two times in clusters). Assignment of trainees in secondary schools where university instructors could not reach to offer frequent professional support to trainees at school level also negatively affected the acquisition of experiential professional knowledge of prospective teachers.

The result of the study revealed that student teachers' practicum implementation process seems encountered challenges emanating particularly from poor role accomplishment of prospective teachers and cooperating teachers in practicum. Of course, university instructors had some limitation in their experience of practicum. Accordingly, it would be logical to recommend that the stakeholders particularly secondary schools and the Bahir Dar University should work hard in raising the awareness of prospective teachers toward the significance of teaching practice to them so that they can show commitment in actively engaging in practicum. The university is also highly required to work in close relation with secondary schools so as to cooperatively assign mentors for trainees. It would be equally important for the university to offer training periodically for mentors, school principals as well as district education department officials on practicum so that they can work collaboratively in effecting practicum appropriately. Moreover, it would be better if the secondary schools and the university look for mechanisms to raise interest and commitment of assigned mentors which was found to be low due to absence of any incentive arranged for mentors. On the other hand, the university is required to allocate adequate supervisory time for university instructors so that they can provide sufficient professional support for trainees during their supervisory work. Furthermore, it would be better to assign prospective teachers in secondary schools which exist near by the university so that university instructors can provide frequent and adequate support through their supervisory work at school level rather than they limit their support to their contact in clusters.

#### Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest none declared.

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