RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' WORK-AUTONOMY AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES

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Abstract

The focus of this study is to study the relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences at Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township, Yangon Region. The specific aims are to investigate teachers' work-autonomy, to investigate their professional competences and to study the relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study. The participants of this study consisted of 150 teachers. Instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts. The Cronbach's alpha of the whole scale of teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences was 0.82. Descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA and independent samples t test were used to analyze the data in this study. The result found mean value of teachers' work-autonomy was 2.99. So, the level of teachers' work-autonomy was moderate level. Mean value of their professional competences was 3.04. The level of their professional competences was moderate level. Therewere strong correlation between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences r=.649. It was found that there were statistically significant and positive relationship teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. This research suggests that one way to increase teachers' level of professional competences by enhancing teachers' degree of autonomy at schools. School principals should consider decentralizing the power of decision making at school and accommodate teachers to participate autonomously in school activities both in the classroom area and the school wide area.

Keywords: Teachers' professional competences (TPC), Teachers' work-autonomy (TWA)

Introduction

Education can shape the attitudes, behavior and values of citizens and can offer opportunities for change that will improve equity and quality of education. The highest quality of education requires the teachers having the highest quality and skills in teaching. Teachers' competences have been broadening with respect to reform studies in education, development of teacher education, scientific results of educational science and other fields (Friedman, 1999). Teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) means to bring the bright future to the school. By increasing teachers' work-autonomy (TWA), teachers will feel very passionate in working as the result; they will work very creatively and independently (Blasé and Kirby, 2009). A teacher has two works in school; academic and administrative (Bjork, 2004). When teacher possesses the power to make decision in schools, teachers will make a decision that directly contributes to students' needs in solving their difficultly and improving their ability. Teacher competence indicates the quality of education in a country. Teacher competences deal with pedagogical skill, personal skill and professional skill (Blasé and Kirby, 2009). Teachers must have to work with others learners and teachers, work with knowledge, technology and information and work with and in society (Caena, 2011). This study will investigate teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and teachers' professional competences (TPC) to provide information for school communities related to teachers' personal and professional aspects, building, understanding and awareness of promoting decentralization in school academic and administrative activities. Moreover, it aims to support the cooperation between school administrators and teachers in developing efficient school activities.

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Aims of the Study

The main aim of the study is to study the relationship between teachers' work- autonomy (TWA) and their   professional competences (TPC). The specific aims of the study are to investigate the levels of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) in Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township, to investigate the levels of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) according to principals' current services in school and teachers' personal factors, to investigate the extent of teachers' professional competences (TPC) in Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township, to investigate the extent of teachers' professional competences (TPC) according to principals' current services in school and teachers' personal factors and to study the relationship between teachers' work- autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC) in Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the levels of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) in Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township?
2. What are the levels of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) according to principals' current services in school and teachers' personal factors?
3. To what extent do teachers possess professional competences (TPC) in Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township?
4. To what extent do teachers possess professional competences (TPC) according to principals' current services in school and teachers' personal factors?
5. Are there any relationship between teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC)?

Limitation of the Study

The total participants for this study are selected teachers currently employed by basic education high schools in Tamwe Township, Yangon Region.

Theoretical Framework

This implies that teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences are important phenomenon for all schools in any country. The following theoretical framework leads to the research work.

Teachers' Work-Autonomy (TWA)

Friedman (1999) indicated that four areas of functioning were pertinent to teachers' sense of autonomy at work (1) class teaching (2) school mode of operating (3) staff development and (4) curriculum development. According to Strong (2012) and Fachrurrazi (2017) stated that there are four variables of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA). They are (1) curriculum development (2) professional development (3) school mode of operating and (4) teaching and assessment. Therefore, this study is implied the following theoretical framework leads to the teachers' work-autonomy (TWA).

Curriculum Development

According to Strong (2012), teachers have autonomy in developing the curriculum in order to fit teachers' and students' need in a study planning. Teachers have to control the curriculum. Teachers may take decisions based on an individual's consideration or a discussion with students

in deciding how to develop the curriculum. Teachers may add extra curriculum activities to a standard curriculum to fit student and teacher need. Teachers also may modify and make some innovations into the curriculum by initiating new enrichments or cultural activities onto the curriculum. Teachers may have liberty in delivering a curriculum and have a knack for how they communicate with parents.

Teachers can play an effective role in defining and implementing the curriculum. This entails understanding and participating in the curriculum development process, taking on new roles as advisors, facilitators and curriculum developers. Teachers know their students better than others involved in the curriculum process. Teachers from multiple grade levels may collaborate to identify skills that students need at each level and ensure that the curriculum adequately prepares students to advance to the next grade-level.

According to Rudolph (2006), teachers are leaders in charge when discussing and making decision in the curriculum. Teachers may develop the new curriculum by adding an old element of curriculum that they think significant to be implemented. Teachers may compose new materials for their students in future classroom activities. Teachers may add or delete any teaching subject from the official curriculum.

Staff Development

According to Luthfi (1984, cited in Fachrurrani, 2017), teachers have an exclusive expertise which is different from other professions; teachers' skills are obtained by special training. Teachers' works are based on educational theories and standard operational procedure of the profession. The professional development undertaken by teachers most commonly consisted of informal dialogue to improve teaching, specified courses and workshops, and reading professional literature (OECD, 2009).

Friedman (1999) indicates that teachers decide on the location and timetable for their in-service training courses and determine their own enrichment general education.

Conners (1990) investigates the professional development is defined as process and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skill, and attitudes of educators so that might, in turn, improve the learning of students.

Fullan (1991) expands the definition to include "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement."

New Jersey department of education (2013) indicated professional development shall be comprised of professional learning opportunities aligned with student learning and educator development needs and school, district, and / or state improvement goals.

Professional development shall have as its primary focus the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting all students. Professional development shall include the work of established collaborative teams of teachers, school leaders, and other administrative, instructional, and educational services staff members who commit to working together to accomplish common goals and who are engaged in a continuous cycle of professional improvement focusing on: evaluating student learning needs through ongoing reviews of data on student performance and defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the analysis of these data.

School Mode of Operating

Friedman (1999) stated that teachers have performed several tasks indicates to their greater involvement in organizational activity of school. Teachers' tasks deal with issues such budget,

finance and inadequate activity of school. Teachers and staffs have a power to make decisions to discuss budgets, to think about school resources to influence financial issues.

Strong (2012) stated that students' behavior is an area of teacher autonomy where teachers actually have a power to arrange students' behaviors. Teachers will initiate a standard norm and behavior to be implemented in daily classroom activities. All classrooms members should obey the whole standard classroom operating. Teachers may have lack of restrictions in applying classrooms operation.

Elmore (1987) stated the classroom behavior is area of teacher autonomy where teacher can choose appropriate attitudes to be applied in classrooms. Teachers will choose and decide how to behave in classrooms for teachers and students. Teachers will take responsibility if any unwanted situation emerges. They are trained to be experts of classrooms procedures and should possess the decision making ability related to what they can do best.

Eidelman (2015) stated in Mosaica Education, the ultimate goal and the foundation for everything must do in educational excellence. They are financial services, marketing, public relations and communications, human resources, facilities and technology.

Teaching and Assessment

Strong (2012) stated teachers understood students' personal, psychological and scholastic necessity due to teacher mains responsibility to enhance students' capacity building. Teachers achieve thoughtful understanding of students' personal, psychological and scholastic needs. Teachers create a good relationship between teachers and students and between students and students in order to meet students' psychological achievements. Teachers apply standardized teaching method to optimizing students' capacity. They counsel an assessment technique in order to solve problems related to students' discipline and inappropriate manners. Teachers know how to motivate students. Teachers are really creative with the projects they contrive for their students. Others are fantastic at getting their students to engage in thoughtful conversations. Teachers are able to select and decide materials for classrooms' teaching learning process. They take decision related to classrooms' physical environment. They can decide without any personal consent to reward students who has an individual improvement and achievements. Teachers will decide on classrooms' procedure.

According to Tamir (1986 cited in Strong, 2012), all the curriculum is implemented by teachers and depends on the quality of teaching and learning strategies, learning materials and assessment. A teacher can provide insight into the types of materials, activities and specific skills that need to be included in implementing the curriculum. Teachers own interest, ability and competence to teach the curriculum i.e. confidence in teaching, attitudes and freeness to teach the subject.

Teachers described desire for more autonomy in their curriculum, assessment and the pace or schedule of curricular content. Teachers appear to have comprehensive freedom once their classroom doors are closed, have demanded additional autonomy over the classroom aspects as instructional decisions and student activities (Blasé and Kirby, 2009).

Friedman (1999) stated that assessment is an area of autonomy for teachers. Teachers can choose an appropriate way of assessment in assessing students' achievement. They will decide some practical technique for students' progress assessment. Teachers will decide on testing and scoring criteria of students' assessment process.

Luthfi (1984 cited in Friedman, 2012) stated that with a skill of diagnostic, teachers are able to identify problems to the students and provide a best solution. Teachers can provide thousand

solutions for thousands of students. A teacher is a profession with a special gift in helping the need by providing the best way out.

Teachers' Professional Competences (TPC)

Niemi (2012) indicated that five areas of functioning were pertinent to teachers' professional competences (1) cooperation (2) diversity of pupils and preparing them for future (3) teachers' own professional learning (4) designing own instruction (5) ethical commitment in teaching profession. Therefore, this study is implied the following theoretical framework leads to the teacher's professional competences (TPC).

Cooperation

Niemi (2012) stated that teachers have to work with others learners and teachers, work with knowledge, technology and information and work with in society. Teacher can manage the classroom interaction, the evaluating grading of student, management of tasks outside of classroom, working with school community and cooperating with students. When teachers collaborate, the interests, backgrounds and strengths of each teacher can contribute to a project. Teachers draw support from each another and delegate tasks that allow each teacher to feel effective. Collaboration between teachers contributes to school improvement and student success.

Brown (2016) stated teachers demonstrate how to work together with others to reach a common purpose and share age-appropriate responsibilities enables children to learn how to work together to reach a goal. Teachers play games to encourage teamwork (activities like playing games together in teams), teachers clean up together, or simply building puzzles together enables children to learn how to work together. Teachers teach them how to problem solve and learn how to overcome challenges together. Teachers help children to learn how to identify a problem and think about different ways to solve that problem. And encourage them to try out solutions. Teachers recognize that cooperation is working together to reach a common goal. Parents must allow some choice in the matter while still working with the children to meet the end goal. Teachers use specific praise when observing the children cooperating. Teachers praise them for working together. Teachers try to be as specific as possible explain how the child demonstrated cooperation.

Diversity of Pupils and Preparing them for Future

Luthfi (1984 cited in Friedman, 2012) stated that teachers own diagnostic skills that allow them to apply very applicative theories based on needs of students. Specific students have typical problems with a skill of diagnostic teachers are able to identify specific problems to the students and provide a best solution accordingly. Teachers can provide thousands of solutions for thousands of students.

Strong (2012) stated that teachers' power in developing professionalism of students and in building teachers' personal professionalism. Teachers can select a location and a schedule for their in service trainings. Teachers can choose topic and subjects for the training and able to appoint instructors for their capacity building sessions.

Niemi (2012) stated that teachers have different kinds of teaching, provide and prepare readiness for students for their daily life, promote equity of sexes, comfort the multiculturalism, ready for media education and develop applications of modern information technology.

Teachers' Own Professional Learning

The European Commission (2007) has emphasized that teachers' trust have competence to work multicultural settings including an understanding of the value of diversity and respect for differences. Teachers have a responsibility to develop new knowledge about education and

training. In the context of autonomous lifelong learning, their professional development implies the teachers. They are teachers continue to reflect on their practices in a systematic way. They undertake classroom-based research. They incorporate the results of classroom and academic research into their teaching. They evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and amend them accordingly and they assess their training needs themselves.

Niemi (2012) stated that teachers try to develop school curriculum and work as a change agent in a society. Teachers try to cooperative action research and revise students' learning environments. Teachers have self-regulated learning and research for their own work.

Bray (2007) stated the personal professional learning plans, educator competences, coaching and make own playlist are the most important for teachers' own professional learning.

Designing Own Instruction

Niemi (2012) stated teachers use teaching method and self-evaluating of own-teaching. They can design instruction. They can independent management of teachers' tasks. They have mastered their academic contents of curriculum.

According to Gustafson (1996 cited in Fachrurrazi, 2017), instructional design is analyzing what is to be taught/learned; determining how it is to be taught/learned; conducting tryout and revision; and assessing whether learners do learn.

Reiser and Dick (1996 cited in Fachrurrazi, 2017) stated that effective instruction that enables students to acquire specified skills, knowledge, and attitudes. According to Fachrurrazi (2017) stated teachers begin the planning process by clearly identifying the general goals and specific objectives students will be expected to attain, they plan instructional activities that are intended to help students attain those objectives, they develop assessment instruments that measure attainment of those objectives and they revise instruction in light of student performance on each objective and student attitudes towards instructional activities.

Barile (2011) proved student-centered discussions, making connections, increased autonomy, building relationships and a focus on literacy to be extremely effective in classroom for teachers.

Ethical Commitments in Teaching Profession

Niemi (2012) stated education of a student's whole personality. Teachers have the development of own educational philosophy. They can confront changing circumstances of a school. They commit teaching profession. They have lifelong growth and they support a learner's individual growth. The three main obligations of the teaching learning process are obligations towards students, obligations towards parents, community and society, obligations towards the profession and colleagues.

Teacher treats all students with love and affection, respects the value of being just and impartial to all students irrespective of their religion, sex, economic status, disability, language and place of birth, facilitates students' physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and moral development, makes planned and systematic efforts to facilitate the child to actualize her potential and talent. Teacher establishes a relationship of trust with parents/guardians in the interest of all round development of students.

Teacher creates a culture that encourages purposeful collaboration and dialogue among colleagues and stakeholders, takes pride in the teaching profession and treats other members of the profession with respect and dignity, refrains from accepting any gift, or favor that might impair or

appear to influence professional decisions or actions, respects the professional standing and opinions of her colleagues.

Key Terms

Teachers' professional competences(TPC): Teachers' professional competences (TPC) are designing own instruction, cooperation_ teachers working with others, ethical commitment in teaching profession, diversity of pupils and preparing them for future and teachers' own professional learning. (Niemi, 2012).

Teachers' work-autonomy (TWA): Teachers' work-autonomy means a power of teacher to act and work independently, free from any external forces (Friedman, 1999).

Methodology

This study was conducted with descriptive research design. Questionnaires survey was used quantitative study and open-ended questions were also used in qualitative study to engage full, meaningful answers and to get more objective responses. Simple random sampling method was used.

Quantitative Research Method

The sample comprised five schools at Basic Education High Schools in Tamwe Township. One hundred and fifty teachers from those schools were selected by using the simple random sampling method. The respondent rate was 100%. This study is intended to study the relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. The questionnaire consists of two parts. Part (A) included (28) items based on the dimension of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) that were developed by Friedman (1999). Part (B) included (35) items based on the dimension of Niemi (2012). Similarly, there were (35) items Part B concerned with teachers' professional competences (TPC). In order to obtain the content validity for teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and teachers' professional competences (TPC) questionnaires, an expert review was conducted by (13) experienced educators who have special knowledge and close relationship with this area, from the Department of Educational Theory. According to the test of pilot study, the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha, α) were (0.904) for teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) questionnaires and (0.719) for teachers' professional competences (TPC) questionnaires. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha, α) of overall questionnaires was (0.828). First and foremost, the related literature was explored. Next, the questionnaires were developed under the guidance of the supervisor in order to get the required data. Before piloting, all experienced teachers from the Department of Educational Theory examined the questionnaire for item clarity, grammar and usage for the validation of questionnaires. After, the researcher received the advice and guidance concerning the questionnaires from the experiences teachers, the use of words and content of items were modified. Then, as a pilot study, questionnaires for teachers were distributed to (40) teachers at No. (2), Basic Education High School, in Yankin Township on September 10, 2019. Distributed questionnaires were collected again by the researcher after one week later. The respondent rate was 100%.

Data Analysis

After the questionnaires were returned, the data were put into the computer data file and were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 25. The descriptive statistics were used to tabulate mean values and standard deviations of individual item and group of item in the questionnaires. In classifying the teachers' work-autonomy, the overall mean values and the standard deviations were used. Teachers' professional competences were conducted in the same way. One-way ANOVA and independent samples *t* test were used to describe the teachers'

work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC) by total teaching services, position, qualification and total services of principals. Pearson correlation was used to find the relationship between teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC).

Qualitative Research Method

Among the selected schools, two schools were chosen from Tamwe Township, based on the results of the lowest mean value and the highest mean value. Therefore, the school C got the highest mean value and the school D got the lowest mean value. These two schools were chosen for asking the interview questions. Interviews were conducted to study teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC). In addition to questionnaire survey, instruments for qualitative study such as interview questions were developed based on two dimensions of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC). Interview questions were conducted with selected teachers to obtain necessary reliable sound information of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC) from December 4, 2019 to December 6, 2019. Interviewer could explore and probe participants' responses to gather more in-depth data about their experiences and feelings (Gay, 2016). Interview questions were formulated from these data. In order to obtain in-depth information of teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC), the interview items to overall teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC) were asked. The researcher wrote detailed notes and used phone-records during the interview or after each interview.

Data Analysis

As the supplementary to the quantitative findings, qualitative study, the interview was conducted. After the data had been collected from the participants, their answers were thoroughly studied to categorize the similar ideas and to identify the main theme. Data analysis was based on categorizing and interpreting the recordings and interview questions. To give out the qualitative findings on teachers' work-autonomy (TWA) and their professional competences (TPC), the interpreting and synthesizing the organized data were made. Information from teachers' interview questions was complementary to each other.

Findings

Research findings are presented by using descriptive statistics: mean and standard deviations, One-Way ANOVA and Pearson correlation. Teachers' responses to open-ended questions are also presented.

Quantitative Findings

Table 1 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Work-Autonomy

No.	Dimensions	Mean	SD
1	Curriculum development	2.88	.61
2	Staff development	3.02	.56
3	School mode of operating	2.90	.57
4	Teaching and assessment	3.15	.48
	Teachers' Work-Autonomy	2.99	.69

Scoring direction: 1.00 - 2.00 = Low   2.01- 3.00 = Moderate   3.01 - 4.00= High

In Table 1, it was found that teachers' work-autonomy is at the moderate level.

Table 2 Comparison of Mean Values of Teachers' Work-Autonomy (TWA) according to Levels of School

No.	Schools	CD	SD	SMO	TA	TWA
1	A	2.91	3.13	2.86	3.12	3.00
2	B	2.89	3.15	2.91	3.19	3.03
3	C	3.00	3.06	3.00	3.21	3.06
4	D	2.77	2.91	2.84	3.05	2.89
5	E	2.89	2.92	2.93	3.41	3.03

Scoring directions: 1.00- 2.00 = Low   2.01- 3.00 = Moderate   3.01 - 4.00 = High

The comparisons of mean values of the four dimensions of teachers' work-autonomy in the selected schools are presented in Table 2. The level of teachers' work-autonomy of all of the schools is moderate.

Table 3 One-Way ANOVA Results for Teachers' Work-Autonomy (TWA) Grouped by Schools

Dimension		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*p*
Teachers' Work-Autonomy (TWA)	Between Group	.76	4	.19		
	Within Group	15.94	145	.11	1.74	ns
	Total	16.71	149			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 at significant level, ns=not significant

There was no significant difference in teachers' work autonomy according to levels of schools.

Table 4 Independent Samples *t* Test Results of Teachers' Work-Autonomy Grouped by Qualification

Dimensions	Group of Qualification	N	Mean (SD)	*t*	*df*	*p*
Curriculum Development	BEd, MEd	61	2.92 (.30)	1.38	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	2.83 (.47)			
Staff Development	BEd, MEd	61	3.10 (.28)	3.68	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	2.88 (.42)			
School Mode of Operating	BEd, MEd	61	2.96 (.33)	2.42	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	2.79 (.44)			
Teaching and Assessment	BEd, MEd	61	3.16 (.34)	.315	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.13 (.70)			
Teachers' Work-Autonomy(TWA)	BEd, MEd	61	3.04 (.25)	2.25	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	2.91 (.40)			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 at significant level and ns=not significant

According to Table 4, there was no significant difference in the levels of teachers' work-autonomy according to their qualifications. The level of work-autonomy of teachers who get BEd and MEd degrees is higher than those who get BA, BSc and other degrees. Table 5 shows

independent samples *t* test results of teachers' work-autonomy grouped by total services of principals at current schools.

Table 5 Independent Samples *t* Test Results of Teachers' Work-Autonomy Grouped by Total Services of Principals at Current Schools

Dimensions	Services of Principals	N	Mean(SD)	*t*	*df*	*p*
Curriculum Development	Above 3 years	85	2.82(.37)	-2.21	148	.03**
	3 years and below	65	2.96(.40)			
Staff Development	Above 3 years	85	2.98(.36)	-1.80	148	ns
	3 years and below	65	3.09(.37)			
School Mode of Operating	Above 3 years	85	2.87(.42)	-1.08	148	ns
	3 years and below	65	2.95(.36)			
Teaching and Assessment	Above 3 years	85	3.15(.60)	-.28	148	ns
	3 years and below	65	3.18(.37)			
Teachers' Work-Autonomy(TWA)	Above 3 years	85	2.96(.35)	-1.57	148	ns
	3 years and below	65	3.04(.31)			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 at significant level and ns=not significant

There was a significant difference in curriculum development of teachers' work- autonomy according to the total services of principals in current schools in Table 5.

Table 6   Mean Values and Standard Deviations for Teachers' Professional Competences

No.	Dimensions	Mean	SD
1	Cooperation	3.02	.53
2	Diversity of pupils and preparing them for future	3.18	.46
3	Teachers' own professional learning	3.13	.48
4	Designing own instruction	3.11	.48
5	Ethical Commitments	3.22	.48
	Teachers' Professional Competences	3.04	.49

Scoring directions: 1.00- 2.00 = Low   2.01- 3.00 = Moderate   3.01 - 4.00 = High

According to Table 6, the level of teachers' professional competencies is high.

Table 7 Comparison of Mean Values of Teachers' Professional Competences according to Levels of School

No.	Schools	CO	DPP	TOP	DOI	EC	TPC
1	A	3.09	3.20	3.19	3.14	3.26	3.17
2	B	3.03	3.20	3.21	3.19	3.35	3.19
3	C	3.05	3.23	3.21	3.19	3.31	3.19
4	D	2.97	3.13	3.07	3.04	3.12	3.06
5	E	3.04	3.23	3.00	2.99	3.03	3.05

Scoring direction: 1.00- 2.00 = Low   2.01- 3.00 = Moderate   3.01 - 4.00 = High

The comparisons of mean values of the five dimensions of teachers' professional competencies in the selected schools are presented in Table 7. Teachers' professional competencies in School D is only at the moderate level except other schools.

Table 8 One-Way ANOVA Results for Teachers' Professional Competences (TPC) Grouped by Schools

Dimension		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Teachers' Professional Competences (TPC)	Between Group	.572	4	.14	1.54	ns
	Within Group	13.38	145	.09		
	Total	13.95	149			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 at significant level, ns=not significant

Table 8 presents one-Way ANOVA results for teachers' professional competences (TPC) grouped by schools. There was no significant difference in teachers' professional competences (TPC) grouped by schools.

Table 9 Independent Samples *t* Test Results of Teachers' Professional Competences Grouped by Qualification

Dimensions	Qualification	N	Mean(SD)	t	df	p
Cooperation	BEd, MEd	61	3.05(.25)	1.85	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	2.95(.31)			
Diversity of Pupils and Preparing them for Future	BEd, MEd	61	3.19(.33)	.79	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.14(.37)			
Teachers' Own Professional Learning	BEd, MEd	61	3.17(.30)	2.01	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.05(.38)			
Designing Own Instruction	BEd, MEd	61	3.14(.31)	1.45	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.05(.38)			
Ethical Commitments	BEd, MEd	61	3.23(.34)	.59	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.19(.44)			
Teachers' Professional Competences	BEd, MEd	61	3.16(.26)	1.50	135	ns
	BA, BSc and Others	89	3.08(.34)			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 at significant level and ns=not significant

Independent samples *t* test results of teachers' professional competences grouped by qualification at shown in Table 9. The level of professional competencies of teachers who get BEd and MEd degrees is higher than those who get BA, BSc and other degrees. But, there was no significant difference in teachers' professional competencies according to their qualifications.

Table 10 Relationship between Teachers' Work-Autonomy and Their Professional Competences of Tamwe Township

	Teachers' Work-Autonomy (TWA)	Teachers' Professional Competences (TPC)
Teachers' Work-Autonomy(TWA)	1	.65**
Teachers' Professional Competences (TPC)	.65**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 showed that there was relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences.

Qualitative Findings

The interview question (1) is "Do you satisfy the opportunities you get in curriculum development, teaching and assessment and school mode of operating on your workplace with regard to current work?" Teacher A, B and C from School C stated that they didn't get the autonomy in curriculum development. They were permitted to teach regular teaching to cover the course. They don't have the power to make decision in school. Teacher D, E and F from School D stated that they didn't get the autonomy in curriculum development. Principal managed for teachers to attend the class in full time. They got the opportunities to make decision in teaching and assessment in their classrooms.

The interview question (2) is "Do you take a lot of responsibilities in teaching, school mode of operating and financial sectors? Give your reasons if you do." Teacher A, B and C from School C answered they didn't do school management and they did only teaching. They determined teaching and assessment and they didn't want to do paper work load. Teacher D, E and F from School D answered they could decide student's individual improvement. According to their expression, they take activities according to the decision made by the principals.

The interview question (3) is "Do you have stress with respect to the autonomy in your workplace? Give your reasons." Teacher A, B and C from School C stated that they had stress because they didn't have private time. They wanted to do teaching only. Teacher C from School C and teacher E and F from School D said that they had stress in writing paper work. They wanted to do teaching only.

The interview question (4) is "Do you have the opportunity to teach the subject you are expert in?" All the teachers from Schools C and D answered they had to teach the subject according to their specialization.

The interview question (5) is "How do you cooperate with your students, colleagues, parents and community to become effective school?" Teacher A, B and C from School C said that parents have always little interest in school. They cooperate with students and principal in school health activities. Teacher D, E and F stated that they encouraged students, colleagues and principal to participate to reach their common goals in school.

The interview question (6) is "How would you study continually to improve your professional competences?" Teacher B from School C answered she wanted to attend the BEd correspondence course if she had a chance. Most of the teachers from school C and D answered that they were unwilling to study continually. Teacher E and F from School D said that she wanted to attend refresher course concerning her specialization subject.

Discussion

Arising from the findings of this study, the following discussions are made. In all items of teachers' work-autonomy in curriculum development; teachers should have autonomy to compose new learning materials for their students. But, they didn't understand and participate in curriculum development process, taking new roles as advisors, facilitators and curriculum developers. Firestone & Wilson, 1985 suggested that when teacher is making decisions about his or her classroom environment, the sense of shared purpose and goals in a school can lead to role ambiguity and when teachers gained control determining the curriculum, developing the methods to teach the curriculum, selecting materials, establishing the daily schedules and enforcing the classroom management system, they perceived themselves as having efficacy. Therefore, Teachers

should have autonomy in developing the curriculum in order to fit teachers' and students' needs such as vocational training and local curriculum. They also should use to combine new and old curricula for their students' needs.

In staff development of work-autonomy, teachers participated in informal dialogue for improving teaching, specific courses, workshop and reading professional literature. But, they didn't have autonomy concerning on the location and timetable for their in-service-training courses and they are not allowed to decide and their own enrichment in education. According to interview questions, some teachers said that they didn't want to teach anymore and some said they wanted to attend refresher courses. Katz (1968) stated that the greater the degree of specialized knowledge and skills required of the occupant of a position, the greater the degree of autonomy that accrues to the position. Therefore, teachers should have autonomy for their in service training and professional development programs.

In school mode of operating, teachers have power in an area of their' work-autonomy where teachers have to arrange students' behaviors. They will set standard norms and behaviors for student to be implemented in daily classroom activities. Teachers don't have power to make decisions concerning school budget. According to interview questions, most of the teacher said that they didn't involve in other school administration. Raelin (1989) explored three distinct sections strategic autonomy, administrative autonomy and operational autonomy. Strategic autonomy is defined as the vision, mission and broad goals determined by the school broad, superintendent and central office staff. Administrative autonomy is the management of school system's unit by the principal placed in the managerial role. Operational autonomy describes the freedom teachers have to solve problems and control their work environment within organizational constraints while being accountable to the school administration. So, they should have autonomy to decide several tasks that indicate to their greater involvement in organizational activities of school.

In teaching and assessment, teachers have autonomy in grading for students' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning strategies, learning materials and assessment. According to interview questions, teachers said that they always worked under the control of the principals. Jones and jones (1986) stated that seven main sections. They are (1) coping with students' psychological needs (2) dealing with students' scholastic needs (3) motivating students and reducing unruly behavior by establishing favorable interpersonal relations within the classroom (4) working with parents in all matters concerning their children (5) designing efficient teaching timetables and ensuring class functioning as a social unit (6) creating effective teaching methods to enhance learning and (7) establishing working ground rules within the classroom and the school as a whole. So, teachers should have autonomy to create a lot of academic projects for their students.

In the item of teachers' professional competences of cooperation, teachers use specific praise when observing the childrens' cooperation, but they don't have any opportunities to manage the tasks outside classroom; (For example, keep on eyes on students during recess, school festivals and trips). Lee. Dedrick and Smith (1991) suggested that fostering cooperative environment and allowing teachers reasonable autonomy in their classroom practices are more likely to foster the efficacy and satisfaction of teachers. Teachers should model good behaviors themselves to let student cooperate activity in their activities.

In diversity of pupils and preparing them for future, teachers have intercultural education and promoting equity of sexes and they can support students to understand the new curriculum. They are not ready for media education. Most of the teachers said that they encouraged students to participate to reach their success in their daily life. Muijs. D & Reynolds, D (2005) highlighted those five main elements of students' learning such as intellectual skills, verbal skills, cognitive

strategies, attitudes and motor skills. Pupils' learning could be greatly affected by the relationship with the teacher and the learning situations. So, teachers should be ready to provide for students to understand their lesson and prepare them for future society. Teachers should keep in mind to analyse the strengths and needs of students and they need to bring content objects as well as the design of lessons that promote content learning.

In teachers' own professional learning, teachers have critical assessment concerning their professional development and they don't have access to integrate research and classroom practices. Forrest W.P (2013 cited in Medley, 1977) stated that successful teachers are those who are good relationship not only with pupils but other staff, parents and colleagues, school principal and other members of community. So, they should evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and assess their training needs by themselves.

In designing own instruction, teachers can design of instruction for their teaching but they don't use teaching methods effectively and efficiently. The European Commission (2007) has emphasized that teachers must have competence to work in multicultural setting (including an understanding of the value of diversity and respect for difference) and teachers have responsibility to develop new knowledge about education and training, undertake classroom- based research, in cooperate the results of classroom and academic research into their teaching and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies. Therefore, teachers should make discussions and make connections between theory and practice to be effective in classroom.

In ethical commitments, teachers can change circumstances of school especially all round development of students and school improvement. Most of the teachers cooperate with others in improvement plans of school. Gulcan. N.Y (2009 cited in Medley, 1977) stated that there are four principles in ethical commitments. They are honesty, confidentiality, conflict of interest and responsibility. They should support students' individual growth and be obligated for students, parents and community.

In all dimensions of teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences, they receive autonomy in teaching and assessment and their ethical commitment is the highest level in Tamwe Township. These dimensions measured that teachers decide on classroom procedures, determine norms and rules for students' behavior, decide on testing and scoring criteria for students' achievement and assessment procedure, select teaching materials, use specific instruction, make critical reflection of their own work, do self-regulated learning and have flexibility according to their changing circumstances of their school. This study found that teachers have autonomy in their teaching and assessment. They showed that their ethical commitment for their professional competences is the highest level.

Teachers from school A and B occupied moderate level in all teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. School C occupied the highest level in work-autonomy in teaching and assessment dimension. School E occupied the highest level in teaching and assessment and diversity of pupils and preparing them for future dimensions. Teachers' awareness of their responsibilities and self-improvement in all professional aspects must be enhanced so that they can try harder to enroll in training courses and attend professional meetings and participate discussions with colleagues to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Teachers from school C are well qualified but teachers from school D are low qualified. According to interview questions and their results, they should be more practically trained by giving time and taught how to apply techniques and skills to specific situation in summer every year and in-service training courses should be given. There was no significant difference of teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences concerning their total teaching services and position.

In order to relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences, this study claims that there is strong and positive correlation both school B and E. There is also moderate and positive correlation at schools A, B and D. It can be seen that there is strong and positive correlation in overall relationship between teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. This result indicates that the more the level of teachers' autonomy, the more the level of their professional competences. The less the level of autonomy, the lower level of their professional competences is. Blasé & Kirby (2009) claimed that the most essential conditions of teachers' professionalism is that they have autonomy in fulfilling the job obligation.

Therefore, teachers should get more appropriate ways to increase their incomes in order to retain well qualified teachers. The salary for teachers at present is very low in comparing with other employees in other fields. So, they have to do extra jobs without caring about their own professional improvement. Pre-services and in-service teachers' education and training must be provided for teachers with good teaching approaches and new ways to evaluate teachers themselves and students' achievement.

Teachers should have closer contact with parents, students and administrators and then listen to them, understand their aspiration, wishes and adopt what is good and suitable in their ideas pertaining of teachers; practical teaching and educational conditions to improve efficiency and effectiveness in teaching.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings of this study, the recommendations are made. Teachers should support the cooperation between school and community and should contact with parents, students and community. Teachers should participate in curriculum development process and accept the implementation of teachers' and principals' effectiveness in assisting all students. Teachers should make decisions on budget planning and should decide on students' demographic class-composition. They should have autonomy in students' achievement evaluation criteria and should determine norms and rules for students. They should work with other learners and teachers with knowledge, technology and information and should make student-centered discussions, making connections increased autonomy, building relationship and focus on literacy to be extremely effective in classroom. School principals should cooperate with teachers both in classroom operation and in school wide operations to develop an efficient and effective school organization. Government and school principals should provide autonomy for teachers' roles and encourage teachers to boost their competences by themselves in gaining more autonomy. Teachers should have professional expertise and be ready to bring the students to keep abreast of 21st century education.

Need for Further Studies

Further research should investigate deeper into the influence of culture, race and politics that will affect the score of teachers' work-autonomy and their professional competences. Further research should be conducted in other areas such as different levels at schools, universities and townships, states and regions.

Acknowledgement

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