

Status of Portfolio Implementation and Teachers' Belief of Its Contributions to their Professional Development and Students' Learning

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess status of portfolio implementation and teachers' belief of its contributions to their professional development and students' learning in Bahir Dar town. From 13 public primary schools, 6 schools and 162 teachers were selected. In addition, 3 mentors and 6 experienced teachers were selected purposely for interview. Data were collected using questionnaire and interview. Questionnaire data were analyzed using one sample t-test, Pearson correlations coefficient and multiple regressions, and qualitative data were analyzed using developed categories. The study found out that teachers' implementation of portfolio was not to the required level. However, teachers believed that portfolio contributes to their professional development and students' learning. Correlation analysis showed that teachers' belief about the contribution of portfolio for their professional development and students learning was significantly and positively related with its implementation. On the other hand, regression analysis indicated that teachers' belief about contribution of portfolio for their professional development and their students' learning was found to significantly predict level of implementation. And, lack of time, lack of continuous and professional-led training, lack of ownership and attitudinal problems were reported factors for low level of portfolio implementation.

Keywords: Portfolio Implementation, Teacher Belief, Professional Development, Student Learning

1. Introduction

The common maxim that says "teaching is a mother of all professions" shows teachers' critical roles in a society. This is because teaching is one of the essential professions through which all other professions are made possible. Hence, what teachers know and are able to do is of critical importance. In this sense, the task of preparing and supporting the career-long development of teachers' knowledge, attitudes and skills becomes a primary issue that must be dealt with (Walsh & Gamage 2003; Villegas-Reimers 2003). Nowadays, it is commonly agreed among educators that professional development is critical for improving and maintaining teacher quality, and students learning as the effect flows on into the classroom (Phillips 2008). Due to these reasons, teachers' professional development has been a global concern. According to Beeson (1987) in Walsh and Gamage (2003), a growing recognition of the importance of arranging opportunities for the continuing professional development of teachers has been seen in the last two decades. Of these opportunities, one of the most promising new approaches to professional development is work-embedded learning. Work-embedded learning allows educators to share their teaching experiences with others, reflect on specific work experiences, share best practices, test new programs and plan and implement projects (Walsh & Gamage 2003). Such type of learning also aligns with the new perspective of professional development. The perspective is based on constructivism (Lieberman 1994) and conceives teachers as reflective practitioners. In addition, professional development of teachers is perceived as a long term process and takes place in a particular context (related to daily activities of teachers) (Darling-Hammond 1998). Among the activities that help teachers' practice work-embedded learning, portfolio has been

playing a major role. The use of portfolios in teacher education programs appears to have been suggested by Shulman and his colleagues at Stanford University, in 1986, in an attempt to explore alternative modes of assessment in teacher education programs (Liu 2009). These educators claimed that the traditional strategies for assessing teachers have been criticized for not being able to provide a comprehensive measure of teachers' knowledge of teaching, and lack of reflecting the complex teaching practices confronting teachers. Due to this, portfolio has been considered as a possible tool to overcome such weaknesses. It was with this premise that it has also been introduced in Ethiopian schools.

In most studies, portfolio development was also shown to have a number of positive effects on teachers' professional development practices as the outputs give full picture of the teachers' weaknesses and strengths. It also helps teachers to be more active in their practice, engage in self-evaluation and reflection thereby enabling them to modify their attitudes and teaching beliefs. In this regard, Weshah (2010:98) stated:

Teachers' portfolios focus on important teaching processes that could be developed and observed in workplace through period of time. They also enhance teachers to assess their needs of knowledge, skills and dispositions through the process of reflection, which enable them to learn from direct experience. In addition, they enable them to reorganize their thoughts and solve their problems in authentic situations.

Portfolio, however, has got different types based on the purposes to which institutions are expecting to achieve. For instance, Birgin and Baki (2007) described there are various types of portfolios based on their purpose and collected items. Due to this, many educators have come up with different types of portfolio. For instance, according to Haladyn (1997) in Birgin and Baki (2007), there are five types of portfolios named as ideal, showcase, documentation, evaluation, and class portfolio. Still some other educators classify portfolio as learning, assessment and teaching portfolio (where this study is interested in). Due to these variations in the types of portfolio, the definitions of portfolio are also varied according to users' purpose and way of usage. What is then teaching portfolio? A teaching portfolio is specific to the education profession. Shulman (1994:8) defines a teaching portfolio as "a carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by samples of student work and fully realized only through reflective writing, deliberation, and serious conversation". Painter also mentioned:

'A teaching portfolio is a documented history of a teacher's learning process against a set of teaching standards. ...It is an individualized portrait of the teacher as a professional, reflecting on his or her philosophy and practice' (Painter 2001, in McNelly n.d: 56).

Painter (2001) in McNelly (2002) sees teaching portfolio as a documented history of a teacher's learning process viewed against a set of teaching standards. Yet, successful development of a complete portfolio comes out through the deliberate selection of evidence and thoughtful reflections on those artifacts, which provide insight into teachers' growth. If successfully completed, portfolios can be used to gauge teacher effectiveness and student achievement (McNelly, 2002). According to Mues and Sorcinelli (2000), teaching portfolios are typically used for two purposes, which sometimes overlap: as a developmental *process* for reflecting on and improving one's teaching; and as an evaluative *product* for personnel decisions such as tenure, promotion, or a teaching award. Besides, teaching portfolios are expected to foster teachers' awareness of their teaching and the subject matter they teach (Darling-Hammond & Snyder 2000). Portfolios are also used to provide evidence of learning and development (Austin, Marini, & Desroches 2005). Hence, when teachers develop a teaching portfolio, it helps them examine their own learning processes and professional development (Loughran & Corrigan 1995 and Darling 2001 in Dineke et al. 2006), get evidence of their own teaching practice and evaluate their own teaching cases. In this regard, teaching portfolios are used more and more for such purposes (Mansvelder-Longayroux 2006). In addition, the purposes of a professional portfolio include providing evidence of the development of teachers' professional skills and improvement in the learning and outcomes of their students and to provide a basis for the performance review which will be carried out for each teacher (Ministry of Education, MoE henceforth 2011). Portfolio also helps teachers measure and evaluate their own performance against criteria set, record their continuous professional development priorities and activities, and serve as an important resource to support performance review when they prepare themselves for additional responsibility. According to MoE (2011), keeping and developing a professional portfolio helps teachers develop a systematic and professional approach, summarize performance of their students, record their professional development activities and the impact they have had on the quality of teaching and learning, and provide evidence of successful performance for further improvement.

Taking the existence of variations in conceptualizing portfolio into consideration, teaching portfolio was operationally defined for the purpose of this study as a document that records teachers achievements, allows them to reflect on their teaching and supports them to reflect on their students learning. It is conceived as an essential part of teachers' professional development which can be modified or changed over time as a result of

teachers' reflection in evaluating their teaching. Hence, teaching portfolio enables teachers reflect on their own professional development and their students learning, act and develop plausible approaches to teaching. This operational definition of portfolio matches with the definition of MoE (2011) that states portfolio as "an organised collection of items, produced by a teacher or education professional to demonstrate his/ her professional development." This match helps to exactly investigate the intents of introducing portfolio to Ethiopian schools as conceptualized and directed by MoE.

Despite documented successes of portfolio, some limitations have also been reported on the value of using it in teacher education. For example, after analyzing teachers' portfolios, Potthoff et al. (1996) in Liu (2009) found out that portfolios contained little evidence of individual creativity as most portfolios were the same in structure and content. Such kinds of research results may create hesitations about its contributions to teachers' professional development. However, many professions, including teaching, have now mandated the use of portfolios as part of the on-going assessment of the competency of practitioners (Austin, Marini, & Desroches 2005) as the benefits of portfolio outweigh compared to its limitations. Other findings also asserted that portfolio development had a positive impact on teachers' understanding, attitude and confidence of their profession. It is because the processes of developing portfolio encourage teachers to reflect more on their practice and become more conscious of their instruction (Liu 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005). On the other hand, there are various factors that have an effect on the implementation of portfolio in particular and teachers' whole professional development endeavours in general. Among these variables, teachers' beliefs about their students and their professional development practices have key roles. In this regard, substantial research in the area of teacher education has revealed that teachers' beliefs play a determinant role in their professional behavior. This role on their professional behavior and professional development in general has diverse influences on their instructional practices. For instance, Mohamed (2006) revealed that teachers' held belief can influence not only their teaching but also their whole development as a teacher where portfolio plays a pivotal role in changing teachers' beliefs of instructional practices. It is because engagement in developing portfolio leads the teachers to continuous reflection on their beliefs and practices. This sustained reflection in turn offers teachers a chance to learn from their own experiences and construct their knowledge and understanding (Khan and Begum 2012). Therefore, it is worth studying teachers held beliefs about an educational issue and investigating its contributions to their professional development and learning of their students.

In spite of long-time historical usage of portfolio in other parts of the world, it has been introduced in Ethiopia over the past few years where primary schools in Ethiopia are at the forefront in implementing it compared to secondary and higher education. Currently, portfolio has become a much promoted tool in the Ethiopian primary schools as part of teachers' continuous professional development practice. Given the widespread use of portfolio development in teacher education and its reported benefits by researchers, conducting a research study to scrutinize its implementation and contributions to teachers' professional development and students' learning will add valuable recommendations to the local literature. Moreover, there is a dearth of evidence that shows its status of implementation, its contributions to teachers' professional development and students' learning in Ethiopia. Hence, one of the reasons that initiated this study is to fill this gap in Ethiopian context. Furthermore, from informal discussions we had with teachers during our practicum experiences in schools; teachers seem to practice it as an imposed requirement. In addition, it was felt during our discussion that some teachers see it as something coming from external body to the school than considering it as a tool instrumental for their professional development and their students learning. Hence, whether teachers' portfolio practice is clearly aligned with the ideals of their professional development or not needs support of empirical evidence. Therefore, the very purposes of this study are to see the implementation of portfolio and assess teachers' belief of its contributions to their professional development and their students' learning. Accordingly, this study intends to address the following research questions:

1. What is the status of portfolio implementation at primary schools?
2. Do teachers believe use of portfolio contributes to their professional development and their students' learning?
3. Do teachers' beliefs about the contribution of portfolio to their professional development and their students' learning affect the level of its implementation?

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This research is based on both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

2.2 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The population of the study was 503 teachers in 13 primary schools in Bahir Dar town in Amhara National

Regional State, Northern Ethiopia. Of these, 6 schools were randomly selected and among 249 teachers in the selected primary schools, 162 were selected using stratified random sampling. In addition, 3 mentors and 6 experienced and actively engaged teachers in continuous professional development practice of the schools were selected purposely based on suggestions of mentors and supervisors for interview.

2.3 Data Gathering Tools and Analysis

Questionnaire and interview were employed to collect data. The questionnaire had 45 items in three sections in a 4 point scale: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). To collect accurate data, the questionnaire was subjected to pilot test and 0.76 Cronbach alpha index of reliability was found. Among the distributed questionnaires, 148 questionnaires were found complete for analysis while 14 questionnaires were excluded as they were found incomplete for analysis. And, the return rate was 91%. Semi-structured interview was made with selected experienced teachers and facilitators. After relevant data were gathered from all sources, questionnaire data were analyzed using one sample t-test, Pearson correlations coefficient and multiple regression analysis. The qualitative data on the other hand were analyzed using categories developed in line with the research questions to be answered.

3. Results and discussion

Quantitative results are presented in table showing the results of teachers' beliefs of portfolio contribution to their professional development and their students learning, status of portfolio implementation, correlations among variables and the effects of independent variables on the dependent variable (teachers' beliefs of portfolio on their professional development and their students learning on level of its implementation). The qualitative data collected from interview were made to supplement the quantitative results in line with the research the research questions.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and t-test for teachers' beliefs of the contribution of portfolio to their professional development (n=148)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Expected Mean</i>	<i>Actual Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Contribution of portfolio for professional development	37.500	42.845	3.207	20.277	147	0.000

The results from one sample t-test showed that teachers beliefs about the contribution of portfolio for professional development is significantly above the expected ($t= 20.277$ at $\alpha=0.000$). This revealed that teachers believed portfolio contributes to their professional development. Previous researches also illustrated similar results on how portfolios can support teachers' professional development. For instance, Grant & Dornan (2001) in Austin, Marini, & Desroches (2005), King (1990), Lyons (1998) and Darling-Hamond & Bransford (2005) confirmed that portfolio provides the teacher with a focus for professional development, self-awareness and insight to examine their thoughts and emotional responses to professional experiences and offers a series of evidence of their continuous professional development activities. The interview results also showed similar findings. For instance, a teacher asked whether he believes portfolio contributed to his professional development stated:

When I compare with my earlier experiences, I am improving my teaching though it might not be to the standard and am not producing the kind of portfolio expected, but it is better than my previous experiences as it helps me engage in reflection and taking actions based on what I have reflected.

Previous research results also showed that when teachers are made to develop teaching portfolios, they will be engaged in active learning that ultimately lead them to personal reflection and knowledge construction (Liu 2009). In line with this, another teacher reflected:

The implementation of portfolio is entangled with many problems but now we are getting used to it and it is getting better. In addition, as the society and the schools are changing from time to time when we solve one problem another comes and we need to find solution to that and it continues. For this purpose, portfolio helps me take actions on my day-to-day activities and thereby update myself through reflection.

Another teacher reflected his view stressing the importance of support for the successful development of teachers through portfolio.

If coupled with appropriate support, it is an important tool for a teacher. I strongly believe that I should continue working on it because it helps me to be better teacher by identifying my strengths and weaknesses.

From the teachers' ideas, they do believe that portfolio helps them identify their instructional gaps and improve them by taking relevant actions. Similar findings have shown that portfolio is effective way of recording

teachers' understandings, learning, reflections, achievements, and interest as it plays a major role in identifying the gap between learning and practice. Portfolios also help teachers draw a career map, develop a philosophy and reflect to fill the gap between learning and teaching (Khan and Begum 2012). Similar view was reflected despite the teacher reflects problems in attitude and its implementation.

It is good if teachers work on their portfolios but it would have been even better if we could know more about its preparations and get continuous support. But, what we [teachers] are doing lacks understanding. There are a lot of confusions on its preparation. Besides, it is something we do when we hear rumours of supervisor arrivals at our school.

Another teacher from another school reflected:

I believe that portfolio can enhance my profession. As far as I am in teaching, I will not stop working on portfolio. I do consider it as part and parcel of continuous professional development and a means through which I see and improve myself, and help others.

Earlier findings also showed that when teachers are developing portfolio, they become more capable of solving problems related to their teaching practice (Doty 2001) and provides a concrete sequence of documents paper-trail of on-going learning to the least (Grant & Dornan 2001 in Austin, Marini, & Desroches 2005). Similarly, it was found out that portfolio development had a positive impact on teachers' understanding, attitude and confidence on their profession (Liu 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005).

Another mentor underscored that portfolio should not be seen as an option for teachers.

Portfolio is not something we choose. It is a must for every teacher. Because of portfolio, I have learnt how to organize my activities, to reflect on my actions and to create new ways of doing things.

The mentor teacher underscored that developing portfolio for a teacher is mandatory as it helps teachers organize their activities and create new opportunities for doing their jobs. Similarly, Khan and Begum (2012) in their research asserted that portfolio provides an opportunity to compare one's previous and existing learning and gauges the growth and learning in terms of understanding about a particular issue. Another teacher reflected the contribution portfolio has on his professional development by tracing examples from his experiences.

It is important for one's professional development. During the process, I get feedback from colleagues and students, and identify my weaknesses. For instance, I had problem of implementing different methodologies in my teaching and am gradually overcoming my problems because of recorded evidence in my portfolio. I always go back to see myself and identify my problems.

As can be seen from the above reflections, teachers unequivocally expressed their belief of portfolio's contribution to their professional development which coincides with the quantitative results indicated in table 1 despite some reservations on the success of its implementation.

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and t-test for teachers' beliefs about the contribution of portfolio for students learning (n=148)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Expected Mean</i>	<i>Actual Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Portfolio contribution for students' learning	25.000	27.804	2.062	16.540	147	0.000

As it can be seen from Table 2, teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for students learning is significantly higher than expected ($t= 16.540$ at $\alpha=0.000$). This indicated that teachers believed portfolio has a role in promoting students' learning. Following are the teachers' beliefs expressed during interview. One teacher stated:

I believe portfolio can enhance my students learning. I usually keep records of my students' behavior to improve barriers to their learning. For instance, if there are low achieving students in my class, I record their progresses in my portfolio and reflect on how their results could be improved and so on.

Another teacher reflected in a similar way and stated:

It is an ideal means through which I organize the gaps on my part and on the part of learners and the school, and plan how to improve my teaching and my students learning.

Corroborating the above idea, another teacher also reflects that portfolio enabled her to identify the weaknesses and problems of her students.

In the process of portfolio, I critically observe things like students' behavior and what they do in my classroom. I identify problems and conduct action research to create better classroom and improve the teaching learning process which in turn brings about improvement in my school.

Similarly, Yoon, Duncan, Lee and Shapley (2008), in their logic model, asserted professional development affects student achievement through three steps. First, professional development enhances teacher knowledge,

skills, and motivation. Second, better knowledge, skills, and motivation improve classroom teaching. Third, improved teaching raises student achievement. According to their finding, if one link is weak or missing, better student learning cannot be expected. Similarly, a mentor teacher asserted that portfolio is a means to follow up the conditions of students. Hence, it is possible to deduce from both the quantitative and interview results that teachers believe portfolio contributes to their students learning. Some of the teachers also repeatedly mentioned that if they get the opportunity and support of developing portfolio their professional development and students learning will be enhanced.

Table 3: Means, standard deviation and t-test for level of portfolio implementation (n=148)

Variable	Expected Mean	Actual Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Level of portfolio implementation	50.000	48.135	5.150	-4.405	147	0.000

As it can be seen from table 3, implementation of portfolio was significantly lower than the expected ($t = -4.405$ at $\alpha = 0.000$). This shows that teachers didn't implement portfolio to the required level.

Teachers were also made to reflect on the status of implementation of portfolio. Following are interview extracts from teachers. For instance, one of the teachers reflected:

We [teachers] are not doing well on our portfolios as most of us are busy and are poor time management. Doing portfolio requires to be inquisitive, critical observer and following up students' progress and identifying their problems. It requires discussing students' problems with parents. Addressing all these issues is tiresome for me as a teacher as I am supposed to teach 7-8 hours per day.

When asked to mention the barriers for the successful implementation of portfolio, a mentor teacher mentioned:

One of the major problems we are facing is attitudinal problem. Some teachers still think that doing portfolio is killing their time; they are heard arguing that portfolio has nothing to do with improving their teaching performance. Moreover, preparing portfolio requires working with colleagues, reading different books, etc. which needs time. Teachers always complain about lack of time for preparing portfolios. These and other problems hinder the proper implementation of portfolio. In general, I can say that the status of its implementation is very poor.

Another teacher mentioned lack of continued guidance and planning on the part of the school management and she stated:

It is not pre-planned and is not supported by continuous follow up. It is like a campaign, it sometimes appears to be a hot agendum and it transpires throughout the school and some other time nobody talks about it. Hence, from my experience, I do not think it is being implemented properly.

On the other hand, some of the teachers have reflected the existence of lack of clarity and knowledge among mentors and supervisors who are assigned to provide support. For instance, one of the teachers reflected:

The supervisors and mentors assigned to support the process of portfolio preparation were selected from among the teachers and do not have relevant training and education on teacher development. Moreover, the trainings do not solve our problems as they are not comprehensive and are given only once or twice a year.

In general, the major factors hindering the successful implementation of portfolio that were repeatedly mentioned during teachers' interview include: lack of time because of too much workload, lack of continuous and professional-led training, inconsistency of formats that created confusions, lack of clear conception, lack of ownership and attitudinal problems. From the interview results, teachers' voices seem to indicate their commitment to execute portfolio as part of their professional development endeavours though there are many factors that hinder their practices. While teachers were asked to reflect on the status of portfolio implementation, they were hastily stating the challenges facing their practice. In general, the status of implementation of portfolio seems inadequate as indicated from both the quantitative (indicated in table 3) and qualitative results.

Table 4: Means, standard deviations and Pearson correlation coefficients for teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for professional development and students' learning, and level portfolio implementation (n=148)

Variable	Means	Std. Deviation	Correlation Coefficients	
			1	2
Teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for their professional development (1)	42.845	3.207		
Teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for students' learning (2)	27.804	2.062	.201*	
Level of portfolio implementation (3)	48.135	5.150	.384**	.303**

p<0.05*, p<0.01**

The results from correlation analysis showed teachers' beliefs about the contribution of portfolio for their professional development and students' learning was positively and significantly related with implementation of portfolio ($r = 0.384$ at $\alpha = 0.01$ and $r = 0.303$ at $\alpha = 0.01$ respectively). The correlation between teachers' beliefs about the contribution of portfolio for professional development and teachers' beliefs about the role of portfolio in promoting students' learning was also positive and significant ($r = 0.201$ at $\alpha = 0.05$). The correlational analysis showed that teachers' belief about the contribution of portfolio for teachers' professional development was significantly and positively related with implementation of portfolio. That is, teachers who reported high level of belief about the contribution of portfolio for their professional development tended to have high level of portfolio implementation. The relationship of teachers' belief about the contribution of portfolio for students' learning with the level of portfolio implementation was found to be strong and positive. That means teachers who reported high level of belief about the contribution of portfolio for students' learning, tended to report high level of portfolio implementation. The correlation between teachers' belief about the contribution of portfolio for teachers' professional development and teachers' beliefs about the role of portfolio in students' learning was statistically significant. That is, teachers who rated high level of belief about the contribution of portfolio for teachers' professional development also tended to rate high level of belief about its importance for students' learning. Previous studies also revealed that teachers were satisfied with the portfolio development and also believed that portfolio enabled them to document their teaching in an authentic setting and to bring in the context of their own classrooms in a way that no other form of assessment can (Weshah 2010).

Table 5: Regression coefficients and multiple regression values for teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for teachers' professional development and students' learning (n = 148)

Variables	Beta	t-value	P
Teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for their professional development	0.337	4.444	0.000
Teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for students' learning	0.236	3.109	0.002
Overall $R = 0.448$, $R^2 = 0.201$, $F(20.057, 365.478) = 18.222$, $p = 0.000$			

As can be seen from Table 5, teachers' beliefs about contribution of portfolio for their professional development was found to significantly predict level of portfolio implementation ($\beta = 0.337$, $t = 4.444$, $P = 0.000$). Teachers' belief about contribution of portfolio for students' learning ($\beta = 0.236$, $t = 3.109$, $P = 0.002$) was also found to significantly predict level of portfolio implementation. The joint contribution of these two independent variables treated in the study to the dependent variable (level of portfolio implementation) was 20.10% ($R = 0.448$, $F(20.057, 365.478) = 18.222$, $p < 0.000$). As evident from table 5, teachers' belief of the contribution of portfolio was found to predict their level of implementation despite the level of implementation of portfolio on ground was below the expected. This shows that though teachers believed portfolio's contribution to their students learning, having strong belief may not guarantee for the successful implementation of innovations in teacher education unless teachers get conducive and supportive environment in their work settings. In this regard, teachers' lack of time to work on their portfolio as they are supposed to teach more than seven hours per day, the sub-standard formats provided by the trainers and mentors which created them confusions as to which to follow, lack of teachers' skills on portfolio preparations and organization, and lack of series professional led training were among the major factors teachers have reported for the low level of implementation despite their strong beliefs of portfolio contributions to their professional development and their students' learning.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

The study found out implementation of portfolio in primary schools was not to the required level. Nonetheless, in contrast to their implementation, teachers believed that use of portfolio in their day-to-day activities contributes to their professional development and their students' learning. Teachers' belief about the contribution of portfolio for their students' learning was positively and significantly correlated with the level of portfolio implementation. The correlation between teachers' beliefs about the contribution of portfolio for teachers' professional development and teachers' beliefs about the role of portfolio in promoting students' learning was also positive and significant. The regression analysis also indicated that teachers' belief about contribution of portfolio for their professional development and their students' learning was found to significantly predict level of portfolio implementation. The study also identified major challenges where teachers attributed to the failure of implementation of portfolio. These include lack of time, lack of continuous and professional led training, inconsistency of formats, lack of ownership and attitudinal problems. Therefore, from the results obtained, there is a degree of agreement among teachers that portfolio has importance to their professional development and their students' learning though its implementation was found below expected. Hence, it should be noted that the presence of strong held belief may not necessarily guarantee for the successful implementation of innovations or reforms in teacher education. It is then recommended that the schools implementing portfolio as part of teachers' professional development need to train teachers by selecting people who have relevant training in the area of teacher education as a short term plan and they should recruit mentors and supervisors who have direct educational preparation to support and provide relevant training and follow up. As portfolio implementation was found below expected and teachers have attributed for its failure in implementation to various factors, schools need to work hard to solve these problems. For instance, the load of those teachers who are working as mentors should be reduced. Schools need to work towards changing the attitude of teachers to make teachers believe that the owners for their continuous professional development are themselves. Extending other forms of teachers' professional development should also be encouraged so that teachers could have good understanding of other types of portfolios. In addition, supervisors and mentors need to put in place standard criteria where teachers can gauge their own effectiveness. In this regard, self and peer assessment checklists need to be provided to teachers to check the quality of their portfolio. In addition, regular consultations and training programs need to put in place and university school linkage needs to be strengthened. Finally, more research needs to be done on the issue of preparation, organization and evaluation of portfolio as there is still research gap in Ethiopia.

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