

Professionalism and Professional Ethics in Tigray Region

Dr. Gebre Miruts Beyene
Ethiopian Civil Service University

Abstract

Ethics and professionalism are inescapable parts of everyday practice for everyone at any level of civil service hierarchy. Hence, the objective of this journal article is to critically evaluate the Professionalism and Professional Ethics in Tigray Region. For this reason, the relevant data was collected both from primary and secondary data sources. Finally, the factors that impede the implementation of Professionalism and Professional Ethics were identified and the discussion was concluded that regardless of the institutional framework in-place and the establishment of anticorruption institutions, the application of professionalism and professional ethics was highly inhibited by lack of civil service neutrality, lack of district level decentralized anti-corruption institutions at Zones, Woredas and Sub Cities and poor accountability system.

Introduction

As in many literatures, organizations do not change for the sake of change rather they are part of a wider process of development. They are continually forced to adapt to the situation within which they exist and operate. The implementation of CSR needs professional ethics. Many scholars affirmed that, being ethical is not the same as following the law. The law often incorporates ethical standards to which most citizens subscribe. But laws, like feelings, can deviate from what is ethical (Buba, 2009). Professionalism is the hardest way of achieving professional ethics and the implementation of CSRs in developing nations is violated by unethical behaviors.

As indicated in chapter four below, corruption and lack of proper monitoring and evaluation are of the evils of implementing CSR. It was also clearly mentioned that, in small towns and cities of the Tigray region, there was the existence of problems of land and land related corruption, rent seeking mindset of the tax assessors and collectors, failure to implement government policies and strategies as well as inability to take corrective measures and poor monitoring system are of the short comings in most civil service institutions (Tigray complaint hearing process owner annual report, 2012). In addition to this, according to the Federal Anti Corruption Commission annual report (2009), of the corrupt practices taken before the law in Ethiopia, 86% were government employee and 4% were government officials which can affect negatively the effectiveness of CSR implementation.

Hence, the question is why is this takes place and how it is beyond the capacity of the civil service organizations? Therefore, the main objective of this research was to examine the Root Causes of the factors that inhibited the professional ethics in Tigray region. Based on this main objective, the research tried to address the following research questions:

1. How the civil service reform is implemented in Tigray Region?
2. What practical challenges are the civil servants facing in relation to their professional ethics?
3. What are the root causes of the factors that inhibit the professional ethics of the civil servant?

The overall objective of reforming the civil service is to improve the capacity of the public sectors. As a result, concerning to the implication of the investigation, the government direction cannot be conversed without the ethical behavior of its professional civil servants. This is because; professional civil servants are expected to serve their citizens accordingly. Hence, this study was an attempt to contribute towards filling the gaps in professional ethics in civil service to promote the implementation of CSR. Methodologically, the study was conducted on a case study method and pertinent data was collected both from primary and secondary data sources.

Concepts of Professionalism and Professional Ethics

Ethics and Professionalism

The civil service, which is the cornerstone to implement the CSR and other governmental issues, should have to be guided by merit based systems. Ethics and professionalism are inescapable parts of everyday practice for everyone at any level of civil service hierarchy. Professionalism as stated in United Nation (2000) is the overall value that encompasses all other values that guide the public services. As a result, it includes neutrality, loyalty, transparency, punctuality, effectiveness, fairness, and other values that may be specific to the public services of individual countries. However, ethics is a broad norm that delineates how public servants act as agents of the state and as members of an established profession in carrying out their official duties (Buba, 2009).

A civil service dedicated to professionalism and ethics is more likely to attain its goals if it has in place an ethical infrastructure. To promote professionalism, a career system based on the merit principle that can do reasonably and neutral recruitment and promotion of civil servants must be in place. This structure should be

accompanied by a clear civil service law that outlines the legal rights and responsibilities of civil servant (Martin and Thompson, 2006). Furthermore, well-articulated human resource policies in terms of appropriate remuneration, capacity development opportunities, disciplinary procedures, inter alia, should be enforced and implemented. Ethics can also be promoted by preventing, detecting and reporting, investigating, prosecuting and enforcing the appropriate laws against misconduct. Civil service performance and integrity are an integral part of the implementation of CSR (United Nation, 2000).

The legal profession has developed over the centuries to meet a public need for legal services on a professional basis. Traditionally, this has involved the provision of advice and representation to protect or advance the rights, liberties and property of a client by a trusted adviser with whom the client has a personal relationship and whose integrity, competence and loyalty are assured (The American Political Science Association, 2008).

Hence, in order to satisfy this need for legal services adequately; lawyers and the quality of service they provide must command the confidence and respect of the public. This can only be achieved if lawyers establish and maintain a reputation for both integrity and high standards of legal skill and care. The lawyers of many countries in the world, despite differences in their legal systems, practices, procedures and customs, have all imposed upon themselves substantially the same basic standards. Those standards invariably place their main emphasis on integrity and competence (Carr, 2005).

Ethics and Corruption

Corruption is the malevolence of implementing the CSR because as public choice theorist stated, civil servants lack service mentality and are becoming more interested in serving themselves than the public. United Nation (2000) explains the term Ethics as an aspiration approach focusing on the prevention of illegal or immoral behavior. However, Corruption is the misuse of public office for private gain and it involves the improper and unlawful behavior of both politicians and civil servants, whose positions created opportunities for diversion of money and assets from government to them and their partner in crime by ignoring as corruption distorts government performance and economic development (Martin and Thompson, 2006). Under this scenario, Philip (2002) confirms that:

.....public officials violate the rules and norms of conduct to benefit third party who gains privileged access to goods and services. As a result, officials rewarded for what they did/failed to do and the public interest is harmed. This includes activities of illegal exchange leading to personal enrichment, appointment or promotion of civil servants. In the pursuit of these benefits, public officials provide individual benefactors and organized interest groups with privileged access to public contracts and administrative support for requested policies. What might prevent such activities is carefully designed set of incentives that establish constraints on illegal behavior, facilitate transparency in interactions of bureaucrats with the public, and reward professional integrity.

Corruption is a systematic and multi-dimensional approach caused by policies, programs and activities that are poorly coordinated and managed, inadequate civil servants pay and lack of accountability and moreover the poor anti-corruption system in most developing countries aggravate the situation (Transparency International, 2011). Combating corruption begins with better systems, more competition, transparency and accountability in government. Institutions based on sound ethical principles are necessary preconditions for stable implementation of CSR. Today, citizens everywhere demands greater probity of government officials since technology and global market brings corruption more quickly to the eyes of the public (ibid).

Gray, Hellman and Ryterman (2002) also asserted that, corruption can be prevented by taking the remedial action on conflict-of-interest, by introducing code of ethics/conduct and promulgation of overall anti-corruption initiatives. Besides these measures, citizen's access to information from public sectors, the use of whistle blowers and above all the clear separation of powers must be in place to implement government polices as well as the CSRs effectively.

Result and Discussion

Professional Ethics: As a Strategy to Implement CSR

In Ethiopia as well as Tigray Region, Ethics is one of the five major CSR sub programs. The Ethics program was initiated to establish and ensure the cultivation of Ethical professional policy implementers in civil service organizations. In the contemporary world today, professional Ethics has become an important matter of discourse for governments. This dominant thinking according to Gilman (2005) comes with the perception that standards in public interests are in decline and the costs of misconduct on public resources are unacceptably high. Hence, in Tigray Regional State there is a government movement to maintain public trust and integrity in civil service organizations to promote better governance, improve service and democracy. The need to institutionalize professional Ethics as a best mechanism to fight against corruption was fully recognized by the Tigray regional

government leading to the inclusion of the Ethics component in the CSR program. Of course, this was also a National directive.

In Tigray civil service institutions, there are politically appointed top management officials whose function it is to formulate regional policies and to persuade decision-making processes. The foundation of the Ethics sub reform program in Tigray region was therefore basically to establish a regional body on Ethics to coordinate Ethics infrastructures and regulate standards of Ethical conduct, to address the issue of corruption, to develop code of Ethics that sets out the framework within which all civil servants work and the core values and standards they are expected to uphold, among others (Tigray CSR main document, 2004).

According to the NPM theory, to ensure professional Ethics in civil service organizations, the codes of conduct require to write them, to interpret them, to educate civil servants about them, to enforce them and to assess them. This is because the real intention behind the codes of conduct is to pledge the service mentality of civil servants. However, printing a code of conduct and placing it on a wall is not accomplishment. During the survey, civil servants were consulted to share their opinion on the service mentality of the civil servants in the study area. Figure 1 summarizes the replay.

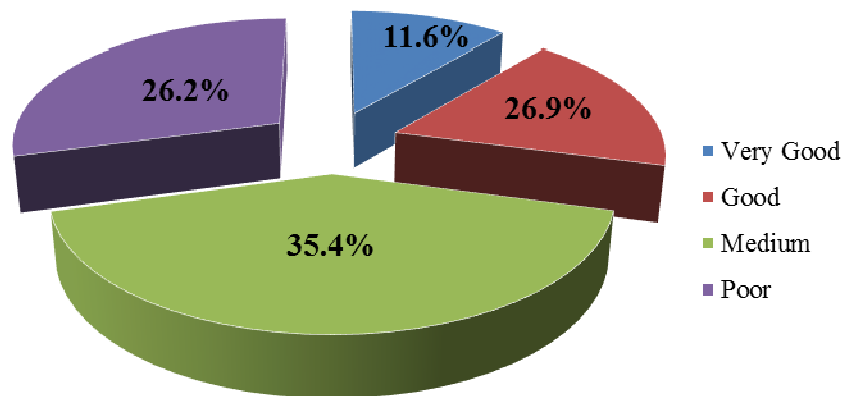


Figure 1: *Service Mentality in the Civil Service*, Source: *Field Survey, 20013/14*

According to AH Consulting, (2010) BPR was introduced in 2003 as part of the CSR program and applied across civil service organizations nationally. Business process reengineering is the fundamental rethinking and radical redesigning of business processes (Hammer and Champy, 1996). Hence, the introduction of this dominant thinking in Ethiopia was to realize a dramatic improvement in performance based on cost, quality, service and speed.

Figure 1 recaps the service mentality of civil servants in Tigray and as shown there, the result is not as dynamic as expected. Though civil servants commitment to implement the Ethics sub reform was a prerequisite for the effectiveness of CSR and public service delivery, nonetheless, in Tigray Region many of the respondents (35.4%) replied that the direct impact on the daily practice of public service values and ethical standards were medium. A significant number (26.2%) of the participants also indicated that the Tigray civil servants service mentality was poor.

As stated in the NPM model, the Ethical principles have to be written and publicized. One target was to publicize in all sample *Woredas* and sub-cities, by posting the principles of codes of conduct like honesty, loyalty, transparency, confidentiality, integrity, accountability, serving the public interest, exercising legitimate authority, impartiality, respecting the law, responsiveness, and playing exemplary role, among other. Nevertheless, 11.6% and 26.9% of survey respondents valued the civil servants service mentality was very good and good, respectively in Tigray.

Similarly, civil servant contributors were also requested to share their observation on how the codes of conduct are used to ensure professional Ethics. Therefore, some of the respondents argue that since the inception of the CSR program in Tigray Region, a great deal has been improved in professional ethics. Especially during the commencement of BPR execution, everybody was pleased by the way the professionals delivered service to the public. Others also discussed the civil servants commitment to serve the public with speed and quality was healthy, and their attitude to serve the public rather than being served had improved.

However, the deep-rooted politicization and the poor performance appraisal system negatively affected the service mentality of the civil servants. Though the Tigray civil servants proclamation clearly stated that, ethical professionals should be loyal to the constitution and are answerable to the public. Partisan politics that discriminated in promotions of civil servants contributed to the low service mentality and poor professional commitment in the civil service.

An interview and focus group discussion were held with civil servants and top officials at zone and bureau levels about the willingness and service mentality and professional ethics of the civil servant in Tigray. During the discussion, most of the civil servant respondents appreciated the totality of civil servants service provision increment through time. The steady improvements made by the civil servants were appreciated by the officials. But, a significant number of the civil servant contributors discussed that, to improve the service mentality of the civil servant dramatically, there is a need for leadership support because effective leadership inspires respect.

In the absence of effective leadership from the top, any attempt to change organizations in a climate of systemic corruption will be bound to fail. The *Woreda* and sub-city officials and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a working environment based on mutual respect. However, most of the respondents reflected that most of the *Woreda*/sub-city officials are incapable and engaged in their self-interest maximization. Many of the civil service managers and supervisors are not amenable to accept the views and opinions of the civil servants. They do not resolve issues or solve problems nor are they responsibly guiding and motivating their staff. Some of the contributors also argued that some officials were not promoting the development agenda of the region and consequently there are also civil servants who practically rob public assets to satisfy their personal interest.

Besides, many of the civil service managers and supervisors are not as such open to accept the views and opinions of the civil servants, they are not providers of problem solving supports and they were also not responsibly guiding and motivating their staffs. Some of the contributors were also argued that, some officials are not promoting the development agenda of the region and consequently there are also civil servants that practice robbing public asset to fulfill their self interest.

As a professional ethics, civil servants both at rural *Woredas* and urban centers are supposed to work in the public interest rather than becoming self-interested. The research believes that the service mentality of the service providers at any level of government hierarchy should conceded with moral ethics, the researcher tried to present the Urban-Rural response in comparison.

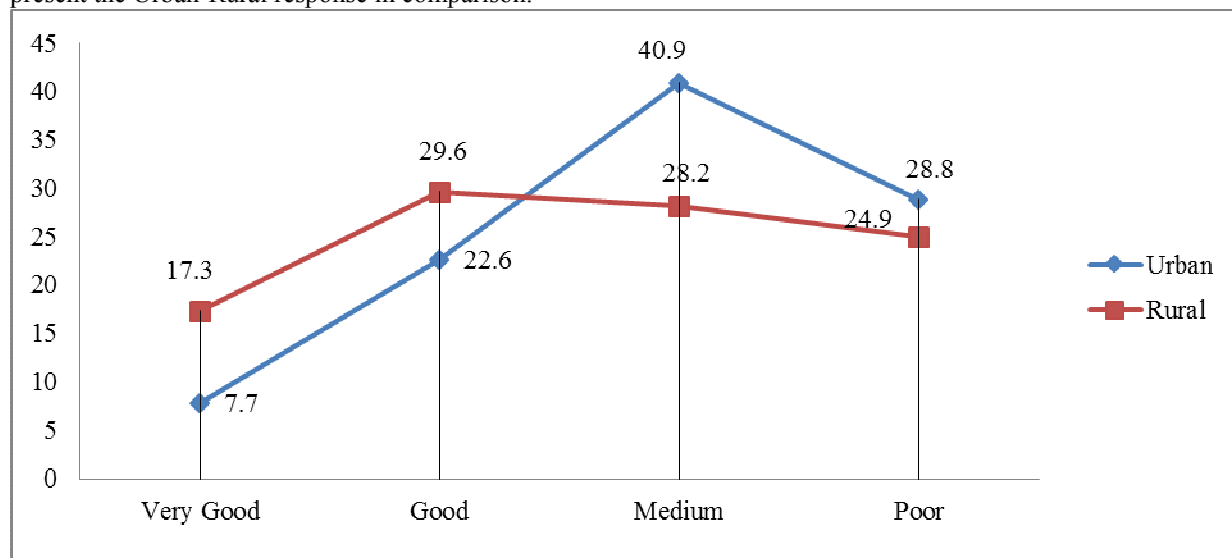


Figure 2: Service Mentality in Comparison to Urban-Rural Sectors

Source: Field Survey, 2013/14

As indicated in figure 2 above, 46.9% of the sample civil servant respondents at rural *Woredas* were appreciated the goodness of service mentality in the civil service and 28.2% of them were also replied as it was medium. In the contrary, 24.9% of the contributors indicated the service mentality in the civil service of the study area was poor. However, most of the civil servant respondents (40.9%) at urban centers responded that the service mentality in the civil service was medium and 30.3% of them answered as it was good. However, 28.8% of the civil servant asserted that the service mentality was poor. When compared the civil servants service mentality, in both cases, it was better in rural areas then in urban centers.

Corruption: The Evil of CSR Implementation Strategy

In many instances, corruption is of malevolence of the CSR implementation. According to Transparency International (2011), corrupt practice in the public sector deteriorates democratic institutions, encourages systematized crime and destabilizes public services. Likewise, UN (2002) also asserted that, the institution building agenda previously was focused on the formation and development of organizations and the technical skills required to operate them.

However, in many circumstances, the outcome was not impressive for the reasons that sub cultural and conventional outlooks and behaviors that hold-up or ignored corruption was merely carried forward into the new institutions. Nevertheless, it is now accepted that reforms must deal not only with institutions but also with individuals who work in those institutions. The same document also revealed leadership that promote and apply integrity, transparency, accountability, focus on objectives as well as results, and the broad-spectrum acceptance of a mind-set, attitude and customs, which favor integrity over corruption are needed.

Taking into consideration what corruption possibly can do if left unchecked, the Government of Ethiopia established the Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission in 2001 by allowing regional governments to setup their own Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commissions in accordance with their own constitutional jurisdictions (Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission annual report, 2009-2010). It was after the preface of the ongoing CSR program that the Tigray Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission were established as an independent institution in 2011.

This depicts that the Ethiopian government in general and that of Tigray's in particular are committed to fighting corruption and unethical practices. During the survey, participants were asked about their observation whether there was some corrupt practice in the civil service organization or not. Table 1 recaps the issue.

Table 1a: Sex * Do you think that there is some corrupt practice in the civil service organizations of your Woreda/sub city? Cross-tabulation

			Corrupt practice in civil service organizations			
			Yes	No	I Don't Know	Total
Sex	Male	Count	164	21	7	192
		% within Sex	85.4%	10.9%	3.6%	100.0%
	Female	Count	84	15	3	102
		% within Sex	82.4%	14.7%	2.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	248	36	10	294
		% within Sex	84.4%	12.2%	3.4%	100.0%

Table 1b:
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.944 ^a	2	.624
Likelihood Ratio	.926	2	.629
N of Valid Cases	294		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.47.

Source: *Field Survey, 2013/14*

In Tigray region, there is a legal framework established for disclosure and registration of assets. The law forces the politically appointed officials and senior civil servants to disclose and register their assets. This shows to what extent the regional government is committed to struggle against corrupt practices. However, as Transparency International (2008) justified, corrupt practices, in one form or another, has been found in almost all human societies throughout history. The persistence of corrupt practices all over human history forced governments and policymakers to think about it as an unavoidable part of human interaction.

For this reason, governments everywhere including the Ethiopian governments have tried to design effective organizational arrangements and undertaken public policy measures that can reduce corruption in public services and its harmful effects on their socioeconomic and political systems. Unfortunately, in several regions of Ethiopia as well as in Tigray Region, corrupt practices remained as the main obstacle to implementing the CSR programs and the regional sociopolitical and economic development. Table 1 verifies this where 84.4% of the respondents replied yes confirming that there were some corrupt practices in their organizations. Only 12.2% answered that there were no corrupt practices in their *Woreda* and sub-city.

The Chi-Square test result also illustrates that, the Pearson Chi-Square value of .94, with significance value (P-value) of .624 which is >0.05. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis as it is statistically insignificant because there were some corrupt practices in civil service organizations of the study area. There was no gender differentiation in the belief that corrupt practices exist in civil service organizations.

During their discussion when sharing their opinion about corrupt practice, some participants stated the systematic approaches of corrupt practices. In Tigray, there were some clear corrupt practices in the civil service that were not operated in the open but through hidden networks with officials that made it difficult to bring the matter to the law. As an indicator, the respondents put that some civil servants and public officials are living beyond their level of income in furnished houses with modern cars and some have even become contractors operating with millions of Birr.

Interviewees and focus-group discussants were passionate about expressing their belief the existence of

obvious symptoms of corrupt practices. Participants believe that the corrupt practices begin from the maladministration of the merit-based HRM. In the study area, office politics operated through partisan domination where offices were full of nepotism in promoting and/or appointing someone to higher position. For that reason, the politicized civil service system was not only difficult to the nonpartisan employees but also to the party loyalists. Due to lack of competitive practices, even loyalists may not get a fair shake when it comes to plum appointments. Lack of institutional autonomy gives much room to corrupt practices. Therefore, civil service de-politicization is one of the key elements in the fight against corrupt practices. Some participants reflected upon the futility of attempts to correct such corrupt practices underscoring that even when blatant abusers are dismissed, those who replace them continue with the same corrupt behavior.

One participant made an astute observation in saying, *“I think it is not only from the immoral human behavior that corruption becomes a common practice but the office Bench Sofa and Arm Chair there may have some stimulating factor because I saw many people coming to an office and practicing in wrong doings”*. The rationale behind the participant’s discussion indicates that, in Tigray region, there was poor administrative oversight at the *Woredas* and Sub-cities.

Decentralized Anti-Corruption Institution: As an Approach against Corruption

The global discourse on corruption focuses on its immorality. According to Polidano (2001), countries throughout the globe specially developing nations have tried to reform continually their administrative systems since the late 1980s. Similarly, as part of the larger administrative reform, the Ethiopian government intentionally introduced Ethics sub reform in to its CSR program. After the inclusion of this sub program as an approach against corruption, the Ethics and Anticorruption Commission was established in 2001 and cascaded to all regional governments. Hence, the Tigray regional government had instituted Ethics and Anticorruption Commission as an independent institution since 2011.

In relation to this, during the survey, respondents were asked to share their opinion on the extent to which the anti-corruption institution is decentralized in Tigray Region. Almost all of them replied that, structurally, the ethics and anti-corruption institution is limited to the regional level only. However, at *Woreda* and Sub-city levels, there are whistle blowers who report wrongdoings and violations of law helping the fight against corrupt practices. Regardless of the earnest efforts exerted, the institutionalization of independent Ethics and Anticorruption institutions at the lower tier of government (at Zones, *Woredas* and Sub Cities) remains unresolved. The establishment of district level independent Anticorruption institutions helps to fight against corrupt practices. The public is also ready to work with government and collaborate against this evil.

In Tigray National Regional State, there is clearly stated guiding principle on how and when to establish Ethics and Anticorruption institutions at district levels. The Ethics and Anticorruption Commission Proclamation No. 189/2011 Article 8 allows the establishment of branch offices at Zone and *Woreda* if necessary. Nevertheless, the regional government charged to decentralize the Anticorruption institutions to district levels, appears to prefer the use of whistleblowers at district levels. Whistleblowers, according to Amundsen and Andrade (2009), are entities that determine and report wrongdoings, refuse to participate in workplace misconduct, testify at legal proceedings and provide evidence of offense to the media.

However in Tigray Region, the contributors suggested that whistleblowers were not contributing much to the reduction of corrupt practices, as they are understood to serve the interest of officers by serving as informants. This is so because whistleblowers are appointed by and report to their political masters and are accountable to *Woreda* and sub-city administrators, not to the commission directly. While they are expected to refuse to participate in organizational wrongdoings, the opposite is observed in Tigray. According to many of the respondents when whistleblower’s boss is involved in corruption they report the act, but rather tolerate it. Obviously, this is understandable as their own career could be on the line if they reported such acts. Instituting independent Ethics and Anticorruption institution could help in addition to clear separation of powers at the *Woredas* and Sub-cities.

Professional Accountability: As a Strategy to Implement the CSR Programs

The strategic implementation of CSR needs professional ethics at the center and public officials who are accountable for what they do. Civil servants and public officials as asserted by Transparency International (2008) are expected to uphold and strengthen public trust and confidence in government by indicating the maximum standards of professional competency, efficiency and effectiveness to preserve the constitutional laws and looking for public service advancement.

According to the NPM doctrine, accountability is an obligation to answer for the fulfillment of assigned and accepted duties within the framework of the authority and resources provided. The NPM model also justifies the move from process oriented accountability to results oriented accountability. The National Ethics sub reform program and that of Tigray was a deliberate action to ensure good governance by holding the civil servants accountable for assigned responsibilities. In doing this, the Tigray regional government in its Civil Servants

Proclamation No.189/2011 under Article 63 determined the disciplinary penal against misconducts.

The objectives of the Tigray civil servants disciplinary penalty was to rehabilitate a delinquent civil servant that he/she can learn from his/her mistakes and become a reliable civil servant or to discharge him/her when he/she becomes recalcitrant (Tigray Civil Servants Proclamation No.189/2011, 2011).

In the same document, Article 67 states that, rigorous disciplinary penalties in the civil service was imposed for “accept or demand bribes, to commit an immoral act at the workplace, to commit an act of theft or breach of trust, to commit an act of misrepresentation or fraudulent act, to inflict damages to the property of the government due to an intentional act or negligence, abuse of power, to commit sexual violence at the workplace and to commit any breach of discipline of equal gravity with the offences specified under this Article.”

The real intention behind this government commitment was to make both civil servants and their officials are accountable to the constitutional laws and the public. With this in mind, respondents were consulted to share their opinions on top of how accountability is ensured in Tigray regional state. Thus, the crosstab table 2 below points up the survey feedback.

Table 2: Sex * How accountability is ensured in the civil service organizations of your Woreda/sub city?

			Accountability in the civil service organizations				
			Civil service disciplinary review	“Gemgam” (evaluation) with serious penalty	“Gemgam” but with tolerable penalty	Always “Gemgam” without serious measure	Total
Sex	Male	Count	52	17	64	59	192
		% within Sex	27.1%	8.9%	33.3%	30.7%	100%
	Female	Count	24	12	39	27	102
		% within Sex	23.5%	11.8%	38.2%	26.5%	100%
Total		Count	76	29	103	86	294
		% within Sex	25.9%	9.9%	35.0%	29.3%	100%

Source: *Field survey, 2013/14*

In the Tigray civil service organizations, the civil service disciplinary review and the principles of Anticorruption were in place to check professional ethics and to penalize corrupt practices. According to Mesfin in Teye (2010), the ethics sub reform program was introduced as part of the CSR to create a working environment value of willingness and ethical conduct to serve and satisfy the needs of citizens, highest concern for the use and upkeep of public property and corruption free utilization of the limited public resources.

However in Tigray Region, the survey result indicates that, there was a corrupt practice in the civil service organizations but making accountable for the miss-user remains hesitant. As demonstrated in table 2 above, 35% of the participants answered, the assurance of accountability in the civil service organizations were violated by “Gemgam” (evaluation) but with tolerable penalty and for that matter a significant number (29.3%) of the respondents also replied that there were always “Gemgam” but without serious measure against the corrupt practices.

By law, there are civil service bindings in Tigray that clearly state direct and rigorous disciplinary penalties for acts of corruption as reviewed against the Anti-corruption laws. Most challenging here is not the process, but rather the absence of rewards for good deeds. For this reason, as can be seen from Table 2, only 25.9% of the participants confirmed the properness of accountability measures and 9.9% of them also answered “Gemgam” (evaluation) and serious penalties were taken to make accountable for malpractice in civil service organizations of the study area.

Similarly, during the respondents discussion on the role of “Gemgam” which was perceived to be without teeth, most participants reported that the system fails mainly because the officials themselves who given the mandate to oversee the process are engaged in corrupt practices and they ignore to take corrective measures against misconducts. According to Public Chios Theory, Politicians and bureaucrats (officials, public/civil servants) are expected to be the major actors or mediators of the public interest.

However, in most cases this is the immoral behavior of manager-subordinate interaction: agents if they are not working to fulfill their self-interest, they may do nothing in the interest of their principal. As shown in the survey results, civil servants promotion in Tigray, irrespective of competency, is assigned on the consent of the official expecting to create a self-serving network to ensure his/her stay in office. Some of respondents indicated that political affiliation has given rise to practices where all involved in rubbing each other shoulders to continue in their respective positions

According to Weist (2003), governments decentralize their civil service not as an end in itself but in seeking of better services to manage public resources efficiently and hold-up extra expected outcomes. But the

Public Chios Theorist argues that public servants are supposed to work in public interest placing into practice government policies and strategies as professionally and successfully as possible. Bureaucrats commonly are self-interested utility maximizers, provoked by remuneration, pre-requisites of the office, patron system and the effortlessness to manage bureaus as is said, *'Everybody's business is nobody's business'*.

The ideal approach of decentralization is: the more devolved the power at district level is, the closer the public service provision would be to the community. Nevertheless, in the absence of appropriate power distance (manager-subordinate relationship), the consequence has disappointed the workforce which intern led to ineffective implementation of CSR in the Region.

Many international literatures illustrated that, public officials are the mandated architect of the ethical principles in the public sectors. As a change army, civil service professionals are also expected to work towards the code of conducts or code of ethics. In relation to this the Ethiopian government and that of Tigray is working on to establish ethical civil to implement the CSR and other government programs.

In doing so, the ethics sub reform program was introduced as a typical component of CSR to create anticorruption and accordingly the codes of ethics. Hence, civil service official were requested to share their opinion about the service mentality of the civil servant and professional codes of conduct. Most of the civil service officials were discussed that the civil servants willingness to deliver public service were increasing and was really important for the effectiveness of the transformation agenda in the region as well as the country.

However, some of the officials were explained that, the total number of civil servant shows incremental through time but the quality rather than its quantity was not attractive. The expectation of public service provision from a large number of professional was not equivalent to its mass and the practice to insure ethical professionals was also militated by the civil servants themselves. If not all, some of them were acquainted with immoral acts specially those who are working in land and land related issues, public procurement and taxation, trade and licenses among others were not free of corrupt practices. Others were also potentially corrupter.

In this case some civil service officials were also engage them self in corrupt practice and they distort the public resource by creating unnecessary networks in civil service organization. Besides, most of the officials were claimed the way accountability is ensured and the non-functionality of the whistleblowers in the civil service organizations. The other problem appreciated by the officials was the absence of district level decentralization at zones and *Woreda*/sub cities level while most resources were invested at districts and many illegal practices were common. Generally, some of the civil service officials share the risk in professional ethics but some were also tried to exclude themselves from the ineffectiveness of ensuring the professional ethics during the implementation of CSR in Tigray.

The Ethiopian district level decentralization provides closer public service to the local community. The CSR as a typical strategy to implement the district level decentralization is also contained the ethics sub reform program to create a relatively corruption free civil service. The Tigray civil servants proclamation on the other hand clearly states that how and when to take corrective measures against miss user. With this in mind, service users were asked to explain how professional ethics was ensured in their *Woreda*/sub city and most of the respondents (33.3%) replied that, most of the time the civil servants disciplinary review was held based on the civil service disciplinary laws and 31.7% of them were rejoined as "Gemgam" were practiced periodically to look into the civil servants performance and if any misuse, there were serious measures against the miss users.

However, 35% of the service user contributors rejected the application of civil service disciplinary laws and the serious penalty against the miss conductors and they sounded there were yes "Gemgams" but was with tolerable and without any serious penalty. The discussion shows us, though with some measure the "Gemgam" rather than the civil service disciplinary laws were a dominant thinking. Here, "Gemgam" does not mean something bad but once the civil codes were in-placed why conference like "Gemgam" was necessary and this can also gives privilege to some dominant groups as well as to the *'talk-attos'* and the all I know peoples. But, while they were right, the minority and the silent groups of the civil servants can be victims of it.

The Practical Challenges of Professional Ethics in Implementing CSR

The Ethiopian civil service reform was designed to ensure adequate public service by professionalizing the civil service. Civil service organizations are the strategic implementers of this dynamic reform. The Tigray regional government initiative to create ethical professionals was seen in the Ethics sub reform program of the region. Professionalizing the civil service and defining codes of conduct to boost a relatively corruption-free civil servant helps to implement effectively the CSR. Ethics and professionalism are inescapable parts of everyday practice for everyone at any level of civil service hierarchy. The Tigray Ethics sub reform program was incorporated with this in mind in the larger CSR. Nevertheless, the practice to ensure professional Ethics in the region was highly affected by lack of civil service neutrality, poor accountability and lack of district level decentralized anti-corruption institutions.

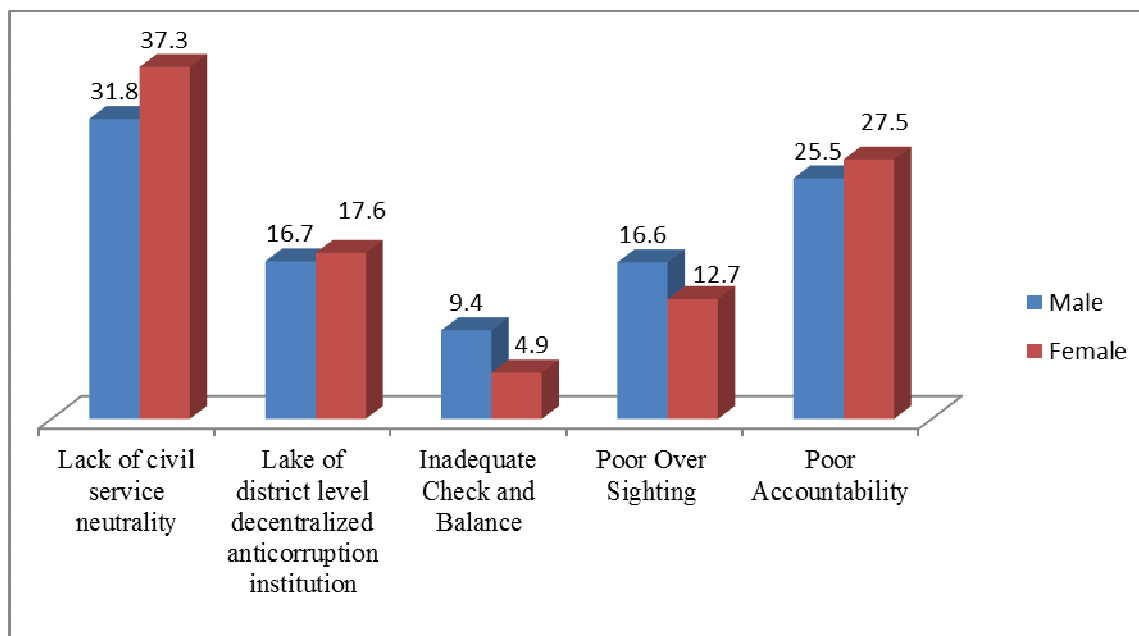
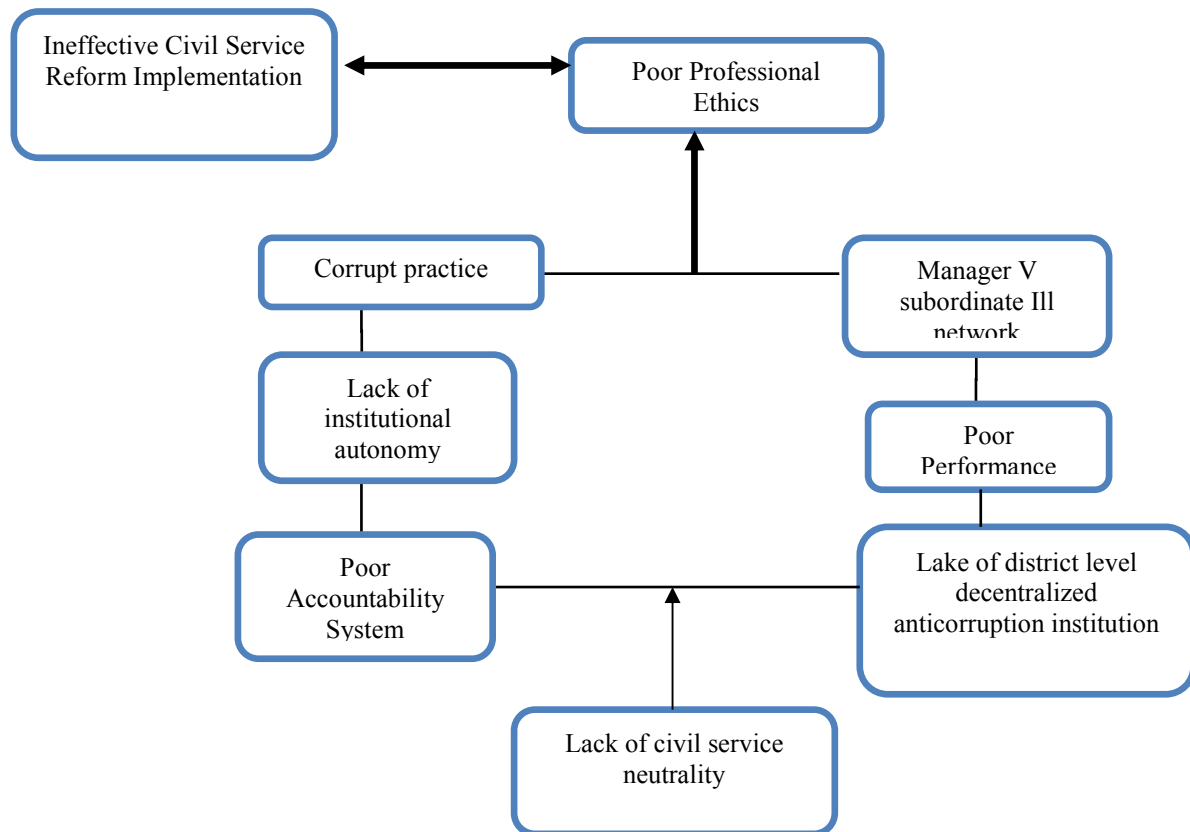


Figure 3: *The Practical challenges of Professional Ethics*
 Source: *Field Survey, 2013/14*

Social science experts argue that civil servants act as agents of the state and as members of an established profession. Governments should delineate their act by the broad norms of Ethical values like neutrality, loyalty, transparency, punctuality, effectiveness, fairness among others and governments themselves must model the behavior. But, as shown in Figure 3, of the stated challenges of professional Ethics, lack of civil service neutrality, poor accountability in the civil service and lack of district level decentralized anticorruption institutions were identified by both male and female contributors as the most practical challenges to ensure professional Ethics in civil service organizations of Tigray region. It is also true that, a politicized and unaccountable civil service organization suffers to realize professionalism and corruption-free civil service during the government program implementation and the CSR in particular.

The Root Causes of Factors that Inhibited the Success of Professional Ethics

The fundamental rethinking of the new public management was an outlook for quality service provision to satisfy the public interest. The thematic area of the CSR in Tigray Region accepts the new discipline of the NPM model. The foundation of the Ethics sub reform program in Tigray Region was therefore basically to create relatively corruption-free civil service organizations. However, the grand professional ethics of the study area was poor. It was poor for many reasons. The Tigray CSR implementation was challenged as a result of the poor professional ethics and corrupt practices. The root causes identified for this reason was lack of civil service neutrality, lack of district level decentralized anti-corruption institutions at *Zones, Woredas* and Sub Cities and it was also due to the poor accountability system.



Source: From the overall discussion of this document

Conclusion

As one of the five major CSR sub programs, Ethics was initiated to establish and ensure the cultivation of ethical professional policy implementers in civil service organizations. Hence, in Tigray Regional State there is a government movement to maintain public trust and integrity in civil service organizations to promote better governance, improve service and democracy. The need to institutionalize professional Ethics as a best mechanism to fight against corruption was fully recognized by the Tigray regional government leading to the inclusion of the Ethics component in the CSR program. The foundation of the Ethics sub reform program in the region was therefore basically to establish a regional body on Ethics to coordinate Ethics infrastructures and regulate standards of Ethical conduct, to address the issue of corruption, to develop code of Ethics that sets out the framework within which all civil servants work and the core values and standards they are expected to uphold, among others.

However, though the ethical principles were written and publicized by posting on every door of every sector offices and regional bureaus, the practice, one could observe ineffectiveness everywhere. Corrupt practices are evident as some civil servants and public officials are seen living beyond their means where they live in lavishly furnished houses, driving expensive cars and involved in projects worth Millions of Birr. The root causes identified for this reason was lack of civil service neutrality, lack of district level decentralized anti-corruption institutions at Zones, *Woredas* and Sub Cities and it was also due to the poor accountability system.

Reference

- AH Consulting, 2010. *Independent assessment of the implementation of the civil service reform program in Ethiopia*. Final report submitted to the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia ministry of Capacity Building. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Babu Dhinesh, S., 2009. *Professional Ethics and human resource*. University of Science press. New Delhi.
- Carr David, 2005. *Professionalism and ethics in teaching*, London and New York
- Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission, 2010. *National Anti-corruption movement annual report*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Gilman, Stuart C. 2005. *Ethics codes and codes of conduct as tools for promoting an ethical and professional public service: comparative successes and lessons*, Prepared for the PREM, the World Bank. Washington, DC
- Gray Cheryl, Hellman Joel and Ryterman Randi, 2002. *Anticorruption in Transition 2 Corruption in Enterprise-*

- State Interactions in Europe and Central Asia*, World Bank
- Hammer, M. nad Champy, J. 1996. *Reengineering the corporation: A Manifesto for Business Revolution*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing. London.
- Martin Saint Denis and Thompson Fred, ed., 2006. *Public Ethics and governance: standards and practices in comparative perspective*. Elsevier. JIA. Amsterdam.
- Philip Mark, ed., 2002. *Political Corruption, Democratization and Reform*. In *Political Corruption in Transition*. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press.
- Polidano Charles, 2001. *Why Civil Service Reform Fails*, Public Policy and Management Working Paper no.16, Institute for Development policy and Management, Manchester in <<http://www.bango.org.bb/Why%20PSR%20Fails.pdf>> [Accessed 16 Nov2011].
- Taye Assefa, 2010. *Digest of Ethiopia's national policies, strategies and programs*. Forum for social study. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- The American Political Science Association, 2008. *A Guide to Professional Ethics in Political Science*, Washington
- Tigray Civil Servants Proclamation, 2011. *Tigray Civil Servants Proclamation189/2011*. Mekelle Tigray
- Tigray Civil Service Reform, 2004. *The Civil Service Reform main document of Tigray national regional state*. Mekelle, Tigray.
- Tigray complaint hearing process owner annual report, 2012. *Regional Complaint assessment report*. Mekelle, Tigray.
- Transparency International, 2008. *Corruptionand Public Sector Reform Monitoring Systems: U4 anti corruption research center* <<http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/gpacpublications/manual.pdf>> [Accessed 26 Dec 2011].
- Transparency International, 2011. *Daily lives and corruption: public opinion in Ethiopia*. The global coalition against corruption.
- United Nations, 2000. *Professionalism and Ethics in the Public Service: Issues and Practices in Selected Regions*. United Nations, New York, <<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan000112.pdf>> [Accessed Feb12 2012].
- Weist Dana, 2003. *Thailand's Decentralization: Progress and Prospects*. Paper prepared for the Asian Development Conference on Decentralization in Asia, Kitakyushu, Japan.