



# The implementation of early childhood care and education (ECCE) in Bahir Dar city administration: A comparative study between private and public pre-primary schools



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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to assess the implementation of ECCE between private and public preschools in Bahir Dar city administration. The implementation was assessed through main factors which includes: the physical and learning environment that encompass the materials used for children holistic development, curriculum guideline, teachers' know how, teaching learning methodology, health, the relationships with parents and community, and administrative issues. The study has taken a form of descriptive survey in a comparative perspective. The study examined the preschool education policy and practices of 2 public and 2 private preschools. The four preschools were selected through purposive sampling technique. The participants of the study included preschool educational experts, teachers, parents, and principals. Data collection tools were questionnaires, observations, interviews and document analysis. To analyze the data Frequency, percentage, one sample *t*-test, and independent *t*-test have been employed. Findings revealed that there are curriculum implementation differences between public and private preschools.

## 1. Background of the study

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is the subject of considerable debate and interest among governments and politicians in all parts of the world (Mwamwenda, 2014). International organizations such as UNICEF and UNESCO gives more emphasis on the provision of quality early childhood education and care to all children (Heather, 2013). Their arguments emanate from research evidence that has shown the long-term benefits of offering young children quality care and education in the early years (UNESCO, 2015). The widely observed issue has been suffering many of the children all over the world with no discrimination between urban and rural, poor and rich, black and white people (Maunganidzel & Tsamaase, 2014). Hence, workable policies have to be formulated to tackle the problem (UNESCO, 2015).

ECCE policies and programs in Europe and the Anglo-American countries evolved out of remarkably similar historical streams: child protection; early childhood education; services for children with special needs; and services to facilitate mothers' labor force participation (Maunganidzel & Tsamaase, 2014). In all the countries, one overarching

theme is the movement from private charity, beginning in the early and middle 19th century to public responsibility, evolving largely after World War II (UNESCO-II CBA, 2010). The extent of public responsibility does vary, however, across the countries (Kamerman, 2006). For example in Britain, day nurseries and infant schools stressing education were established in the early 19th century (Mwamwenda, 2014). The former was not very extensive but the latter expanded rapidly, and then largely disappeared to be replaced later by part-day kindergartens. Scholars state that the main need appeared to be the improvement of the quality (Mwamwenda, 2014).

Like in Europe, Australia, ECCE service have developed with a narrow focus (e.g to provide long day care for children for working families, to provide an educational program for children age 4–5 years prior to school entry), resulting in a fragmented array of separate, special and competing services (Tayler & Irvine, 2000). With this background, it is not surprising that the present system is characterized by diversity (Okengo, 2010).

The current Australian service system can be represented by two broad categories: formal and informal service (Tayler & Irvine, 2000).

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Formal services include: center based services such as long daycare, kindergartens preschool and outside school hours care (most often based on school sites); and home-based services such as family daycare (Tayler & Irvine, 2000). Informal service includes care provided for a fee in the child's home (e.g. nanny) or caregiver's home (e.g. private home-based care). A distinguishing characteristic is the formal services are most often subject to government regulation or some other form of quality assurance, where informal care is generally unregulated or some other form of quality assurance (Okengo, 2010).

In most Asian countries ECCE is a recent Phenomenon that they give high emphasis to achieve "Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children" goal 1 of EFA: the Dakar Framework for Action, approved in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000 (UNESCO, 2004, p. 1). For instance, Vietnam's long standing status as a predominantly agrarian society has meant that traditionally, all able family members have shared an equal responsibility for farm work. For this reason, even before major changes in the economy had taken place and urban centers developed, Vietnamese women in rural villages have needed some form of childcare support, a need which was most often met by grandparents and other elder relatives (UNESCO, 2004, p. 1). According to (Bantista, 2004) the current forms of provision for early childcare and education include: creches, community childcare centers and day-care centers (for infants up to three years); home-based childcare (for groups of five to 15 infants up to two years); and kindergartens and pre-schools (for three-to six-year-old).

Significant changes in the Vietnamese economy in the early 1990s greatly affected day care participation rates (Bantista, 2004). Children could be cared for at home since many of the parents were unemployed during the early stages of implementing economic reform measures, and many who had work could not afford the costs of childcare services. To address this decline in day-care enrollment, the government decided to maintain only existing day-care centers and did not establish new ones (Okengo, 2010). As of 2000, there were over 48,000 teachers registered in day-care centers (Bantista, 2004). Most of these had received some form of basic training; there were only 225 day-care teachers with university or college degrees, which points to a real shortage of qualified teachers, especially for early childcare (Okengo, 2010).

Africa as part of the world experience, early childhood care and education as its low level of development (Maunganidzel & Tsamaase, 2014). Most African countries even those with the better level of economic development tend to implement early childhood care and education in unstructured way this make children grow in short of social emotional development in skills abilities attitudes to wads others negligence to social environments which at last results to the unconsolidated and unorganized social and emotional development of children which in turn will affect the social, economic, cultural and political aspects of a nation (Mwamwenda, 2014). In Botswana, the need for the provision of early childhood care and education is even more compelling for both child development practitioners and academics given the reported increase in early pregnancies, single parenthood and households exacerbated by HIV-AIDS and concomitant lack of appreciation and understanding of the children's early education needs (Bar-On, 2004, p. Pp67). The first Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) facilities in Botswana were established shortly after the country's independence chiefly to serve the expatriate community (Bar-On, 2004, p. Pp67). Although the National Policy on Early Childhood care and Education was adopted in 1981, early child development has had a historical low priority in government budgeting compared to other countries in the region. With the pre-primary and primary budget at 25% of education budget and the least in the group as at 2007, it is important to focus on this phenomenon (Maunganidzel & Tsamaase, 2014).

The priority for governments across Sub-Saharan Africa has been to achieve EFA goals for primary education. In many cases, ECCE was neglected and the overall balance of access is inequitable, favoring more advantaged urban children. In many countries, private providers and

NGOs, including faith and community based initiatives, play a major role in ECCE services. Many governments have battled to regulate and assure quality in private, faith-based and community facilities. As a rule, in Sub-Saharan Africa many private early learning centers follow highly formal models of education, focusing on the "acquisition of the 3R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) and relying on teacher-centered methods for development of knowledge and skills" (Okengo, 2010). This may be partly because parents see this as the most appropriate approach to preparing children for later schooling (Biersteker, Ngaruiya, Sebatane, & Gudyang, 2008, p. 228).

In its comprehensive education policy, Ethiopia recognizes the importance of preschool education by putting its goal for all round development of the child in preparation for formal schooling (MoE, 1994) though insignificant attention was given in practice. As indicated earlier, Ethiopia developed separate National Policy Framework for ECCE which shows the commitment of the country toward ECCE implementation and it is one step ahead in giving due attention to the crucial issue. As a result, the Ethiopian government developed a national policy framework for early childhood care and education (MoE, MoH, & MoWA, 2010b, p. 18) stated "it is during the early years that children learn and acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes quickly with minimal effort". However, factors such as poverty and others hinder the all-round development of the children. Hence, carefully planned early interventions equitably and equally can have long-term positive outcomes for children in all aspects of life Woodhead Siraj-Blatchford and Woodhead cited in (Yalew, 2011). The Policy Framework again emphasizes the fundamental importance of ECCE in accelerating attainment of EFA and the MDGs (MoE MoH and MoWA 2010a). According to Biklen, Apon-Shevin, Stainback and Stainback in (G/Egziabher, 2014) all young children must be nurtured in a safe and caring environment that allow them to become healthy, alert, secure, and be able to learn. Therefore, early childhood education is one of the intervention methods for enhancing the later academic success of young children.

Currently teachers who are not well trained for pre-school teaching do not practice the Ethiopian Early childhood care and education program: besides, they are not working in collaboration with families, and other professionals (MoE, 2009). Furthermore, the existing urban-based modern pre-primary schools are limited for children of age 4 to 6 and are not inclusive for children with special needs (Demeke, 2007). Several studies assessed the practice of the ECCE in Ethiopia. For instance, Biniyam (2014) conducted a study entitled with "Practice and Challenges of Pre-School Education in Nefasilk Lafto Sub City of Addis Ababa". The study examined the main determinant factors of ECCE. His study found out several challenges like, shortage of trained manpower and employee turnover, parent's limited support to children's development, government insufficient support, unavailability of text books, shortage of input materials, and lack of decision making body like board of director for managing KG.

Unlike the study made by Biniyam (2014) looked the existing Policy, practice, and challenges of Early Childhood Care and Education of teachers training in Ethiopia by taking the Case of Kotebe University College (KUC). Authors examined how the policy provisions have been understood and implemented on ECCE teachers training at KUC and, how the prevailing practices at the university college engaged to train pre-service ECCE professionals. The study found out that ECCE teacher's training at KUC lack the required quality.

Rahel's (2014) study is different from the above researches in its dimension. The title of her study is "The Role of Leadership in Preschools Teachers Competence". Her major findings are low teacher salaries, high turnover, and teachers' insufficient knowledge of subject matter. Lack of proper coaching and supervision as well as coordination was found to be practiced at low level. It also found out that the training, which provided to kindergarten teachers had not brought about significant impacts in improving teachers' performance. It did not also improve teachers' vision of professionalism as well as confidence.

In relation, G/Egzeabeher (2014), explored the practices and

challenges of Early Childhood Care and Education in Addis Ababa, with the specific case of Arada Sub-City government kindergartens'. The study critically looked at the sufficiency and efficiency nature of key inputs and management practices, the practice of major stakeholders' participation on the ground overall practices and challenges encountered of the program. Meanwhile, his study found out that the kindergartens are not that much conducive for all children because there were narrow classes, great number of children in the classes, low Participation of parents, and stakeholders, lack of training principals, teachers, experts and parents/guardians which are great barriers to implement Early childhood Care and Education, absences of experience sharing of kindergartens, limited support system of supervision and collaboration of stakeholders.

On the other hand [Girma \(2014\)](#), in his study titled "Early Childhood Education Practices: The Case of Akaki-Kality", sort out the major challenges encountered in the process and best practices in the preschools. The study found out that achievement of holistic development of children in the schools was based on teachers understanding of how to implement the curriculum and the schools orientation to satisfy the 'owners'. Girma's study clearly showed low commitment of the government to promote preschool education. This study is different from others in its instrumentation and analysis.

The study conducted by [Sosena \(2013\)](#), "Challenges of Implementing Kindergarten Curriculum in Addis Ababa", the study stressed the extent of curriculum implementation was low; classrooms and outdoor spaces, materials and equipment, were limited; teachers were lack of professional skills to teach young children, parents knowledge about the objective of kindergarten education is low; and government support services were very minimal and limited in government kindergarten.

Again, this study is different, because; it is conducted in private and government pre-schools of Bahir Dar city administration with comparative lenses. Bahir Dar has got a relatively good coverage of kindergarten education as compared to other woredas in the region ([Amhara Regional State Education Bureau AREB, 2004](#)), authors of this study argued that still the coverage and services are not adequately and effectively delivered as required. Therefore, the present research is conducted to bridge the wider gaps in implementation, practice and challenges of early childhood care and education in the selected public and private pre schools. In this context, the main objective of this study was to investigate the implementation of ECCE in private and public preschools in Bahir Dar city. To this effect, the study attempted to explore the international, national, and regional policy issues on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). The study also examined the status of preschool education practices, strengths and limitations. Once more, the research endeavors to identify ways for the improvement of the preschool policy implementation in Bahir Dar city administration.

Meanwhile, the study particularly focused on addressing the following basic research questions:

1. To what extent are the selected preschools equipped with the necessary trained manpower, learning materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments?
2. What is the status of stakeholders' involvement in selected preschools in Bahir Dar city administration?
3. To what extent government officials give uniform supports as well as supervisions for both private and public institutions on the implementation processes
4. Is there any significance difference between public and private preschools in the implementation of ECCE policies?

## 2. Literature review

In developing countries the existence of early childhood programs come after 1970 and was driven by different rationales ([Firehiwot, 2016](#)). As the basic needs of so many young children were not being met, many developing countries emphasized infant and child health, poverty

reduction, safe and affordable environments for child minding, and the transition to primary schooling ([UNESCO, 2015](#)). Africa has the shared history of colonization by European countries and the impact of this experience on Early Childhood care and Education developments ([Kamerman, 2006](#)). Kamerman argued that most of the African countries achieved independence in the 1960s, a decade when most of the countries were confronted by the over-arching task of nation-building. In the [ADEA Newsletter \(2015\)](#) Africa is described as having the youngest population in the world, (half of the population are children under 14 and 20 percent under 5). It is the region with the highest infant mortality rate, with children likely to suffer from chronic malnutrition and an inadequate food supply, experience severe poverty, likely to live in the midst of armed conflict and/or becoming an AIDS orphan ([UNESCO 2012](#)).

Enrollment rates improved during the 1990s in response to the 1990 Jomtien and Dakar conferences, the World Summit for Children, and the CRC, but coverage remains very low ([UNESCO 2012](#)). Most African countries have pre-primary enrollment rates of less than 10 percent, but rates vary greatly in the region from over 90 percent in Mauritius to less than 1 percent in the Congo and Djibouti ([ADEA Newsletter \(2015\)](#)). The situation varies across the countries, with eastern and southern Africa accounting for 62 percent of the participating children. The programs are largely private with 80 percent of the children enrolled in private programs ([UNESCO & UNICEF, 2012](#)). International organizations have played an especially important role (e.g. UNICEF and the World Bank; the Bernard van Leer and Aga Khan Foundations), ECCE is still viewed as a luxury, primarily the responsibility of families and communities, and investments in ECCE not viewed as important ([Kamerman, 2006](#)).

[Pence \(2004\)](#) points out that ECCE has a much longer history as a part of colonization activities in Africa than many seem to have realized. The first nursery school in Kenya was established for European children in Nairobi in 1942, when the country was under British administration. "In the post WWII period a particularly important factor in ECD development throughout Africa is the interaction between colonial structures typically established to serve only the colonizing population and post-independence efforts to establish ECD systems for all" ([Pence, 2004](#), p. 9). As he states, "The colonial structure of preschools, nurseries, crèches, kindergartens and other programs bearing European names are familiar from their European origins and they did not look greatly different in their African settings" ([Pence, 2004](#), p. 9). The problem was that these newly independent governments were trying to address the much larger needs of the overall country with very limited financial resources and while they were also nation-building. The inability to do this led many countries to turn to the private sector for ECEC provision instead ([Kamerman, 2006](#), p. 26).

Early Childhood Education based on expansion, enrolment, teachers, rural, and gender distribution in the last three decades, has undergone tremendous changes in terms of growth and development. More schools for Early Childhood Education have been constructed in villages, rural areas and urban areas. Such construction has been in response to the demand of the people for such provision. This indeed is a new chapter in the history of Africa, given that for too long, neither the governments in power nor parents paid that much attention to Early Childhood Education ([Firehiwot, 2016](#)). Governments did not pay that much attention, simply because the governments they succeeded did not have that much attention to Early Childhood Education. They have had inherited such concept from where they came from. Parents did not care just as much, because in their lives, they never attended Early Childhood Education ([Mwamwenda, 2014](#)). Before 1990 young children from birth to 5 were largely invisible in most African policy documents except with regard to health and nutrition policies. Despite the conviction stressed in the Jomtien Declaration that "Learning begins at birth," almost no attention had been paid to the youngest children, under age 3 ([Kamerman, 2006](#), Pp. 27–28).

### 3. Methodological approach

#### 3.1. Sample size and sampling techniques

Among 50 preschools in the city administration, four, which are two of private and two public preschools, were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Because researchers have close relationships in these preschools, this intimacy is believed to help them to dig full data. Behind this the selected private preschools are primacy and more preferable by parents who have good economic and educational background in Bahir Dar city and the public's also the first line who have medium income. All teachers of targeted preschools and school principals were taken by purposive sampling technique. Pre-primary education experts from Amhara Regional State Education Bureau and Bahir Dar city Administration Education department were purposely included by non-probability sampling technique to participate in providing information through interview since they are the ones that have got strong attachment to the program implementation due to their responsibility. Lastly, students parents were selected by systematic random sampling method as can be seen from Table 1 below.

As showed in Table 1 above there are a total of 90 students of which, 43 male and 47 female in KG1. In KG 2, a total of 91 students of which 50 male and 41 are female. Whereas in KG3, from 95 students, male 54 and female 51 in the sample governmental preschools. Therefore, it is expected that 276 parents sent their children in these preschools. Researchers took one third out of the total parents from the population for questionnaire by using systematic random sampling method. Similarly, in private preschools there are 263 students in KG1, 191 students in KG2, and total of 313 students in KG3, 183 students like wise governmental preschools, one third of parents selected by using systematic random sampling method.

#### 3.2. Instruments of data collection

In the process of collecting the relevant data for this study, Questionnaires, Interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Observation check list were employed. The purpose of employing these multiple instruments was to increase the credibility of the finding and to minimize the risk of drawing erroneous conclusion.

##### 3.2.1. Questionnaire

In this study, two sets of questionnaires, with open and closed-ended items were designed to obtain the relevant information from parents. The closed-ended items represent the likert scale and each question having five options. Open-ended questions were provided to give enough freedom to respondents in view of their coming with innovative ideas which will have significance to the research. A questionnaire is a form used that participants in a study complete and return to the researchers. The participant chooses answers to questions and supplies basic personal or demographic information (Creswell, 2012).

##### 3.2.2. Interview

Interviews are a common source of qualitative data because they are an effective means to learn from participants about their perceptions of

and experiences with a study's topic (Lisa, 2008). Hence, in this study for the session to be held with key informants: principals and educational expert's interview questions were prepared. The interview questions were developed based on the potential barriers ECCE implementation and the main ideas of the two questionnaires. The interview was conducted directly by the investigators.

##### 3.2.3. Focus group discussion

Guiding questions were prepared and focus group discussion was conducted with teachers and caregivers. The focus of the discussion were on the overall ECCE program implementation issues such as their attitude, competence and interest of teachers and caregivers, sanitation hygiene and related issues. Focus groups are a form of group interview, though not in the sense of a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. Rather, the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researchers (Creswell, 2012).

##### 3.2.4. Observation

Observations represent a frequently used form of data collection, with the researchers able to assume different roles in the process Spradley cited in (Creswell, 2012). A check list is a simple device consisting of items which are thought by instigators to be relevant to the problem being identified and researched Koul in (G/Egziabher, 2014). Kindergartens were observed by the researchers to collect and organize relevant data on key inputs and overall indoor/outdoor environment of kindergartens including their documentation along with their entire contents of about the overall current status on the ground by using checklist.

The purpose of using checklists during the periods of observation is to draw pertinent data from classrooms and outdoors play areas that supplement the questionnaire. Accordingly, in the classrooms the use of teaching methods, materials, assessment procedures and interactions were observed. For this purpose, one classroom was observed in each preschools randomly selected for 40 min (one-two periods depend on the grade level of the class). In addition, organization of classrooms and activity centers, supply materials and equipment, and their arrangements were the main focus of the observation in all classrooms of each preschool. In the outdoor, playground, supply and arrangements of play materials and equipment were observed in all sampled kindergartens. For the purposes, observation checklists were prepared. It has been believed that the students-teacher interactions, their intention and efforts occur in the classrooms. Thus, it is possible to say that classroom observation is a key instrument of data collection in examining how preschool programs are being implemented. Therefore, the classroom observations were used to describe the classroom interaction of preschool teachers and students.

##### 3.2.5. Document analysis

To secure facts and figures along with new policies, directives and strategies, different documents like education abstracts, reports, annual and strategic plans were consulting as secondary source to supplement and/or triangulate the data or information collected through various means as mentioned above. Document analysis is the study of the written text and takes into account the document's physical condition, the handwriting or printing used, and its idiosyncrasies (Lisa, 2008).

### 3.3. Reliability and validity

To test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire and interview items, a pilot-test was conducted in a small sub-sample (Creswell, 2012). For the validity, the draft instruments were given 2 educational experts and 1 preschool supervisor. The purpose of conducting the pre-test on the draft was to obtain information about the clarity of the questions, directions and for the data that it could draw from parents, educational experts' caregivers, teachers and preschool principals. Based on their feedback (suggestions and comments) items which were found ambiguous and that are not the concern of respondents were refined and canceled. For the reliability, the draft questionnaires were administered

**Table 1**  
Number of students of sample schools.

School	KG1			KG2			KG3		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
<b>Public</b>									
Fasilo	24	27	51	32	17	49	33	39	72
Belay Zeleke	19	20	39	18	24	42	21	12	33
Total	43	47	90	50	41	91	54	51	105
<b>Private</b>									
SOS	47	48	95	16	20	36	20	16	36
Bahir Dar Academy	79	89	168	78	77	155	77	70	147
Total	26	137	263	94	97	191	97	86	183

in other preschools out of the targeted preschools for 17 parents from Soma Academy 10 parents and it is private school and Shum Abo 7 parents it is public school, encoded using SPSS software Version 20 and the calculated Cronbach Alpha for the five Likert-scale items was found to be 0.79 which indicated the reliability of the instrument is adequate.

### 3.4. Data management

The quantitative data collected through questionnaire were managed by using SPSS version 20-application software. Qualitative data were coded and interpreted thematically.

### 3.5. Method of data analysis

The data were analyzed by used both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The quantitative data used through questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, one sample *t*-test and independent sample *t*-test besides percentages and tables were employed to compute different variables' these statistical techniques were used to compare and contrast the relationships between factors affecting the implementation of ECCE in private and public preschools. Qualitative descriptive techniques were used to describe data acquired through observation, focus group discussion, interview and document analysis.

### 3.6. Ethical consideration

Efforts were made to make the research process professional and ethical. To this end, researchers tried to clearly inform to the respondents about the purpose of the study. As the researchers introduced its purpose in the introduction part of the questionnaire and interview guide to the respondents, authors of the study will confirm to subjects, confidentiality was protected. The participants made to understand what has been explained and be given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by the researchers. The informed consent document must be written in lay language, avoiding any technical terminology.

The participant's consent to participate in the research was voluntary, free of any coercion or promises of benefits unlikely to result from participation and no group was disadvantaged by being excluded from consideration. In doing so, first researchers went with official letter written from Bahir Dar University Department of Teachers education and curriculum studies to the Bahir Dar City Administration Education department and sample preschools. Then authors explained the purpose of the study to the school principals to get permission to accomplish the work the same thing did to the experts and finally to start the study researchers introduced the objective and advantage of the study to the respondents to obtain their voluntarily participation; and also informed the information obtained from the respondent, data obtained from the document and others were kept confidential. In addition, the study was conducted after obtaining informed consent from respondents.

## 4. Analysis of the study

The first purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which kindergartens equipped with the necessary trained work force, learning

**Table 2**  
Extent of Public kindergartens equipped with Classroom materials and equipment (public preschools).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Adequate text books in the school	72	1.5417	.73038	17.911	71	.000
Classroom equipment	72	2.6250	.54223	41.078	71	.000

materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments. To accomplish this objective, one sample *t*-test used and the results are presented in Table 2 below.

### 4.1. Classroom materials in public

As shown in Table 2 above the results of one sample *t*-test for public kindergartens with respect to adequacy of textbook indicated that the obtained mean score ( $m = 1.5417$ ), at ( $t(71) = 17.911$   $p = .00$ ) is less than to the expected mean ( $m = 3$ ), with a mean difference of ( $MD = 1.4583$ ). The result implies that there is lack of adequate of textbooks in the school. Similarly, the result of classroom equipment revealed that ( $m = 2.6250$ ), at ( $t(71) = 41.078$   $p = .000$ ) almost similar to the mean test value of adequacy of classroom materials and equipment which was 3 as perceived by parents. Authors observed that in public preschools, the available classrooms were not well ventilated and there is no available interest corner, teaching materials and equipment, there are no shelves; crowdedness of classrooms was the problem of public pre schools.

The principals were asked during the interview about the causes of the problems. In their responses, all principals in the public preschools 2 (100%) agreed that the preschool were not enough for children in their surroundings; and there was high demand of enrollment in the government schools, as the service was free of charge and that was the reason to have crowded class room. All kindergartens in the sample, were built for the school purpose, hence they have appropriate class size. A learning environment, which is called the third teacher in the Reggio Emilia schools (Gandini, 2002) plays one of the most important roles in education and development of children with special needs. In addition to this, the guide lines for ECCE and standards of preschools, ((MoE, 2010), 2011 and (MoE, 2013)) there should be 1 Main teacher, 1 assistant teacher and 1 care giver for 40 students with 1.5 square meter space for a child in a classroom. As it is observed from the finding, the Public preschools Classroom materials and equipment of is not consistent with the policy of ECCE.

### 4.2. Qualification and Competency of the school Employees

The above Table 3 one sample *t*-test indicated that the overall competencies of employees in the institution. The result revealed teachers in the school are competent with a mean score of ( $m = 3.0972$ ), at ( $t(71) = 63.092$   $p = .000$ ) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents. In relation to care givers competency the one sample *t*-test revealed below the average expected mean score with a mean score of ( $m = 2.5278$ ), at ( $t(71) = 34.189$   $p = .000$ .) the finding shows that care givers of the school are incompetent as perceived by parents. In addition to this leaders in the school are competent with a mean score of ( $m = 3.0972$ ), at ( $t(71) = 68.935$   $p = .000$ ) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents.

Both in the observations and interviews, most teachers in public schools have certificate on ECCE from former Menen training school in Addis Ababa, which give training for preschool teachers. But, assistance teachers have no any type of training or know how about ECCE and there is no care giver in these schools but assistance teachers additionally played caregivers role. Similarly, principals of these sample preschools

**Table 3**  
Extent of Qualification and Competency of the school Employees (public preschools).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Competencies of Teachers	72	3.0972	.41655	63.092	71	.000
Competencies of Caregivers	72	2.5278	.62736	34.189	71	.000
Competency of the School Leaders	72	3.0972	.38124	68.935	71	.000

have certificate from Menen School.

According to the document, entitled preschool inspection checklist (preschool standard); Pre-school leader and main teacher should have pre-school teacher training diploma. And assistant teachers need to have certificate from grade 10 national exam center and pre-school teacher training certificate; care givers need to have certificate from grade 10 national exam center and it is said better if they are trained with food preparation (MoE, 2015). The finding of the study revealed that the qualification of the public preschool employee is inconsistent with the standard, which is stated in preschool inspection checklist.

4.3. Outdoor facilities

As it is shown in Table 4 above, the overall outdoor facilities in public kindergartens is below the expected mean as perceived by parents in the three dependent variables. Outdoor play materials with the mean score of (m = 2.4167), at (t (71) = -68.11, p = .000). Sanitation (m = 2.3750), at (t (71) = -6.990, p = .000); and safety of the area (m = 2.6667) at (t (71) = -4.213, p = .000) respectively. From the finding, one can conclude that there is lack of outdoor facilities in public kindergartens. The information obtained through observation using checklist mentioned items of key inputs in preschools. Based on the observation, researchers were able to find one public preschool with rest room, feeding room and store, but rest room and store were not found in the other preschool. Similarly, in the public preschools the toilet rooms were not adequate in number it was inappropriate and the staff and children’s toilet was not separated.

4.4. School community relation ship

In Table 5 one sample t-test result shows about the extent of school community relationship. Accordingly, all the three variables related to school community relationship the obtained mean scores of t-test indicated below mean average of the expected mean score (m = 3) as perceived by parents. The tendency of the school approaching with parents and community mean score (m = 2.0972) at (t (71) = -12.129, p = .000), parent interaction with teachers of their child with a mean score of (m = 2.18) at (t (71) = -10.582, p = .000), and parents participation in their children preschool affairs mean score (m = 2.36) at (t (71) = -9.208, p = .000) respectively. The finding indicated that there is lack of interaction among overall school community relationships.

4.5. Classroom materials in private

As shown in Table 6 the results of one sample t-test for private kindergartens with respect to adequacy of textbook indicated that the obtained mean score (m = 2.1011), at (t (177) = -14.677 p = .00) is less than to the expected mean (m = 3), with a mean difference of (MD = 0.8989). The result implies that there is lack of adequate of textbooks in the school. Similarly, the result of classroom equipment revealed that (m = 4.3989), at (t (177) = 35.588, p = .000) above the expected mean which is m = 3, as perceived by parents. This result revealed that private kindergartens have sufficient classroom equipment.

**Table 4**  
Extent to which public kindergartens equipped with outdoor facilities (public preschools).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Outdoor Playing Materials	72	2.4167	.72675	-68.11	71	.000
Sanitation of the Area	72	2.3750	.75875	-6.990	71	.000
The Area safe for Children	72	2.6667	.67135	-4.213	71	.000

**Table 5**  
Extent to public kindergartens engaged in School community relationship (public preschool).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)
The tendency of the School approaching with parents and community	72	2.0972	.63156	-12.129	71	.000
Parents interaction with Teachers of their child	72	2.1806	.65706	-10.582	71	.000
Parents participation in Their children preschool affairs	72	2.3611	.58876	-9.208	71	.000

**Table 6**  
Extent of Preschools equipped with Classroom materials and equipment (private preschools).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Adequate Text Books In the School	178	2.1011	.81712	-14.677	177	.000
Classroom Equipment	178	4.3989	.52443	35.588	177	.000

4.6. Qualification and competency of the school employees in private preschools

The above Table 7 one sample t-test indicated that the overall competencies of employees in the institution. The result revealed teachers in the school are competent with a mean score of (m = 3.5169), at (t (177) = 9.687 p = .000) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents. In relation to care givers competency the one sample t-test revealed above the expected mean score with a mean score of (m = 3.6348), at (t (177) = 8.234 p = .000.) the finding shows that care givers of the school are competent as perceived by parents. In addition to this leaders in the school are competent with a mean score of (m = 3.6742), at (t (177) = 13.288 p = .000) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents.

According to the preschool standard, it is possible to say that there were not qualified main teachers and caregivers in the sample private preschools; the diplomas and degrees of the teachers and principals were not related with preschool education. Training in other field of discipline might limit the competency of teachers to implement the curriculum, which in turn affect the whole development of children in the studied preschools. The interviewee, the principals witnessed about the training that was to be given for preschool teachers at college/university was not helpful to implement the current syllabus of preschools.

**Table 7**  
The qualification and competency of the school employees One-Sample Statistics (private preschools).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Competencies of Teachers	178	3.5169	.69887	9.687	177	.000
Competencies of Caregivers	178	3.6348	1.02859	8.234	177	.000
Competency of the teaching materials School Leaders	178	3.6742	.67690	13.288	177	.000

4.7. Outdoor materials and facilities in private preschools

As it is shown in Table 8 above, the overall outdoor facilities in private preschools is below the expected mean of (m = 3) as perceived by parents in the three dependent variables outdoor play materials with the mean score of (m = 2.4382), at (t (177) = -6.360, p = .000). From the finding, one can conclude that there is lack of outdoor playing materials in private kindergartens, sanitation (m = 4.75), at (t (177) = 54.655, p = .000), and safety of the area (m = 4.1685) at (t (177) = 34.125, p = .000) respectively. From the finding, one can conclude that private preschools highly equipped with outdoor facilities and safe for children.

Based on researchers' observation the play materials seem more or less similar across all the observed preschools. Mary-go-round, slide, seesaw, and swing were common to two public and one private preschool, but the available equipment were inadequate in number especially in public preschools. In one private preschool only two playing materials, it is to mean that playing materials almost none in this preschool.

4.8. School community relationship in private preschools

Table 9 one sample t-test result shows about the extent of school community relationship. Accordingly, all the three variables related to school community relationship the obtained mean scores of t-test indicated above mean average of the expected mean score (m = 3) as perceived by parents. The tendency of the school approaching with parents and community mean score (m = 4.2921) at (t (177) = 35.054, p = .000), parent interaction with teachers of their child with a mean score of (m = 4.2584) at (t (177) = 38.244, p = .000), and parents participation in their children preschool affairs mean score (m = 3.1966) at (t (177) = 3.949, p = .000) respectively. The finding indicated that there is strong interaction among overall school community relationships.

4.9. Trained man power, learning materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments

As shown in Table 10 above, the results of one sample t-test indicated that the mean score of adequacy of classroom materials and equipment 2.9140 was almost similar to the mean test value of adequacy of classroom materials and equipment that was 3 as perceived by parents. This finding shows that parents claim that adequacy of classroom materials and equipment is at average level. Similarly, the results of one sample t-test indicated that the mean score of qualification and competency of the school employees (3.40) was significantly higher than the mean test value of qualification and competency of the school employees, which were 3 as perceived by parents. This finding shows that parents maintain that qualification and competency of the school employees is at higher level. Likewise, the results of one sample t-test demonstrated that the mean score of outdoor facilities in the sample kindergarten schools (3.41) was significantly higher than the mean test value of outdoor facilities in the sample kindergarten schools, which were 3 as perceived by parents. This result shows that teachers claim that supervisors' practice of support function is at higher level.

The second purpose of this study was to discover the status of stakeholders' involvement in preschool education. To attain this one

Table 8  
Outdoor materials and facilities in private preschools.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Outdoor Playing Materials	178	2.4382	1.17848	-6.360	177	.000
Sanitation of the Area	178	4.7584	.42924	54.655	177	.000
The Area safe for Children	178	4.1685	.45686	34.125	177	.000

Table 9  
School community relationship in private preschools One-Sample Statistics.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
The tendency of the School approaching with parents and community	178	4.2921	.49179	35.054	177	.000
Parents interaction with Teachers of their child	178	4.2584	.43900	38.244	177	.000
Parents participation in Their children preschool affairs	178	3.1966	.66434	3.949	177	.000

Table 10  
Extent to which kindergartens equipped with the necessary trained man power, learning materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments.

Kindergartens	N	Mean	SD	T test	df	Sig
Classroom materials and equipment	250	2.9140	.75889	1.792	249	.074
Qualification and competency of the school employees	250	3.4067	.67429	9.536	249	.001
Outdoor facilities	250	3.4133	.80483	8.120	249	.001
Total school situation	250	3.2447	.67281	5.750	249	.001

sample t-test was conducted and the results are presented in Table 11.

4.10. Status of Stakeholders' Involvement in Preschool Education

As indicated in Table 11 the results of one sample t-test portrayed that the mean score of stakeholders' involvement in preschool education (3.42) was significantly higher than the mean test value of stakeholders' involvement in preschool education, which was 3 as perceived by stakeholders. This results shows that stakeholders argue that the status of their' involvement in preschool education is at above average level. The finding of the study suggests that the status of stakeholders' involvement in preschool education is at higher level.

In connection to the second objective, an attempt was also made to examine stakeholders' participation in preschool education in terms of school type (public and private) schools. To attain this objective an attempt was made to carry out independent samples t-test and the results are presented in Table 12.

As indicated in Table 12 above, the results of independent samples t-test portrayed that there is statistically significant mean score difference between schools types (public and private) in terms of stakeholders' participation. The t-value depicted that private schools had significantly higher mean score than public schools. This shows that there is high stakeholders' participation or involvement in preschool education in private schools compared to public schools. The interviewees (the principals) was witnessed the high level of participation of parents in the preschools affairs especially the private preschool principals said that parents were very concerned about their kids education.

During the interview, the principals were asked what did, the participation of health office with their preschool looks like. The principal who worked in one public preschool responded that the office gave

Table 11  
Extent to which kindergartens equipped with the necessary trained man power, learning materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments Test Value = 3.

Kindergartens	N	Mean	SD	T test	Df	Sig
Stakeholders' involvement in preschool education.	250	3.4267	.91407	7.380	249	.001

**Table 12**  
School Type difference in stakeholders' participation in preschool education.

	School Type	N	Mean	SD	T-test	Df	Sig
Stakeholders Participation	Public	72	2.2361	.55507	23438	248	0.001
	Private	178	3.9082	.49194			

the training and issued the handout for the teachers and principals on sanitation and first aid at the beginning of this year, the rest principals who worked in the rest sample preschools did not get this kind of chance. However, all principals and teachers agreed on the office were giving the vaccines for kids in the preschools for several times. The principals (interviewees) witnessed about the presence of local and international NGOs participating in the government preschools, but the, sample preschools they didn't get chance to supported by NGOS. However, other studies affirm that such types of relations are necessary to ECCE. The preschool educational system can promote holistic child development through supporting comprehensive programs with active involvement of families and communities supplemented with the provision of health care and nutritious food so that the quality of the service increases to meet the intended objectives (G/Egziabher, 2014).

The third purpose of this study was to explore the difference between public and private preschools in terms of implementing polices on ECCE. To manage this, independent samples *t*-test carried out and the results are reported in Table 13.

4.11. Implementation of policies on ECCE by school type

As indicated in Table 13 the results of independent *t*-test depicted that there was statistically significant mean score difference between public and private preschools in terms of adequacy of classroom materials and equipment. The *t*-value revealed that private schools exhibited significantly high mean score than public schools in the adequacy of classroom materials and equipment. This finding shows that private schools well furnished with materials and equipment than their public counterparts.

5. Summary of major findings

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of ECCE in private and public preschools in Bahir Dar city. To this effect, the study attempted to explore the international, national, and regional policy issues on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). The study also examined the status of preschool education practices, strengths, and limitations. Furthermore, the study endeavors to identify ways for the improvement of the preschool policy implementation. Therefore, the study particularly focused on addressing the following research questions:

- To what extent are the selected preschools equipped with the necessary trained manpower, learning materials and over all indoor/outdoor environments?

**Table 13**  
Public and private Pre Schools Difference in Terms of Implementing Polices on ECCE.

Preschools Implementation	School Type	N	Mean	SD	T-test	df	Sig
Material and equipment	Public	72	2.0833	.46724	15.331	248	.001
	Private	178	3.2500	.57305			
Employees Qualification	Public	72	2.9074	.40040	8.428	248	.001
	Private	178	3.6086	.65795			
Outdoor facility	Public	72	2.4861	.57582	17.029	248	.001
	Private	178	3.7884	.53577			
Community relationship	Public	72	2.2361	.55507	23.438	248	.001
	Private	178	3.9082	.49194			
Total school situation	Public	72	2.4282	.40676	19.076	248	.001
	Private	178	3.6388	.47213			

- What is the status of stakeholders' involvement in selected preschools education in Bahir Dar city administration?
- To what extent government officials give uniform support as well as supervision for both private and public institutions on the implementation Processes?
- Is there any significance difference between public and private preschools in the implementation of ECCE policies?

In light of the above research questions, both quantitative and qualitative methods of research were employed. The participants of the study included two preschool education expertises: two from AREB and Bahir Dar city Education Department. 38 teachers and 4 principals of 4 sample preschools. Data was collected through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and document analysis. The study also employed the review of ECCE policy documents and other written documents of the sample preschools. Above all, the major findings of the study have been presented below in the form of answers given to the basic research questions:

5.1. The extent of the ECCE policy implementation

**Language:** Private preschools gave more emphasis for English language, because; even if parents' questionnaire indicated 128 (51.2%) were preferred their children learn both languages (by English and Amharic), 97 (38.8%) were preferred their children learn by English, the rest parents 25 (10.0%) were preferred Amharic as a medium of instruction for their children. In, contrary most teachers and principals indicated that the parents' influence to made English language for medium of instruction for their children was the big challenge to implement the preschool policy in their centers. In addition to this, most parents indicated they have not knowledge about the current policy for ECCE in the questionnaire.

**Qualification and competency:** the finding of the study revealed that teachers in the public school are competent with a mean score of (m = 3.0972), at (t (71) = 63.092, p = .000) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents. In addition to this, leaders in the school are competent with a mean score of (m = 3.0972), at (t (71) = 68.935, p = .000) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents. The result from the interview is contrary to parent's response, the training and educational background of teachers and principals was not appropriate to implement the preschool curriculum. In the observation and interview, most teachers in public schools have certificate on ECCE from former Menen training school in Addis Abeba before 40 years, which give training for preschool teachers. In relation to care givers competency, the one sample *t*-test



revealed below the average expected mean score with a mean score of ( $m = 2.5278$ ), at ( $t(71) = 34.189, p = .000$ ) the finding shows that care givers of the school are incompetent as perceived by parents. Results from observation and focus group discussion supported results from questionnaire, assistance teachers have no any type of training or know how about ECCE and there is no caregiver in these schools but assistance teachers additionally played caregivers role. Similarly, principals of these sample preschools have certificate from Menen School. However, have not leadership courses. In contrary to this, the result revealed teachers in the private pre schools are competent with a mean score of ( $m = 3.5169$ ), at ( $t(177) = 9.687, p = .000$ ) which is greater than the expected mean which was three as perceived by parents. In relation to caregivers competency, the one sample  $t$ -test revealed above the expected mean score with a mean score of ( $m = 3.6348$ ), at ( $t(177) = 8.234, p = .000$ ) the finding shows that care givers of the school are competent as perceived by parents. In addition to this, leaders in the school are competent with a mean score of ( $m = 3.6742$ ), at ( $t(177) = 13.288, p = .000$ ) which is greater than the expected mean which was 3 as perceived by parents.

According to the preschool standard, it is possible to say that there were not qualified main teachers and caregivers in the sample private preschools; the diplomas and degrees of the teachers and principals were not related with preschool education. Training in other field of discipline might limit the competency of teachers to implement the curriculum, which in turn affect the whole development of children in the studied preschools. In relation, majority of teachers and principals from private preschools had no opportunities for on the job training to improve or update their professional skill in implementing the ECCE policy effectively, and there were also the knowledge gap to implement the preschool syllabus in all most sample preschools.

According to the document entitled preschool inspection checklist, Pre-school leader and main teacher should have pre-school teacher training course diploma and assistant teachers have to have certificate from grade 10 national exam centre and pre-school teacher training certificate; care givers need to have certificate from grade 10 national exam centre and it is preferable, if they are trained with food preparation (MoE, 2015). Training in other field might limit the competency of teachers to implement the policy of ECCE, which in turn affect the whole development of children in the studied preschools.

**Classroom materials and equipment:** the results of one sample  $t$ -test for public kindergartens with respect to adequacy of textbook indicated that the obtained mean score ( $m = 1.5417$ ), at ( $t(71) = 17.911, p = .00$ ) is less than to the expected mean ( $m = 3$ ), with a mean difference of ( $MD = 1.4583$ ). The result implies that there is lack of adequate of textbooks in the school. Similarly, the result of classroom equipment revealed that ( $m = 2.6250$ ), at ( $t(71) = 41.078, p = .000$ ) almost similar to the mean test value of adequacy of classroom materials and equipment which was 3 as perceived by parents.

These researchers observed that in public preschools, the available classrooms were not well ventilated and there is no available interest corner, teaching materials and equipment, there are no shelves; crowdedness of classrooms was the problem of public pre schools.

On the other hand, the results of one sample  $t$ -test for private preschools with respect to adequacy of textbook indicated that the obtained mean score ( $m = 2.1011$ ), at ( $t(177) = -14.677, p = .00$ ) is less than to the expected mean ( $m = 3$ ), with a mean difference of ( $MD = 0.8989$ ). The result implies that there is lack of adequate of textbooks in the schools. Similarly, the result of classroom equipment revealed that ( $m = 4.3989$ ), at ( $t(177) = 35.588, p = .000$ ) above the expected mean which is  $m = 3$ , as perceived by parents. This result revealed that private kindergartens have sufficient classroom equipment.

Researchers observed that in private preschools the available classrooms were well ventilated and equipped. In addition to this, in one preschool, there are available interest corners with local and international materials helped to kids know their culture and world, teaching materials.

**Outdoor facilities:** the overall outdoor facilities in public

kindergartens are below the expected mean as perceived by parents in the three dependent variables. Outdoor play materials with the mean score of ( $m = 2.4167$ ), at ( $t(71) = -68.11, p = .000$ ). Sanitation ( $m = 2.3750$ ), at ( $t(71) = -6.990, p = .000$ ); and safety of the area ( $m = 2.6667$ ) at ( $t(71) = -4.213, p = .000$ ) respectively. From the finding, it can be concluded that there is lack of outdoor facilities in public kindergartens. The information obtained through observation using checklist mentioned items of key inputs in preschools. Based on the observation, researchers were able to find one public preschool with rest room, feeding room and store, but rest room and store were not found in the other preschool. Similarly, in the public preschools the toilet rooms were not adequate in number it was inappropriate and the staff and children's toilet was not separated.

The overall outdoor facilities in private kindergartens is below the expected mean of ( $m = 3$ ) as perceived by parents in the three dependent variables outdoor play materials with the mean score of ( $m = 2.4382$ ), at ( $t(177) = -6.360, p = .000$ ). From the finding, it can be conclude that there is lack of outdoor playing materials in private kindergartens, sanitation ( $m = 4.75$ ), at ( $t(177) = 54.655, p = .000$ ), and safety of the area ( $m = 4.1685$ ) at ( $t(177) = 34.125, p = .000$ ) respectively. From the finding, one can conclude that private preschools highly equipped with outdoor facilities and safe for children.

Based on researchers' observation the play materials seem more or less similar across all the observed preschools. However, in one private preschool only two playing materials, it is to mean that playing materials almost none in this preschool.

**School community relationship:** the results of independent  $t$ -test represented that there was statistically significant mean score difference between public and private preschools in terms of school community relationship. The  $t$ -value revealed that private schools exhibited significantly high mean score than public schools in school community relationship. This finding shows that private schools have improved school community relationship than their public preschools.

The interviewees (principals) was witnessed the high level of participation of parents in the preschools affairs, especially; the private preschool principals said that parents were very concerned about their kids education. However, about the parents of public owned preschools principals indicated that parents give priority to only their private jobs to get their daily bread by running here and there to assure their survival. Thus, it is possible to conclude that towards the private preschool, the participation of parents in the preschools was good, but it needs a lot of work to encourage specially the public preschools' parents to participate in the preschools affairs. In line with this, Haile (2010:71) states, "The parent involvement in the pre-schools has been low as compared to the numbers of children found in pre-schools. Limited numbers of parents have made contact with the teachers about their children's learning."

From the overall result finding, the investigators observed that there are lack of continuous supervision, lack of text books, fewer roles of stakeholders on ECCE and lack of trained principals, teachers and care givers on the market which hinder the effective implementation of the ECCE in observed preschools which needs intervention from concerned bodies.

## 6. Conclusions

On the basis of findings mentioned above the following conclusions are drawn:

As the finding of the study indicated, even though there are a policy and standard provision for ECCE in the country, the great majority of private and public sample preschools in Bahir Dar city administration had problems/challenges to implement the policy. According to the preschool curriculum and current preschool standard, the data analysis indicated that the practices of preschools got challenges: teachers' and principals' qualifications; teaching methods; the classroom environment and its organization; playgrounds and play equipment; parent teacher interactions; and assessment practices which are the indicators of the

policy implementation for ECCE, were not properly implemented even if there were the effort to implement a policy preschools.

Learning with mother tongue was implemented in almost all preschools, but private preschools which thought English language as a subject, and there were schools that have thought subjects with English language which are not recommended in preschool curriculum. The early childhood period is so complex that involved the collaborative effort of parents, schools, governments, and other supporters in realizing the holistic development of the child. Nevertheless, there were limitations working with parents, communities, health offices, and local/international NGOs in preschools.

The availability of separate rest rooms, separate toilets, children's reference books about their surroundings, feeding rooms, in classrooms were claimed to be inadequate. Moreover, there were no medical consults, interest corners, and pedagogy center in almost all preschools except in one. In addition, materials and equipments for children with special needs were nonexistent in the preschools.

## 7. Recommendations

In order to solve the challenges the preschools faced, and to improve their performance the following recommendations have been forwarded based on the findings of the study.

- Teachers are the most important persons in implementing the policy, all teachers at this level must be well trained to assist the children and implement the program as well. Refreshment trainings, workshops, and seminars on the issue of preschool education need to be prepared by the concerned body.
- The Ministry of Education needs make all the possible strives to start new teacher training programs at degree level besides diploma level that already started to upgrade the preschool teachers who are already in service.
- The government in general, professionals in each level in particular, need facilitate an awareness program to the communities about the objective of the preschool education program in collaboration with Ministry of information to get media coverage for the purpose.
- It is also advisable to strengthened institutionalize the coordination efforts through establishing a sort of sectoral/institutional network at all levels.
- The organization of classroom and outdoor spaces, materials and equipments, child centered teaching methods, individual assessment, and play are important parts in helping children to acquire the skills and competencies associated with preschool provision. Therefore, the preschools need to provide age appropriate and well equipped materials and instructional methods to facilitate the children needs.
- Participating families and communities in children's learning, and use of culturally-relevant materials are very vital for preschools for holistic development of children.
- Teachers' incentives and commitment should be strengthened to their maximum effort and preparing instructional materials using low cost or locally available raw materials, are advisable, to improve the shortages.
- In connection with the children with disability the support should be strengthened by creating conducive nature and trained manpower of preschools for them.
- Amhara Regional State Education Bureau needs take the initiation and lead to using its curriculum expert to supplement the existing preschool curriculum with contextualized text books and teacher guides to minimize or avoid the ambiguity and difficulty nature of the curriculum and repeatedly demand of refreshment training from existing teachers and the new comers in to the system.
- Bahir Dar city Administration education department should keep responsibilities in running preschool education. Therefore it needs strictly make sure that a minimal level of requirement in program facilities maintained in licensing for preschool education.

- The education department also should effectively overcome its duties and responsibilities in ensuring and controlling standards. Effective and continuous supervision need to be conducted to support teachers to implement the curriculum properly.
- As this study is very limited to come up with all critical problems being featured in the current preschool policy implementation process in Bahir Dar, further and more in-depth study should be carried out on the same area to identify or provide possible answers to the other problems uncovered in the study.

## Author contribution statement

Jerusalem Yibeltal Yizengaw: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis, Sample Determination, Methodological Approaches, Software, Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

Milatwork Tessega: Data Curation, Software, Writing- Original draft preparation, Investigation.

## Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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