

Understanding Effective Teaching Beliefs of Instructors and Students: A Qualitative Study at an Ethiopian University

By Markos Tezera Taye^{*}, Abdulghani Muthanna[±], Guoyuan Sang[°]
& Ahmed Alduais[•]

This article explores instructors and students' beliefs toward effective teaching in higher education in Ethiopia. Besides classroom observations, we developed and conducted semi-structured interviews with ten instructors and 12 students at one higher education institution. We followed the data condensation and displayed it for interpreting the data. The findings highlight the qualities of effective teaching and the hope for a change in the current teaching approach to actively participate in the teaching-learning action. This, however, demands a change in designing the course syllabus and assignments and the continuous professional development of the teaching faculty.

Keywords: beliefs, effective teaching, student-centered approach, professional development, higher education, Ethiopia

Introduction

It is reasonable to recognize that teachers' pedagogical skills and personal beliefs shape their classroom teaching (Brinkmann, 2016). It is equally important to consider students' beliefs toward effective teaching as their beliefs help teachers design effective teaching strategies for their courses (Kurniati & Cahyono, 2018). This means that personality aids teaching (Arif, Rashid, Tahira & Akhter, 2012). Therefore, understanding beliefs could help comprehend how personality and functioning vary across individuals (Dweck, 2008). Therefore, this article focuses on exploring the beliefs of instructors and students toward effective teaching in higher education in Ethiopia, how their beliefs influence teachers to adopt a student-centered approach, and how students take responsibility for their learning.

In the age of information and globalization, there is an increasing demand for changes in higher education institutions with a focus on curricula, teaching strategies, support services, and overall functioning that prepare the new generation for current and future challenges (Mok, 2010; White & Glickman, 2007; Zhu & Engels, 2014). A change is a never-ending process that could be adapted as far as the goals of a given change are made clear and shared to have a conscious social awareness of a particular change (Keating, 2005). For example, a change in

^{*} Assistant Professor, College of Education, University of Gondar, Ethiopia.

[±] Associate Professor, Department of Teacher Education, Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Norway.

[°] Professor, Center for Teacher Education Research, Beijing Normal University, China.

[•] Associate Researcher and Assistant Professor, Department of Human Sciences (Psychology) University of Verona, Italy.

curriculum or teaching approaches could improve educational institutions (Lin, Chuang, & Hsu, 2014).

Ethiopian higher learning institutions provide teachers with a year-long pedagogical training for all instructors to enable them to implement a student-centered approach in their classrooms. However, they are focusing on developing teachers' teaching skills without addressing students' and teachers' beliefs on effective teaching. How teachers and students' beliefs shape the implementation of the student-centered approach is an under-researched issue in Ethiopian higher education. This article explores the influence of teachers and students' beliefs on the implementation of the student-centered approach. It mainly aims to answer these research questions: 1) How do instructors and students perceive effective teaching at university? Moreover, 2) How do such beliefs contribute to using a student-centered approach?

A Brief Overview of Higher Education in Ethiopia

Higher learning in Ethiopia has almost the same age as Axum Obelisks that dates back to the traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church before 300 AD (Abebe, 1995; Kebede, 2010; Teferra, 2017; Teferra & Altbach, 2004; Saint, 2004; Wagaw, 1990 as cited in Yallew, 2020). However, the history of modern higher education in Ethiopia dates back to the establishment of the Addis Ababa University College in 1950 (Asgedom & Hagos, 2016). The Ethiopian higher education system has seen a massive expansion (Abdela & Pillay, 2014); federal universities are currently forty-four. The Ministry of Education was responsible for leading the Ethiopian higher learning institutions. Nevertheless, after establishing the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in October 2018, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education became responsible for overseeing science, technical, and vocational education and training.

Many nations continuously evaluate and develop their higher education policies and systems. The Ethiopian higher education is no exception; it called for a pedagogical philosophy reform, hoping for a shift from instructor-led teaching to student-centered learning and provided pedagogical training for faculty members (MoE, 2015). In the 21st century, there is a trend toward employing a student-centered approach wherein students take responsibility for their learning (Trentin, 2010). Below is a brief description of what effective teaching is.

Beliefs on Effective Teaching

The teaching action is at the heart of education institutions. It mainly includes teachers and students (Briggs & Sommefeldt, 2002). A variety of beliefs on the implementation of teaching has been reported. For example, many instructors prefer not to engage students in class participation and keep their primary role as controllers and transmitters of knowledge (e.g., Alemu, 2010; Li, 2014; Trentin, 2010). Others believe that both instructors and students play essential roles in making the teaching-learning activity effective (e.g., Bidabadi, Isfahani, Rouhollahi, & Khalili, 2016; Brown & Atkins, 1988). Moreover, employing

different teaching approaches that encourage students' independent and collaborative learning helps develop critical thinking skills (Dunne & Wragg, 1994).

Effective teaching is viewed differently. Some scholars attribute effective teaching to an instructor's quality in relation to their subject knowledge, teaching skills, and professional skills (Brown & Atkins, 1988; Dunne & Wragg, 1994). In a cultural context where the people attribute effective teaching to the instructor's subject knowledge, students and instructors themselves may think of instructors as the primary source of knowledge, and they may gear the teaching/learning process to be teacher-centered (Briggs & Sommefeldt, 2002). In such teaching approaches, students may fail to have a meaningful learning experience and may not retain concepts introduced in the class (Senge, 2010). If instructors and students recognize rote learning as a norm in a given context, they never hesitate to adopt the teacher-centered approach (Briggs & Sommefeldt, 2002). Concerning this issue, Michael and Modell (2003, p. 96) asserted that "if instructors mainly test students' "ability to regurgitate memorized information," their students will "make little effort to learn to solve problems".

While one teaching approach could be practical in one context, it might not be so in another context (Brown & Atkins, 1988). However, the relationship between instructors and students is essential for an effective teaching-learning process in all contexts (Kyriacou, 2009).

University Teacher Competence and Effective Teaching

Are Beliefs Competencies, Vice Versa, or Both? It is not well-known whether university teachers and students' beliefs are static or dynamic. Do they keep changing based on the teaching environment, experienced lives, and professional development (Yuan, Chen, & Peng, 2020)? Or are they static and remain in conflict with the new beliefs in the work environment (Noben et al., 2021)? Given that they are a controversial issue, we assume it is not enough for university teachers to have positive beliefs on teaching and their discipline (e.g., Wang, Lee, & Park, 2020). Similarly, it is not enough for students to have positive beliefs on learning and their study discipline.

Although both parties' beliefs are essential for effective teaching and learning, these beliefs' nature is still insufficient for effective teaching. What is more, when these beliefs have in common, this is undoubtedly advantageous for both the students, the university teachers, and the society (Brickhouse, 1990). When the opposite happens, professional development training to help the teachers and students gain situational knowledge is highly required to bridge the gap (Halim, Buang, & Meerah, 2010). These beliefs, which are different according to the experiences and disciplines, are also valuable sources for the required key competencies for a university teacher and student (Clement, Clarebout, & Elen, 2003). For instance, several university teachers worldwide might find it hard to implement technology in their classes. They attribute this to the need for high efforts to prepare materials, tasks, or even incompetence in using technological equipment (Steel, 2009).

That being said, the professional development of university teachers is the essence of successful higher education. Higher education institutions' responsibility is to ensure continuous professional development for university teachers (Duță, 2012). This professional development should include university students, too. When the students are not well-prepared for learning, this hinders effective learning, even with university teachers with high key competencies (Gil-Galván & Gil-Galván, 2013). By this means, professional development is intersectional in that it involves the collaboration of three parties at the micro-level: university teachers, students, and administration of the university. The beliefs of these three parties will be inconsistent, and they will need to reach an agreement. This conflict could hinder both teaching and learning processes (e.g., Çelik, Bayraktar-Çepni, & İlyas, 2013). Previous research argues that this conflict is more evident in novice university teachers (e.g., demonstrators, lecturers) (Löfström & Poom-Valickis, 2013). A study found that while university teachers should develop and be trained to have self-reflecting, self-renewing, self-motivating, and self-developing personality competencies; students should equally have inter-reflecting, inter-renewing, inter-motivating, and inter-developing competencies (Blašková, Blaško, Jankalová, & Jankal, 2014).

Key Competencies of a Good University Teacher. Several attempts have been made towards a standardized model identifying the critical competencies of a good university teacher. A comprehensive model is that including professional competence, educational competence, motivational competence, communicational competence, personal competence, science and research competence, and publication competence (Blašková, Blaško, & Kucharčíková, 2014). Higher education institutions' provided training is significant to ensure the provision of quality materials reflecting all these competencies. It should have training that ensures lifelong learning for both teachers and students. Lifelong learning enables them to learn, do, live together and with others, and learn to be (Duță & Rafailă, 2014a). This list of competencies is not different from scientific, teaching, transversal, relational, vocation and dedication, higher education experience, self-assessment, professional development, and research competencies (Duță Pânișoară, & Pânișoară, 2014). At all rates, whatever the list of these critical competencies, they should ensure achieving three dimensions: cognitive, functional, and professional skills and knowledge (Dută & Rafaila, 2014b).

Factors Enhancing Effective University Teaching. Mutual understanding and collaboration between university teachers and students are vital to achieving successful learning and teaching. A university teacher who is pedagogically, professionally, and communicatively competent needs to be flexible for all teaching environments, students' preferences, and even beliefs (Blaskova, Blasko, Matuska, & Rosak-Szyrocka, 2015; Ospanova et al., 2015). This kind of teacher should motivate oneself, students, and colleagues and be motivated in return (Blaskova, Blasko, Figurska, & Sokol, 2015; Su, 2016). To have both competent teachers and students is a step towards higher quality higher education and world-class higher education institutions (Kornienko, 2015). Moreover, the teaching-

learning environment and even the socio-economic environments contribute to this mutual understanding between the two parties to reach effective teaching (Bogomaz, Kozlova, & Atamanova, 2015; Van Houtte & Demanet, 2016). When the university teachers believe in learners' autonomy, they create a learning environment yet establish a positive context for their teaching environment (Yasmin & Sohail, 2018).

Knowledge is also a potential factor enhancing effective university teaching. Pedagogical knowledge is more influential than the belief in integrating technology use towards effective teaching (Taimalu & Luik, 2019). This includes the administrators and policy-makers' role in supporting and funding professional development, helping teaching acquire practical knowledge (Ingwu et al., 2019). In other words, while some teachers might have the initiative to practice student-centered learning, the educational system in their country could be a barrier (e.g., Yasmin, Naseem, & Masso, 2019). Inadequate and/or insufficient knowledge in the field being taught turns to be a disadvantage, even when the teacher manifests high self-efficacy (Kartal et al., 2019). It is the higher education administration's responsibility to develop effective strategies for professional development, including the knowledge element (Yessingaliyeva et al., 2020). It is worth mentioning that inadequate teacher knowledge affects university teaching, organizational inadequacy, and stress as threatening factors for teachers' psychological state, affecting their teaching (Yin, Han, & Perron, 2020).

Methods

The authors employed the qualitative ethnographic methodology that focuses on understanding individuals' actions and exploring and reporting events as they occur in natural settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Smith, 2005). For collecting in-depth data, the authors recruited 22 participants from the College of Medical and Health Sciences (CMHS), the Institute of Technology (IT), the College of Social Science and Humanities (CSSH), and the College of Agriculture and Rural Transformation (CART) within the same higher education institution. This triangulation of sources enhances the trustworthiness of the collected data. The instructor participants, who are 10 in total, were selected based on their pedagogical training and were teaching undergraduate students during the study conduction. Such purposive selection of participants helps obtain deeper and quality data (Stephens, 2009). Some participants also had administrative experience besides their teaching tasks. Table 1 provides profiles of instructor participants.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Instructor Participants

Code	Sex	Discipline	Qualification	Academic Status	Teaching Experience	College/Faculty
T1	F	Nursing	Master	Lecturer	4 Years	CMHS
T2	F	Medical Microbiology	PhD	Assistant Professor	Ten years	CMHS
T3	M	Pharmacy	Master	Lecturer	3 Years	
T4	F	Mechanical Engineering	Master	Lecturer	5 years	IT
T5	M	Hydraulic	PhD	Assistant Professor	6 years	IT
T6	M	Natural Resource Management	Master	Assistant Professor	7 Years	CART
T7	M	Rural Development and Agricultural Transformation	PhD	Assistant Professor	7 years	CART
T8	F	Geography	Master	Lecturer	3 Years	CSSH
T9	M	English	PhD	Assistant Professor	8 Years	CSSH
T10	F	Psychology	Master	Lecturer	6 Years	CSSH

The other 12 participants are students selected from classes being taught by the selected instructor participants. In addition to the instructors' suggestions that these recruited students are more expressive, they were also the representatives of their classes regardless of their academic performance. Some student participants were also involved in students' affairs at the university level. Table 2 describes the student participants.

Table 2. Characteristics of Students

Participants	Sex	Department	Year	Role	Faculty/College
S1	F	Nursing	3 rd	Class representative	CHMS
S2	M	Nursing	3 rd	A member of a club	CHMS
S3	M	Physiology	2 nd	Class representative	CHMS
S4	F	Pharmacy	4 th	Class representative	CHMS
S5	M	Mechanical Engineering	4 th	A member of a club	IT
S6	F	Hydraulics and Water Engineering	4 th	Class representative	IT
S7	M	Natural Resource Management	2 nd	Class representative	CART
S8	F	Natural Resource Management	3 rd	No Participation	CART
S9	M	Geography	3 rd	Class representative	CSSH
S10	F	English	3 rd	A member of a club	CSSH
S11	M	Psychology	2 nd	Class representative	CSSH
S12	F	English	2 nd	No Participation	CSSH

Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

For collecting data, the authors developed and designed the semi-structured interviews for the study participants, focusing on exploring the institution's organizational culture under study and its impact on the implementation of the

student-centered learning approach. The interviews were developed in English. Semi-structured interviews help collect in-depth data (Muthanna, 2019). Another focus of the interviews focused on exploring the potential effect of beliefs on effective teaching and implementing active learning approaches in the classroom.

After the primary author collected the participants' consent for participating in the study, he conducted the interviews. He started by interviewing the instructor participants. This is followed by interviewing students. The primary author also conducted classroom observations to strengthen data collected via interviews (Flick, 2007; Van Maanen, 1979). The observations focused on exploring how faculty members teach, and students learn in the classrooms, focusing on implementing the student-centered approaches. The primary author conducted 20 observations (two for each instructor participant) with around 1 hour for each observational session.

Data Interpretation Techniques

After transcribing the collected data verbatim, the authors followed the data condensation and data display techniques proposed by Miles and Huberman (2012) for critical interpretations. Miles and Huberman (2012, p. 12) defined *data condensation* as “the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appears in the full corpus (body) of written-up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials”. This means that organizing chunks of data into categories is the primary activity that helps to note details and identify emerging patterns (Hamersley & Atkinson, 2007; Waal, 2009). The data condensation included activities such as “writing summaries,” “coding,” “developing themes”, “generating categories,” and “writing analytic memos” (Miles & Huberman, 2012, p. 12). The extensive readings of the transcripts led to the emergence of many codes. These coding processes helped reduce the data to a manageable volume.

Further readings of the coded texts led to the identification of themes and categories. After the condensation of data, the authors employed the technique of data display, which is inseparable from data condensation and is “an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action” and assists researchers in comprehending and interpreting the data effectively (Miles & Huberman, 2012, p. 12). Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) proposed different techniques for displaying data, such as “matrices” and “networks,” arguing that the way qualitative researchers display their data depends on the nature of the coded data. We adopted the networks technique by connecting similar codes and texts in one separate file. Reading these texts several times led to the emergence of three essential themes being reported below.

Results

This study aimed to explore teachers and students' beliefs at the Ethiopian higher education system through a qualitative study. This section presents the findings for three essential themes: qualities of an effective teacher, effective teaching, and call for reform in teaching and learning perspectives. Each of these themes is supported by extracted excerpts from the collected data from the participants, both teachers and students. These are also integrated with the collected observations.

Many instructors and student participants defined an effective instructor in personality traits, preparedness, and content knowledge. All participants also agreed that the instructors are responsible for students' learning and the effectiveness of the teaching-learning activity. The participants' beliefs on effective teaching impact the adoption of the student-centered approaches. Their beliefs are discussed in the following three themes.

Qualities of an Effective Instructor

Instructor and student participants regarded an effective instructor as a person with sufficient up-to-date content knowledge and preparedness. They also agreed that effective instructors have practical knowledge (beyond theoretical knowledge), which helps them ease the lessons for their students. Most importantly, the instructor's understanding of the course is an essential quality of an effective instructor. However, many participants highlighted the importance of instructors' content knowledge over their instructional skills to contribute to students' learning. Following are exemplary quotes:

To be an effective instructor, first and foremost, instructors should have good knowledge of the subject matter. Instructors without adequate subject matter knowledge are nothing. Instructors' communication skill is something that should come next to share their knowledge with students. T10

I would like to suggest that instructors' subject matter knowledge matters more than their instructional skills. Effective transmission of information in the classroom is highly determined by how well the instructors are prepared for the course matter since knowledgeable instructors can easily design and implement different teaching approaches on the spot. Hence, the teaching approaches of instructors are something secondary. T6

In addition to the content and pedagogical knowledge, all participants believed that instructors should possess and practice professional ethics such as showing respect to one another and students in words and deeds. Further, effective instructors are highly 'passionate' about the teaching profession and care about students' learning. In connection to this, an instructor participant said:

... an effective instructor values professional ethics, which includes the way he dresses and communicates with students, and besides, they should plan the lesson and prepare

themselves before delivering the lesson since there is a saying that “to teach, is to learn twice. T2

Teaching ethics also relates to instructors’ being disciplined and supportive. Showing punctuality, communicative competence, playing role models for students, and dressing well are also ethically crucial for effective instruction. The instructor participants mentioned that such traits potentially influence the students’ learning in the classroom. This idea was summed up by an instructor participant who stated:

One of the reasons that hinder students from participation in the classroom is the instructor’s behavior. Students fear participating in a class taught by an unkind, arrogant, overacted, and disrespectful instructor. Most students know instructors who have such behavior, and they sometimes accuse these instructors of showing misbehavior. T4

Furthermore, all participants stated that effective instructors consistently guide, appreciate, respect students, and establish a good rapport with students. However, the student participants showed a deep concern regarding a smooth relationship between instructors and students. For example, S11 stated that effective instructors have “optimal relationships with students”. Also, the student participants discoursed that instructors should treat students with respect. Following is an exemplary quote:

There is an Ethiopian proverb that says, “ከቅንቅን ፈታ” which means that a person’s approach is more valued than the things they deliver for others. An effective instructor shows welcoming faces for students. Students may make mistakes, but instructors should advise students to help them avoid repeating the same mistakes rather than insulting and approaching them fiercely. S1

As highlighted above, a good relationship with students is essential in students’ effective learning. The significance of developing a good relationship with students is also emphasized in the university’s reviewed documents. For instance, it is stated that instructors are required to “treat and interact with students ... giving due respect to their human dignity, emotions, efforts and the particular circumstances they may find themselves and rid off oneself from injuries, bias, and prejudice, iniquitous and discriminatory practices” (University of Gondar, 2013, p. 25). However, the instructor participants raised the difficulty of controlling some students who do not reflect learning ethics, stating that a teacher-student relationship should have limitations.

By consensus, all participants indicated the significance of understanding students’ needs and treating all students equally. Additionally, the student participants shared that effective instructors attempt to understand their students’ psychological state, especially those who face challenges during their studies. Metaphorically, the student participants depicted an effective instructor like an influential medical doctor who diagnoses the patient’s conditions and prescribes clear recommendations accordingly. In this sense, S3 discoursed that ‘if students

have an examination, they might be too stressed to attend other classes ... only effective instructors who would appreciate students' condition and provide them with some advice. Considering the psychological aspect of students' wellbeing is essential, and the instructor participants also highlight this. For example, T4 mentioned that "effective instructors worry about and consistently investigate students' individual and social factors that would potentially affect their learning, and they discuss with students how they could manage their problems".

The Effective Teaching

The employment of a variety of teaching methods and techniques makes the teaching-learning activity enjoyable and effective. Considering the needs of students is also the main factor in the development of a course. Both study participant groups reported that students' needs for the course development are not considered. Further, class observations show that students' previous knowledge is not investigated or tested, leading to repeated topics. This indicates the lack of engagement and participation, an essential aspect for enjoyable and effective learning and/or teaching. The instructor participants show awareness of the importance of engaging students in participation and discussion, as seen in the following exemplary quotes.

If the instructor gives chances for students to reflect on what they have learnt, they can identify their knowledge gaps to take further actions...inside the classroom, instructors should make the session practical, give chances for students to participate, listen to their ideas, and understand their emotions and feelings. T1

To enhance students' understanding of the lesson, the instructor should revise the previous lesson in question and answer, employ a participatory teaching approach, and present the lesson carefully, without rushing. T2

However, classroom observations show that instructors are not implementing their views in actuality. This is due to the institution's lecture style implementation despite the university's emphasis on using the interactive approach in teaching. The student participants expressed their hope for a change in the teaching activity, where their voices and reflections are encouraged, heard, and valued. They are also aware of their obligations, such as ethicality and good relationships, as seen below.

... Students should adequately listen to and write what the instructor is saying. Of course, students should ask questions if there is something unclear. They should not raise questions by interrupting the lesson since it may affect the teaching and learning process. S9

If the instructor forwards some questions, students should try their best to answer questions. Otherwise, students should ask questions only at the end of the session. S1
Students might have questions, but it is not wise to interrupt the lesson. Of course, I am not saying that students should not ask, but I am saying that students should ask questions after the instructor has finished the lesson. S8

Further, the student participants suggested that an effective instructor can use different icebreakers to create an encouraging learning environment. For example, one participant said:

An instructor provides students with psycho games related to the lesson. I feel bored of instructors who always focus on the lesson without motivating students through different techniques. Otherwise, students will be tired of the lesson, and their retention level will decrease since it is lecture intensive. S12

A Hope for a Change in the Teaching Approach

The study participants agreed that a good understanding of the content and the discipline and instruction mode (English) are essential for helping learners comprehend the content and comply with the discipline's overall nature. Some participants emphasized the importance of instructors' being well expressive and systematic in their teachings. Following are examples of the participants' viewpoints:

As far as instructors know what they are teaching, nothing hinders students from understanding the lesson. This means that instructors cannot face problems expressing points to the students more quickly if they know what they are teaching. Delivering lessons without adequate knowledge about the content shall not be considered teaching; instead, it attempts to confuse students. (T9)

A knowledgeable instructor is an effective instructor who can help students understand the content in a reasonable manner. Students taught by a knowledgeable instructor will definitely have good subject knowledge as the instructor can answer questions forwarded from students. (T5)

The above accounts refer to instructors as knowledge transmitters and students as dependent learners, which is evident in the teacher-centered approaches.

Our observational research reports that instructors explain every concept, leaving no room for students to reflect on their thoughts. Being silent, the students get the feeling of being dependent (on their teachers). Such an authoritarian teaching approach does not effectively develop students' critical thinking that demands their participation and discussion with real-life situations. While interviewing the student participants about such a teaching approach, they preferred to participate and discuss. Some instructors even highlighted this, who stated "students could understand a lesson if they engage in laboratory work as per the curriculum's direction, T3". Likewise, student participants further agreed that students understand lessons as long as instructors work in the laboratory and fieldwork. This revealed how instructors and students associate practical lessons with practice-based teaching.

While all study participants believe in the importance of linking theories with practice to better understand a lesson, it is not attained. For example, the student participants discoursed:

Since instructors do not teach theory with practice, I usually forget the lesson after the examination. Even I do examinations by memorizing every fact rather than analyzing and establishing the links among concepts that I have learnt in the classroom. S5

As a science stream, instructors are not teaching courses by linking theories with practice. In cognizant of this fact, I do not feel confident that I will solve natural work environments. Generally, instructors focus on theories. S7

Further, our classroom observations showed the absence of engaging students in participation. Further, while instructors provide examples, the student participants hoped to use national-related examples rather than Westerners. Additionally, combining instructors and students' efforts all together leads to better outcomes of the teaching-learning activity. Doing so demands consideration of students' interests rather than the curriculum. On this issue, some participants said:

... Instructors should give project works even though students are losing interest in working on projects. Moreover, instructors should create opportunities for students to be active participants and present their project works to help them understand the topic well. T4

To make the lesson understandable, instructors should have power-point slides full of figures and charts, and they should give students a chance to reflect their personal views about the issues to be discussed in the classroom, and practices should support the lesson taught in the class. Otherwise, memorization is meaningless and would lead students to forget the lesson. T8

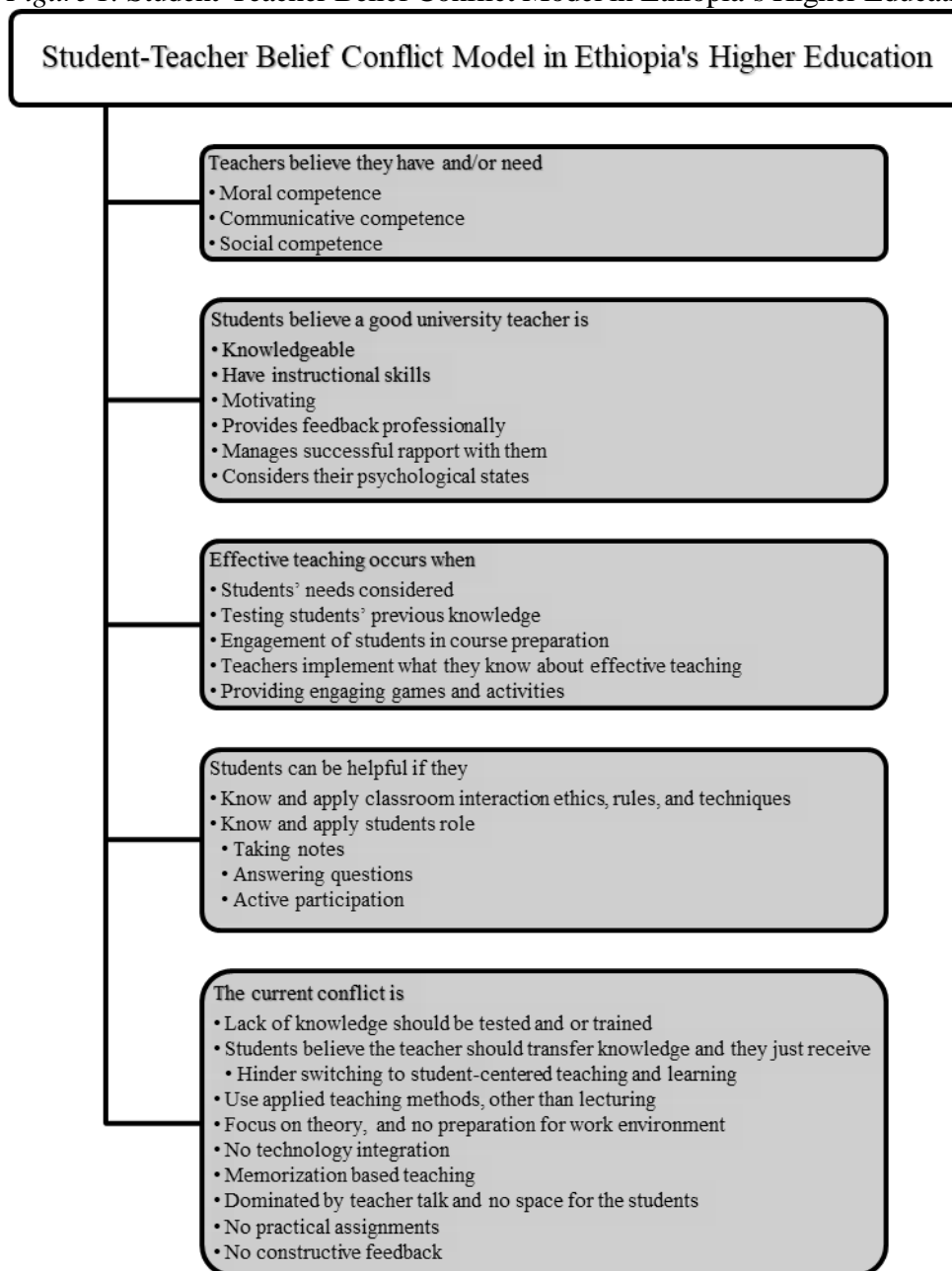
If the instructor takes most of the class time, students cannot develop their self-confidence and communication skills, and they will understand only some of the lesson as their attention decreases...I know students who succeed in the paper-pencil tests but begin to shiver when their instructors request them to present in front of their colleagues. Some students cannot speak in front of people at all. S8

The above quotes reflect the participants' hope for a change in the teaching approach that is teacher-centered. They are hoping for the use of a centered approach wherein their voices are heard. Such engagement of students in learning would enrich their understanding of the curriculum. While instructors support the learner-centered approach, they are simply informed about their inability to practice it due to the shortage of time and the overall load of the course's content.

The participants also agreed that providing students with assignments that should improve students' analytical skills and receive constructive feedback is another vital source of learning. Such hopes are still not considered at the higher education institutions in Ethiopia.

Figure 1 summarizes the current state of student-teacher belief conflict in the Ethiopian higher education system. Hence, this calls for an immediate change in university teachers' professional development and preparation for higher education.

Figure 1. Student-Teacher Belief Conflict Model in Ethiopia's Higher Education



Discussion

This article reports on the beliefs of instructors and students on effective teaching and the perceived impact of these beliefs on implementing the student-centered approach in the classroom. The shared beliefs of instructors and students on the qualities of an effective instructor represent the reflection of the university's teaching and learning culture. In the context of the studied university, instructors' content knowledge and personality traits were considered essential qualities of an

effective instructor, while the instructor's pedagogical skills were de-emphasized in characterizing the instructor's quality. Some of the personality traits are believed to be fundamental in assuring effective teaching and learning; these include politeness, knowledge, updating oneself, respecting oneself and their profession, upholding professional ethics, establishing friendly approaches with their students, showing a welcoming face to the students, answering students' questions correctly, skillfully understanding the students' psychological state, understanding the needs of students, treating all students as equals and being able to acknowledge that every student has the potential to learn. It should be noted that the relationship between instructors and students needs to be limited to a good working relationship. In this regard, instructors should inform students of expected behavior in the classroom to make students feel at ease to approach them.

As a quality measure of the effective instructor, instructors' subject knowledge was represented by their theoretical and practical knowledge in their discipline. This necessitates professional development for individual instructors; the university should regularly update instructors' subject knowledge. For instance, instructors may update themselves through regular reading of up-to-date books and articles related to their teaching. It is equally important to enhance instructors' knowledge of their pedagogical skills for delivering quality instruction (Brown & Atkins, 1988; Dunne & Wragg, 1994; Muthanna, 2011). This may include strengthening existing training programs concerning active-learning approaches, students' assessment, and classroom management. Otherwise, students and instructors may believe that instructors' pedagogical skills are secondary in a university context.

Besides instructors' overall subject knowledge and ability to link theories with practice, English helps students understand a lesson. The study student participants regarded instructors as knowledge transmitters, hoping for a change in their teaching approach. The change should allow students to take part in reflecting thoughts during the class. Further, the assignments should improve students' analytical skills and encourage various sources to broaden students' knowledge. Providing feedback on students' assignments is essential.

Additionally, developing course objectives based on students' needs is the main factor for effective teaching. This finding is consistent with (Crețu & Rogoz, 2014). While different teaching approaches and techniques are helpful, the observations show that the lecturing mode is the institution's dominant teaching approach. While instructors and students prefer to employ the centered-teaching approach, the lack of teaching aids hinders.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a need to include students' skills in the national curricula to balance theory and practice. Considering students' needs and current knowledge is essential for designing the course syllabus and selecting appropriate teaching approaches and techniques. This also emphasizes training instructors on the importance and use of the student-centered approach, which is beneficial for

instructors and students. Finally, a continuous sharpening of an instructor's personality helps effective teaching-learning activity in higher education.

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