



RESEARCH ARTICLE

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES OF CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: EFL TEACHER-EDUCATORS AND LEARNERS OF JIMMA AND BULEHORA COLLEGES OF TEACHERS' EDUCATION IN FOCUS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the practices and challenges of co-curricular activities (CCAs) in colleges of teachers' educations (CTEs) of Oromia regional state. The study particularly, investigate the extent to which EFL teacher-educators and learners were engaged in the practices of CCAs and enhance English language proficiency and improve quality of education and factors that affect the implementation of effective CCAs in the colleges. To accomplish this purpose, the study employed a descriptive study method, which was supplemented by both quantitative and qualitative research to enrich data. The study was carried out in two CTEs selected through purposive sampling aimed to make the sample more representatives by including the old and the novice CTEs in the region. Then, 11 EFL teacher-educators and 62 EFL learners were selected from the two CTEs using simple random sampling techniques particularly lottery method. Questionnaire, interview, FGD, and content analysis were data collection tools used for this study. Frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were utilized to analyze the close-ended questionnaire. The qualitative data obtained through an open-ended questionnaire, interview, FGD, and content analyses were analyzed using narration. Hence, the major results of the study revealed as almost all EFL instructors in the colleges believe in that CCAs are vital in enhancing learners' educational and social benefits: English language proficiency, learning psychology, and students' social interactions in general; in the observed CTEs, CCAs has no focal person who coordinate, monitor and evaluate the practice and challenges of the activities to the concerned body; regional education bureau and college top management have no clear and smart guideline which helps them to organize CCAs particularly which enhances students English language proficiency; the very low attention given to CCAs by the college top management result in the very low outcome expected from the activities; even though the number of CCAs on the syllabus or/and curriculum were large in number, most of these clubs were not functioning/inactive in the observed CTEs. Generally the inadequacy of the budget, unavailability of resources, the absence of in-service training programs on CCAs for teachers, were the major challenges facing EFL teachers to practice CCAs in the colleges. Finally, recommendations were drawn based on the above findings. The point of the recommendations include: awareness creation of the college top management on the purpose of CCAs through seminars and workshops about the practice of CCAs in the college. CTEs should have smart guidelines on how to organize, support, supervise, monitor, and evaluate the practice and challenges of CCAs particularly English language clubs in order to enhance the status of students' engagement in the CCAs.

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INTRODUCTION

With globalization as one of the predominant terms in the academic discourse about the trends and prospects for economy, investments, and culture in the contemporary world, language learning is intensifying. In Ethiopia, English is used as a medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary education and as a working language in some government and non-government organizations. Countrywide, it serves as international language for communication and functions as a medium of instruction, language of research in higher institutions, and language of business and profession too.

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That is to say, English has become the language of international affairs. The use of English in media is also great. For example, 60% of the world's radio broadcast, and 70% of the world's mail are covered by English language (Broughton *et al*, 1978 cited in Biniam, 2008, p.14). According to the education and training policy of Ethiopia, established in 1994, all universities in the country are supposed to produce documents, conduct research, publish materials, hold meetings, write minutes, and write memorandum and reports effectively and efficiently in English language (MoE, 2007). Consequently, at tertiary level, students' English language proficiency is critical to their academic success in particular and their profession in general, as they are required to carry out various academic and non-academics responsibilities in their future careers. In contrary to this fact, Hailom and Woldu

(1998) argue that most of Ethiopian students could not reach a reasonable level of English language proficiency. "Having passed through several years of learning English beginning from primary school levels up to higher levels of learning, subject teachers at the different teacher training institutions in the country are found to be deficient in their mastery of English language proficiency" (Hailom&Woldu, 1998, P. 439). The foremost factors identified by several researchers which negatively impact the mastery of students' English language proficiency is that students have little chance to use the language outside the classroom, and teaching methods teachers use. For example, on the condition of English language learning in the Ethiopian context, researches reveal that most of the time, English language learning is confined to the classroom level only where students have no room for real exposure to the target language that help them to enhance their language proficiency (Mekonnen, 1984). On the other hand, many scholars like Krashen and Terrell (1983) state that classroom language teaching is targeted at providing learners with opportunities to use the language outside the classroom where the student is able to use both the outside world and the classroom settings for their further development. Krashen (1981) also explains that for effective language learning to take place, the language learning environment should be worth considering. Language learning under real life environment would give learners a living means of communication, providing them with better opportunities to learn the target language successfully (Stern, 1983). Likewise, many authors describe as classroom language learning can be more assisted if teachers help learners to get chances to work with the target language in different contexts, and to practice the target language by providing them with more options and resources outside the classroom so that they can use the target language for the real life communicative purposes in general and develop their English language proficiency in particular (Pegrum, 2000, Brown, 1994, Willis 1997).

Statement of the Problem

Various EFL scholars have been agreed that language learning would be more effectively provided that classroom learning should be supplemented by appropriate and reasonably sufficient practices outside the classroom (Biniam, 2008). The researchers of this study also believe that learners should get chances to practice the language they learn in the classroom outside of it. Hence, in the process of foreign or second language learning, limiting learners only to classroom learning do not provide them with the necessary knowledge and proficiencies. Similarly, the language curriculum prepared for tertiary level like universities and colleges of teachers' education, which is produced by the Ministry of Education and regional education bureau, clearly shows as co-curricular activities would provide learners with opportunities of practicing language skills outside the classroom and make them confident and effective users of the target language for real life communicative purposes. Concerning this, there are number of co-curricular activities expected to be offered in the college of teachers' education. For instance, ELIP (English Language Improvement Program), English club, Art club, Mini-media: students newspaper, dramatic activities, role play, simulation, group discussions, dialogues, language games, debate contests and others are some of the active co-curricular activities which have been established in the college of teacher education (CTE) and may make language learning more real life among students (Manas R. P. &Yadesa B. G., 2012;

Biniam, 2008, P.15). Hence, co-curricular activities hold a place of great importance in the field of education for the all-round development of learners in general and language proficiency in particular. Unlike the regular classroom where language is treated consciously, if the various learners' activities are used outside the regular class time, students may find them as meaningful as life itself. This is because student activities beyond the classroom level are believed to enrich learning by way of involving the learners in informal experiences to try out the language for themselves (Rivers, 1987). That is to say, language outside the classroom is a real source of authentic language where students use it for various real life experiences.

Consequently, there are a few studies conducted on the areas of co-curricular activities used at the classroom level. A study done by Schallert and Horwitz (1999), which is intended to see the link between English as a foreign or second language classroom, and language anxiety; and the researchers revealed that foreign and/or second language classroom is strongly affected by classroom anxiety in general and speaking anxiety element in particular. Thus, the researchers suggested that co-curricular activities can be one way of involving students in real life learning.

The other researchers, Manas R. P. &Yadesa B. G. (2012) planned to assess the implementation of co-curricular activities in secondary schools by Oromiya special zone, surrounding Finfine. The finding of their study revealed that the number of clubs existed and effectively giving services for school community was less and cannot give a chance to involve for the large population of students and mass communities of the school. In addition, the result of the study clearly depicts as there is almost no in-service training for teachers on the area of co-curricular activities, and shortage of provision of the relevant resources in the secondary schools. BiniamAtnafe, (2008), on the other hand, conducted research on extra class activities in improving students' English language skills by focusing on the role of student activities outside the regular class hours in improving learners' English language speaking and listening skills. The study found out that extra class activities have paramount functions in improving students English language speaking and listening skills. However, the students and teachers do not have positive attitudes and awareness about the role of extra class activities on English language skills improvement for they feel that the program would create further burden on them and it may take much of their time.

The above studies, on the other hand, did not attempt to look into the practice and challenges of co-curricular activities in promoting learners' English language proficiency. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to assess the practice and challenges of co-curricular activities in promoting learners' English language proficiency with particular reference to Jimma and BuleHora colleges of teachers' education. Consequently, this research basically differs from the above studies in that it has used the descriptive research design involving both quantitative and qualitative methods, it was conducted on tertiary (college) level, and not only on the significance and role of co-curricular activities in improving learners' English language listening and speaking skills but also it has assessed the practice and challenges of co-curricular activities in promoting learners' English language proficiency in the selected colleges of teachers' education in the region.

Basic research questions

- How EFL teachers and learners practice co-curricular activities in the colleges of teachers' education?
- What kinds of co-curricular activities should be given more emphasis to promote English language proficiency?
- To what extent do EFL teachers and learners have awareness about the advantages of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency?
- What are the challenges EFL teacher-educators and learners encounter while organizing co-curricular activities in colleges of teachers' educations?

Objectives of the Study

General objective: The main objective of this study was to investigate the practice and challenges of co-curricular activities in promoting learners' English language proficiency in the selected colleges of teachers' education.

Specific objectives

- To examine how EFL teachers and learners practice co-curricular activities in the colleges of teachers' education
- To explore what kinds of co-curricular activities should be given more emphasis to promote English language proficiency
- To identify the extent do EFL teachers and learners have awareness about the advantages of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency
- To identify the challenges EFL teacher-educators and learners encounter while organizing co-curricular activities in colleges of teachers' educations

1.5. Expected outcomes of the study

- The result of the study has identified learners' interests, and tried to provided them with opportunities to participate in different co-curricular activities of their colleges.
- It could facilitate the teaching and learning of English language skills by creating co-curricular activity programs in the colleges.
- The result of the study provided learners with the chance of using English language beyond the classroom by encouraging them to be involved in many co-curricular activities.
- The findings of the study could give an insight for other interested researchers on the area in the future.

Limitations of the study

It is obvious that research work cannot be totally free from limitation. To this end, some limitations were observed in this study. That is, the researchers would like to note that due to scarcity of research budget, they were obliged to limit the study site to only two colleges of teacher education. They were also forced to limit the informants to as few as about 73 (11 EFL teacher-educators and 62 EFL learners) from the two colleges. Had it not been for the shortage of resources, it would have been better to reach more areas and more participants that would strengthen the dependability of the data and generalize

ability of the results. As a result, the study missed additional information which might be useful to support both quantitative and qualitative data.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this research, in order to achieve the intended objective and to address the basic research questions, the project were employed a descriptive research design involving both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

Population and sample size of the study

The study population for this project was EFL teacher-educators and third year English language majoring students from 2 colleges of teacher educators (Jimma and BuleHora) which are found in Oromiya Regional State. The selection of the study area was purposive because the researchers have experiences in learning and teaching in different colleges of the region, it happened to be convenient for them to gather the necessary data so smoothly. According to the information from Oromiya education bureau, in the 2015/2016 academic year, there are 8 EFL teacher-educators and 35 EFL learners in Jimma, and 7 EFL teacher-educators and 43 EFL learners in BuleHora which sum up to 93 as the population or the main sources of data for the study, respectively. The sample size for the participants of the quantitative data was determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) required sample size determination techniques. Accordingly, from the 93 total or main population of the study, 73 participants were selected as a sample using simple random sampling technique particularly lottery method. First, the technique of sampling proportional to size was used to determine the number of sample respondents from each college of teachers' education. Next, the name of EFL teacher-educators and students in the colleges were written on a piece of paper. Then, the pieces of paper with the names was rolled and drawn to be included as a sample. Consequently, 6 EFL teacher-educators and 28 EFL learners in Jimma, and 5 EFL teacher-educators and 34 EFL learners in BuleHora College of teachers' education which sum up to 73 samples were proportionally selected from each college respectively.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The data collection tools used for this project were questionnaire for both sample EFL teacher-educators and learners, to cross check the responses given by EFL teacher-educators on questionnaire, the researchers have conducted interview with sample EFL teacher-educators from each college purposefully, content analysis (analysing English language documents/syllabus from the ministry of education and/or regional education bureau), and focus group discussion only for selected EFL learners purposefully (2 FGD groups which contains 6 participants (2 from the higher, 2 from the medium, and 2 from the lower learners) in each college). Hence, qualitative data were analysed thematically, whereas the quantitative data were employed descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. As it is known, Cronbach Alpha (α) which is an index of reliability and ranges between zero and one is most common reliability statistics used to measure internal consistency or reliability and validity of the research instruments. Thus, teachers and students responses to the questionnaire were entered into SPSS

Version 22.0 computer software and checked for reliability and the Cronbach's Alpha statistical technique was used to check each item's reliability. Accordingly, 32 items with ($\alpha = 0.85$), which is good to be used as an instrument for data collection were duplicated and used because professionals have a rule of thumb for describing internal consistency or reliability using Cronbach alpha as (0.7- 0.8 acceptable, 0.8- 0.9 good and above 0.9 excellent) (Dornyei, 2007).

Ethical and Environmental Considerations

Virtually all studies that involve human subjects raise ethical concerns which should be dealt with appropriately. Accordingly, ethical issues pertaining to the legitimacy of this study and the rights of the human participants were addressed in the following ways. Before leaving for the data collections, the researchers were secured letter of permission from the university to the research sites. Firstly, all the respondents were provided with information regarding the objectives of the study, and ethical issues related ahead of data collection activities. Secondly, the provision of information was totally depended on the willingness of the respondents and they were not forced to give information they do not want to. Moreover, all the information obtained from the respondents was confidential. Thus, any information which may affect the personality and security of the respondents were not included in relation to their names. Besides, no attempt was made to obtain data in a cunning way. More importantly, respondents were told not to write their names on the questionnaire papers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study investigated practices and challenges of co-curricular activities in promoting students' English language skills in the selected colleges of teachers' education, Oromiya regional state. To this effect, data were collected from 11 EFL teacher-educators and 62 EFL learners. To collect relevant data for the study, questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion, and content analysis were employed. Table 1 below illustrates students' responses to the awareness level and impacts of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency. Table 1 consists of nine items designed to investigate the students' awareness level and impacts of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency. The first item was designed to identify whether participating in different CCAs has benefit for the students to promote English language proficiency or not. In connection with this item, 22 (35.5%) and 19 (30.6%) of the respondents have shown their strong agreement, and agreement with the claim respectively. However, 11 (17.7%) and 10 (16.0%) of the respondents were unable to decide and disagree with the items respectively. Similarly, the mean value for the item, which is ($M = 3.80$), indicates that the students' response inclines to 4 which shows as the respondents were agreed with the statement. From this, it can be implied that most of the students have awareness about the importance of participating in different co-curricular activities and as it helps them to promote English language proficiency. Regarding this, Wilmer (1963) notes that student activity programs outside the classroom would facilitate language learning among students and helps them to practice different language skills at a time. In the same manner, Bromley (1988) also argues that student activities outside the classroom are highly associated with the development of the various language skills. Again in Table 1, item 2 above, 32 (51.6%) and 15 (24.2%) of the students

replied disagree and strongly agree respectively to the item which tries to identify if they had a good chance to share ideas with their friends in English language classes. Whereas the other 13 (21%) and 2 (3.2%) were unable to decide and agree, and the mean for the response lied in the range of agree which shows that most of the students have a positive attitude towards the item under this number. Therefore, it could be concluded that the respondents have a positive attitude for the CCAs. This may be due to their ambition to improve their English language proficiency.

As indicated in Table 1 above, item 3 is assumed to identify students' attitude if CCAs could help them to learn new English vocabularies. Accordingly, 31 (50%) of the respondents replied they strongly agree and 27 (43.5%) agree with the assertion. On the other hand, only a few students, 2 (3.2%), and 2 (3.2%) were shown as they were unable to decide, and their disagreement respectively. In addition, the mean value for the item, which is ($M = 4.40$), lies nearly in the range of strong agreement (5) on the Likert-scale. Based on these findings, one can deduce that the majority of the student respondents have founded the activities (CCAs) more helpful. As shown in Table above item 1 and 4 were intended to identify whether also categorized under Table 1. Item 4 asked students if the co-curricular activities helped the students to have a chance of practicing integrated language skills at a time. Accordingly, 27 (43.5%), 23 (37.1%) and 11 (17.7%) of the respondents replied strongly agree, 'agree' and 'disagree' respectively and while the rest 1 (1.6%) remained undecided to the assertion. In a similar manner to the 5th item asked the respondents if the activities helped them to express themselves in English Language. Hence, 27 (40.3%), 12 (19.4%) and 3 (4.8%) of the respondents replied strongly agree, agree and disagree while the rest 3 (3.4%) were unable to decide. In addition, the mean of the two items, which is ($M = 4.16$ and 4.06), lies nearly in the range of agreement (4) which supports the discussions made under items 4 and 5. Hence, the respondents were found to have positive attitudes towards the items. From this it can be inferred that the student respondents tend to be aware of the fact that language can best be learned when it is practiced. In this regard, Williams & Burden (1997) state that in the process of second learning, language practices among learners would give them good opportunities to use the language for real communicative purposes. Consequently, from the above discussions, it can be inferred that students want to have such CCAs outside their regular class hours. Item 6 in Table 1 above was intended to identify whether CCAs provide learners with a real life English language learning environment or not. Hence, 23 (37.1%), 25 (40.3%), of the respondents have shown their agreement, and strong agreement with the claim respectively. On the other hand, 6 (9.7%), of the respondents were unable to decide while 5 (8.1%) and 3 (4.8%) of the respondents replied disagree and strongly disagree. Likewise, the mean for the item is ($M = 3.93$). This indicates that the students' response lies almost in the range of agreement (4). From this, one can conclude that any language which learners come across outside the classroom is authentic language and the situation helps learners to be exposed to potentially authentic language input. Thus, this would make the language learning environment so real life where students can get good opportunity or exposure to practice the target language so real lively. Many scholars, for instance, Pegrum (2000), and Keefe and Jenkins (1997) believe that student activities outside the classroom can provide learners with actual language practices. When we see the students' responses

to item 7, in Table 1, which tries to illustrate if the students were motivated by the CCAs they were involved in or not, most of the students, 25 (40.3%) showed strong disagreement and 18 (29%) disagreement to the item. However, 12 (19.4%), and 4 (6.4%) respondents were unable to decide and agree with the item respectively, whereas 3 (4.8%) of the respondents were shown their strong agreement. Hence, the students tend to have a negative attitude towards this negative item which implies that they are positive to the CCAs. Furthermore, when we look into the mean score for the item ($M = 2.04$), which lies in the range of disagreement is also sound evidence that most of the students have shown that the students are in favour of the CCAs. As shown in item 8, Table 1, 27 (43.6%) and 18 (28%) of the students replied strongly agree and agree respectively, while the rest 12 (19.4%) and 5 (8.1%) of the respondents replied 'undecided' and 'disagree' to the idea which illustrates the feelings of the students about the activities respectively. The mean score of the item ($M=3.58$) also shows that the respondents have a positive attitude to the item. Based on this, it is possible to conclude that most of the students have a positive feeling towards CCAs.

As indicated in Item 9, Table 1 above, most of the students, 21 (33.9%) and 15 (24.2%) showed strong agreement and agreement for the item which was designed to see whether the respondents want the activities to continue with greater support from the colleges or not. In contrary to this, 14 (22.6%) and 6 (9.7%) of the respondents were responded undecided, disagreement and strong disagreement respectively. This shows that most of the students have good awareness about the impact of CCAs. In addition, the mean score of the item ($M = 3.53$) also indicates that most of the respondents fall in the range of agreement to the stated idea, which is also supported by the principle of communicative language teaching approach. With item 1 of Table 2, both respondents were asked whether or not mini-media club was being practiced in their college. While responding to this item, the majority of the students 34 (54.8%) and 7 (63.6%) of teacher respondents responded as average respectively. Another justification can also be drawn from the mean of item 1. That is, the mean score of the students ($M = 1.54$) and of teachers ($M=1.72$) clearly shows that most of the students and teachers have confirmed as the practices of mini-media club is average in the two sample colleges of teachers' education. Therefore, this result revealed that colleges of teachers' education in the region were not giving emphasis to mini-media club that promotes students' English language proficiency. As can be observed in Table 2 above, on item 2 (Essay writing competition club), majority 28 (45.2%) of student respondents and majority 7 (63.6%) of teacher respondents confirmed as the practice of the club is low in their college. Regarding the practice of mass drill, majority 47 (75.8%) of the students and 8 (72.7%) of the teachers were responded as very low; concerning reading competition club, majority 41 (66.1%) of the students and majority 8 (72.7%) of the teacher respondents replied as very low. Hence, mean values for each of the three items, gears around 1.00 (1.47, 1.45 and 1.36) which stands for very low in the given five point Likert-Scale. Therefore, based on all these results, one can conclude that these clubs which promote English language skills were neglected in the college of teachers' education. Again at the same table, on item 5 of Table 2, respondents were asked whether they were encouraged to be involved in ELIP (English Language Improvement Program) or not. Accordingly, 44 (71%) of student respondents and 7 (63.6%) of teacher respondents were

replied as their involvement in ELIP was very low and low respectively. Similarly, the mean value ($M = 1.29$) and ($M= 1.90$) of the two informants also reveals that most of the two categories of the informants' were rated as very low and low to this item. Hence, this result indicates as the students do not have ample chance to involve in ELIP in the two colleges of teacher education in the region.

As shown in the above Table 2, on item 6 (Debate contest club), most of the students and teacher respondents, 27 (43.5%) and 6 (54.5%) replied as the practice of the club is very low. Similarly, on the 7th item (English Club), majority 41 (66.1%) and 6 (54.5%) of the students and teacher respondents replied as very low respectively. Regarding the last three items that are art, dramatic activities and role play clubs, majority 39 (62.9%) / 8 (72.7%), 36 (58.1%) / 9 (81.8%) and 45 (72.6%) / 9 (81.8%) of the students and teacher respondents were responded as very low respectively. The mean value of these items were $M=1.38$, $M=1.54$, $M=1.18$, $M=1.5$, $M=1.18$ and $M=1.24$ which inclines to very low in the given five point Likert-Scale. Hence, from these results we can conclude that all these clubs which could expose the students to promote English language proficiency were overlooked in the two colleges of teachers' education in the region. To sum up, the interview held with instructors of the two sample colleges and documents analysis made revealed that the dominant clubs functioning in the colleges were Mini Media and Sport club. Even, in these two clubs students do not use English language as a medium of communication; rather they use their vernacular languages. Therefore, data obtained from interview, focus group discussion, and document analysis reveals as at the beginning of annual academic year, co-curricular activities were informed to the students, which seems for the report purpose only, but throughout the year no one carries about the practices of co-curricular activities in the two sample colleges of teachers' education.

As can be seen in Table 3, on the first item (language teachers in general and English language teachers in particular should encourage learners to participate in different CCAs), 9 (81.8%) and 2 (18.2) of the teacher respondents replied as they strongly agreed and agreed respectively. The mean for the item ($M = 4.81$) which is found in the range of strong agreement, which proves that most of the teachers have strong agreement that language teachers in general and English language teachers in particular should encourage learners to participate in different CCAs. This indicates as the teachers believe in encouraging learners to participate in different CCAs. In their response to item 2 of Table 3, respondents were asked whether or not English language is likely to be affected by the setting where the teaching- learning process takes place. As to this, 6 (54.5%) and 5 (45.5%) of teacher respondents expressed their agreement and strong agreement respectively. Similarly, the mean for the item ($M = 4.45$) also shows that the students have shown strong agreement with the statement. In supporting this finding, Wilmer (1963) argues that a healthy environment stimulates both teachers and learners. In this regard, the author notes that student activity programs outside the classroom would facilitate language learning and would create positive language learning environments. From this, it can be implied that the responses made by the teacher to item 2 in the above table reveal that teachers in the sample colleges were aware of the fact that language learning could be affected by the environment where the learning takes place.

Table 1. Students' responses to the awareness level and impacts of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency

Statements	Rating Scale										Total	M ± SDV	
	SA(5)		A(4)		N(3)		DA(2)		SDA(1)				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
1. In the colleges, participating in different CCAs has high benefit for the students to promote English language proficiency.	22	35.5	19	30.6	11	17.7	10	16	0	0	62	100	3.80 ±1.05
2. In CCAs, I had good chance to share ideas with my friends in English language.	15	24.2	2	3.2	13	21.0	32	51.6	0	0	62	100	3.96±0.76
3. During CCAs, I learned a lot of English language Vocabularies and expressions.	31	50	27	43.5	2	3.2	2	3.2	0	0	62	100	4.40±0.71
4. CCAs gave me much chance to practice integrated language skills at a time.	27	43.5	23	37.1	1	1.6	11	17.7	0	0	62	100	4.16±0.77
5. During CCAs, I gradually felt confident to express myself in English language.	25	40.3	12	19.4	3	4.8	1	1.6	0	0	62	100	4.06 ±0.97
6. I found CCAs to be real life English language Learning	23	37.1	25	40.3	6	9.7	5	8.1	3	4.8	62	100	3.93±1.18
7. I feel that CCAs are less motivating.	3	4.8	4	6.4	12	19.4	18	29	25	40.3	62	100	2.04±1.12
8. I was very much enjoyed or interested to be involved in CCAs	27	43.6	18	28	12	19.4	5	8.1			62	100	3.58 ±1.33
9. I want CCAs to continue with greater support from the college.	21	33.9	15	24.2	14	22.6	6	9.7	6	9.7	62	100	3.53 ±1.23

Key: SA(5)=Strongly Agree, A(4)=Agree, N(3)=Neutral, DA(2)=Disagree, SDA(1)= Strongly Disagree, *CCAs= Co-Curricular Activities

Table 2. Students' and Teachers' responses to the practices of clubs in the college and the benefits these clubs provide for promoting English language proficiency

Type of Clubs		Rating Scale										Total	M ± SDV	
		VH(5)		H(4)		A(3)		L(2)		VL(1)				
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
1. Mini-Media	S	0	0	0	0	34	54.8	28	45.2	0	0	62	100	1.54±0.50
	T	0	0	1	9.1	7	63.6	1	9.1	2	18.2	11	100	1.72 ±1.27
2. Essay writing competition	S	0	0	0	0	10	16.1	28	45.2	24	38.7	62	100	1.47 ±0.71
	T	0	0	0	0	1	9.1	3	27.3	7	63.6	11	100	1.45±0.68
3. Mass drill	S	0	0	10	16.1	2	3.2	3	4.8	47	75.8	62	100	1.37±0.77
	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	27.3	8	72.7	11	100	1.27 ±0.46
4. Reading competition	S	0	0	18	29	3	4.8	0	0	41	66.1	62	100	1.38±0.58
	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	27.3	8	72.7	11	100	1.27 ±0.46
5. ELIP	S	0	0	18	29	0	0	0	0	44	71	62	100	1.29±0.45
	T	0	0	1	9.1	0	0	7	63.6	3	27.3	11	100	1.90±0.83
6. Debate contests	S	0	0	2	3.2	9	14.5	24	38.7	27	43.5	62	100	1.77±0.81
	T	0	0	0	0	1	9.1	4	36.4	6	54.5	11	100	1.54±0.68
7. English Club	S	0	0	15	24.2	6	9.7	0	0	41	66.1	62	100	1.43±0.66
	T	0	0	0	0	2	18.2	3	27.3	6	54.5	11	100	1.63±0.80
8. Art Club	S	0	0	0	0	1	1.6	22	35.5	39	62.9	62	100	1.38±0.52
	T	0	0	0	0	1	9.1	2	18.2	8	72.7	11	100	3.90±8.99
9. Dramatic Activities	S	0	0	0	0	8	12.9	18	29	36	58.1	62	100	1.54±0.71
	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	18.2	9	81.8	11	100	1.18 ±0.40
10. Role play/Simulation	S	0	0	8	12.9	4	6.5	5	8.1	45	72.6	62	100	1.24±0.93
	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	18.2	9	81.8	11	100	1.18 ±0.40

Key: VH(5)=Very High, H(4)=High, A(3)= Average, L(2)= Low, VL(1)= Very Low, S= Student, T= Teacher

Table 3. Teachers' view on the awareness level, benefits and challenges of co-curricular activities in the college

Statements	Rating Scale										Total F %	M ± SDV	
	SA(5)		A(4)		N(3)		D(2)		SDA(1)				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
1. Language teachers in general and English language teachers in particular should encourage learners to participate in different CCAs	9	81.8	2	18.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.81±0.42
2. English language is likely to be affected by the setting where the teaching- learning process takes place.	5	45.5	6	54.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.45±0.52
3. CCAs would provide learners with a talk rich environment	6	54.5	3	27.3	2	18.2	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.36±0.80
4. CCAs would help learners develop self-confidence and responsibility for their learning	6	54.5	4	36.4	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.45±0.68
5. There would be clear guiding principle to organize CCAs in the colleges	5	45.5	4	36.4	2	18.2	0	0	0	0	11	100	3.72±1.27
6. CCAs should be practiced in the college of teachers' education	6	54.5	4	36.4	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.36±0.80
7. CCAs guide students how to organize and present an activity, how to develop language skills, how to co-operate and co-ordinate in different situations and etc.	6	54.5	3	27.3	2	18.2	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.36±0.80
8. CCA provides the avenue of self-assessment when the students come in contact with teachers outside the college.	7	63.7	4	36.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.72±0.78
9. CCA along with classroom English helps to channelize the hidden potential of the students and make them fluent enough in the target language.	6	54.5	4	36.4	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.63±0.80
10. Domains like social, academic, good discipline and aesthetic get enriched after participation in CCAs.	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.45±0.68
11. CCAs help in realizing the importance of language skills and develop the spirit of healthy competition.	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.36±0.67
12. CCA enhances students experience, understanding and brings benefits beyond students and teachers expectation.	6	54.5	4	36.4	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.72±0.64
13. Lack of teachers and students interest can affect the practice of CCAs	7	63.6	3	27.3	1	9.1	0	0	0	0	11	100	4.54±0.68

Key: SA(5)=Strongly Agree, A(4)=Agree, N(3)=Neutral, DA(2)=Disagree, SDA(1)= Strongly Disagree, *CCAs= Co-Curricular Activities

Table 4. Teachers' responses to the encouragement provided by college management and students' participating in co-curricular activities

Statements	Rating Scale										Total F %	M ± SDV	
	VH(5)		H(4)		A(3)		L(2)		VL(1)				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
1. The involvement rate of students in CCAs per week	0	0	0	0	6	54.6	2	18.2	3	27.3	11	100	3.00±1.48
2. The level of current practice of CCAs in the college	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	63.7	4	36.4	11	100	2.60±1.57
3. The level of encouragement provided by college management for enhancing CCAs	0	0	0	0	1	9.1	2	18.2	8	72.8	11	100	2.41±1.66
4. The provision of materials for carrying out CCAs in the college	0	0	0	0	2	18.2	4	36.4	5	45.5	11	100	2.32±1.67

Key: VH(5)=Very High, H(4)=High, A(3)= Average, L(2)= Low, VL(1)= Very Low

While responding to item 3 of Table 3, respondents were asked whether or not CCAs would provide learners with a talk rich environment. Accordingly, 6 (54.5%) teachers strongly agreed, whereas 3 (27.3%) teachers agreed, and only 2 (18.2%) of the respondents were unable to decide. On top of that, the mean value of the item ($M=4.36$) shows that the majority of the respondents is found in the range of agreement. This indicates that most of the respondents have a strong belief as CCAs can provide learners with an interactive context and as a result, it can create a rich source of environment for the purposeful practice of language skills.

The fourth item in Table 3 was formulated to know whether CCAs would help learners to develop self-confidence and responsibility for their own learning or not. In this reference, 6 (54.5%), more than half of the respondents, strongly agreed and 4 (36.4%) agreed with the item above. On the other hand, a number (9.1%) of the respondent chooses the response undecided. The fact that the mean for the item which is ($M = 4.45$) shows that the majority of the respondents are found almost in the range of agreement. Generally, the responses in item 4 indicated as CCAs would help learners to develop self-confidence and responsibility for their own learning and it is important for students' personal, academic, and professional development. In their reaction to item 5 of Table 3, respondents were asked whether there would be a clear guiding principle to organize CCAs in the colleges or not. While responding to this item, 5 (45.5%) and 4 (36.4%) of the teacher respondents reported their strong agreement and agreement respectively towards the item. The mean for the item which is 3.72 also indicates that most of the respondents have agreed. This indicates that the respondents are found to have a positive attitude towards the statement, and they believe that organizing student activity program could help the activities to be more useful. Accordingly, different scholars like Keefe and Jenkins (1997) argue that that organizing student activity program would be a leading factor for the activity programs to be fruitful. Therefore, student activity programs should be effectively organized to make the learners more dynamic.

The sixth and seventh items in Table 3, shows that the majority of the respondents, 6(54.5%) and 4(36.4%), strongly agreed, and agreed to the assertion which claim that CCAs guide students how to organize and present an activity, how to develop language skills, how to co-operate and co-ordinate in different situations and etc. However, the remaining 3 (27.3%) respondents were unable to decide. Moreover, the mean for the items which is ($M = 4.36$) also suggests that the majority of the respondents are found nearly in strong agreement with the idea which says CCAs guide students how to organize and present an activity, how to develop language skills, how to co-operate and co-ordinate in different situations and etc. This implies that majority of the respondents in the college believe that CCAs can help learners to be all rounded skills and to develop their language skills in an integrated way. Supporting this, ELT theoreticians argue that one important way of ensuring the integration of language skills is getting students work together in an environment where everyone participates (Broughton, *et al*, 1978). From this, it can be inferred that student activities outside the classroom are best ways to facilitate the integration of language skills. Zarry (1991) also notes that CCAs involve the practice of different language skills at a time. Bromley (1988) criticizing the teaching of discrete language elements argues that "... in many schools blocks of time are given to teaching listening, spelling, writing,

reading, speaking and grammar. ... [However], the language forms use real life together whenever we interact with others to communicate or learn". Bromley (1988) further argues that, student activities outside the classroom are helpful to integrate both language skills with content "... intentionally combining language learning with knowledge, learning is an efficient and effective way to develop both" (Broughton, *et al*, 1978, Zarry, 1991, and Bromley, 1988). With item 8 of Table 3, respondents were asked if CCAs provides the avenue of self-assessment when the students come in contact with teachers outside the college or not. As to this, majority 7 (63.7%) of the sample teacher respondents expressed as they strongly agreed to the items. The mean value of the item which is 4.72 also indicates that most of the respondents have strong agreement towards the statement. The result, therefore, disclosed that CCAs provides the avenue of self-assessment when the students come in contact with teachers outside the college. Item 9 of Table 3, concerned with whether or not CCAs help to channelize the hidden potential of the students and make them fluent enough in the target language. In connection with this, 6 (54.5%), the majority of the teachers have shown strong agreement and 4 (36.4%) of the respondents replied agreed respectively. The mean for the item which is $M = 4.63$ also indicates that most of the students have strong agreement with the idea. This data indicates that almost all the sample respondents have a positive attitude towards the item. From this finding, it could be concluded that CCAs can help students to channelize their hidden potential and make them to be fluent enough in the target language.

Regarding the issues of domains like social, academic, good discipline and aesthetic get enriched after participation in CCAs with item 10 of Table 3, 6 (54.5%) of teachers strongly agreed whereas 5 (45.5%) of the sample respondents were agreed with the item. In addition the mean value of the item $M = 4.45$ reveals the strong agreement about the item. From the result, therefore, it could be possible to conclude that domains like social, academic, good discipline and aesthetic get enriched after participation in CCAs. Tchudi (1994) also argues that in order to promote students' social and academic skills, learners need to be engaged in meaningful CCAs outside the classroom. The eleventh item in table 3 above, deals with whether CCAs help learners to realize the importance of language skills and develop the spirit of healthy competition among them or not. In connection with this item, the majority 5 (45.5%) of the sample respondents were strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the statement. Similarly, the mean value ($M = 4.36$) of the item also shows that most of the respondents have strong agreement with the idea mentioned above. The reality that these CCAs help learners to realize the importance of language skills and develop the spirit of healthy competition is also recommended by different authors like Reverse (1978) that argues as CCAs (drama, debate contests, role plays, language games, extended dialogues and discussions, and simulations) involve the practice of oral strategies such as describing, predicting, simplifying, or asking for a feedback and; hence, are valuable practices for the development of learners' language skills. The frequency counts for item 12 (CCA enhances the students' experience, understanding and brings benefits beyond students and teachers expectation), and item 13 (lack of teachers and students' interest can affect the practice of CCAs) of the above table 3 shows that the majority 6 (54.5%), and 7 (63.6%) of the respondents rated as they strongly agreed with the two items respectively. Moreover, the mean values of the items ($M = 4.72$, $M =$ and 4.54) are nearly

the same with the Likert-Scale (5) assigned to strongly agree. Hence, this result indicates that the respondents have a positive attitude to the item and they also tend to be aware that CCAs are motivating and could assist communicative language learning. On the top of this, Brown (1994) notes that student centred and cooperative language learning activities motivate learners intrinsically and encourage them to take charge of their own learning. Similarly, Hedge (2000), also states that cooperative language learning would motivate learners as it provides students with an anxiety free learning environment. Therefore, this finding shows that respondents believe as the fact that CCAs are helpful in making the learning environment motivating and help learners develop cooperation and enhances the students' experience, understanding and brings benefits beyond students and teachers expectation, and above all lack of teachers and students' interest can affect the practice of CCAs in the college of teachers' education.

While responding to item 1 of Table 4 (concerning the involvement rate of students in CCAs per week), 6 (54.6%) respondents rated as average. The table also indicated that the mean score for the item was $M = 3.00$, which indicates as students were moderately engaged in the CCAs per week. Hence, it can be concluded that, the involvement rate of students in CCAs per week in the two sample CTEs was very less or insufficient. Therefore, the involvement, students made in practicing CCAs do not offer them all rounded development in general and to promote English language skills in particular. With the rest items (item 2, 3 and 4) of the above table 4, respondents were asked to assess about the level of the current practice of co-curricular activities in the college (item 2), the level of encouragement provided by college management for enhancing co-curricular activities (item 3), and the provision of materials for carrying out co-curricular activities (item 4) in the college of teachers' education. Thus, most of the sample respondents 7 (63.7%), 8 (72.8%) and 5 (45.5%) were rated the three items as low and very low respectively. Furthermore, the mean value of the three items $M = 2.60$, $M = 2.41$ and $M = 2.32$ clearly shows as all the items were rated as low and very low respectively. On the top of these, the interview conducted with instructors also depicted as lack of facilities and in-service trained human power on the area of co-curricular activities were the prominent factors in realizing the practice of co-curricular programs effectively in the two sample college of teachers' education in the region. As a result, the level of the current practice of co-curricular activities, level of encouragements, and provision of materials for practicing co-curricular activities were not effective in the sample college of teachers' education. That is to say, the way CCAs has been treated in the two sample colleges of teachers' education do not initiate students/learners for better performance in general and effectiveness of English language proficiency in particular. Generally, from the findings of the above items of Table 4, it can be concluded that concerned bodies like managements of the colleges and direct stakeholders like teachers and students in the college of teachers' educations were not fully committed to making fertile ground for the practical implementations of co-curricular activities in the two sample colleges of the region.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents the summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations that are assumed to be useful not only to show the status of the implementation of co-

curricular activities, but also to alleviate the challenges that EFL teacher-educators are facing currently in Jimma and BuleHora colleges of teachers' education of Oromia Regional National State.

Summary

This section is dedicated to the discussion of the study findings. It begins with a brief overview of the study and then summarizes the results. The main purpose of this study was to assess the practice of co-curricular activities that promotes learners' English language proficiency, and to alleviate its challenges that negatively impact the practice of co-curricular activities in the selected colleges of teachers' education in the region.

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following basic research questions were raised:

- How EFL teachers and learners practice co-curricular activities in the colleges of teachers' education?
- What kinds of co-curricular activities should be given more emphasis to promote English language proficiency?
- To what extent do EFL teachers and learners have awareness about the advantages of co-curricular activities in promoting English language proficiency?
- What are the challenges EFL teacher-educators and learners encounter while organizing co-curricular activities in colleges of teachers' educations?

In order to address the basic research questions, relevant and related literatures were reviewed. To this end, the study was conducted in two colleges of teachers' education by using purposive sampling techniques. Consequently, 11 EFL teacher-educators and 62EFL learners were selected as respondents through simple random sampling techniques particularly lottery methods. The study employed both primary and secondary data sources. Furthermore, both quantitative and qualitative data gathering tools were used. Hence, for quantitative data collection, sets of questionnaires were prepared while interview, focus group discussion, and content analysis were used to gather qualitative data. The data obtained from the respondents were analyzed, and interpreted by using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. As per the analysis made, the major findings of the study were summarized as follows:

The finding of the study revealed as almost all EFL instructors in the college believe in that CCAs are vital in enhancing learners, educational and social benefits: English language proficiency, learning psychology, and students social interactions in general. However, in the two selected college of teachers' education, CCAs has no focal person that coordinate, monitor and evaluate the practice and challenges of the activities in the college. Besides, the outcomes of the study depict as the regional education bureau and college top management have no clear and smart guideline which helps them to organize CCAs particularly which enhances students English language proficiency. That is to say, the top management of the colleges does not provide ample resources needed, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of CCAs in the colleges of teachers' education. Moreover, the finding shows that though EFL teachers and students agreed with the educational and social benefits of CCAs, existing situation in

the colleges (absence of cooperation between the stakeholder offices like town and zonal education bureau, and non-governmental organizations to realize the effectiveness of CCAs, considering learners active involvements in CCAs like mini-media as a means of classroom disturbance) hinders their participations. That is to say, the very low attention given to CCAs by the government and non-government organizations result in the very low outcome expected from the CCAs.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, major findings and summary of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: The study indicated that there were different CCAs in the syllabus or/and curriculum. That is to say, these CCAs were found to be large in number. However, most of these clubs were not functioning_ only mini media had been providing services for college communities. Hence, we can conclude that a large number of students could not participate in the activities, and as a result, there was a large gap to enrich the whole students with the goal of desired objectives of education.

- The finding of the study noted that CCAs plan is available at the syllabus or/and curriculum level. But at college or/and department level, it doesn't get priority as other urgent tasks. From this one can conclude that the administrative bodies found at regional education bureau hardly give attention to support, supervise, and monitor the practice of CCAs in the colleges of teachers' education.
- The finding of the study shows as there is no English language day once in a week for all the colleges' community to use English as a medium of communication.
- The findings of the study revealed that responses made by the students' focused group discussion show that the students have a positive attitude towards the effectiveness of CCAs. This would be due to the ambition of the students to improve their English language proficiency and due to the absence of the practice of such activities in the college.
- Largely, the study depicted the following major problems that challenge or negatively impact the implementation of CCAs in CTEs. Accordingly, inadequacy of the budget, lack of teachers and students motivation, lack of material and facility, lack of in-service training for the concerned stakeholders, unsystematic organization of CCAs in the college, lack and absences of commitment and attention to support CCAs from the colleges, teachers work load, and lack of effective management system were some of the challenges that significantly affect the practice of CCA programs in the colleges of teachers' educations.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings, summary and conclusions drawn from the study, the following informative recommendations were made to enhance the practices of CCAs by alleviating the challenges that negatively affect its realization. EFL teaching and learning process should be supported by different CCAs. Hence, colleges should encourage and motivate teachers and students to be engaged in different CCAs in the college of teachers' education.

- Since the result of the study revealed as there is nobody who cares about CCAs, colleges of teacher education should assign a focal person who coordinate, monitor and evaluate the practice and challenges of the activities in the college and device formal plan and make a formal report to the concerned bodies.
- A few colleges' top managements should not consider learners active involvements in CCAs like mini-media in the colleges of teachers' education as a means of classroom disturbance.
- Region education bureau (in our case Oromia education bureau) must device, smart guideline on how to organize, support, supervise, monitor, and evaluate the practice and the challenges of CCAs particularly English language clubs in the colleges of teaches' education.
- As the finding of the study confirms the absence of cooperation between the stakeholder offices: town and zonal education bureau, and non-governmental organizations should do their best to realize the effectiveness of CCAs in their nearby college.
- The management of the college should provide ample resources needed, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of CCAs in the colleges of teachers' education.
- There could be the English language day once a week for all the colleges' community to get opportunities of using English as a means of communication.
- It might be better if the college administration makes assessments of resources for the students and teachers to facilitate CCAs that contribute to the successful practice of English language skills.
- It would be better if teachers usually and confidentially give constructive comments to the colleges that help them to create fertile ground for the practice of CCAs.
- It is advisable that the Oromia education bureau (OEB) should prepare an in-service training program, create awareness on the merits, practices, and challenges of CCAs for colleges' administrative bodies that enhances students' English language proficiency.
- It is recommendable if panel discussion is made together with students, teachers, colleges' administrative bodies, and if possible with a syllabus or/and curriculum development on the merits, practices and challenges of CCAs.
- It would also be very helpful to encourage CTEs to take the initiative to run CCA programs freely in the colleges so that students would make active participation and would carry on with the activities.
- What is more is CTEs should full fill the necessary preconditions for teachers and student to practice CCAs effectively in the colleges. That is, college should assign teachers to train and students to learn on the basis of their interest and abilities in facilitating or/and coordinating, monitoring and evaluating CCAs.
- This study needs to be conducted at some time in the future to determine the current status of the practice and the challenges of CCAs in the colleges of teachers' education.

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