

The Challenges of Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) Program in Dire Dawa University: From the View-Point of Summer Student Teachers

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Abstract

This study examined the prevailing challenges of summer Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) program at Dire Dawa University. The convergent mixed methods design was employed to this study purpose. A sample of one hundred eight PGDT student teachers, enrolled in summer 2016 academic year, was selected by using simple random sampling method. Close-ended and open-ended questionnaire items were used as data collection instrument. The validity of questionnaire was checked by three teacher educators of Dire Dawa University. Data collected through close-ended questionnaire were analyzed by using Pearson's Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square method while data collected through open-ended questionnaire was analyzed thematically through narrative approach. Summer Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) has encountered certain pitfalls and challenges related with student teachers, institution, curriculum and teacher educators. So as to free PGDT programme from vicarious challenges the need for continuous professional discourse with teacher educators is recommended.

Key words: Teacher education, postgraduate diploma, challenge, teaching, student teacher

1. Introduction

In this era, investment in human capital remains a key for an overall societal transformation and to fit with economically competing flat global world. As today's employees engage with technology-driven, diverse, and quickly changing global world, teachers need to prepare students for this world with problem-solving, collaboration, and analysis – central to individual and community success (Kist, 2005 cited in National Council of Teachers of English, 2007). As far as every country's economy is globally interconnected, students today are graduating into a world that is interconnected as never before. So therefore, teachers should prepare young people for this new reality. To play the role of producing competent citizen that could fit in with economic demand of inextricably interconnected global world, quality of teacher training programs should get due attention of every stakeholder.

Tremendous literatures have proved that, especially in 21st Century, teaching as a profession needs a great teacher competent in pedagogical skills, technological skills and subject matter content. In this regard, educators have repeatedly argued that present approaches to teaching and structuring learning environments

are inadequate to addressing and supporting twenty-first century learning needs (Carneiro, 2007; Delors et al., 1996; P21, 2007; VISIR Consortium, 2012 all cited in Cynthia, 2015). Cynthia strongly argued that, regardless of the reasons, it is generally accepted that curricula and schools must be transformed to make new forms of learning possible.

In this regard, though Ethiopia has witnessed astonishing success in expanding access and equity in education, its quality of education in general and quality of teacher education in particular is still bounded by challenges. Thus, the need for equilibrating access with quality should be the priority of every education stakeholders in Ethiopia.

It is true that a country's success in education is highly dependent on the quality of teachers. In line to this, Ayalew (2009) has asserted that teachers are the most important elements in the realization of educational goals and the strength of any educational system, largely depends on the quality and commitment of its teachers meaning that, every educational system should strive to attract qualified people to the profession and to provide them with the best possible working conditions and material incentives that will satisfy their needs.

Since the introduction of the new Education and Training Policy in 1994, the present Ethiopian government has strived to improve teachers' professional competency by introducing different teacher development programs, of which TESO and PGDT have had paramount importance. Currently, Ethiopian government has also put a strategy to '*transform teaching into a profession of choice*' during Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V, 2015:54). The focus of this strategy is on the needs of teachers, with the ambition to re-establish the prestige of the teaching profession such that it attracts the most able and ensures that all teachers are valued and value their profession. Through this process, teacher retention will rise, teacher attendance will increase and student achievement will be improved with rising teaching and learning standards in the classroom.

In spite of great efforts to ensure quality of education through quality teachers, ESDP V (2015) has asserted that low quality of skilled teachers has contributed to quality problem in general education of the country. Similarly, Workneh and Tassew (2013) claim that the issues of education quality in general and teacher training and development programs in particular have remained a huge challenge for the Ethiopian education system for many years. They further suggest that well-run teacher training programs and well-managed schools that provide teachers with good work experience are expected to improve the quality of education. In their part, Koye & Yonas (2013), who studied practice and challenges of PGDT at Haramaya University, strongly recommended that the summer modality should be changed to regular to practice the PGDT program effectively and to taste its fruits. Koye (2014) also found out that majority of student teachers believe that teachers and teaching profession deserve low social respect by other professionals; they would like to be skilled in other profession than continuing in teaching in future, they put teaching profession ninth in ranking order out of ten professions. Thus, it is possible to say that PGDT students have unfavorable attitude towards teaching profession. Likewise, Mulugeta (2016) also affirmed that the PGDT program went through numerous problems and turbulence.

However, the aforementioned studies mainly emphasized on regular PGDT program. These studies failed to address summer modality of PGDT program. From aforementioned studies, Mulugeta (2016) tried to address the challenges of both regular and summer modalities together. Stacking together student teachers from these two different modalities may question the reliability as well validity the results. Accordingly,

challenges of student teachers of regular PGDT program could be different from that of summer modality. Student teachers who join summer modality have teaching experience and are from the world of work while those who join regular program are bachelor graduates directly from university, without any teaching experience. The present study needed to address the challenges of summer modality PGDT student teachers independently. In this regard, as summer PGDT students' trainer and Teacher Development Coordinator of the University, the researcher has observed practical challenges faced post graduate diploma in teaching (PGDT) which requisite forward move for possible solutions and improvements. Thus, this study examined the challenging factors of Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) program implementation, particularly summer modality, in Dire Dawa University.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Why Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) Program?

Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO) was introduced as teacher education program in 2003. After eight successive years of implementation of TESO program, the task force composed of several stakeholders was established to study the major problems of the TESO program and develop a sound teacher education program in the country (Mulugeta, 2016). When TESO was used as Ethiopian Teacher Education program, abundant pitfalls were evidenced by scientific studies. Teacher educators were invited to reflect on the TESO program and suggest possible direction for improvement.

Accordingly, as pinpointed in the document called "Curriculum Framework for Secondary School Teacher Education Program in Ethiopia", indeed, despite loud and clear achievements following the introduction of the teacher education system overhaul program (TESO), problems that characterize secondary schools were very much similar to those which TESO was meant to address. For example, Ministry of Education (2009:3) indicated that the following were the major problems that characterize TESO program.

- Teachers' subject matter competence is inadequate,
- Active learning methods are not properly and sufficiently employed,
- Professional commitment and work ethics are not demonstrated as desired,
- Teachers' interest to follow up and assist students is low, and
- School-community relationships are poor.

Due to aforementioned pitfalls of TESO, PGDT has introduced (MOE, 2009: 6) to achieve the following objectives:

1. Equip trainees with the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to become effective secondary school teachers;
2. Enable trainees to become reflective practitioners who are able to analyze, evaluate and act to improve their own practice and develop further professional knowledge and skills;
3. Develop understanding of the nature of teacher professionalism, the responsibilities of teachers and the professional values and ethical practice expected of them;
4. Create awareness that a central characteristic of teaching as a career is engagement in a lifelong process of professional learning and development;
5. Develop trainees' capacity to engage in research to inform and develop their practice;
6. Institutionalize equity in the teaching force and reach underprivileged areas in the provision of quality secondary education; and
7. Provide teacher trainees with the theoretical and practical experience they need to achieve all the standards and competencies set by Ministry of Education.

2.2 Previous Studies

Teacher educators in Ethiopian Universities have studied more about the state of PGDT programme. Most of them did not deny the value of this program for teachers' professional development if it is implemented well and as intended. But, the educators argued that the programme seems simply left on the document and surrounded by practical pitfalls. From the view-point of educators, Koye & Yonas (2013) found out that the majority of the instructors' perception towards the summer modality of PGDT program in Haramaya University is negative. They further asserted that the practice of PGDT is suffering from confusion and challenges.

From PGDT student teachers point of view the researchers have found clashing results. For instance, a study by Koye (2014) revealed that majority of the student teachers believe that they joined the teaching profession because of lack of other options, but not because they love it. In contrast to this result, Adugna (2012) has found that prospective student teachers possess positive attitudes towards teaching profession.

On other hand, in his study at Bahir Dar University, Mulugeta(2016) identified student teachers' class absenteeism, lack of interest in and commitment to the program, and failure to provide timely and constructive feedback to trainees as main challenges of PGDT programme. According to Mulugeta's finding PGDT student teachers assume the program as short term training and believe that the program is not worthwhile to their career. However, teacher education should induct qualified young forces to answer query of quality in education.

Furthermore, Mulugeta (2016) identified institutional challenges such as loose coordination system, lack of concern for the program by the University and MoE officials and failure to treat trainees like other students in the regular program. The most serious problems in the winter PGDT program were poor communication between the coordination office and trainees, lack of study centers and facilities (library, computer), lack of supportive books in the library, lack of monitoring and support system. Moreover, unavailability of counseling service to trainees, low concern of the university to this program and lack of orientations to trainees were other constraints in the program (Mulugeta, 2016). In summer PGDT training program, weak communication between the coordination office and trainees, lower priority given to PGDT by University and MoE officials, unavailability of counseling center, lack of organized learning materials were hindering the summer PGDT program (Mulugeta, 2016).

3. Methods

3.1 Design

The purpose of this study was to examine the prevailing challenges of summer Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) program at Dire Dawa University. For this study purpose convergent mixed methods design was employed. According to Creswell (2013: 540):

The purpose of a convergent (or parallel or concurrent) mixed methods design is to simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, merge the data, and use the results to understand a research problem. A basic rationale for this design is that one data collection form supplies strengths to offset the weaknesses of the other form, and that a more complete understanding of a research problem results from collecting both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.2 Participants

In the academic year of 2016, Dire Dawa University has been training secondary school teachers through Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) programme, only in summer modality. Only two colleges

namely, College of Social Science and Humanities (536 student teachers), and College of Natural and Computational Science (516 student teachers) have PGDT student teachers. These student teachers (total of 1052) were the population of the study. A sample of one hundred eight summer PGDT student teachers, of which fifty two (48%) from College of Natural and Computational Science and fifty six (52%) from College of Social Science and Humanities, was selected by using simple random sampling method.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Questionnaire was used as data collection tool. The questionnaire consists of close-ended and open-ended items. The validity of questionnaire was checked by three teacher educators of Dire Dawa University. The items consisted of “Yes” or “No” categorical responses.

Data collected through close-ended questionnaire were analyzed by using Pearson’s Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square method while data collected through open-ended questionnaire was analyzed thematically through narrative approach.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Challenges Related with Student Teachers

Table 1: Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square result for challenges related with student teachers ($df=1$, $N=108$, $Expected\ Frequency=54$)

✚ ^a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 54.0.

Challenges		Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Pearson Chi-Square (X^2)	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
PGDT students’ lack of awareness about the program	No	42(38.9%)	54.0	-12.0	5.333 ^a	.021
	Yes	66(61.1%)	54.0	12.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Negative attitude of student teachers(PGDT students) towards PGDT	No	42(38.9%)	54.0	-12.0	5.333 ^a	.021
	Yes	66(61.1%)	54.0	12.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
PGDT students’ dropout	No	41(38%)	54.0	-13.0	6.259 ^a	.012
	Yes	67(62%)	54.0	13.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Lack of professional commitment by PGDT students	No	40(37%)	54.0	-14.0	7.259 ^a	.007
	Yes	68(63%)	54.0	14.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Low perception of PGD students’ about the value of PGDT learning	No	42(38.9%)	54.0	-12.0	5.333 ^a	.021
	Yes	66(61.1%)	54.0	12.0		
	Total	108(100%)				

Subjects of the study (66, 61.1%) reported that lack of awareness about PGDT program was the challenge related with student teachers. The result was statistically significant at $p < 0.025$ ($df=1$, $X^2=5.333$, $p=0.021$). Likewise, negative attitude of student teachers towards PGDT program (66, 61.1%) and PGDT student teachers dropout (67, 62%) were also serious challenges of PGDT program at Dire Dawa University. These findings were statistically significant at $p < 0.025$ ($df=1$, $x^2=5.333^a$, $p=0.021$) and $p < 0.02$ ($df=1$, $x^2=6.259^a$, $p=0.012$). As reported by large number of participants (68, 63%), lack of professional commitment was also a critical challenge sourced from PGDT student teachers. The finding was statistically significant at $p < 0.010$ ($df=1$, $x^2=7.259^a$, $p=0.007$). Similarly, 66(61.1%) participants asserted that low perception of student teachers about the value of PGDT learning was the challenge related with student teachers which was hindering the implementation of PGDT programme at Dire Dawa University ($p=0.021$, $df=1$, $x^2=5.333^a$). Thus, the participant student teachers believe that lack of awareness, negative attitude towards a program, high dropout, lack of professional commitment and low perception among PGDT student teachers were the challenges of PGDT program at Dire Dawa University. Likewise, qualitative results related to these findings from exemplar participants are given as follow:

All PGDT student teachers lack awareness about the program (ST3, from Biology Department). ...most of student teachers did not give attention to PGDT programme courses (ST6, from Sport Science Department).

PGDT program for summer student teachers is the repetition of courses because of that many of us have negative attitude towards a programme. I believe that PGDT is important for regular students but it is wastage of time for summer students because we were taught pedagogical courses at Diploma level (ST1, from Biology Department)...the interest of students in PGDT is very low so that no one seriously attends the program (ST2, from English Language & Literature Department). No any incentive is given to teachers after PGDT graduation so that it demoralizes us (ST4, from English Language & Literature Department).

In connection to the present study findings, Mulugeta (2016) found out low interest and motivation, consider this program as a stay station, believing the training is worthless for their career, misconception the program and missing classes repeatedly as challenges of PGDT program at Bahir Dar University, both in summer and regular modalities. On other hand, Demis, Haileselassie & Dawit (2015) found that, in regular modality, trainees were not interested with the program because most of them joined the program for they had no any other job opportunity.

Furthermore, Koye & Yonas (2013) found low motivation of students and their poor attendance as serious challenges of PGDT program.

4.2 Challenges Related with Institution

Table 2: Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square result for challenges related with institution ($df=1$, $N=108$, Expected Frequency=54)

Challenges		Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Pearson Chi-Square (X^2)	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Large class size(Large number of students in one classroom)	No	29(26.9%)	54.0	-25.0	23.148 ^a	.000
	Yes	79(73.1%)	54.0	25.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Absence of conducive learning environment	No	52(48.1%)	54.0	-2.0	.148 ^a	.700
	Yes	56(51.9%)	54.0	2.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Mixing students from different disciplines so as to teach PGDT	No	37(34.3%)	54.0	-17.0	10.704 ^a	.001
	Yes	71(65.7%)	54.0	17.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Reluctance in providing certificate after graduation	No	28(25.9%)	54.0	-26.0	25.037 ^a	.000
	Yes	80(74.1%)	54.0	26.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Less support from respective department	No	42(38.9%)	54.0	-12.0	5.333 ^a	.021
	Yes	66(61.1%)	54.0	12.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Lack of classroom facilities	No	49(45.4%)	54.0	-5.0	.926 ^a	.336
	Yes	59(54.6%)	54.0	5.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Lack of reference materials	No	32(29.6%)	54.0	-22.0	17.926 ^a	.000
	Yes	76(70.4%)	54.0	22.0		
	Total	108(100%)				

^a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 54.0.

As depicted in table 2, large number of participants (79, 73.1%) affirmed that large class size was serious institutional problem that challenges implementation of PGDT program. This finding was statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ ($df=1$, $X^2=23.148^a$). At the same time, they reported that mixing students from different disciplines so as to teach PGDT courses (71, 65.7%) was also institutional problem that challenges PGDT programme implementation at Dire Dawa University ($df=1$, $X^2=10.704^a$, $p=0.001$).

Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) student teachers (summer modality), seriously claimed that the University was reluctant to award PGDT graduation certificate (80, 74.1%) to graduates of the program. This result was statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ ($df=1$, $X^2=25.037^a$).

Likewise, lack of support from respective department (66, 61.1%) and lack of reference materials (76, 70.4%) were found to be institution related challenging factors which could affect PGDT programme implementation. These results were found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.025$ ($df=1$, $X^2=5.333^a$, $p=0.021$) and at $p < 0.001$ ($df=1$, $X^2=17.926^a$) respectively. On the other hand, absence of environment conducive to learning (56, 51.9%) and lack of classroom facilities (59, 54.6%) were not the challenges of

PGDT program at Dire Dawa University. Even though, the frequency of respondents who selected “Yes” to these items, 56 and 59 respectively, seem greater than the expected frequency (54), the findings were not statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Thus, lack of conducive learning environment ($df=1$, $X^2=.148^a$, $p=.700$) and lack of classroom facilities ($df=1$, $X^2=.926^a$, $p=.336$) were not the institutional challenges of PGDT programme at Dire Dawa University. On the other hand, exemplar participants reported the challenges related with the institution as follow:

Within the university, non conducive environment, unfulfilled materials and...lack of leadership at all levels are the challenges to attend PGDT program well (ST3, from Civic and Ethical Education Department). [More over], the government by itself did not give attention for PGDT programme (ST2, from Biology Department).

I believe that large class size the major factor that affect the implementation of PGDT [and] the department does not give more attention for PGDT program (ST3 & ST4 respectively , from English Language & Literature Department). Large number of students in one class (above 70), lack of good governance around department, ... the shortage of time that is given for summer PGDT courses are challenges of PGDT at Dire Dawa University(ST4, from Civic and Ethical Education Department). As to me shortage of time, large class size and mixing two different departments in one class are challenges of PGDT in our university (ST1, from History and Heritage Management Department).

Likewise, the study by Mulugeta (2016) found out that the university doesn't treat trainees like the regular students. His study further investigated assigning winter students outside, lower priority given to PGDT, lack of study centers and facilities (library, computer), unavailability of counseling service to trainees and lack of monitoring of the program as challenges emanated from the institution. On their part, Demis, Hailellesie and Dawit (2015) found that the classroom and the overall learning environments were not attractive and sufficient too.

4.3 Curriculum Related Challenges

Table 3: Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square result for challenges related with PGDT curriculum ($df=1$, $N=108$, *Expected Frequency=54*)

 ^a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 54.0.

Challenges		Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Pearson Chi-Square (X^2)	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Unqualified learning modules	No	55(50.9%)	54.0	1.0	.037 ^a	.847
	Yes	53(49.1%)	54.0	-1.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Shortage of modules for distance learning	No	39(36.1%)	54.0	-15.0	8.333 ^a	.004
	Yes	69(63.9%)	54.0	15.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Repetition of course contents	No	51(47.2%)	54.0	-3.0	.333 ^a	.564
	Yes	57(52.8%)	54.0	3.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Lack of up-to-datedness of courses	No	48(44.4%)	54.0	-6.0	1.333 ^a	.248
	Yes	60(55.6%)	54.0	6.0		
	Total	108(100%)				

As portrayed in table 3, small number (53, 49.1%) of participants reported unqualified leaning modules as curriculum related challenge of PGDT program. The result was not statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ ($df=1$, $X^2=.037^a$, $p=.847$). Similarly, repetitiousness of PGDT course contents (57, 52.8%) and lack of up-to-datedness of courses (60, 55.6%) were not curriculum soured challenges of PGDT program. Though the observed frequencies (57 & 60 respectively) seem greater than the expected frequency (i.e. 54), the calculated values of Chi-square (X^2) ($X^2=.333^a$ & $X^2=1.333^a$ respectively, see table3) were less than table value of Chi-square (X^2) (i.e. $X^2=3.8415$) at $p=0.05$. Thus, the finding regarding repetitiousness of PGDT course contents ($p=.564$) and lack of up-to-datedness of courses ($p=.248$) were not statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. However, 69(63.9%) PGDT student teachers reported shortage of modules for distance learning as curriculum related challenge at Dire Dawa University. The finding was statistically significant at $p < 0.005$ ($df=1$, $X^2=8.333^a$, $p=.004$). Furthermore, qualitative results regarding curriculum related challenges quoted from exemplar student teachers are presented as follow:


I think PGDT courses are the repetitive of what I took at TTI certificate and Diploma level. So it is not necessary for summer students except for regular students who graduate with applied courses (ST3, Geography & Environmental Studies Department).

PGDT courses should be given in an integrated approach side-by-side with major courses, each year at least one PGDT course to make the programme more effective (ST5, Civic and Ethical Education Department). The instructors and students did not give value for PGDT while they are teaching and learning, so it needs new curriculum modification (ST2, Geography & Environmental Studies Department).

A study by Demis, Haileselesie and Dawit (2015) also asserted that, though trainees felt that the lessons they were offered in general can help them to be good secondary school teachers, they were not interested with courses they taught in class implying that there are some irrelevant courses that they are made to take. Lack of organized teaching materials was also curriculum related challenge of PGDT programme (Koye and Yonas, 2013).

4.4 Challenges Related with PGDT Instructors

Table 4: Goodness-of-Fit Chi-Square result for challenges related with PGDT curriculum ($df=1$, $N=108$, Expected Frequency=54)

 ^a 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 54.0.

Challenges		Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Pearson Chi-Square (X^2)	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Assessment problems	No	48(44.4%)	54.0	-6.0	1.333 ^a	.248
	Yes	60(55.6%)	54.0	6.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Communication problem with student teachers	No	44(40.7%)	54.0	-10.0	3.704 ^a	.054
	Yes	64(59.3%)	54.0	10.0		
	Total	108(100%)				
Unsuccessful completion of PGDT courses	No	51(47.2%)	54.0	-3.0	.333 ^a	.564
	Yes	57(52.8%)	54.0	3.0		
	Total	108(100%)				

As described in table 4, 60(55.6%) participants of the study reported assessment problem as teacher related challenge. However, this result was not statistically significant at $p=0.05(X^2=1.333^a$ & $p=.248$) though the observed frequency (60) seem greater than the expected frequency (54). Likewise, results regarding communication problem of teacher educators with PGDT student teachers (observed $N=64(59.3\%)$, $X^2=3.704^a$, $p=.054$) and unsuccessful completion of PGDT courses (observed $N=57(52.8\%)$, $X^2=.333^a$, $p=.564$) were not statistically significant at $p<=0.05$ though the observed frequencies looked greater than the expected frequency (54). However, some exemplar participants reported the following challenges related to instructors:

Most of instructors who teach PGDT ... are not experienced and they are new for the courses (ST5, Sport Science Department). The instructor by itself did not give attention for PGDT courses and some of them are autocratic (ST3, Sport Science Department). There are no sufficient teachers to give the course; some teachers who teach PGDT program do not have professional ethics to teach PGDT courses (ST4, Biology Department)

Teaching-learning is only theory based and it is not student-centered; only chalk and talk is used & there is no reaction by students (ST1, from Mathematics Department). Some teachers are not committed to teach the courses (ST1, from Civic and Ethical Education Department).

Lack of awareness...[among] instructors(ST7, from Civic and Ethical Education Department).

Similar to the above findings, the previous study by Mulugeta (2016) identified that instructor related challenges were low interest and commitment, low support of instructors to trainees, focusing on theory rather than practice, dominantly applying lecture-method, absenteeism, failure to provide feedback, and poor academic advising. However, Mulugeta's findings did not address whether the challenges belong to regular or summer modalities.

5. Conclusion

As quality of education is strongly associated with quality of teachers, teacher training program is mandated to equip trainees with required competencies, knowledge, skill and attitude. Thus, teacher education programme should be free from hindering challenges if it is to serve purpose of producing well qualified teachers. At the same time, student teachers should acknowledge the importance of a programme to their professional development. As to the findings of this study, summer Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT), as teachers' training program in Ethiopia, seems surrounded with certain challenges. Student teachers' lack of awareness, negative attitude towards a program, high dropout, lack of professional commitment and low perception are challenges of summer PGDT programme. To solve challenges related with student teachers, it is better to aware them about the objectives and importance of PGDT programme for their lifelong professional development. The problems behind institution that challenge the implementation of PGDT programme are large class size, mixing students from different disciplines, reluctance in certification, lack of support from respective department, lack of good governance at department level, and lack of reference materials. Curriculum related challenges of PGDT programme, summer modality, are shortage of modules for distance learning and repetition course contents. Moreover, lack of experience, poor attention for PGDT courses, lack of professional ethics and autocratic behavior, using merely chalk and talk approach of instruction, lack of commitment to teach PGDT courses and lack of awareness are instructor related challenges of PGDT programme. To free PGDT from different challenges Ministry of Education should hold continuous professional discourse with teacher educators. To this end, the government should devise alternative option to reform teacher education programme based on 21st century educational demand.

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