

Determinants of Teachers' Decision to Leave or Stay in the Teaching Profession

Manna Olango* and Tesfaye Semela**

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Introduction

Teaching as a career creates opportunities for progress and promotion. Teachers perceive their career as something that provides them with or deprives them of some opportunities for their personal growth. So they often evaluate the benefits of the career in social and economic contexts to make decisions of staying or leaving the job.

The intention to change the teaching career may be influenced by the teacher's commitment to and satisfaction in the job. A teacher's commitment to the job is his/her attitude toward teaching activity as affected by personal intrinsic motivation (Blau, 1988), whereas job satisfaction refers to his/her attitude

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toward work-related condition, facet or aspect of the job (Wiener, 1982). To investigate whether the salary reward affects teachers' career decision in the presence of various personal and environmental factors affecting career commitment and job satisfaction, we need to assess the likelihood of teachers leaving or staying in teaching job based on these factors including the new salary offer. How these factors affect both teaching activity and the condition in which teaching-learning process takes place is of interest for recruiting and retaining teachers.

Trends in the teaching career in the Ethiopian context reflect a significant change of values right from the introduction of modern education by Menilik II in 1908 (Seyoum, 1986) up to the present. During the time of Emperor Haileselese I, after World War II, Ethiopian education was strongly influenced by the British. To withstand the negative influence the process of Ethiopianization began by training of teachers locally (MOE, 1996) for the first time. With the ambition to expand education, the Ministry of Education could not pay attractive salary for these locally trained teachers. Consequently, teachers' commitment to teaching and their satisfaction with the job started to be eroded.

Evidences suggest that the 'brain drain' from primary schools to other jobs dates back to the early 1960's (Aklilu 1967). Furthermore school directors in the fourteen provinces characterized teachers who left schools as active, responsible and resourceful citizens with good suggestions for improvement of their schools. Notwithstanding the steady decline in teacher motivation due to low salary scales and job dissatisfaction, no sufficient studies have so far been conducted concerning the migration of teachers to other jobs. The rationale for undertaking this study originates from the need to understand the problems prevalent in the teaching learning environment and social perception of teaching career that prompt this migration. The potential significance of retaining teachers of good quality and experience in the career is recognized by the Ethiopian government as expressed in the New Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1993). Efforts are made to expand pre-service and

in-service teacher education and promote teacher development schemes including improving teacher salary scale. Such efforts need to be strengthened by further policies of teacher retention based on research findings on teacher migration.

It can be argued that the crisis of teaching as a profession in general and teacher dissatisfaction with the job in particular should be viewed from the broader perspective of the crisis of the education sector as a system (Tekeste, 1990). The crisis of education sector can be partly attributed to the policy of expansion of the education sector in the early 1960's, lack of competent leadership, irrelevant curricula, civil war of the 1970's and 1980's and continued shortage of competent and qualified teachers. As a result of these negative developments, Ethiopian schools have suffered from low quality standards and poor working conditions such as overcrowded classes, heavy teaching load with large number of courses allocated and large number of parallel classes taught, absence of teaching manuals for teachers, shortage of textbooks and inappropriate preparation in the language of instruction (TGE, 1993). These conditions added to the low teachers' salary scale seem to have created demoralizing state of affairs in the teaching career. It is thus, in the best interest of primary and secondary schools and school administration to understand what environmental factors and teachers' personal characteristics predict career plan, that is, their intention to stay in or leave the profession. The purpose of this study is therefore, to assess the predictive relationships between environmental, personal and demographic variables and the teachers' career plan.

Literature Review

Studies on job-related factors of teacher motivation were reviewed in general and seen in the Ethiopian context in particular. The reviews gave some conceptual framework within which the study questions were formulated. Specifically, determinants of job satisfaction, career commitment and other

external and personal factors affecting career decision were looked into in the literature.

Determinants of Career Commitment and Job Satisfaction

According to the Teacher Retention Model of Gardy and Figueria (1987) that integrated major findings from research on teacher performance, job satisfaction, and career commitment as predictors of turnover/ retention behavior, teachers traverse through a four-stage process before deciding to stay in or leave teaching career. These stages were identified as (a) selection stage (b) integration stage or developing career satisfaction, performance and commitment to teaching, (c) evaluation stage or appraisal of teaching and alternative jobs and (d) decision stage or making decision regarding staying in or leaving teaching career.

Thus, career commitment obviously influences career plan at both initial and integration stage of the intent formation process. In turn, career commitment has got three determinants: value orientations contributing toward the emergence of one's commitment to his career (Rhodes & Doering, 1983; Wiener, 1982), positive job experiences, and personal demographic variables such as age and tenure (Buchanan, 1974). Personal characteristics such as interest and moral values attached to the career might moderate some dissatisfying conditions in the job environment and may encourage teachers to stay in the job. On the other hand, normative beliefs representing social pressure, the social status the job offers, and the social value system influence teachers' perception of whether or not they should join the teaching profession (or stay in it) and their motivation to comply with their expectation.

Two earlier studies have distinguished those factors related to job satisfaction in another context. Hoppock (in Blum and Naylor, 1984) identified the following as components of job satisfaction. According to him, satisfaction with one's job includes: (1) the individual reaction to unpleasant situations (2)

the facility within which he/she adjusts himself/herself with other persons, and (3) the relative status in the social and economic group within which he/she identifies. In a similar study based on a factor analytic technique, Vroom (in Blum & Naylor, 1984) identified the following attitude dimensions as determinants of job satisfaction. These are attitudes toward (1) the organization (2) promotional opportunities (3) job content (4) supervision (5) working conditions, and (6) financial rewards. Both studies depicted environmental factors of job satisfaction that affect career decision.

On the other hand, Blum and Naylor (1984) asserted that intention to leave or to stay in one's profession has also to do with the degree to which the individual is satisfied or dissatisfied with the various aspects of the job. In turn satisfaction with one's profession is the result of various attitudes held by the person related to the job and other specific factors such as salaries, supervision, steadiness of employment, condition of work, advancement opportunities, recognition of ability, fair evaluation of work, fair treatment of the employer as well as individual characteristics and group (colleague) relationships outside the job (Blum & Naylor, 1984). This depicts that both personal and environmental variables play a significant role in influencing teachers' career decision at the initial stage where serious appraisal of teaching and alternative jobs is done. Assessing these variables in the context of Ethiopian schools is therefore useful and appropriate in order to maintain teachers' job satisfaction and uphold their commitment to teaching career.

Studies on Teachers and Teaching Profession

Though published data on teachers' motivation are sketchy, earlier studies (Aklilu 1967, Anberber 1971) conducted in four years interval among teachers in the Ethiopian context identified (1) economic and financial problems (2) administrative inefficiency (3) unfavorable working conditions (4) little chance for personal development through further education and (5) low social status accorded to teachers by officials, parents and the

community to be the outstanding reasons that frustrated teachers and compelled them to leave the profession.

In addition, one major study (*Evaluative Research on the General Education System of Ethiopia* (ERGESE), cited in Tekeste (1996) seems to endorse most of the factors raised by Hoppock and Vroom and the studies conducted earlier in Ethiopia. This extensive review identified some of the underlying reasons for the decline in the attractiveness of the profession. The study was based on 1123 secondary school teachers (Tekeste 1990). The major findings were that

- ◆ university or college graduates joined the profession unwillingly, that is, either by assignment by the government or by lack of other opportunities (50% of the respondents preferred to be engaged in a profession other than teaching);
- ◆ there was a low attitude toward the profession (slightly over 20% of the respondents found to be unhappy due to their low salaries), and
- ◆ that low social status was perceived by teachers since more than 40% of respondents indicated that society at large has a low opinion of the teaching profession (i.e. they perceived little respect for the profession or for the professionals from society).

The factors thus identified as potential predictors of career decision include, among other environmental variables, initial preference for teaching, perceived social status of teachers and career commitment. The ERGESE study had a consensus that the initial preference for teaching and the way the society perceives the teaching profession and the professionals and the social status accorded to teachers affect career decision.

With regard to the demographic variables such as qualification, service year, place of residence, age, and gender, earlier studies

have not clearly revealed whether or not these variables have impacts on career decision. It might be useful to include these variables in the study to explore their effects on teachers' intent to leave or stay in the profession. The other variables are grouped into two: environmental variables and personal factors.

In view of the changing Ethiopian situation, particularly with the introduction of the new salary scale, the present study attempted to examine the extent to which teachers' career plan can be predicted based on these working condition variables and social and personal factors.

The following research questions were looked into to assess the predictive relationships.

- Is there a difference in teachers' preference to stay in or leave the profession across the demographic variables: qualification, experience, age, place of residence or gender?
- Does teachers' career decision to stay in or leave the profession depend on environmental factors: supervision, work environment, new salary scale, administrative efficiency or colleague relationship?
- To what degree does career decision of teachers depend on the personal factors: career commitment, initial preference for teaching or perceived social status?

Design of the Study

Subjects

The participants of this study were 204 (Male=160, Female =44) primary (first and second cycles) and senior secondary school teachers. The target population of the study were 1695 teachers of primary and senior secondary schools of Wonago and Yirga Chefe woredas of the Gedeo Zone. These consisted of

128(M=120, F=8) secondary school teachers and 1567(M=1298,F=296) primary school teachers. 46 secondary school teachers were selected by quota sampling proportional to the total size of teachers in each of the three secondary schools, that is, 20,10 and 16 from Dilla, Wonago, and Yirga Chefe high schools respectively. In each school, the indicated size was selected by simple random sampling. The one hundred and fifty eight primary school teachers included in the study were selected by similar quota sampling from the sixteen primary schools, sampled in each woreda randomly from the seventy six primary schools of the two woredas. Once the sixteen schools were sampled and the number of teachers in each school was known, a proportional size was selected by simple random sampling in each school to obtain the 158 participants from primary schools.

To further characterize the sample, 125(61.3%) were from urban centers while 69(33.8%) were from rural areas. As to their qualification, 14 (6.9%) had bachelor's degree, 52(25.5%) had diploma, 124 (60.8%) had TTI certificate, 8(3.9%) completed 12th grade and had a short-term training, and 6(2.9%) had at most 12th grade certificate. The majority (77.6%) of the respondents were teachers in primary schools while the rest (22.4%) were teachers in secondary schools.

The data collection instrument was a survey questionnaire that included biographical information, teachers' attitude toward the profession, attitude toward the work environment, attitude toward the new salary scale, attitude toward staying in the profession, perceived promotional opportunities and other demographic variables assumed to be necessary for the present study.

Variable Designation

The criterion variable in this study was teachers' intention to stay in or leave the teaching profession, which is defined as his or her career plan. It was considered as a categorical variable coded 1 if the respondent wanted to stay in teaching profession, and 0

otherwise. In the initial model 13 explanatory variables were considered. These included age and years of service as continuous variables 10 categorical variables recorded using the method of dummy variable coding (Bryman, A & Cramer, D, 1994), that is a variable is coded 1 for membership and 0 for non-membership. Respondents' qualification had five categories as shown in Table 4.1.

Data Analysis

The preliminary procedure followed in the data analysis was computing frequencies, percentages, and Chi-square analysis to describe the overall characteristics of the data. Following this, the Logistic Regression Model was fitted for the selected independent variables which were assumed to have a significant relationship with the criterion variable.

On top of this, an attempt was made to identify the major predictor variables among those in the initial model by using Forward Stepwise Selection procedure of the Logistic Regression analysis (Norusis, 1990). The Wald statistic was used for removing variables from the model or retaining them. The Wald statistics for all variables in the model were examined and the variable with the largest significance level for Wald Statistic ($p > .05$) was removed from the model. If no variable was removed the next eligible variable was entered into the model and so on. Selection procedure stopped when a removal of variable resulted in a model that had already been considered.

Logistic Regression Model

The Logistic Regression Model enables us to directly estimate the probability of an event occurring under a situation where the assumptions (normal distribution of errors and equal variance-covariance matrices) for testing hypothesis in linear regression are violated. It also requires far fewer assumptions than the discriminant analysis though the later also allows direct prediction of group membership. Even when the discriminate

analysis assumptions are satisfied, the Logistic Regression Model still performs well in predicting the likelihood of a certain event with only two values (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989).

The model can be written for a single independent variables as

$$\text{Prob (event)} = \frac{e^{B_0 + B_1 X}}{1 + e^{B_0 + B_1 X}} = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(B_0 + B_1 X)}}$$

where B_0 and B_1 are coefficients estimated from data, X is the independent variable, and $e=2.718$ approximately. The model becomes

$$\text{Prob (event)} = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(B_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n B_i X_i)}}$$

where B_0 and B_1 are estimated coefficients based on data observed on the n independent variables. The coefficients are estimated using the maximum Likelihood method, that is, the coefficients making our observed results most "likely" is selected. To interpret the logistic coefficients, we need to rewrite the logistic regression model in terms of the odds of an event

$$\text{Odds (event)} = \frac{\text{Prob(event)}}{\text{Prob(noevent)}}$$

Then the log of the odds is given by

$$\log \left[\frac{\text{Prob(event)}}{\text{Prob(noevent)}} \right] = B_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n B_i X_i$$

which is linear and lets us to interpret the logistic coefficients B_i as the change in the log odds associated with a unit change in the i^{th} independent variable X_i . Equivalently, e^{B_i} is the factor by which the odds change as a result of a unit change in the i^{th} independent variable X_i since

$$\text{Odds (an event)} = e^{(B_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n B_i X_i)} = e^{B_1 X_1} \dots e^{B_n X_n}$$

We see that $B_i > 0$ means the factor is greater than 1 which means the odds is increased and that $B_i < 0$ means the factor is less than 1 and the odds is decreased. When the odds is above 1 and increased, it means that the probability of the event occurring is more than 50% and increasing. On the other hand when the odds is below 1 and diminished, the probability of event occurring is less than 50% and decreasing. An equivalent test of significance of the coefficients is to use the Wald statistic as defined below.

The standard error (S.E) of a coefficient B_i is an estimate of the variability of the coefficients of samples of the population. It is used to construct the Wald statistic, which is defined as the square of the ratio of the coefficient B_i to its standard error with df equal to 1 having chi-square distribution. In general, for categorical variables the Wald statistic has df equal to one less than the number of categories.

Results

In order to give the general picture of the data, the criterion variable is cross-tabulated by the major predictor variables. Table 1 summarizes the frequencies, percentages, chi-square statistics of the criterion variable by potential predictors.

After identifying these independent variables (Table 1) that are assumed to predict teachers career plan the Logistic Regression Model was fitted using the Forward Selection procedure (Norusis, 1990). Accordingly, the log likelihood that included all independent explanatory variables (-2log likelihood = 98.67, df = 128) revealed that the data fits the model very well. Moreover, the classification table that compares the predictions with actual observations indicate the overall 88.89 percent correct classification.

The initial model outputs include estimates of coefficients and the odds of the logistic regression presented in Table 2. The Forward Selection procedure of the model yielded, among the explanatory variables, perceived social status, career commitment, gender, supervision and support and initial preference for teaching in that order of strength as significant predictors (Table 3) of career decision. On the other hand, teachers career decision was not associated significantly with new salary scale, qualification, satisfaction with work environment, service year, place of residence and satisfaction with administrative efficiency. Table 3 depicts final model outputs of estimated coefficients and the odds.

Table 1: Frequency, Percentages and Chi-square Results of Teachers' Career Plan Across the Independent Variables

Variable	Career Plan		Total	Chi-square	P
	Leave	Stay			
Place of Residence					
Urban	61(29.9)	29(14.2)	61.3	.819	.225
Rural	64(31.4)	40(19.6)	33.8		
Gender					
Male	89(43.6)	71(34.8)	78.4	12.95	.000
Female	11(5.4)	33(16.2)	21.6		
Qualification					
12 th and below	-	6(2.9)	2.9	4.53	.080
12 + Training	4(2.0)	4(2.0)	4.0		
12+TTI	56(27.5)	68(33.3)	60.8		
Diploma	28(13.7)	24(11.8)	25.5		
Degree	12(5.9)	2(1.0)	6.9		
Preference for teaching					
Preferred teaching	10(4.9)	35(17.2)	22.1	15.96	.001
Did not preferred	79(38.7)	65(31.9)	70.6		
New Salary Scale					
Satisfied	28(13.7)	34(16.7)	30.4	.53	.47
Not satisfied	72(35.3)	70(34.3)	69.6		
Perceived Social Status					
Moderate or High	20(9.8)	37(18.1)	27.9	8.45	.003
Low Social Status	80(39.2)	58(28.4)	67.6		
Work environment					
Satisfied	34(16.7)	46(22.5)	39.2	3.00	.08
Not satisfied	66(32.3)	54(26.5)	58.8		
Supervision and support					
Satisfied	50(24.5)	73(35.8)	60.3	8.91	.002
Not satisfied	48(23.9)	29(14.2)	37.7		
School Administration					
Satisfied	24(11.8)	33(16.2)	28.0	3.23	.07
Not satisfied	76(37.6)	59(28.9)	66.5		
Colleague Relationship					
Satisfied	52(25.5)	74(36.3)	61.8	9.38	.001
Not satisfied	46(22.5)	26(12.7)	35.2		
Career commitment					
Committed	19(9.3)	74(36.3)	45.6	.55	.000
Not committed	81(39.7)	30(14.7)	54.4		
Total	100(49.02)	04(50.98)			

*Figures in parenthesis are percentages

Table 2: The Initial Model Logistic Regression: Career Plan with Selected Independent Variables.

Variable	B	S.E	Wald	df	sig
Career commitment (still want to continue=1 otherwise=0)	2.7459	.7239	14.388	1	.0000***
Service year	2.1655	1.2250	3.125	1	.1000
Place of Residence (Urban=0; Rural =1)	.8341	.4161	4.018	1	.0500
Gender (Female=1, Male=0)	2.2531	.9736	5.355		.0250*
Qualification					
Degree(r)	-1.9747	.4992	15.648	4	.0500
Diploma	-1.6312	4.199	0.151	1	.7500
TTI	-1.5176	4.182	0.132	1	.7050
12+Training	-.3973	4.256	0.008	1	.9500
12 and below	.7043	4.505	0.024	1	.9650
Initial preference for teaching (Preferred=1, Otherwise=0)	1.4816	.7402	4.006	1	.0250*
New Salary Scale (Satisfied=1, Otherwise=0)	.976	.695	1.972	1	.1750
Perceived social Status (Moderate or High=1, Otherwise=0)	3.2041	.7098	20.377	1	.0000***
Work Environment (Satisfied=1, Otherwise=0)	-1.1372	.7668	2.199	1	.1050
Supervision (Satisfied =1; Otherwise=0)	1.9592	.7184	7.437	1	.0205*
Efficiency of School Administration (Satisfied=1; Otherwise=0)	1.0110	.7742	1.705	1	.2750
Colleague Relationship (satisfied=1; Otherwise=0)	-.0738	.8732	0.007	1	.9870
Age	-.2015	.0744	7.335	1	.0700
Constant	5.379	5.31	1.026	1	
-2log Likelihood=98.67					

P<.05, *p<.01, ***p<.001

R= reference category

Table 3: Coefficients of Forward Stepwise Selection Procedure of Logistic Regression: Teachers' Career Plan with Selected Predictor Variables.

Variables	B	S.E	Wald	df	sig
Perceived social status	2.96	.542	29.825	1	.0000***
Career Commitment	2.46	.579	18.051	1	.0000***
Gender	2.23	.759	8.632	1	.0060**
Supervision & Support	1.48	.548	7.293	1	.0050**
Initial Preference	1.48	.740	4.000	1	.0280*
Constant	3.67	2.05	3.205	1	

P<.05, **P<.01, ***P<.001

Discussion

In the following discussion, the results and their relationship with the criterion variable are presented in three sections which include the effects of demographic variables (gender, age, qualification, and place of residence), the environmental factors (supervision, new salary scale, work environment, colleague relationship, administrative efficiency and personal intrinsic factors (initial preference, perceived social status, and career commitment) as follows.

As shown in Table 2, gender is the only demographic variable that was found to be a significant predictor of teachers' future career decision. Qualification, age, place of residence and service years of teachers do not considerably influence what they decide with regards to quitting or staying in the job.

The statistical significance of gender (Wald = 8.632, df=1, p<.01) means that the likelihood of staying in the profession is higher if the teacher is female than male. The possible explanation for the obtained gender difference in career decision in favor of females may be compared to males; females seem to enjoy teaching career since the career is assumed to be the domain of females (Abebayhu 1995). Another argument to explain why this is so is that teaching job is less likely to cause traveling from home as compared to other better paying jobs and women tend to remain in such settled home based career.

There was a prior expectation that teachers' qualification, place of residence, age and work experience may affect career decision. This is because of the assumption that qualification and work experience may affect teachers' intent to stay in teaching job or look for other opportunities since better tenure and qualification are widely considered as a major criteria to quality for other jobs that may offer better status and prestige. On the contrary, however, work experience in teaching and level of qualification were not found to be significantly related with career decision to continue or leave the teaching profession. Similarly, teachers' place of residence seems to have no effect on their future career decision. In other words, living in urban or rural places did not have a significant bearing on their decision to stay in or leave teaching job.

Supervision and professional support, efficiency of educational administration of schools and offices, colleague relationships, work environment, and new salary scale were the environmental variables included in the model with an informed guess that they may affect career decision.

It is evident that satisfaction of employees with effective administration and support and supervision by superiors are significant components of job satisfaction (Blum & Naylor 1984). Consistent with this, the result uncovered that teachers' satisfaction with supervision and professional support by school bosses and officials are significant predictors of teachers' career decision. This was evidenced by the high likelihood of teachers (Wald=7.299,df-1, $p < .01$) staying in the teaching career provided that they are satisfied with effective supervision and professional support from superiors. Similarly, it was presumed that satisfaction with the recent increment in the salary scale may be a significant predictor of teachers' career decision. Nonetheless, according to the results, the new teachers' salary scale was not found to be a significant predictor of career decision (Wald = 1.972, df = 1, $p > .175$). Further confirming the results, the cross-tabulation of responses on teachers' satisfaction regarding the new salary scale with career plan did

not reveal significant association ($\chi^2 = 0.53$, $df = 1$, $p > .05$) between the two variables. This in turn implies that decision to stay in or leave the profession is not critically influenced by the new salary increment because the majority of the respondents were not satisfied with it.

Contrary to what was initially expected, inefficiency of school administration was not found to be a critical factor in career decision. This may be because teachers attribute administrative inefficiency to the incompetence of office holders at *wereda* and zone levels but not at the school management level. The majority of the teachers think that lack of efficiency of educational management at these levels is the source of their dissatisfaction regarding administration particularly the long delay in salary payment to teachers as the typical example of administrative inefficiency at the *wereda* and zone levels. So the observed insignificance of the factor may be due to the feeling among teachers that school directors share the same management problems.

Even though work environment and colleague relationship are also important ingredients of job satisfaction (Vroom, in Blum & Naylor 1984) both of them were not found to remarkably influence teachers' career decision. This might imply that decision to stay in or leave teaching career may not be moderated by attractiveness or lack of it in the work environment or good or bad colleague relationships that teachers experience in school. The negative coefficients these factors had in the model though they did not achieve statistical significance, might however indicate that teachers are dissatisfied with respect to work environment and staff interaction.

Although only external factors such as economic and financial insecurity, administrative inefficiency from within and without the school, unfavorable working conditions in the school, lack of opportunity for further education were high ranking reasons advanced by teachers in earlier studies (Aklilu, 1967), the present study showed that the intrinsic characteristics such as

initial preference to or interest in teaching, career commitment to and perceived social status of teaching influence significantly the decision teachers make either to leave or to stay in the job.

The proportion of teachers who reported to have joined the profession by their own initial preference for teaching was 22.1% (see Table 1) whereas that of those who reported to have taken teaching job either by assignment without choosing it or because they had no other job opportunity was 75%. The result (Wald 4.000, $df = 1$, $p < .05$) also revealed that initial preference for teaching makes a difference in decision making with regard to leaving or staying in the job. This seems to be in agreement with Farrugia (in Menna, 1995) who showed that a majority of teachers attracted to the job by the intrinsic pedagogical features of the career are less likely to be dissatisfied enough in their job to leave it.

Among the intrinsic personal factors was teachers' career commitment. It is highly apparent that career commitment predicts teachers' career plan (Gardy & Figuera 1987). In agreement with this, the present study revealed significant predictive power of career commitment with respect to career decision (Wald = 18.051, $df = 1$, $p < .00001$). In this regard, the logistic regression analysis revealed that the positive effect of career commitment (preference for teaching job in spite of the disadvantages) increases the likelihood that teachers would decide to stay in the teaching job. Thus, commitment to teaching profession is found to be one of the strongest predictors of teachers' career plan.

Similar to career commitment, teachers' perception of their social status is strongly related to career plan. Specifically, as perceived by the respondents the status they occupy vis-à-vis other civil servants (working in other government sectors) of similar qualification affects their career intent. With regard to this, the result showed that the majority (67.6%) of the teachers perceived low social status when they compared themselves with other group of people working in other governmental and

non-governmental organizations. Consistent with this observation, the logistic regression revealed that teachers' perception of their own social status as moderate or high was significantly associated with the likelihood (Wald = 29.825, df = 1, $p < .001$) of deciding to stay in the job. In other words, the evaluation of teachers' social status as moderate or high relative to other professionals increases the probability of making decision of continuing in the teaching career. The result is consistent with other studies in the area (Aklilu, 1967; Anberber, 1971)

In short, among the variables considered career commitment, initial preference for teaching job, perceived social status, supervision and professional support by superiors, and gender were found to be significant predictors of teachers' future career decision to leave or to remain in the job. On the other hand, the new salary scale and other environmental factors (work environment, effectiveness of school administration, colleague relationship) were not found to be significant predictors of teachers' intent pattern.

Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which different job-related factors are useful in predicting teachers' decision to stay in or leave the profession. These job-related factors were analyzed with respect to their impact on teachers' decision about leaving or staying in the job in the present changing situation with the new teachers' salary scale in effect. Based on the results, the following conclusions and implications are drawn:

In contrary, the new increment in the salary scale does not sufficiently motivate teachers to stay in the teaching profession. On the other hand, supervision and recognition by the supervisors are the only external motivators that encourage teachers to stay in the teaching profession.

In the case of personal and intrinsic factors, initial preference for teaching profession, career commitment to teaching and perceived social status of teachers play significant role in mitigating stressful conditions at work and help teachers cope with the challenge in teaching profession and stay in it.

With regard to the effect of environmental factors, the study revealed that except supervision and professional support, others, namely the new salary scale, efficiency of educational administration, and colleague relationship were not found effective in predicting teachers' decision to stay in or leave the teaching job. This might imply that even though the MOE introduced the new salary scale for teachers, the increment was not sufficient enough for most teachers to encourage them to prefer staying in the job. This may be because the majority of the teachers, particularly at lower and upper primary levels, did not find the new salary scale to be satisfactory. Hence it was not good enough to play the role as a good external motivator to sustain teachers in the job. But still, further study on teachers' salary scale might be desired with a larger scale data in order to confirm this finding about salary increment and its role as an external motivator.

On the other hand, the likelihood that teachers decide to stay in the teaching profession is high provided that they get supervision and professional support from their superiors. This is probably because those respondents who reported to be satisfied with the encouragement and supervision of directors and officials at *wereda* and zone levels endorsed their staying in the job. Thus it appears that a frequent work visit and encouragement by office holders need to be strengthened. This is important for many reasons. One of these may be that teachers will get the chance to discuss their problems be it administrative, social or personal with their superiors and find solutions for the problems together. This in a way bridges the gap between superiors (officials) and subordinates (teachers) and creates good working relationships and efficient and democratic administrations. In fact, critical and complementary suggestions from school directors and zonal

supervisors give teachers a sense of professional unity and personal recognition of their role as mentors, counselors, and role models for the new generation. Professional supports such as provision of manuals, textbooks, training, refreshing programs also have a revitalizing effect on teachers' commitment and performance.

Concerning personal intrinsic factors, those variables observed to be good predictors of career decision were initial preference to and career commitment to teaching, and perceived social status. Regarding initial preference, the likelihood that teachers decide to stay in the job depends on whether or not they have joined the profession by their own interest to begin with, not by assignment or due to absence of other opportunities. Those who joined teaching profession by assignment or because of lack of other job opportunities are very likely to leave as soon as they grab other opportunities. This suggests that while recruiting teachers, priorities should be given to interest in or preference to the job. To this effect, other than the usual method of screening candidates, recruitment policy that recognizes both interest and performance should be adopted. Student placement criteria for teacher education should also be designed and practiced in such a way that those candidates with high interest and performance should compete among themselves at admission.

Similar to initial preference for teaching job, commitment to the profession was found to be the other strong predictor of career decision. The result that depicts that those committed to the profession were very likely to stay in the profession may not be surprising. These teachers undergo a series of changes from selection to decision stages before they decide to stay in the profession. What this means to teacher education is that Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs) and Teacher Education Colleges should play a significant role in the process of socialization of the new trainees to the teaching profession. Concerning the selecting of courses that contribute towards career commitment and professional development, the teacher training curricula should consider enhancing the attitude

development of the trainees in favor of the profession. To effect this, the trainees should be exposed to the pedagogical sciences and practices both in pre-service and in-service training. The implication for school administration is also apparent. The novice teachers need to be supported and mentored by committed role model teachers and directors in their new jobs. This can be effected if schools practice team works of teachers and promote peer and student evaluation.

An intrinsic characteristic that is found to be strongly influencing teachers' career decision is social status of teachers relative to other professionals of similar qualification. Even though most respondents reported their perceived social status as "low" compared to other professionals, those who perceived themselves as "moderate" or "high" are very likely to stay in the profession. This implies that perceived social status of teachers compared to other professionals in the community affects their career decision.

Perceived social status of teachers is basically the social position that their economic and professional status offers in relation to other groups. Economically, the earning power, which determines the purchasing power and the kind of property they can afford to own, forms high or low images of teachers in the society. Respondents from rural areas reported that they had high social status in their community, whereas most respondents from the urban or semi-urban areas rated their social status as "low".

The implication for teacher development is that the MOE and the regional governments should work together toward maintaining at least moderate teachers' social status through improving the working conditions, work relationships, and administrative efficiency, and through providing fringe benefits such as housing, family inclusive medical care and significant hardship allowance for teachers assigned in remote rural areas. Promotional in-service training are also effective means of upholding personal and professional development of rural and semi-urban teachers.

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