

Improving Quality of Education in Guna-Tana Landscape: Investigating Determinants of Grade Four Students Reading Literacy in Primary Schools in South Gondar, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of reading literacy in selected primary schools in Guna-Tana landscape of South Gondar Zone. Specifically the study was designed to investigate the status of reading literacy achievement of student, examine whether the text book is relevant, assess the availability and utilization of teaching facilities, identify teachers' professional competence, investigate the learning interest and motivation of students and identify the participation of parents in reading literacy. Accordingly a survey design with qualitative and quantitative approach was used. From total target population students, 384 were selected randomly in 10 primary schools. All the available 100 teachers were taken comprehensively. For FDG parents, for interview principals and education experts were taken. In collecting the required data questioner for students and teachers, interview for principal and experts, standardized test for students, FGD for parents and observation checklist were used. The result showed that students perform 51.25 more or less equivalents to 50% of the minimum expectation of MoE in Ethiopian education and training policy. The socio-economic variables such as family size and parents' education levels have brought problem in children reading literacy. Moreover, parental involvement by 6.2%, students' interest and motivation by 17%, teachers competency and curriculum materials were determined the students reading literacy. The availability and utilization of instructional materials, the library facilities, pedagogical centers, and relative conducive class room and schools infrastructural facilities affected the reading literacy performance of students in the study area. As a result necessary suggestions were given on basic thematic areas for improving reading literacy.

Keywords: Reading literacy, Quality of education, reading *competency* Guna-Tana landscape

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INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Education in Ethiopia is the means to eradicate poverty and the key to open the door of civilization. As a result in Ethiopia, as of the beginning of modern education, a number of attempts were made to improve the access and quality of education. In 1961 in the Addis Ababa conference African states including Ethiopia passed commitment to deliver quality primary education. Education Sector Review (ESR) was conducted in 1971/72 with its aim of making education system relevant to address the economic, social and cultural development of the country. Evaluative research for general education system in Ethiopia (ERGESE) in 1986 was conducted for improving the quality of education by improving the better supply of teaching materials and quality of teachers. However, the progress so far made to improve quality is limited (MoE, 2011). The problem of reading literacy performance in different times of Ethiopia was the reflection of the education system in the above major educational reforms.

Debre Tabor University is one of the public universities located at the center of South Gondar, Ethiopia. The university is running different research and community service activities to serve the surrounding community. The university is now ready to implement an ongoing research and community service activities that will focus on improving the reading literacy performance of students in primary schools of Guna-Tana landscape. A research team of three members of the university with relevant qualification has taken the initiative.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Ethiopia's primary school language policy is often noted for being the most progressive policy in Sub-Saharan Africa with respect to mother tongue instruction. However, that a significant percentage of children in Grade 2 read zero words correctly. Even in Grade 3, significant percentages of children remained nonreaders. It is striking that after 3 years of school, such large proportions of children remained completely illiterate in their mother tongue (EGRA, 2010). If students were not reading English at early grade three, they would be in trouble, where, s/he did not able to read independently in the next grades: fall behind his/her class meets and not able to understand what the teacher write on the black board and not able to write essays and reports (MoE, 2013). Tsehay's (2013) study in Amhara Region of Semein Gonder Zone Primary Schools on reading also revealed that students' early reading

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achievement was low.

In addition to this, a study by American institute of research (2014) shows that the proficiency level of Ethiopian student in English language is very low, at least two thirds of all students in Grades 2 to 4 fall into the below-basic category. The same research shows that the overall student performance on the English Ethiopia Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) is well below the standards set by the ministry of education. The findings of this study supplement the work of the Ethiopian Training Quality Assurance Agency in the National Learning Assessment studies of 2000, 2004, and 2007. These reports suggested that the quality of reading outcomes is declining slightly.

Thus, it is clear that a large percentage of children did not comprehend what they were reading. These children are likely nominees for dropout or repetition, and they certainly run the risk of not being prepared for the end-of-primary examinations.

Therefore, this low achievement in reading comprehension is very concerning. The problem may be attributed from different predictive factors. Then, this study mainly focuses on reading literacy performance of school girls and boys. By this activity, it is possible to identify the major determinants of reading literacy and this will help to intervene following the priority issues.

In relation to reading literacy studies both at international level and local level were done; such studies were Content reading and literacy Alvermann & Phelps (2005), on methodology such as Reading to learn, Augsten & Smith (1982), on the reading problem and its associated crisis Chall (1990), on curriculum of mother tongue language Marew, (2001), Langer (1991) on literacy and schooling and Wragg (1998) about how children improve literacy on primary school. In this regard, we were understanding that at local level there is very limited studies and in the project area specifically at Guna-Tana landscape no study that exactly indicates the practice of measuring, identifying determinants' and intervening on the improvement of girls and boys performance in basic reading literacy. The criticality of the problem has been observed that researchers' experience, parents and community complaints assured that students are poor performing in reading literacy. Thus, all the aforementioned facts motivate the team to study the topic under the study area.

1.3. Basic Research Questions

The research projects tried to answer the following basic research questions:

1. What is the level of reading achievement of students in reading achievement tests?
2. What are the determinants' of reading literacy in schools of Guna-Tana landscape of South Gondar Zone?
3. To what extent availability and quality of school facilities determine achievements?
4. To what extent teachers' competency determined achievements?
5. To what extent students interest and motivation affect?
6. To what extent parental involvement affect reading?
7. To what extent socio economic back ground affect achievement?
8. To what extent text book influence students achievement?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to analyze the performance of students in reading literacy and to determine the associated determinants' of reading literacy?

To attain this, specific objectives were formulated:

- To determine the extent of performance of students using reading literacy achievement tests
- To identify the availability and quality of school facilities.
- To determine teachers competency level for teaching reading,
- To identify the interest and motivation level of students in reading literacy,
- To identify parental involvement level for assisting their child in reading
- To examine the extent of socio-economic variables including reading culture on their performance
- To examine the relevancy of students text book to reading performance.

1.5. Operational definition

Reading: is defined as the gaining of meaning from and bringing it to the written page (Wong, 1998).

Literacy: refers to the ability to read and write (Baker, 2006).

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Description of the Study Area

South Gondar administrative zone is found in Amhara National Regional State and is 666 kms from Addis Ababa and 113 km from Bahir Dar. It is geographically located between 11°22' and 12°33' north latitude and 37°25' and 38°43' East longitude, constituting an area of 14,595 Sq.km. It shares common borders with East Gojjam in the south, West Gojjam in the south west, Lake Tana in the west, North Gondar in the north, Wag Hemra zone in the

North East, North Wollo in the East, and South Wollo in the South East. Abbay River separates South Gondar from the two Gojjam zones (SGAD, 2014).

The study was conducted in Primary schools of Guna-Tana landscape in South Gondar zone. The study area is appropriate for the research site because it is the area that we are delivering intervention with community service in other projects.

2.2. Research Design

To achieve the objectives of the study, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches employed. The design for this study is survey research design and cross sectional.

2.3. Study Variables

This study had the following dependent and independent variables.

2.3.1. Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of the study was reading literacy *achievement of grade four students*.

2.3.2. Independent Variables

The independent/predictor variables of the study were the determinant factors including the socio-economic background variables, teachers' competency related variables, school environment and facility related variables, curriculum related variables, students' interest & motivation related variables, parents reading culture and support related variables.

2.4. Study Population

The target population for the study was 57,795 students of grade four, teachers and school principals in Primary Schools. Educational stakeholders such as parents were also considered in the study.

2.5. Sample size and Sampling Techniques

Sample size of students was determined using single population proportion formula, taking type one error to be 5%, and 95% levels of confidence.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1-P)}{E^2}$$

Where;

- n= number of school children attending their education in primary and secondary schools
- P= proportion of average score for grade 4 students (50%)
- E =Type one error (0.05)
- z = Critical value at 95 % level of significance (1.96)

Using this formula, the proportion sample size determination formula 384 students were the sample size included in the study.

Procedurally, in order to get the desired information, all students of grade four in Guna- Tana landscape was taken as target population of the study. According to statistical information obtained from education department of the Zone in Guna-Tana landscape of six Weredas (Farta, Fogera, Libokemkem, Guna-Begemidir, Estie and Dera) 57,795 students in G-4, were enrolled in 2018/2019 which were the target population of the study. These grade levels were taken for the reason that in this grade levels students have the complete picture of the education cycles and profiles of the cycle is expected at this grade levels. Moreover these grade levels were areas of study in Ethiopian learning assessments so that we would have comparison on national level.

To select samples from target population a random sampling technique were used. According to the education department of the zone in six Weredas of Guna- Tana landscape there are 696 primary schools. From these schools 10 (1.3%) was determined as sample size of the study. This is according to Koul (2006) sample size determination has no restricted rule. Hence, this amount of percent of school is adequate for this study purpose and such schools were selected randomly in each weredas. Consideration was made by toping up of urban schools to keep reasonable balance and to see comparison of performance between urban and rural. Finally, in each randomly selected rural (5 schools) and urban (5 schools) one section of grade four students were taken the assessment exam and fill the questionnaires'. The parents of selected students were filled the questionnaires with purposive targets.

In the sampled schools all the teachers of grade four (100 teachers) comprehensively filled the questionnaire because they are manageable. The selected students' parents were filled questionnaire on issues of their intervention on reading literacy of their child. Furthermore, in the sampled school all principals were taken for interview. Reading facilities at the school levels were observed with checklist.

Table 1: Sampled Schools and Students in Guna –Tana Landscape

No	Sampled schools	School strata (urban/rural)	Selected number of selected students		
			Male	Female	Total
1	Dengors	Rural	23	15	38
2	Siraba	Rural	20	18	38
3	Tegibara	Rural	20	16	36
4	Shobli	Rural	22	18	40
5	Ata	Rural	15	20	35
6	Woreta/Guaya/	Urban	21	19	40
7	Addiss Zemen	Urban	14	26	40
8	Gafat	Urban	17	22	39
9	Hamusit	Urban	22	18	40
10	Mabi Abo	Urban	20	18	38
Total			194194	19019	3843844

2.6. Data Collection procedure

In this project the following activities were conducted so as to meet the intended objectives of improving students reading literacy. The study was involved open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires for both the students, parents and teachers; interview was also made with the school leaders to get information relevant to the study; and observation check list was also prepared by the research team to gather primary data. Analysis of existing documents using scoring template was also made to gather secondary data.

The data gathering procedures were involve the following key activities:

- Providing comprehension and word recognition reading achievement tests for 384 students. In this regard, standardized test items of different type administered for sample students. This helped to determine the reading literacy performance of students.
- Questionnaire for students, parents & teachers were given mainly on the issue of the school facilities, teachers competency, students interest and motivation and their background
- Interview was conducted with school principals and language experts about students' performance and determinants factors in any side.
- Scoring template used to assess the effect of curriculum material on reading literacy
- Observation of learning environments was made to assess the availability and utilization of reading facilities and their conduciveness's for improving reading literacy.

2.7. Data Analyses Techniques

After collecting all the necessary data and document analysis, it was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative method. The quantitative result was triangulated by using narrations. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The frequency tables and descriptive one sample statistics, the mean in the scoring template of text book was employed to describe the collected data. The students' achievement relation among different variables was correlated using independent sample t-test for comparison of gender and urban-rural location differences were done. The multiple linear regression analysis was used to model the relationship between the students' average achievement with the possible predictor variables like students' motivations and interests to learn, Parents involvement, and socio-economic characters of students. The analysis of data was carried out using SPSS Version 20. The level of significance for all statistical analysis was 0.05.

3. Data Analysis, Result and Discussion

The general purpose of the study was to analyze the performance of students in reading literacy and to determine the associated determinants' of reading literacy. This part of the research is focusing on the analysis and interpretation of the data. The analysis were made in connection with each specific objectives and the analysis includes the reading achievement status of students, parental involvement level for assisting their child in reading, the availability and quality of school facilities, teachers competency level for teaching reading, the interest and motivation level of students in reading literacy and socio-economic variables including reading culture on their performance and the relevancy of students text book to reading performance.

3.1. Reading achievement status of students

This part tried to see the students' performance level using standard test of reading comprehension and word recognition test.

Table 2: Proficiency level of students in mean score of grade levels

No	Proficiency level	Frequency	Percentage
1	No of students below the mean score	201	52.3
1	No of students greater than mean score	183	47.7
3	Number of students less than 50	175	45.6
4	Number of students 50-75	163	42.4
5	Number of students 75-85	33	8.6
6	Number of students greater than 85	13	3.4
Mean score		51.25	

As shown in the table 2 above Students' achievement level in reading achievement test was 51.25, which is a little greater than 50% of the minimum expectation of MoE in Ethiopian education and training policy. The students' achievement in the study area is more or less similar with the achievements observed in the 2011 National Learning Assessment of Ethiopia. As the achievement of this study indicates it is better than the 40.06 average performances of students in national learning assessment NLA (2011). In the table it is also indicated that 201, (52.3%) students were scored below the mean. The figure clearly shows that 175 (45.6%) of the students perform below 50%, 163 (42.4%) perform between 50-75, 33 (8.6%) perform in between 75-85 and the rest 13 (3.4%) of students perform above 85.

In line with this, Riley and Desmond (1994) confirmed that when most of the students well over the mean score and the rest few below mean score; it is convenient for good education process. However, the result obtained in this study, violets the idea of Riley and Desmond as majority of student perform below the mean score. It supports the monitoring result of EFA (2005) which indicates that, in many countries, children are not mastering basic skills, and low achievement is widespread.

Thus, it is possible to say that the test score performance of students in the study area is unsatisfactory. This implies there is weak performance in most area of education since students' performance in reading helps for understanding the expected profiles in the cycle are weak.

3.2. Gender and students reading achievement

Gender and achievement of students are the most influential study variable in less developed and gender disparity countries. In this regard, we use independent sample T-test to analyze the performance difference between boys and girls in reading achievement test.

Table 3: Independent sample T-test for male and female students' in reading achievement

Sex of students	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	sig	MD
Male	194	52.12	18.194	1.306	.913	.362	1.755
Female	190	50.36	19.463	1.412			

The data in Table-3 showed variations in average achievement of boys and girls. The mean reading achievement difference was no significance at 0.05 levels.

Studies in America by Wragg (1998) indicated that girls performed better than boys. However, other studies of ESNLA (2004) have found that achievement in favor of boys. In this regard, the results in this study as noted in the performance difference of grade 4 reading achievement the mean difference was not significance. In grade four as researchers' observation confirm, the previous socio-cultural base gender differences which disfavor girls' participation and the associated life style of girls that do household work, preparing themselves for future mother and wife is minimized. Thus the gender biases associated with girls might be little effect to earn fewer score in relation with boys.

3.3. Location of schools and students reading achievement

Location of schools (urban*rural) can make a difference in reading achievement. In this regard, in the study area location as one variable affects students' performance.

Table 4: Independent sample T-test for Urban and rural students achievement in reading literacy

Location of the schools	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	sig	MD
Rural	187	44.57	16.072	1.175	-7.217	.000	13.027
Urban	197	57.59	19.093	1.360			

Table 4 shows that there was significant mean difference 13.027 in favor of urban students. This value shows that over all students' literacy performances has been deteriorating in rural areas. This may be due to the poor literacy culture and provision of literacy materials.

This study is inconsistency with ETNLA (2008) which was significant with mean difference of 2.84 at 0.05 levels in favor of rural students. But this study reflects that those who are from urban are benefited by urban facilities and urban students may take time to study than influenced by urban distracters. This result also supported

by parents that they demand high child labor and they have little education background to support them. Therefore, the rural students could not resist such obstacle and lack of facilities to become as competent as urban students.

3.4. Background of students and reading literacy

Analysis on background characteristics of students of the research is useful to assess variables that affect the reading literacy achievement in connection with the social and educational background of students.

Table 5: Background statistics of students

No	Variables /characters/	Freq.	Percent	No	Variables /characters/	Freq.	Percent
1	Age of students			6	Availability of books		
	Less than 10 years	5	1.51		have no text book	75	19.5
	10 to 14 years	360	93.75		have text book	309	80.5
	Above 14 years	19	4.94	Total	384	100.0	
	Total	384	100	7	Availability of reference books		
2	Education level of father				have no reference	239	62.2
	illiterate in reading and writing	133	34.6		have reference book	145	37.8
	reading and writing	152	39.6	Total	384	100.0	
	primary level	18	4.7	8	Allocated study time of student per day		
	secondary level	34	8.9		No allocated time	41	10.7
	certificate/diploma level	20	5.2		Less than 1 hour	248	64.6
	Degree and above	27	7.0		1-2 hours	95	24.7
Total	384	100.0	Total		384	100.0	
3	Education level of the mother			9	Availability of study place		
	illiterate in reading and writing	176	45.8		there is no study place	231	60.2
	Reading and writing	109	28.4		have study place	153	39.8
	primary level	32	8.3	Total	384	100.0	
	secondary level	28	7.3	10	Number of absenteeism per week		
certificate/diploma level	13	3.4	not at all		209	54.4	
Degree and above	26	6.8	one day		113	29.4	
Total	384	100.0	two days		32	8.3	
4	Family size in the household				three days	30	7.8
	Less than five	109	28.4	Total	384	100.0	
	Five to eight	260	67.7	11	time taken from home to school		
	Above eight	15	3.9		less than 15 minutes	159	41.4
	Total	384	100		15 and above	225	58.6
5	type of materials read frequently			Total	384	100.0	
	Nobel /fiction/	6	1.6	12	Students preschool involvement		
	teaching notes	368	95.8		no	180	46.9
	text books	6	1.6		yes	204	53.1
	news paper	4	1.0		Total	384	100.0
	Total	384	100.0				

In the study the total student population was 384 which was the sample size of the study and sex-wise male and female students were 194 (50.5%) and 190 (49.5%) respectively which is representative to analyze variables in the study. As far as the age of respondent students is concerned only 1.51% are under age students with the age limit of less than 10 years and 4.94% are above the age limit of primary schools and the rest are within the appropriate school age of Ethiopia.

The family size is one of the socio-economic variables that affect students reading literacy. In this regard 28.4% of the students have less than five, 67.7% five to eight and 3.9% above eight family sizes in the household was observed. In the study area most of the students were living with large family size which can affect their learning achievement by competition of resources including provision of balanced diet. Eccles and Harold (1996) concluded that parents with fewer children provide more help with homework than do parents with more children. Moreover Smith (1985) researched out that students who came from large family size were not favored over all academically. Thus in the study area there may be a problem of getting conducive situation for independent study as there may be disturbance and shortage of study room and problem of helping in doing homework which may have problem in their reading achievement.

Students parents also further identified in their father educational level as illiterate in reading and writing

(34.6%), in a level of basic reading and writing (39.6%), at primary level (4.7%), at secondary level (8.9%) at certificate and diploma level (5.2%) and the rest few (7%) were at level of Degree and above. Similarly the mother education level was found to be illiterate in reading and writing (45.8%) in a level of basic reading and writing (28.4%) at primary level (8.3 %), at secondary level (7.3%) at certificate and diploma level (3.4%) and the rest (6.8%) were at level of Degree and above. As shown majority of the students' parents mainly their mothers are illiterate, basic literacy in adult education and at primary level of education only few percentage of the parents are at education level of secondary and above. This indicates that students from illiterate and less educated families did not get educational support from their families. Deslandes, Potvin, and Leclerc (1999) found that adolescents from traditional families and well-educated parents report more affective support (parent encouragement and praise, help with homework, frequent discussions about school, and attendance at school performances or sports events) than do adolescents from non-traditional families and less educated parents. In this regard the less educated parents of the study area might not support and motivate their children in material provision and academic support.

The other factor that may have effect on students reading achievement is the availability of reference books; in this regard 62.2% of the respondent students have no reference book. The remaining 37.8% have additional reference book for students learning. The formal curriculum materials are not enough to bring all form of education and valuable learning opportunities for learner. As a result in the study area majorities of the students did not get learning opportunities from reference books. They may lack higher order learning, imaginative learning, creativity and problem based learning of the top level in the cognitive hierarchy such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation. They may also face difficulty to be competent for the emerging science and technology explosion.

Cognitive psychologist researched out that independent study (mental cognition) of students can bring variance in their academic achievement. However, in the study area students individual study was affected by the allocated study time; 10.7% of the students have no allocated time at all, 64.6% study less than 1hour, and 24.7% the students were allocated more than 1-3 hours for the study. In the study respondent students confirmed that 60.2% of the students have no study place/ room/ for their independent study. Thus one can conclude that, lack of study room and their allocation of time for independent study might affect their performance.

Student school attendance has significance influence on their achievement. In the study area it was observed that Only 54.4% of the students not absent at all, 29.4% were absent 1-2 days, and the remaining 16.1% were absent from school 3-4 days in a week. About half of the students were absent in the school. In area where school is the only means for education, this much absenteeism will have significant effect on their achievement and quality of education at large.

The time taken for students to reach the school was 41.4% of the students took less than 15 minutes, and 58.6 % travel more than 15 minutes. In This case it may be because of the strong effort of construction of schools with 3 kilometers radius to meet the target of better access to education most of students took few minutes to reach school. This will have better advantage for increasing the enrollment rate and the learning interest of students.

Students' involvement in preschool has significant contribution for holistic development of a child including emergent literacy. In this regard 46.9% students under study have no any form of preschool involvement before their grade one admission. Majority 53.1% have preschool involvement in O-class and Kindergarten.

3.5. Parental involvement level to assist their child

Analysis on view of students on parental involvement of the research is useful to assess variables that affect the reading achievement in connection with the engagement of parents to children education by using four point scale measurements. This quantitative analysis was also supported by qualitative narration obtained from FGD with parents.

Table 6: One-Sample Statistics on parental involvement four point scale items

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The existence of behaviors such as reading aloud with children	384	1.44	.738	.038
monitoring television usage	384	1.60	.986	.050
Facilitate taking a child to the library	384	1.74	.994	.051
homework management(Parents check homework)	384	2.10	1.147	.059
Parents talk to students about schoolwork	384	1.63	.795	.041
Parents creating reading literacy learning opportunity outside the home	384	1.85	.994	.051
Parental encouragement of reading literacy	384	2.26	1.072	.055
Parental expectation of their child and their children schooling	384	2.51	1.163	.059
Frequency with which parents read with their child and teach them about literacy	384	1.72	.892	.046
Parents contact with the school and representing in parent teachers association	384	1.69	.817	.042
Providing literacy environment in the home and parent reading themselves	384	1.86	1.003	.051
The frequency of storytelling at home	384	1.74	.924	.047
Parents support by scheduling the study program	384	1.67	.932	.048
The availability of reading literacy material in the home	384	1.89	.940	.048
Provision of enough food at breakfast, lunch and diner	384	3.05	.540	.028
Aggregated mean	384	1.92	0.929	0.047

Table 6 shows that the mean value for each item (15 scaled items) and the aggregated mean of respondents response all the item in parental involvement agreement level scale. In the table mean and mean of mean of students perception on their parents' involvement was calculated. The mean score of all the items were found to be more than the expected value (the expected mean value for each item was 2.5). The calculated aggregated mean value was ($X=1.92$, $SD=0.929$ and $SE=0.047$). This result showed that the observed mean value indicated that parental involvement as perceived by students hold limited view towards their children reading achievement. From this it is possible to say that students agreed that parents have little willing to involve in their children literacy.

Table 7: Summary on variables that determine students reading literacy performances

Variables in the Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Parental involvement	.314 ^a	.099	.062	18.236
Students interest and motivation	.438 ^a	.192	.170	17.153
Students background	.411^a	.169	.135	17.509

As shown in table 7, even though the standard coefficient beta value of each parental involvement scaled variables were not significantly determined students' academic performance, it had broad effect on total determination in a model. It was noted that keeping other categories constant the parental involvement as perceived by their child contributed adjusted R^2 value of 0 .062 (6.2%) for the total mean performance of students in the study. This power of determination is the aggregate effect of parental involvement variables such as parents reading aloud with children, monitoring television usage, facilitate taking a child to the library, homework management, talk to students about schoolwork, creating reading literacy learning opportunity outside the home, encouragement of reading literacy, expectation of their child and their children schooling, frequency with which parents read with their child and teach them about literacy, Parents contact with the school and representing in parent teachers association, Providing literacy environment in the home, the frequency of storytelling at home, support by scheduling the study program, the availability of reading literacy material in the home and Provision of enough food at breakfast, lunch and diner

In conclusion, the parental involvement as perceived by students was found to be not promising at aggregated scale items and there were cases that parents not fully participated in children education which intern affected their reading achievement. In addition, parents in their focus group discussion confirmed that the involvement of parents was limited to the provision of resources - money, materials, labor. Other, more substantial involvement in terms of consultation or management or control - in the diagnosis of needs, the development and implementation of school policies, the design of educational content, or the delivery or evaluation of such content – was found to be seriously constrained.

In the discussion, they specifically pointed out that they have had limited discussion with their children in their reading achievement. Concerning, the benefit of education they did not have considerable awareness on the important of education. However majority raised educated unemployed those who completed grade 10, 12 and

those graduated at TEVET, college and universities were not employed. As a result parents perceived that education has very limited benefit for their children. They believe that further follow up and support was not much significant contributor of quality education. Parents were not very much in close contact with the school, only on parents' holiday and on the occasional meeting for contribution of cash, labor, and materials have had contact and this was also with minimum frequency. Parents' relation with child teachers was Positive. But they didn't have close contact and even they don't know their name. Their reason was due to that they don't have practice, except for materials, labor and cash contribution their concern on their education quality and performance had been left for teachers. Parents have had a limited contact to Schools on response of children problems such as disciplinary problem. In the area of Parents awareness on school policy and program some of them told that they were participated in school annual report and plan orientation. But they were not much concern on the technical part except their initiation in construction and other facilities provision. Child parent contact on home work and study were found to be limited. They asked their children to do child labor; school work should be within the schools. On the provision of learning facilities like stationary, cloth, food was their responsibility and they could offer them as they can. They were not participating in providing reference books and other children literature. They didn't have idea for this. They believed that the school was responsible for provision of text and they considered that it was more than enough as they see students carry about 10 books for single grade levels. They didn't have conducive room for their independent study. They also confirmed that they were very much demanding child labor, no reward and motivation on their side.

In the same way, parents' role to reading literacy as viewed by Wereda education experts was found to be weak and it was weaker in rural areas. Even it was observed that there was a decreasing trend of participation in cash, labor and material supply. They are weak to send their child to school. Even the existing community participation was the reflection of school leaders in area where there was best leaders' participation was best. But as most of the school leaders are weak, participation was weak in most of the schools in the study areas. The existing participation was limited to the provision of inputs in kind and labor. Their participation was weak in process, instruction, and improvement of students' reading achievement.

Thus, in scaled items of students perception, in the FGD of parents and interview result of experts, shows us ,more involvement in reading literacy might permit parents to accept that their accountability in the quality education of children extends beyond the provision of material requirements for schooling; that it includes the main responsibility of assisting, guiding, and extending whatever help their children need to discharge their responsibilities; and that they equally share the burden of education children with the teachers. Parental involvement in schools is therefore central to high quality education and is part of the core business of schools. The aim of the parent-School Partnerships Framework is to encourage sustainable and effective partnerships between all members of the school community, including teachers, parents, and students.

3.6. Students interest and motivation on students reading literacy

Analysis on view of students' interest and motivation of the research is useful to assess variables that affect the reading literacy by using five point Likert scale measurement.

Table 8: One-Sample Statistics on students' interest and motivation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I like to wait until I know exactly how to use a new word	384	4.05	1.135	.058
I like trying out a difficult sentence in class	384	4.06	1.078	.055
I think learning reading in a group is more fun than if I had my own tutor.	384	3.99	1.182	.060
I enjoy reading with the teacher and other students in language class.	384	4.27	1.017	.052
I don't feel very relaxed when I read in class.	384	3.36	1.421	.072
I sometimes feel awkward reading at class.	384	3.44	1.462	.075
I have really a great desire to learn better reading skills.	384	4.48	.891	.045
I really feel that learning reading is valuable to me.	384	4.44	.912	.047
I found language / reading/ class to be very interesting	384	4.40	1.032	.053
It is very important to me to get a good grade in language /reading/ this quarter	384	4.53	.884	.045
Aggregated mean	384	4.10	1.101	0.056

Table 8 shows that the mean value for each item (10 scaled items) and the aggregated mean of respondents response all the item in students interest and motivation agreement level scale. In the table mean and mean of mean of students perception on their motivation and interest was calculated. The mean score of all the items were found to be more than the expected value (the expected mean value for each item was 3). The calculated aggregated mean value was ($X=4.1$ $SD=1.101$ and $SE=0056$). This result showed that the observed mean value indicated that

students interest and motivation as perceived by students hold positive view towards their quality education. In connection to this MoE (2015) the evaluation of learning in selected Woredas in Amhara region and sub cities in Addis Ababa, confirmed that 89.4% of the lesson was observed that they were considered to be interesting for students who seemed to enjoy them. Like-wise the interest and motivation scale aggregated mean value of this study indicates that students agreed that they are interested and willing enough to participate in their reading.

In this study even as shown in table 6, though the standard coefficient Beta value of each interest and motivation scaled variables were not significantly determined students' academic performance which is one of the indicator of quality education, it had considerable effect on total determination in a model. It was noted that keeping other categories constant the interest and motivation as perceived by students contributed adjusted R² value of 0.170 (17.0%) for the total composite performance of students in the study. This power of determination is the aggregate effect of student interest and motivation variables such as students like to wait until I know exactly how to use a new word, trying out a difficult sentence in class, think learning reading in a group is more fun than own tutor, enjoy reading with the teacher and other students in language class, don't feel very relaxed when they read in class, sometimes feel awkward reading at class, have really a great desire to learn better reading skills, really feel that learning reading is valuable to me, found language /reading/ class to be very interesting and aspiring good grade in language /reading/ this quarter.

In qualitative data in parents FGD, Most parents discussed that their children were not much interested in their further education; they were only interested to complete lower grade levels. They were dreaming short cut income generating activities such as daily laborer in Seesam farming of Metema & Hummera areas. They are also hoping driving license, Arab countries, petty trade and others which could be done with minimum education performance and lower order thinking. They were not much interested in critical thinking level acquiring of knowledge and skills.

Education experts responded that Students back ground knowledge was found to be one cause for their poor achievement and lack of interest in their education. They were very weak in their back ground knowledge. They were much hope less and dreaming Arab country. They planned to be Baggage driver and to involve themselves in petty trade but not for far reaching goals of education. They were poor in cooperative learning. They were poor in reading at library and at home. They hate student centered method and even they hated teachers who engaged in student centered methods.

This qualitative information confirmed that in major areas of the interest and motivation indicators students were less interested. The students perception aggregated mean agreement level was therefore the rhetoric one which was not resulted in motivated and interested learners that we observe in the study area. And hence we do have a stand on less interest and motivation of students in the study areas.

3.7. Teachers competency and reading literacy

Analysis on view of teachers' competency of the research is useful to assess variables that affect the quality of education in connection with the teachers practice, engagement and knowledge on quality education by using five point Likert scale measurement.

Table 9: One-Sample Statistics on teachers' competency

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Teachers have a practice of using assessment results to improve learning (prior knowledge)	100	4.07	.756	.076
Teachers have a practice of utilization of students portfolio for improving students' performance	100	3.70	.916	.092
Teachers associate new and innovative ideas with previous lesson to make clear on objectives	100	4.58	.699	.070
Teachers practice to use methods that accommodate individual differences regularly (varieties method)	100	3.80	1.064	.106
Teachers teach students with their various experience, gift, skill and special talents comprehensively	100	4.43	.640	.064
Teachers implement varieties of assessment techniques to measure students skill and knowledge	100	4.27	.941	.094
Teachers give detail information (feedback) based on the students assessment result (feedback)	100	3.96	.803	.080
The teachers give feedback to the student reader as remedial reading strategy	100	3.68	.851	.085
Teachers facilitate constructive discussion with parents on the improvement of students reading (parent involvement)	100	3.84	.972	.097

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Teachers participate in CPD on the selected issues of reading strategy regularly (teachers professional development)	100	3.89	.886	.089
Teachers use professional knowledge to improve teaching reading	100	4.00	.921	.092
Teachers share their experience on and they do have open to discuss on reading literacy issues	100	3.90	1.040	.104
Teachers practice to utilize different types of teaching and learning materials for reading (motivation)	100	4.22	.786	.079
Teachers create discussion on how to use their time for reading with students	100	3.97	.958	.096
Teachers practice different motivation techniques on the bases of students development level to improve reading	100	3.72	1.036	.104
Teachers use local environments friendly resources to make learning vivid and feasible for students	100	3.91	.975	.098
Teachers motivate students by talking to students about the different purposes for reading	100	4.42	.699	.070
Teachers make students to use of different types of texts (stories, news articles, information text, literature)	100	4.31	.907	.091
Teachers make students to learn the vocabulary, grammar and sound system of the oral language (Oral language)	100	4.07	.856	.086
Teachers can provide opportunities for children to develop their oral language through story-telling and show-and-tell activities	100	3.98	.841	.084
Teachers are encouraging students to talk about what is being read	100	4.25	.687	.069
Teachers provide opportunities for students to speak and use the language extensively.	100	4.14	.829	.083
Teachers need to listen to their students reading aloud (Fluency)	100	4.17	.726	.073
Teachers consider teaching word recognition skills as an important first step to reading	100	4.08	.950	.095
Teachers use a teaching system of repeated reading	100	4.17	.943	.094
Teachers are practicing word definitions and pre-teaching of vocabulary before reading a text (Vocabulary)	100	4.12	.935	.094
Teacher engaged students to Extensive reading and exposure to language-rich contexts	100	3.86	.841	.084
Teachers have mechanisms to students learning new vocabulary	100	4.22	.733	.073
Teachers have a practice of using prior knowledge to make predictions (100	4.23	.874	.087
Teachers make students to identify the main ideas of what they have read	100	4.34	.728	.073
Teachers make students to compare what they have read with their prior experience	100	4.32	.649	.065
Graphic organizers (e.g. flow charts, word webs)	100	4.09	.842	.084
Asking and answering questions	100	4.12	.967	.097
Story telling structure	100	4.12	.769	.077
Allow time to students for writing issues what they read and talk (Integrated reading and writing)	100	4.42	.727	.073
Aggregated mean	100	4.09	0.849	0.085

Table 9 shows that the mean value for each item (24 scaled items) and the aggregated mean of respondents' response all the items in teachers' competency agreement level scale. In the table mean and mean of mean of teachers competency was calculated. The mean score of all the items were found to be less than the expected value (the expected mean value for each item was 3). The calculated aggregated mean value was ($X=4.09$, $SD=.0.849$ and $SE=.085$). This result showed that the observed mean value indicated that teachers' competency as perceived by teachers hold that they disagree on their knowledge, practice and engagement towards their reading literacy. From this it is possible to say that teachers disagreed that they are competence enough for students learning.

Interview response of education experts and school principals also supported the aggregated mean of teachers' competency. As they pointed output, teachers are weak to do tasks with commitments. Teachers in their professional development, they are by far non participant of in-services training, they are not in opposition to updating their profession. Teachers' engagement in action research for the improvement of actual practice is much problematic. Academic knowledge limitation and teachers desire to improve themselves are critical. Academic problems in language and science were reported as serious problem. Students always appeal on teachers weakens

in professional and academic issue. To make matters worse the school principals recommend that “for any teachers who are assigned to teach need to have assistance or immediate supervisor for any task, up to the extent of working in substitution”. They also add self-contained teachers up to grade four faced capacity problem, even the teachers tells them as they can’t teach language. The respondents blamed that the problem has been starting from the teachers’ recruitment, training process and graduation. They pointed out that from 200 sampled teachers 80(40%) teachers couldn’t pass the assessment exam and licensed without professional and academic knowledge.

Thus, in all circumstance the issues associated with teachers’ competency in their academic knowledge, engagement and practice was found to be problematic. The standard and expected profiles of education are not implemented as targeted which result in problem in the quality of education.

3.8. Teachers view on students’ Amharic literacy text book

Based on the teachers’ analysis, the template below was scored for each curriculum component. Each item can have only one score out of 5. This implies that all the indicators for the specific item should be carefully read and a decision should be made which indicator describes the situation the best. That indicator with its score would be the chosen score for that particular curriculum component. Therefore each item contains 5 points which each can achieve the highest score of 5 potentially. The total and the final curriculum components with 20 items were indicated out of a 100 (20x5=100).

Table 10: Curriculum of grade four Amharic text book evaluations -Date: April/May 2019

No	Items	Indicator of actual mean	Ideal score	actual Mean score
1	Coverage of the books that were available with reading passages and stories	Cover all reading passages and stories in most part	5	4
2	The text gradually increase complexity	In most part of the text complexity increase	5	3
3	Appropriateness of the theme in the book	Most of the theme are appropriate	5	3
4	Appropriateness of the words in the text	Most of the words are appropriate	5	3
5	The difficulty level of the book is in line with maturity level of the students	Some part of the theme are to the maturity level	5	2
6	The theme of the text book is as per the syllabus	Most of the theme are from the syllabus	5	3
7	Contents are relevant for the children	Most of the contents are appropriate	5	3
8	Content/ story is interesting to read	Most of the story/ contents are interesting	5	3
9	Text determine the theme / message of story	All the text of reading components determine	5	4
10	The objectives of the book encourage students	Most of the objectives encourage students	5	3
11	The reading texts are with prior knowledge of students	Most of the reading texts are with prior knowledge of students	5	3
12	The text encourages teachers to motivate students	Some part of the text encourages teachers to motivate students	5	2
13	The text book includes clear teaching and learning experiences for teachers and students	Most of the text book includes clear teaching and learning experiences for teachers and students	5	3
14	The book includes practical questions for the students to have reading skills	Most of the book includes practical questions for the students reading skills	5	3
15	The texts include different reading skills	The entire text book includes different skills	5	4
16	The text book initiate to practice student centered learning such as problem solving methods, project, assignment and others	The entire text book initiate to practice student centered learning	5	4
17	The text book have direction to lead students to express their ideas freely	Most of have direction to lead students to express their ideas freely	5	3

No	Items	Indicator of actual mean	Ideal score	actual Mean score
18	The text provide reflection and feed back to the students	Some part of text provide reflection and feed back to the students	5	2
19	The text book include assessment of higher-order reading skills	Most of the texts include assessment of higher order reading skills	5	3
20	The text book uses assessment of different form of reading	Most of the texts include assessment of most reading skills	5	3
Total score			100	60

Reading material mainly the literacy text book relevancy is crucial for better reading achievement. In this regard the scoring template filled by experienced teachers confirmed that the mean relevancy is 60 from 100. This tells as 40% is remaining to be fully relevant reading texts.

As the data shows Coverage of the books that were available with reading passages and stories, text indication of the theme / message of story, inclusiveness of different reading skills, initiate to practice student centered learning are evaluated as better which is four out of five. On the other hand the difficulty level of the book with maturity level of the students, the text encouragement of teachers to motivate students and its capacity to provide reflection and feed back to the students evaluated as weak relevancy which is two out of five. Finally on the rest part of curriculum components such as gradual increment of complexity, Appropriateness of the theme, Appropriateness of the words in the text, the theme of the text book as per the syllabus, Contents relevancy for the children, Content/ story interesting to read, inclusion of clear teaching and learning experiences for teachers and students , inclusion of practical questions for the students to have reading skills, the existence of direction to lead students to express their ideas freely, inclusion of assessment of higher-order reading skills and its uses of assessment of different form of reading .

In conclusion, the text book needs to improve mainly in the issues that scored two out of five and three out of five in the scoring template.

3.9. School Facilities for Reading literacy

As it was collected from the schools in the study area through observation checklist and students response, the availabilities and utilization of schools facilities were very much in constraints

Table 11: One-Sample Statistics on school facilities (four point scale items)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Instructional materials (e.g., textbooks)	10	3.60	.843	.267
Supplies (e.g., papers, pencils, materials)	10	3.40	.516	.163
School buildings and grounds	10	3.20	.789	.249
Heating/cooling and lighting systems	10	2.90	1.370	.433
Instructional space (e.g., classrooms)	10	3.60	.516	.163
Audio-visual resources for delivery of instruction	10	2.20	1.135	.359
Teachers with a specialization in reading	10	2.10	1.287	.407
Library resources (books , magazines, etc	10	2.60	1.174	.371
Instructional materials for reading (e.g., reading series, textbooks)	10	3.00	1.054	.333
Location (accessibility)	10	3.10	1.101	.348
Operating hours (accessibility)	10	3.00	1.155	.365
Space for books and materials	10	3.10	1.197	.379
Study area for students	10	2.80	1.135	.359
Up-to-date textbooks	10	2.70	1.059	.335
Students culture of reading	10	2.70	.949	.300
About pedagogical centers/ availability and efficiency	10	2.60	.843	.267
Type of clubs and organization	10	2.40	.966	.306
teachers and students participation in clubs	10	2.50	1.080	.342
clubs contribution beyond establishment mainly creative work	10	2.10	.994	.314
support provision for clubs	10	1.90	.738	.233
Major problems of the clubs	10	2.10	.876	.277
Aggregated mean	10	2.74	0.989	0.312

In 10 sample schools, school facilities at aggregate mean level are found to be 2.74 in comparison with the 4.0 maximum facilities. In the schools Instructional materials (e.g., textbooks Supplies (e.g., papers, pencils,

materials), School buildings and grounds, Instructional space (e.g., classrooms, accessibility Operating hours and accessibility Space for books and materials are promising for maintain school standard. These facilities are within the scale of 3 and above and hence with minimum improvement will assist to insure standard schools for reading literacy.

However, audio-visual resources for delivery of instruction, teachers with a specialization in reading, Library resources (books, magazines... study area for students, up-to-date textbooks, Students culture of reading ,about pedagogical centers/ availability and efficiency , teachers and students participation in clubs, and clubs contribution beyond establishment mainly creative work, are found to be below the mean facility levels. These constraints may have limitation on reading literacy in sample schools.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The reading literacy achievement of students was 51.25% which is more or less equivalent to 50% of the minimum expectation of MoE in Ethiopian education and training policy. Thus, it is possible to say that the test score reading performance of students in the study area is unsatisfactory. This implies there is weak performance in most area of education in core subjects of the curriculum and the expected profiles in the primary schools appear to be not as intended.

As still there exists achievement mean difference in favor of boys, mean reading achievement difference was no significance at 0.05 levels. In grade four as researchers' observation confirm, the previous socio-cultural base gender differences which disfavor girls' participation and the associated life style of girls that do household work, preparing themselves for future mother and wife is minimized. Thus, the gender biases associated with girls might be little effect to earn fewer score in relation with boys.

There was significant mean difference 13.027 in favor of urban students. This value shows that over all students' literacy performances has been deteriorating in rural areas. This may be due to the poor literacy culture and provision of literacy materials. Therefore the rural students could not resist such obstacle and lack of facilities to become as competent as urban students

The background variables such as family size, parents' education levels and parental involvements in children education in scaled items of students perception, in the FGD of parents and interview result of experts, shows us, more involvement in reading literacy might permit parents to accept that their accountability in the quality education of children extends beyond the provision of material requirements for schooling; that it includes the main responsibility of assisting, guiding, and extending whatever help their children need to discharge their responsibilities.

The issues associated with teachers' competency in their academic knowledge, engagement and practice was found to be problematic. The standard and expected profiles of education are not implemented as targeted which result in problem in the reading literacy of students. It was mainly due to effect of teachers' training and promotion opportunity, Professional interest at work place, tendency to leave job, Positive relation with stakeholders, Supervision and support they got and recognition given for profession determined teachers competency.

The current text book has been evaluated as 60 out of 100 demands evaluation and further improvement in the selected curriculum components such as difficulty, integration and in assessment parts.

The availability and utilization of teaching facilities in schools were found to be in constraint; the availability and quality of instructional materials, the library facilities, the utilization of pedagogical centers, provision of a relative conducive class room and infrastructural facilities of toilet, water supply, electricity and fence have been discouraging the provision of relevant reading literacy for primary schools of the Guna-Tana landscape of south Gonder zone.

4.2. Recommendations/ intervention areas/

- Students perform not as expected in reading literacy. Therefore improvement in the academic achievement of students by tutorial program with well performer assistance teachers, using better facilities, material provision and attention on the issue has to be practiced by the schools and other education stakeholders especially in their school improvement and teacher development program.
- In the study area the very great significant difference between urban and rural children in favor of urban children needs attention of all stakeholders. The parents, teachers, education officers need to mobilize and create literacy environment in rural schools with continuous awareness raising workshops.
- The socio-economic variables such as family size, students living with parents, parents' education levels, family monthly income and other involvement have brought problem in children schooling and quality of education at large. As a result there is a need to improve contribution of parents by developing literacy culture for communities and parents, by offering parental education through non-formal adult education and training by woreda, kebele education affairs and by teachers at secondary and university level. Moreover it is better to indicate their main responsibility such as assisting, guiding, and extending whatever help their

- children need to discharge their responsibilities which contribute on academic mater.
- Students' interest and motivation was brought difficulty on the quality of students learning. Therefore there is a need to practice strategic measures such as education advocacy for both parents and children is crucial by well-educated model individuals like university teachers and successful individual from other sectors. In addition to this the usual student assessment practice need to be modified in a way that students should make every day preparation than the final readiness when they told to prepare for test and exam on schedule.
 - Competency in their academic knowledge, engagement and practice was found to be problematic. Efforts need to be made to improve teachers' satisfaction which in turn Teachers' helped to progress their profession and quality of education. It could be mainly due to efforts on promotion opportunity, mechanisms of Professional interest at work place, health work environment, and Positive relation with stakeholders, Supervision and support and recognition given for them and the profession. Training on topics that could bring competency of teachers need to be given; such training may be on teachers as reflective practitioners, on action research, lesson study of their subject matter. Moreover it is crucial to assign assistant teachers for each teacher, one teacher for four teachers in first cycle grade levels since the teachers are incompetent and as the first cycle grade level is the foundation for other grade levels.
 - The availability and utilization of teaching facilities in schools were found to be in constraint. Thus, the university in collaboration with other stakeholders need to work on the availability and quality of instructional materials, the library facilities, pedagogical centers, provision of a relative conducive class room and infrastructural facilities of toilet, water supply, electricity and fence. Interventions of the university and other concerned bodies will bring different on the improvement of reading literacy for primary schools of the Guna –Tana landscape of south Gonder zone.
 - Detail observation of classroom interaction between teachers and students, frequent testing of students with on continuous assessment base of different forms of assessment in a longitudinal study and applying content analysis research on the curriculum materials can be essential for further investigation to improve the reading literacy of the study area.

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