

Effects of Meta-Cognitive Writing Strategies Training on EFL Learners' Writing Self-Efficacy and Their Perceptions of the Training: First-Year Jimma University Students in Focus

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Abstract

Problem: The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of meta-cognitive writing strategies training on English as Foreign Language Learners' writing self-efficacy and their perceptions of the training: first-year Jimma University students in focus. **Methods:** The study used a quasi-experimental design. In addition, the study used a writing self-efficacy questionnaire and focus group discussion as data-gathering instruments. To analyze the data obtained through the writing self-efficacy questionnaire, an independent samples t-test and paired samples t-test were used, whereas, the data collected through the focus group discussion were analyzed qualitatively. **Results:** The independent samples t-test results demonstrated that the experimental group students had significantly changed their beliefs about their ability to execute writing tasks (t-value=4.648, p-value=0.000. Moreover, the paired samples t-test indicated that the experimental group students also significantly improved their writing self-efficacy (t-value \geq -3.07, p-value=0.004). Likewise, the results of the focus group discussion showed that the students in the experimental group perceived the instruction positively. **Conclusion:** Overall, Meta-cognitive writing strategies are essential to develop different aspects of learners' ability to write.

Keywords: *Effect, Meta-cognitive Writing Strategy, Self-efficacy, Quasi-experimental, Training.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the complex processes in English as Foreign Language (EFL) skills, which involves cognitive and meta-cognitive activities inclusive of brainstorming, making plans, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising (Alisha et al., 2019; Agili&Prabhashini, 2021). Furthermore, Alktheyry and Al-Qiawi (2020) stated that writing calls more than just a good command of language. It demands effective writing strategies to help prepare a person's thoughts, increase arguments, and showcase one's writing skills. In this regard, writing strategies had been studied over the last few a long time because, as argued by Harris et al. (2008), learners have difficulties in writing due to a lack of knowledge of writing strategies.

For that reason, writing strategies have great impact on the quality of one's writing ability since employing various kinds of writing strategies positively influences students' writing as it

is indicated in many of the studies conducted in the area (Ridhuan et al., 2009). Likewise, numerous studies point out that writing strategies are considered as intention-oriented, cognitively worrying, and problem-solving tasks (Fajrina et al., 2021; Ghoorchaei&Khosravi, 2019; Jang & Lee, 2019; Yulianti&Fadhly, 2020). Khan and Kumar (2023) said that writing strategy is the series where in an author engages in making plans, composing, revising, and other writing-associated activities.

EFL college students wish to be multi-professional English masters (Sundari & Febriyanti, 2022). However, for most students', gaining knowledge of English is a tough undertaking that takes time to finish. Writing is one of the language skills that EFL students struggle with the most in their daily activities (Yeom, 2018).

For university students, writing is also an essential skill that supports the growth of their intellectual and academic aspects. According to Graham et al., 2013, writing can be utilized as a tool for learning and convincing people. The ability to communicate in writing is also essential for people learning a second language (Khidhir& Abbas, 2020; Yulianti&Fadhly, 2020).

According to Bai et al. (2020), writing is a system of interpersonal communication that employs several linguistic discourses and styles. Hyland (2019) indicates that writing involves a recursive process which does not occur in linear sequence, and which requires cognitive process emphasizing on the importance of a recursive procedure of pre-writing, drafting, evaluating, and revising.

As well, writing is a complex skill, because it requires writers to think about some linguistic aspects such as grammar, and vocabulary (Astrini et al. 2020). Similarly, Prihatini et al., (2023) stated that writing is a complex linguistic process and requires a good knowledge of grammar.

In line with this, as the researcher's own experience of teaching writing courses at higher education institutions eyewitnesses, and a study by (Tekle et al., 2012) indicated, most students consistently achieve low scores in writing because of poor writing skills, and with low sense of belief on their capability to execute writing tasks (i.e., writing self-efficacy). This loss came from the lack of knowledge of when and how to use writing strategies and even from not realizing that there are different writing strategies that can be used in and out of the classroom to overcome their writing problems.

Also, the students in Ethiopia's higher education institutions have not been taught writing strategies explicitly since elementary school. This is because, at that level, the teachers give little attention to such skills. For instance, Italo (1999) states, "There seems to be a general tendency among language teachers (in Ethiopia) to relegate writing to homework or avoid it altogether."

Similarly, Alamirew (2005) reports, "The teachers do not teach writing properly, that is, they do not give attention to the teaching of writing using different approaches". Chen (2022) pointed out that there is a significant gap between the theory and practice of teaching writing in the context of EFL.

Another reason for the students' low achievement in writing was teachers lack interest in helping students (Zelege, 2022). As a result, the students are not aware of using different types of writing strategies to improve their writing and overcome the challenges they face while doing tasks related to writing. In other words, students at lower grade levels have simply been

taught what is in the teaching materials. But they have to be trained about writing strategies starting from lower grades, as Bai (2015, p. 97) proposed that “it is highly important to train students to write effectively from the primary level”.

In addition, several studies also suggest that EFL/ESL students need training to use strategies in the writing process to improve the quality of their writing, and entail self-regulatory domains such as writing planning, meta-cognitive judgment, goal-oriented evaluation, memorizing, emotional control, and goal-oriented monitoring (Khidhir& Abbas, 2020; Yulianti&Fadhly, 2020, Teng et al., 2022).

Therefore, the researcher was motivated to conduct a study on the effects of meta-cognitive writing strategies training on university students’ English writing self-efficacy, and their perceptions of the training due to the following reasons: First, teachers always blame the students for lack of confidence and poor English writing performance (Fajrina et al., 2021, Bai et al., 2020; Sundari&Febriyanti, 2022). Second, as stated by Atik et al., (2022), there is a limitation of study on EFL learners’ writing strategies training.

Thus, this study is intended to answer the following two questions:

1. Can meta-cognitive writing strategies training result statistically significant change in university level English language learners’ writing self-efficacy?
2. How do university level English language learners perceive meta-cognitive writing strategies training?

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Paradigm

The researchers chose the post-positivism paradigm for their study of the present issue. Due to its ability to achieve the study's primary objectives, post-positivism acknowledges the existence of reality but suggests that it can only be understood partially due to limitations of the researcher (Maxwell, 2004 as cited in Mertens, 2010). Hence, researchers are able to uncover the concept of "reality" within a specific range of likelihood.

It acknowledges the existence of a reality that is separate from the observer, yet it can only be understood partially due to the intricate nature of social phenomena; it also acknowledges that the researcher's own beliefs and values may influence their observations (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design and specifically pretest-posttest group design. This is due to the fact the pre-test-post-test control group design is probably the most common experimental research design (Cook & Wong, 2008).

Study Setting

This study was conducted at Jimma University, one of the eight public research Universities in Ethiopian. The University was selected using purposeful sampling, a non-probability sampling method.

Participants

The participants of this study are 82 a 2022 academic year entry first-year English language learners of Jimma University.

Additionally, participants' demographic and linguistic backgrounds are provided in the table below:

Table 1: Background Information on Participants of the Study

	Respondents	
	Frequency	Percent (%)
1. Sex		
A. Male	24	29.27
B. Female	58	70.73
Total	82	100
2. Age		
A. 18	9	10.98
B. 19-21	42	51.22
C. 22 & above	31	37.80
Total	82	100
3. Mother Tongue		
A. Amharic	17	20.73
B. Afan Oromo	45	54.88
C. Tigrigna	7	8.54
D. Others	13	15.85
Total	82	100

Sample and Sampling Techniques

To select both the study setting and participants, purposive sampling technique was used. This is because, the institution where the study has conducted was a residence for the researchers, and they are familiar with the students. Knowing the research site and the participants are important parts of research investigations (Dörnyei, 2007).

Data Collection Instruments

In order to gather important statistics regarding the effect of meta-cognitive writing strategies training on EFL students' writing self-efficacy, an adapted questionnaire with five likert scales Writing Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (WSQ) was utilized. The instrument consists of 19-item with a 5-point rating scale ranging from 0 to 4. where, (0) indicates strongly disagree, (1) for disagree, (2) for unsure, (3) for agree, and (4) for strongly agree. Additionally, the items used were aligned with the five aspects of writing (i.e., content, organization of ideas, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics) that make up the scoring criteria of the paragraph-writing test. Furthermore, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in this study. These discussions included five purposefully formed groups of students from the experimental group who had undergone the training (i.e., meta-cognitive writing strategies training) to explore their perceptions of the training.

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are essential for assessing measurements of variables and ensuring the overall quality and precision of the study results. Nonetheless, it is challenging to eliminate risks to the accuracy and consistency of a study; instead, by focusing on the tools used in the research, the impact of these risks can be reduced. Therefore, the researcher ought to perceive them as varying levels rather than strict quantification (Cohen et al., 2007). Hence, the reliability of this study was confirmed through triangulation, utilizing various data collection tools. The practice of utilizing multiple data collection methods to study a specific aspect of human behavior is referred to as triangulation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013).

Similarly, a scholarly review was conducted to ensure the content validity of the current study was maintained effectively. The questionnaire data's validity was mainly assessed using SPSS 23. The items used were consistent with the five elements of writing (content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics) that make up the scoring rubric for the paragraph writing test. The researchers found that the reliability test using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.829, indicating high reliability and significance.

Methods of Data Analysis

In this study, a T-test (including independent samples t-test and paired samples t-test) was used to analyze the data obtained from the writing self-efficacy questionnaire. This is because, according to Brown and Rodgers (2002), the *t*-test is the most frequently used measure in L2 research, and it can be used to compare the mean scores of just one group between a pretest and a post-test to find out if the group had acquired some important points during training. Likewise, the data collected through focus group discussions were analyzed qualitatively in narrative modality... The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23.

Ethical Considerations

Research in the social sciences enters into participants' private lives (Berg, 2001). Therefore, researchers should consider the ethical principles that guide the research: permission, honesty, and anonymity (Fetterman, 1989). A letter of cooperation was obtained from Jimma University's Department of English Language and Literature before data collection. This helped the researcher get into the research site and provided full cooperation from the concerned bodies. After obtaining consent, the researcher assured the students' that their voluntary participation was fully guaranteed and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The confidentiality of the information collected has been ensured, and no parts of the data were used for any purpose other than this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Quantitative Results Related to Writing Self-Efficacy

The quantitative data for the study were obtained from students in both experimental and control groups. To compare the results of the two groups, group statistical measures such as mean, and standard deviation were utilized. Additionally, independent samples t-test and paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare the mean results of the writing self-efficacy questionnaire between the experimental and control group students.

Table 2: Pre- Intervention Results of Independent-Samples T Test of Students' Writing Self-Efficacy scores: Experimental Vs Control Groups

	Groups	Mean	SD		Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means			
					F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pre WSES	Experimental (N = 41)	3.1876	.52998	Equal variances assumed	1.789	0.185	1.522	80	.132	.18892
	Control (N =41)	2.9987	.59202	Equal variances not assumed			1.522	79.039	.132	.18892

(WSES refers to Writing Self-Efficacy Scores)

As demonstrated in Table 2, the experimental group students scored a relatively higher mean and standard deviation ($M = 3.1876$, $SD = 0.52998$) compared to the control group students ($M = 2.9987$, $SD = 0.59202$, $t(80) = 1.522$, $p = 0.132$, where the p -value was significantly greater than 0.05. Therefore, the result suggests that there is no significant difference between the groups' means (M). Thus, the students in both groups had the same level of belief about their ability to execute writing tasks before the intervention (i.e., meta-cognitive writing strategies training).

To determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in the groups of students' writing self-efficacy after 14 weeks of intervention, an analysis was conducted, and the post-writing self-efficacy results of both groups are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Post- Intervention Results of Independent-Samples T Test of Students' Writing Self-Efficacy Scores: Experimental Vs Control Groups

	Groups	Mean	SD		Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means			
					F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Post WSES	Experimental (N = 41)	3.5828	.57887	Equal variances assumed	0.023	0.879	4.648	80	.000	.5892
	Control (N = 41)	2.9936	.56908	Equal variances not assumed			4.648	79.977	.000	.5892

(WSES refers to Writing Self-Efficacy Scores)

As shown in Table 3, the experimental group students scored a higher mean (M) value of 3.5828 compared to the control group students' mean (M) value of 2.9936. When reviewing the pre-statistical output of mean (M) values, the experimental group showed an increase of 0.3952 in the mean (M) value; while the control group displayed a decrease of 0.0051 in the mean (M) value. To determine if the difference in writing self-efficacy between the two groups after the intervention (training in meta-cognitive writing strategies) provided to the experimental group students is statistically significant, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is examined. The Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the finding indicates a significant difference in writing self-efficacy between the experimental group ($M = 3.5828$, $SD = .57887$) and the control group ($M = 2.9936$, $SD = .56908$; $t(80) = 4.648$, $P = 0.000$, two-tailed).

Additionally, the finding suggests that the experimental group students had significantly more confidence in their ability to enhance their writing self-efficacy than the control group students after receiving 14 weeks of intervention (i.e., meta-cognitive writing strategies training). Thus, it can be concluded that the training had a positive impact on the experimental group students' writing self-efficacy.

Results of Paired-Samples T Test of Students' Writing Self-Efficacy Scores

A paired-samples t -test was conducted using SPSS version 23 to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test mean scores of the experimental and control groups in relation to their writing self-efficacy. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 4: Results of Paired-Samples T Test of Experimental Group Students' Writing Self-Efficacy Scores

Pair 1 Pre WSES Post WSES	Paired Samples Statistics			Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
							Lower	Upper			
3.19	41	.530	-0.395	.824	.129	-0.655	-0.135	-3.07	40	.004	
3.58	41	.579									

Table 4 displays the results of a paired samples t-test that was conducted to assess the effect of the intervention (i.e., meta-cognitive writing strategies training) on the writing self-efficacy scores of the experimental group students. There was a statistically significant improvement in writing self-efficacy scores from before the intervention ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.530$) to after the intervention ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.579$; $t(40) = -3.07$, $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)). The mean difference in writing self-efficacy scores was -0.395 , with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.656 to -0.135 . The eta square statistic (3.25) indicates a large effect size.

Table 5: Results of Paired-Samples T Test of control group Students' Writing Self-Efficacy Scores

Pair 2 Pre WSES Post WSES	Paired Samples Statistics			Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
							Lower	Upper			
3.00	41	.592	.005	.891	.139	-.276	.286	.037	40	.971	
2.99	41	.569									

Table 5 reveals that the results of paired samples t-test conducted to assess the writing self-efficacy scores of students in the control group. The analysis revealed no significant change in writing self-efficacy scores from pre-tests ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.592$) to post-tests ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.569$; $t(40) = 0.037$, $p > 0.05$ (two-tailed)). The mean difference scores was 0.005 , and the 95% confidence interval ranged from $-.276$ to $.286$. The eta square statistic (-0.08) indicates that effect size is small.

Results of Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

To gain an insight into the perceptions of students in the experimental group regarding the training they received, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with five purposefully selected groups of students. The results of the discussion are organized into two themes: 1) students' perceptions of the effect of the received training on the improvement of writing self-efficacy, and 2) students' overall perceptions on the training they have received. To facilitate the discussion, the five FGD members are identified by codes as Discussant one (D_1) – through Discussant five (D_5).

The analysis of the FGD responses to the first question, "Do you perceive the training you received has helped you improve your confidence in execute writing activities?" revealed that all participants agreed that the training indeed boosted their confidence in carrying out

writing tasks. They further explained this increased confidence had enabled them to write paragraphs more effectively.

Furthermore, in explaining the perception that the FGD participants had, one discussion group students, D₃ reflected:

“Yes, the meta-cognitive writing strategies training has helped us to improve our interest towards writing activities; It made us implement different types of strategies while learning writing lessons”.

Regarding the second theme, which focuses on three FGD guidelines (questions): “Do you perceive that the training has helped you maintain the meta-cognitive writing strategies overtime?”; “Do you perceive that the training has helped you successfully accomplish other academic tasks?”; and “What do you generally perceive about learning writing lessons through meta-cognitive writing strategies training?”, all discussant FGDs’ reflected that the training has highly benefited them in accomplishing their other academic tasks successfully.

During the discussions, participants reflected on their general perceptions of learning writing lessons through meta-cognitive writing strategies training. They discussed the importance of this method, noting that it provides a deeper understanding of strategies used in writing lessons, and offers an insight into the writing process. One focus group, comprised of, D₂ students illustrated this point by saying:

“We generally perceive that meta-cognitive writing strategies training is best method to learn writing activities. This is because, it taught us different strategies like: the planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies to write effective paragraphs”.

In general, from this analysis, it was found that the students in the experimental group, who received the meta-cognitive writing strategies training, had improved their confidence in executing writing tasks. Similarly, it was found that the participants perceived that the training had helped them maintain the strategies over time, helped them accomplish other academic tasks successfully, and that they generally perceived that learning writing lessons through meta-cognitive writing strategies training was helpful.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effects of meta-cognitive writing strategies training on first-year Jimma University English language learners’ writing self-efficacy, and their perceptions of the training. The results of the study revealed that meta-cognitive writing strategies training had positive effects on the experimental group students’ writing self-efficacy. The data collected before the intervention showed that the two groups of students (i.e., experimental and control) were found to be at the same level of writing self-efficacy. However, after intervention, as the independent samples t-test and paired samples t-test analyses reveal, the treatment group’s writing self-efficacy level had been significantly changed when compared with their pre-intervention results.

These findings corroborate with the previous findings of studies that were conducted by different researchers. For example, Tabrizi and Rajaei (2016) conducted a study to show how cognitive and meta-cognitive writing strategies can affect the total scores of elementary-level learners’ writing. The results of this study indicated that both cognitive and meta-cognitive writing strategies help elementary learners improve their writing.

In addition, the findings of the current study were congruent with results of the studies conducted by researchers like Talafhah et al. (2018), which focused on investigating “The Effect of Using Meta-cognitive Strategies on Writing Performance of EFL Students at Jordanian Private and Public Schools.”

And their study showed that explicit meta-cognitive strategy training had a significant positive effect on improving the writing performance of students with disabilities in the 12th Standard students. Likewise, the study conducted by Qin and Zhang (2019) on “meta-cognitive strategies and their relation to the students’ writing performance” also confirmed the findings of their study, which showed that meta-cognitive strategies are related to the participants’ writing performance.

Thus, the above studies have found that the utilization of meta-cognitive strategies in the writing process has shown significant changes in the students writing performance. By analogy, applying meta-cognitive writing strategies training in teaching writing is helpful for students to improve their level of writing performance. More specifically, the results of the current study showed that meta-cognitive writing strategies in teaching writing had brought about visibly significant changes in the students’ writing self-efficacy. However, the study conducted by Al Moqbali, et al. (2020) indicated that evaluating strategies were the least preferred meta-cognitive strategies, which contradicts the current study’s results. In this study, the components of meta-cognitive writing strategies (i.e., planning, monitoring, and evaluating) were given equal consideration, while the training was given to the students in the experimental group and brought the observed results.

Meta-cognitive writing strategies are conceived as part of the control level of the intellect, being systematized and sound (Hayes 2000). In any case, studies on meta-cognition do not take under consideration how passionate develops may trigger or impede the utilization of meta-cognitive strategies (Stewart, et. al 2015).

Lavelle and Guarino (2003) stated that a low self- efficacy is a factor negatively correlated with a satisfactory use of writing meta-cognition. It has been contended that, unlike the use of meta-cognitive strategies, self-efficacy tends to remain steady (Jones 2008). In agreement with the explained topic, (Jones 2008; Martinez et. al., 2011; Kirmizi and Kirmizi et.al., 2015), stated the fact that having a high level of writing self-efficacy seems to be a strong indicator of a higher use of meta-cognitive writing strategies and, therefore, of a better writing performance.

Moreover, the results of the focus group discussion conducted with experimental group students in order to investigate if the subjects perceived that the training has helped them improve their confidence in executing writing activities, if they also perceive that the training has helped them maintain the meta-cognitive writing strategies overtime, if they perceive that the training has helped them successfully accomplish other academic tasks, and what they generally perceive if writing lessons were taught through meta-cognitive writing strategies training, were discussed as follows:

The discussants reflected that the meta-cognitive writing strategies training that they had received had helped them improve the confidence that they had to execute writing activities. That is, the participants further explained that before they had engaged in such trainings their confidence of executing tasks related to writing was low; but after they had received this training their level of confidence was significantly improved and they were highly interested with tasks that require them write some sort of discussions. Likewise, the participants

demonstrated that the training has helped them use the meta-cognitive writing strategies overtime while they learn other courses and as result they were successfully accomplished on their academic areas.

Moreover, the participants reflected that if meta-cognitive writing strategies trainings were implemented in teaching writing lessons, the students would get more benefits in developing different aspects of writing significantly. In general, from the discussion, it can be concluded that the experimental group students' perceptions of the training were highly positive.

This finding has been found to be fitting with the previous studies conducted by Al-Jarrah et al., (2018), which investigated students' attitudes toward meta-cognitive strategies applied in the writing process. The study found that the students had positive attitudes toward meta-cognitive strategies. Similarly, this finding was in line with the results of the previous study, which was conducted by Fiani (2020), about the investigation of students' views on the implementation of meta-cognitive instruction in a writing class. The study (i.e., Fiani's study) discovered that students have a positive attitude toward the use of meta-cognitive writing instructions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of meta-cognitive writing strategies training on English language learners' writing self-efficacy and their perceptions of the training. The results of the study showed that the intervention (i.e., meta-cognitive writing strategies training) had brought about a significant change in the experimental group students' abilities to perform writing tasks.

Thus, the discussions given above imply that meta-cognitive writing strategies are essential to develop different aspects of learners' ability to write (e.g., writing self-efficacy). In addition to this, the results of the focus group discussion confirmed that the experimental group students' perceptions of the training were highly positive.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions made, the following recommendations were formulated:

- EFL teachers should incorporate meta-cognitive writing strategies implicitly or explicitly into their teaching and learning classroom writing activities to encourage their students' use of meta-cognitive writing strategies when they are doing writing tasks.
- Students need to implement meta-cognitive writing strategies while they learn writing for advanced and more effective writing outcomes.

Abbreviations

TEFL.... Teaching English as a Foreign Language

EFL.... English as a Foreign Language

WSQ.... Writing Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

FGD.... Focus Group Discussion

WSES.... Writing Self-Efficacy Scores

Declarations

1. Availability of data and materials

The data sets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

2. Interest statement: The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

3. Funding

The authors declared that the PhD dissertation project out of which this article was emanated was sponsored by MizanTepi University.

4. Authors' Contributions:

1. Abebe Getachew: Collected, analysed, interpreted the data; and produced the manuscript.

2 and 3: Temesgen Mereba and Yemanehbirhan Kelemework: Supervised the dissertation thesis project and commented on the draft and final versions of the manuscript.

Human Ethics and Consent for Participation

Ethical issues have been approved by the Ethical Review Board of College of Social Sciences and Humanities Jimma University during approval of the PhD research proposal. Furthermore, the study was conducted in accordance with the University's Doctoral Guidelines. Regarding consent for participation, prior to data collection participants of the study were explicitly informed about their consents to participate in the study if they were willing and/or not to participate if they were not willing.

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