

## Research Article

# Practices and Challenges of Integrated Functional Adult Education Program Implementation: The Case of Digeluna Tijo District, Oromia

Deriba Bekele <sup>1</sup>, Sentayehu Oljira,<sup>2</sup> and Shouket Ahmad Tilwani <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Adult Education and Community Development, Woldia University, Woldiya, Ethiopia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Woldia University, Woldiya, Ethiopia

<sup>3</sup>Department of English, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj 11942, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence should be addressed to Deriba Bekele; [diribabekele760@gmail.com](mailto:diribabekele760@gmail.com)

Received 18 May 2022; Accepted 8 July 2022; Published 24 August 2022

Academic Editor: Shi Yin

Copyright © 2022 Deriba Bekele et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The study's objective is to investigate the practices and challenges of implementing an integrated functional adult education program. The study used a mixed-method approach with a convergent design. Data were gathered from IFAE learners, facilitators, district education experts, supervisors, and the program's technical committees. Simple random sampling techniques were used, while comprehensive sampling techniques were used for facilitators. District education experts, supervisors, and technical committees were interviewed using semistructured interviews, while IFAE learners and facilitators were interviewed using questionnaires. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, and mean, as well as a description of the interviewee's opinion. As a result, the findings revealed that the IFAE program's contents are more focused on agricultural education and are also relevant to their daily lives. In addition, appropriate materials and teaching methods were used. The major challenges of the district's IFAE program were a lack of a conducive learning environment; participation and integration of different stakeholders; integration between sectors, overlapping of timetable with learners' own work, insufficient budget allocation, and a lack of facilitators training. To that end, it was suggested that strong cooperation and participation among government and nongovernment organizations, as well as strong integration between sectors, be encouraged. Furthermore, if regional, zonal, and district education offices need to find ways to increase their budget or raise funds to increase facilitator salaries and equip them, different learning materials were recommended.

## 1. Introduction

Education is a critical tool for development, and every human being has the right to a basic education regardless of race, religion, or economic status [1]. Besides, education is a fundamental human right and the foundation for development, from which people can benefit economically and socially [2]. However, formal education alone is not enough to bring rapid and continuous social and economic development, so providing other alternative ways like adult education for people who do not get the opportunity of formal education is extremely important. In reality, adult education has a significant role in economic development and poverty reduction.

There is no one agreed-upon definition of the term adult education by scholars and institutions since its scope has been changing from time to time. As it has been changed over time, it can be ill-defined by different scholars and institutions. One problem contributing to the confusion is that the term adult education is used with at least three different meanings. In its broadest sense, the term describes a process of adult learning. In its more technical meaning, adult education describes a set of organized activities carried on by a wide variety of institutions for the accomplishment of specific educational objectives. A third meaning combines all of these processes and activities into the idea of a movement or field of social practice. In this sense, adult

education brings together into a discrete social system all the individuals, institutions, and associations concerned with the education of adults and perceives them as working toward common goals of improving the methods and materials of adult learning, extending the opportunities for adults to learn, and advancing the general level of our culture [3].

According to Merriam [4], adult education could be conceived as a second chance or remedial to those who missed the opportunity for formal education. It can be realized through programs, such as literacy education for the illiterates as well as different continuing education programs in the forms of intellectual and vocational education. This can be viewed as a complementary or supplementary role of education. Adult education plays a complementary role because it stabilizes one's educational attainments, and it provides constraint refinement of knowledge and skills.

In general, the focus of adult education is to impart knowledge and skill among the adult and to facilitate conditions for the provisions of the functional adult education program. Also, it enables an adult to read and write to acquire knowledge and skill in agriculture, health, and civic and cultural education. For adults and youth who did not get the chance to take part in regular programs, the implementation of functional adult basic education is of great importance to accelerate the ongoing development activities in Ethiopia. Therefore, the strategy for adult education has been developed with the active participation of stakeholders [1].

On the other hand, adult education is a broad concept that incorporates different forms. Integrated functional adult education is one of them. "Integrated functional adult literacy is an approach used to help adults acquire reading, writing, and basic arithmetic skills and enhance their livelihoods in their locality, which in turn could contribute to the development of the country" ([5]: 128).

The national adult education strategy of Ethiopia, which was implemented as part of ESDP IV, placed a special policy emphasis on integrated functional adult education. The two-year IFAE program for 15–60-year-olds combines the development of mother tongue reading, writing, and arithmetic skills with practical knowledge and skills. Apart from the efforts of the government, some nongovernment organizations and communities-based organizations are engaged in expanding integrated functional adult education programs, and the plan gives much emphasis to the IFAE program [6].

According to the UNESCO publication "Global EFA Monitoring Report" from 2006, 58.5 percent of the country's population aged 15 and up are illiterate. Experts have long recognized the link between illiteracy and poverty and deprivation (2 cited in [7]: 27). Illiterates are a segment of society who are denied their right to an education and are largely excluded from information and knowledge sources and opportunities. Similarly, Mammo [7] clearly stated about illiterates as follows:

Illiterates are those who lack perceived learning needs and demand or whose need and demand are very limited in scope due to their exclusion from

information and knowledge sources and opportunities. They are individuals who have been kept in the dark about the benefits and values of literacy and education. They are people who are unable to translate their needs into effective demands due to a lack of understanding of their needs as demands. The majority of illiterates are people who live in poor economic and social circumstances, which can have direct or indirect negative consequences because they lack the time or energy to learn. As a result, illiterates are defined by their powerlessness (P: 22).

Several studies on the field of integrated functional adult education have been conducted in various parts of the country. See, for example, [5, 8, 9]. For instance, Tolera [9] studied the challenges of the implementation of Integrated Functional Adult Education (IFAE) in Ethiopia: A case of Oromia Regional State. The finding of his study indicates that integrated functional adult education program involved poor leadership, because the leaders found at different levels of the education sector are not able to share time in supporting this way of working.

However, despite extensive reading of various types of literature, the researchers of this study were unable to locate a study that examines the practice and challenges of integrated functional adult education in either Arsi zone or Digeluna Tijo district. In addition, two cases prompted the researchers to conduct this research. First, the researchers had the opportunity to participate in various workshops held in the Arsi zone and at various Universities. The majority of the workshops focused on the IFAE program's practices and challenges, particularly in terms of facilitator training and teaching methods. Second, according to the 2011 IFAE program annual report, the achievement of Arsi zone, particularly Digeluna Tijo district, was low. These two issues prompted the researchers to conduct a more in-depth investigation into the IFAE program's practice and challenges in Digeluna Tijo district. It would have been comprehensive if more districts were included in this study. However, to make the study manageable considering the available time and financial resources, it was geographically delimited to Digeluna Tijo district of east Arsi zone. East Arsi is one of the zones that is found in the central part of the Oromia region of Ethiopia. Digeluna Tijo is one of the districts that is found in the Arsi zone, and it is bordered on the south by Bekoji, on the southwest by Munesa, on the northwest by Tiyo, on the north by Hitosa, on the northeast by Tena, and on the east by Sherka. The administrative center of this district is Sagure.

Accordingly, the researchers attempt to answer the following basic research questions.

- (1) What does the practice of IFAE program implementation look like in Digeluna Tijo district?
  - (1) Practices of integrated functional adult education program in terms of learning content?
  - (2) Practice of integrated functional adult education program in terms of teaching method and materials?

- (3) The practice of integrated functional adult education in terms of facilitator training?
- (2) What are the major challenges of integrated functional adult education program implementation in Digeluna Tijo district?

## 2. Materials and Methods

Creswell [10] divided the research paradigms into four main types. Those are advocacy/participatory, social constructivism, postpositivism, and pragmatism. Among those, the pragmatism research paradigm was employed as a research paradigm in this study because it allows the researcher to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of the research that best meet their needs and purposes. "Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity, and its believed truth is what works at the time" ([11]: 39).

The researchers used a mixed research approach with convergent parallel design. Mixed-method approach is helpful for researchers, because it will compensate for the weakness of each other [12]. On the other hand, convergent design enables researchers to collect both types of data at roughly the same time and then integrate the information into the overall results interpretation. Besides, a basic rationale for this design is that one data collection form supplies strengths to offset the weaknesses of the other form and that a more complete understanding of a research problem results from collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. For example, quantitative scores on an instrument from many individuals provide strengths to offset the weaknesses of qualitative documents from a few people.

To get valid and reliable information, the uses of appropriate data sources are vital. Therefore, the researcher used only primary sources of data to get adequate and relevant information about the current practice and challenges of integrated functional adult education programs in Digeluna Tijo district. Accordingly, the primary sources of data were used to get firsthand information from district educational experts, supervisors, technical committees, and IFAE facilitators and from adult learners by using open and closed-ended questionnaires and semistructured interviews.

In Digeluna Tijo district, there are thirty-four IFAE centers, each with thirty-five to forty (35–40) students. Using simple random sampling techniques, four IFAE centers were chosen from a total of thirty-four. In general, there are eighty (80) females and seventy-five (75) males, for a total of 155 adult learners in the four randomly selected centers. Thus, twenty (20) adult learners were chosen from each of the four centers using simple random sampling techniques. Simple random sampling technique was also used to select 8 adult facilitators, whereas two educational experts, two technical committees, and two supervisors were chosen by using comprehensive sampling techniques. Furthermore, the details of the sample size, sampling techniques, and data collection instruments are presented hereunder in Table 1.

Both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were used in data collection. In order to collect quantitative

data, self-developed questionnaires were used to collect data from IFAE learners and facilitators in this study. In doing so, both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires were prepared in English. Then, after the English version questionnaires were translated to Afan Oromo with the help of an expert without distorting the original meaning, accordingly, facilitators and some learners fill the questionnaires by themselves, whereas the researcher and data collection assistants read and fill the learners' responses for those who are unable to read and write. As a result, issues such as the practice of the integrated functional adult education program in terms of learning content and teaching methods were gathered through the use of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. To collect qualitative data, the researchers conducted semistructured interviews with participants. These were used to obtain firsthand information from district educational experts, technical committees, supervisors, and integrated functional adult education program facilitators in order to answer questions such as program practices in terms of facilitator training and program challenges.

Following the collection of various data from respondents, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used to interpret the data. "The two databases are analyzed separately and then brought together" in convergent parallel mixed design ([11]: 273). In this study, quantitative data that were collected from questionnaires were translated from Afan Oromo to English and wisely read. The data was then analyzed using the SPSS 24 version to calculate frequency, percentage, and mean to describe and reach conclusions about the practice and challenges of the integrated functional adult education program, as well as the respondents' backgrounds. The qualitative data obtained through a semistructured interview was also transcribed first. The data was organized into retrievable sections and categorized into meaningful themes after transcription. Finally, as a research report, the findings were summarized using a simple and more readable narrative explanation.

## 3. Discussion

As shown in Table 2, item one is dealing with what type of teaching method do facilitators use in an integrated functional adult education class? Accordingly, 10 (58.8%), 1 (5.9%), and 6 (35.3%) were reported learner-centered, teacher-centered, and both, respectively.

As indicated in Table 2, facilitators were also asked about which method of teaching they frequently use during the teaching-learning process. As the result, the respondents' answer indicates that 7 (20.0%) used problem-solving method, 1 (2.9%) role-play method, and 16 (45.7%) group discussion method, and 11 (31.4%) of the facilitators' respondents responded that they use question and answer method. This indicated that there is no single teaching method that is frequently used; rather, it depends on the situation, contents, and learners interests.

According to Jarvis [13], teaching adults differs from teaching children because both have different life experiences and needs. This means that adults are motivated to

TABLE 1: Population, sample, and sampling technique.

No	Sample categories	Population	Sample size	Data Collection	Sampling technique
1.	IFAE centers	34	(1) Fitte (2) Temala (3) Jambo (4) Fittee Tokke		Simple random sampling techniques
2.	IFAE learners	155 (35–40 learners in each center)	20 × 4 = 80	Questionnaires	Simple random sampling
3.	IFAE facilitators	34	8	Questionnaires	Simple random sampling
	District educational experts	2	2	Interview	Comprehensive sampling technique
4.	Technical committees	2	2	Interview	Comprehensive sampling techniques
	Supervisors	2	2	Interview	Comprehensive sampling techniques
Total		1409	94		

Source: Degaluna Tijo education office (2012).

TABLE 2: Facilitator's response related to methods used in the IFAE program.

No	Items	Choice	Responses	
			Fre	%
1.	What type of teaching method do you use in the IFAE class?	(a) Learner centered (b) Teacher centered (c) Both	10 1 6	58.8 5.9 35.3
2.	Which method of teaching do you frequently use during the teaching-learning process? More than one answer is possible	(a) Problem solving (b) Role play (c) Group discussion (d) Question and answer	7 1 16 11	41.2 5.9 94.1 64.7
3.	Which one of the teaching materials do you use frequently in the IFAE class?	(a) Textbook (b) Modules (c) Lesson plan (d) Facilitators guide	6 — 1 10	35.3 — 5.9 58.8

learn and have much different experiences than children. So, everything that facilitators may use in teaching and learning process including teaching methods should be according to the principles of teaching adults. Knowles [14] clearly stated the six principles of adult learning as follows:

- (1) Adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.
- (2) Adults need to be responsible for their own decisions and to be treated as capable of self-direction.
- (3) Adult learners have a variety of experiences of life which represent the richest resource for learning.
- (4) Adults are ready to learn those things they need to know in order to cope effectively with life situations.
- (5) Adults are motivated to learn the skills applicable in their real-life situations.
- (6) Adults' motivation to learn is internal. In general, we have to think about those principles that guides us better to help our adult trainees/learners learn more.

Similarly, Bedi [15] added that the facilitator should use a variety of appropriate methods to ensure an effective and participatory learning process. The training sessions should be designed in such a way that they meet the needs of various

types of adult learners using a variety of methods. In fact, the content of each session frequently determines which methods are appropriate.

Concerning the teaching materials that facilitators used frequently in the integrated functional adult education class, 6 (35%) and 11 (65%) of the facilitators frequently used the lesson plan and facilitators guide, respectively. This implies that facilitators guide is repeatedly used by most of the facilitators in the IFAE program.

On the other hand, during the interview session, one of the district's supervisors clearly stated the following about teaching and learning process:

Adults prefer to be self-directing rather than being dependent upon a facilitator. They have accumulated experience which helps them learn and which helps them how to use learning resources. They also take responsibility for their learning. In general, they decided what to learn, when to learn, and by what method to learn. In short, facilitators are acting as guidance or consultancy rather than a teacher (June 4, 2012).

One of the district technical committees clearly stated the following about the selection of facilitators during the interview session:

First and foremost, we determined the number of facilitators required for our district based on our budget. Then, in collaboration with educational experts and the district's human resources administrative office, we developed criteria. The committee appointed by the district education office will then conduct the recruitment. Following that, we placed a notice in the district education notebook for a period of 10 days. To that end, the primary criterion we consider is that the employees have completed grade twelve or have a certificate. To make the recruitment process transparent, candidates (facilitators) must be provided with information about the recruitment criteria in advance. The second criterion is that he or she should be familiar with the culture of the community in which he or she grew up. We have both male and female candidates with equal qualifications with priority for females (June 6, 2012).

Based on this information, researchers conclude that a lack of well-trained facilitators may have an impact on the implementation of the IFAE program because ensuring the program's quality education is impossible without well-trained facilitators.

As indicated in Table 3, the major challenges of integrated functional adult education are divided into four parts. Those are learners related challenges, facility-related challenges, facilitators related challenges, and stakeholders related challenges. Under the learner related challenges, the unrelated lesson of the program to learners' daily life, lack of interest to participate in the program, childcare and domestic duties, need to harvest, farm, or other works, migration in search of work, and lack of awareness on the advantage of IFAE program are categorized under learners related challenges. Accordingly, the unrelated lesson of the program to learners' daily life, lack of interest to participate in the program, lack of awareness on the advantage of integrated functional adult education program, respondents who reported 11 (64.7%), 11 (64.9%), and 9 (52.9%) as medium problems, respectively, overlapping of timetable with learners' work, childcare, and domestic duties are reported to be high problems. Again, 10 (58.8%) of respondents reported low regarding migration in search of work from one district to others. In addition to this, as the mean of the above problems indicated, there are medium problems of IFAE program in relation to overlapping of time, childcare, unrelated lesson of the program to learners daily life, lack of awareness on the advantage of IFAE, and lack of interest to participate in the program. But problems related to migration for the search of work are low with a mean of 1.53. This implies that, compared to other challenges of adults, those who move from one place to another place for search of work are very low.

Regarding the facility's challenges, such as a lack of learning materials, a lack of learning materials, and the absence of a conducive learning environment, the majority of respondents reported high scores, with a mean of, 2.29,

and 2.47, respectively, while respondents reported a low problem with the distance between learning centers, with a mean of 1.76. This indicated that special attention must be paid to the learning environment in order to create a conducive learning environment.

Furthermore, in open-ended questions, respondents were asked to provide detailed information about the learning location or environment. As a result, they are told that the location is not free of various external and internal disturbances. The reason for this is that there are no built classes for this education program; instead, it is held in churches and mosques. They were told that they sometimes learn at home. In terms of facilitator-related issues, the data revealed that lack of training and insufficient payment are rated as high challenges to the implementation of an integrated functional adult education program, with a mean of 2.29, 2.00, and 2.29, respectively. However, the problem of the facilitator's negative attitude toward the work was rated 1.53 mean. This suggests that the facilitators are enthusiastic about the integrated functional adult education program. On the other hand, there are some issues with stakeholder participation, such as a lack of cooperation among stakeholders, insufficient budget allocation by the government, and a lack of individual commitment to implement the integrated functional adult education program. As a result, all respondents reported that the problem is severe. The researchers also interviewed one of the district educational experts about the government's attention and contribution, and he boldly stated:

Our district suffers from a lack of coordination and integration of stakeholders as a result of inadequate technical support provided by responsible bodies and a lack of community commitment to the IFAE program. According to various media and government reports, the government is paying close attention and contributing significantly. However, the reality is that government makes no practical contribution rather than paper values. In general, all stakeholders are under-represented in the IFAE program (June 6, 2012).

Besides, another interviewee indicated the participation of sector as follows:

There is no strong integration between different sectors. It would be best if there is strong cooperation and integration between different sectors to work on the effectiveness of the program in all aspects. As the name implies, integration refers to the involvement of concerned bodies in the implementation of the IFAE program based on the objective and content of the lesson, such as agriculture and health sectors, gender education and formal education, and so on. But, to be honest, except for the education sector, none of those stakeholders are involved. He concludes that the responsibility for implementing the IFAE program has been delegated solely to the educational sector (June 4, 2012).

TABLE 3: Facilitator's response to challenges of the IFAE program implementation.

No	Challenges	Rating						$X^2$
		High		Medium		Low		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	
<i>Learner related problems</i>								
1.	Unrelated lesson of the program to learners daily life	6	35.3	11	64.7	—	—	2.23
2.	Overlapping of timetable with learners own work	12	70.6	5	29.4	—	—	2.71
3.	Lack of awareness on the advantage of IFAE	3	17.6	11	64.7	3	17.6	2.00
4.	Lack of interest to participate in the program	5	29.4	9	52.9	3	17.6	2.12
5.	Childcare and domestic duties	9	52.9	7	41.2	1	5.9	2.47
6.	Migration in search of work	2	11.8	5	29.4	10	58.8	1.53
<i>Facility related problems</i>								
7.	Lack of learning materials	7	41.2	8	47.1	2	11.8	2.29
8.	Distance of literacy center from learners' home	1	5.9	11	64.7	5	29.4	1.76
9.	Absence of conducive learning environment	11	64.7	3	17.6	3	17.3	2.47
<i>Facilitators related problems</i>								
10.	Lack of training	8	47.1	6	35.3	3	17.3	2.29
11.	Lack of motivation	5	29.4	7	41.2	5	29.4	2.00
12.	Having negative attitude for the work	1	5.9	7	41.2	9	52.9	1.53
13.	Insufficient of payment	9	52.9	4	23.5	4	23.5	2.29
<i>Stakeholder Related problems</i>								
14.	Lack of cooperation between different stake holders	15	88.2	2	11.8	—	—	2.88
15.	Insufficient budget allocation by government	13	76.5	2	11.8	2	11.8	2.65
16.	Lack of individual commitment	11	64.7	5	29.4	1	5.9	2.59

According to the MoE [1], successful implementation of the integrated functional adult education program in Ethiopia requires adequate participation and integration of all stakeholders; in other words, stakeholder participation and integration ensure that the IFAE program is more effective, efficient, and sustainable. However, the findings of this study showed that there is a lack of integration and participation of various stakeholders.

According to the research questions and findings, the researchers discuss the practices and major challenges of integrated functional adult education in Digeluna Tijo district in this section. Based on the study's basic questions, the researchers attempted to discuss both the quantitative and qualitative findings. One of the primary goals of this research is to look into the IFAE program's practices and major challenges. As a result, the learning contents, teaching methods, and training of IFAE facilitators, as well as the programs major challenges, were discussed and summarized.

Regarding the learning contents, the findings of this study revealed that agricultural education, health education, civic and ethical education, business education, environmental protection, gender, and good governance were all included in integrated functional adult education programs. Even though the contents of the IFAE program are the same for all learners, contextualization based on the learners' interests is required. As a result, as this study's findings indicate, agricultural education is a more dominant content of Digeluna Tijo district's integrated functional adult education program. On top of that, Knowles [3] assumes that adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before attempting to learn it, that they have a variety of life experiences that represent the richest resource

for learning, and that they are ready to learn things they need to know to cope effectively with life situations.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education [1] confirmed that adults will be motivated to participate in adult education if the program is relevant to their needs and day-to-day activities, and if the education offered is applicable to solving their current problems. Functional adult education's contents, objectives, and methods are diverse and multifunctional, and it can be formal, nonformal, general, vocational, continuing, regular, or irregular. The nature of functional adult education programs varies and introduces a number of variables that must be considered in adult economic studies, which can range from public basic education provided in the formal system of education to informal learning in the workplace and continuing education of highly skilled professions (cited in [16]). A teaching method is a structure that is imposed on teaching activities. In a given lesson, these teaching activities can be expressed in terms of the facilitator's activity and the learners' activity. The activities must be purposefully chosen, ordered, and structured in order to affect the desired change in the students. Similarly, this study shows that adult learners have accumulated experience that assists them in learning and in determining how to use learning resources. They are also accountable for their own learning. In general, they decided what to learn, when to learn it, and how to learn it. In short, facilitators serve as advisors or consultants rather than teachers. Furthermore, Jarvis [13] stated that teaching adults is not the same as teaching children because they have different life experiences and needs.

Similarly, Bedi [15] added that the facilitator should use a variety of appropriate methods to ensure an effective and participatory learning process. The training sessions should

be designed in such a way that they meet the needs of various types of adult learners using a variety of methods. This means that the content of each session frequently determines which methods are appropriate. Indeed, this study found that IFAE program facilitators in the woreda used group discussions and questions and answers. The availability of qualified teachers is critical to ensuring quality education. Facilitators' competence is likely to be extremely important for the delivery and effectiveness of integrated functional adult education [1]. Tolera et al. [9] contend that teachers/facilitators in adult literacy learning programs are recognized as critical to successful learning outcomes. However, the study's findings revealed that there is insufficient funding to recruit trainees who provide facilitator training. Most of the time, facilitators had to receive preservice, in-service, or on-the-job training for three to five days. Similarly, Hildana [8] stated that facilitator training was insufficient and did not adequately prepare facilitators with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the program and handle adults based on their needs.

The successful implementation of the IFAE program necessitates the active participation and integration of all stakeholders. In other words, stakeholder participation and integration ensure that the IFAE program is implemented in a more effective, efficient, and sustainable manner [1]. However, data from learners, facilitators, supervisors, education experts, and technical committees revealed the presence of multiple challenges in the implementation of integrated functional adult education programs in Digeluna Tijo district. As a result, the program's major challenges were overlapping schedules with learners' own work, a lack of adequate facilitator training, an insufficient amount of facilitator salary, and a lack of participation and integration of all stakeholders in the IFAE program. Similarly, Mohammed [17] identified that there is a lack of adult's willingness to participate in the program, inadequate budget allocation, lack of facilities (resources), and lack of effective leaders, which are some challenges of the program. Besides, also stated that there is a lack of integration and participation of different stakeholders in integrated functional adult education.

#### 4. Conclusion

The information gathered was organized and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and mean, as well as describing of the interviewee's opinion. Based on the analysis, the major findings of the study were summarized as follows in relation to the practices of an integrated functional adult education program in terms of learning content, teaching methods, and facilitator training. The study discovered that agricultural education, health education, civic and ethical education, business education, environmental protection, gender, and good governance were all included in integrated functional adult education programs. Among these, the district program's content is more focused on agricultural education. In the integrated functional adult education program, the majority of the facilitators were used group discussion and questions and

answers as methods of teaching and learning. Concerning facilitator training, it was very brief and insufficient to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the program in accordance with the program guideline and curriculum framework of the integrated functional adult education program.

Regarding the challenges of integrated functional adult education programs, overlaps of timetable with learners' work, having responsibilities for both childcare and domestic duties, it has been reported that there is a significant problem with the need to harvest farm or perform other tasks, there is a lack of a conducive learning environment, inadequate training for facilitators, lack of participation and integration among various stakeholders such as government agencies, non-governmental organizations, communities, coordinators, and facilitators, and there is a lack of integration between education, agriculture, and health sectors.

#### 5. Implication of the Study

The integrated functional adult education coordinator has gain updated information on the actual practices and challenges of IFAE to take as a suggestion and to take corrective action. It is also essential for the integrated functional adult education facilitators if concerned bodies are provide training as well as suggestions about what kind of teaching methods and teaching materials are appropriate in the IFAE class. The finding of the study is enabling the districts and zonal education office to work effectively on the program, and it helps them set a guide to easily overcome the identified challenges. The current study identified that there is a significant problem with the need of harvest to perform other tasks. However, other challenges may also consider as a factor that hinders integrated functional adult education. Therefore, future researchers will be benefited from investigating areas that are not touched by the current study.

#### 6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

In the process of teaching and learning in integrated function adult education, a conducive learning environment is very imperative. But, as the finding of the study revealed that there is no conducive learning environment that motivates learners to learn more, hence, the regional, zonal, and district education offices have to work with the government on how a conducive learning environment should be created for integrated functional adult education learners because a conducive learning environment helps learners actively participate in the learning-teaching process.

The study also revealed that different stakeholders did not work together for the effectiveness of the integrated functional adult education program. Hence, it is recommended that there should be strong cooperation and participation among major stakeholders such as government organizations, public organizations, NGOs, private sectors, and communities as well as strong integration between education, health, and agriculture sectors to work on the

effectiveness of the program. A shortage of budget was also found as a major challenge of the IFAE program. It is recommended that regional, zonal, and district education offices must find ways to increase their budget or raise funds to increase facilitators' salaries and those of others. Overall, the district education office and program supervisors should collaborate with Arsi University's Department of Adult Education and Community Development have to work together on all challenges of integrated functional adult education program.

### Data Availability

The data used to support the findings of the study can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no any potential conflicts of interest to this manuscript.

### Acknowledgments

This work was done based on the thesis conducted on July 2020/21 academic year and submitted to Bahir Dar University. It is available at <https://ir.bdu.edu.et/handle/123456789/11253>. Hence, the authors would like to thank Bahir Dar University and the study participants for their contribution throughout the process of this study.

### References

- [1] MoE, *National Adult Education Strategy*, Ministry of Education, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2008.
- [2] UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization), *Education Strategy*, UNESCO, Paris, France, 2014.
- [3] M. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, Association Press, Chigago, IL, USA, 1980.
- [4] S. B. Merriam, "Andragogy and self-directed learning: pillars of adult learning theory," 2001, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227663704\\_Andragogy\\_and\\_Self-Directed\\_Learning\\_Pillars\\_of\\_Adult\\_Learning\\_Theory](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227663704_Andragogy_and_Self-Directed_Learning_Pillars_of_Adult_Learning_Theory).
- [5] K. Soressa and M. Hasan, "Practice and challenges of integrated functional adult literacy," *International Journal of Innovative and Development*, vol. 59, pp. 128–133, 2016.
- [6] MoE, "Education sector development programme V (ESDP V): programme action plan," 2015, [https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressources/ethiopia\\_esdp\\_v.pdf](https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressources/ethiopia_esdp_v.pdf).
- [7] K. Mammo, *Where and Who Are the World's Illiterates? Background Paper Prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006 Literacy for Life*, Hamburg, UNESCO Institute of Liflong Learning, 2005.
- [8] G. Hildana, "Practices and challenges of integrated functional adult literacy programme: the case of kolfe keranyo sub city," MA thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2014.
- [9] N. Tolera, "Challenges of the implementation of integrated functional adult education (IFAE) in Ethiopia: a case of oromiya national regional state," *African Educational Research Journal*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 103–117, 2019.
- [10] W. J. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Sage, London, UK, 2007.
- [11] W. J. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, University of Nebraska, London, UK, 2014.
- [12] W. Creswell, *Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, University of Nebraska, London, UK, 2009.
- [13] P. Jarvis, *Adult Education and Lifelong Learning: Theories and Practice*, Routledge, London, UK, 2004.
- [14] M. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy*, Association Press, New York, NY, USA, 1970.
- [15] A. Bedi, "An andragogical approach to teaching styles," *Education for Primary Care*, vol. 15, pp. 93–108, 2004.
- [16] G. Abaje, "A study on integrated functional adult education program in pastoral communities of jarar zone," *Challenges and Opportunities*, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 91–98, 2017.
- [17] S. Mohammed, "Implementation of integrated functional adult literacy programme in metekel zone of mandura and pawii," MA thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2013.