



# The Lived Experience of Beginner Teachers Who Teach in Plasma-led (Televised) Classroom: A Phenomenological Study

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## Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experience of beginner teachers who teach in a plasma-led (televised) classroom. A phenomenological research approach was employed. Three beginner teachers teaching in Hamaressa secondary school were purposively selected to participate in the study. To collect data, in-depth interview and open-ended questionnaire were used. Commonalities among teachers' lived experience were found. They experienced chaotic experience in the first few weeks of teaching. Classroom management problem, absence of induction and support, and inability to engage students in the teaching learning process were the challenges that the teachers shared in their teaching as a beginner teachers. A further study with large sample size and longer timeframe was suggested to have a comprehensive understanding of beginner teacher's lived experience.

*Keywords: Beginner teacher; phenomenology; lived experience; plasma-led classroom.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, educational technology has evolved and become more central to teaching and learning (Mahruf & Adrian [1]). Before the twentieth century, the three primary means of instruction were the teacher, the textbook, and the chalkboard. For most of the twentieth century, this remained largely true, with print media the predominant technology in education. Books, paper, pens, and pencils were the fundamental means for accessing, communicating, and otherwise sharing information (Berhanu [2,3]). Schroeder as cited in Lynette [4] and Bate [5] also stated that technology is the mechanism for increasing the amount of human-to-human interaction between teachers and students in the classroom and is used by teachers for interaction to meet the needs of the students' changing learning styles.

According to Latchanna and Basha [6], television is an important medium widely used to disseminate information to its viewers. It has the unique feature of combining audio and visual technology and thus, considered to be more effective than audio media. Similarly, Getachew [7] also asserted that instructional television is a medium which provides better ways of presenting the subject matter to students because it combines sound and visuals in a lesson so that complex or abstract concepts can be illustrated through visual simulation.

Furthermore, Vyas et al. as cited in Latchanna and Basha<sup>6</sup> said that because of its better accessibility, it can bring learning materials to the masses in more direct, effective and personal way than other educational media. Moreover, CPB as cited in Latchanna and Basha [6] stated that one of television's most obvious characteristics is its visual aspect. Humans intuitively grasp the power of images to convey meaning, as can be seen in the old adage that values a picture at a thousand times the value of a word. Television, of course, offers information in multiple forms: not just images, but motion, sounds, and, at times, text.

Television-based instructions increase the opportunity of students' learning through creating excitement, motivation, engaging, stimulating creative and critical thinking. Emphasizing this, Wiken as cited in Latchanna and Basha [6] has demonstrated that the effective integration of technology into classroom instruction can positively impact students' motivation,

engagement and interest in learning. Wiken adds, it leads to increased motivation and, retention which ultimately led to better learning and improvement in the students' academic performances.

According to Lynette [4], effective integration of technology is the result of many factors, but the most important factor is the teachers' competence and ability to shape instructional technology activities to meet students' needs. Teachers know their content and pedagogy, but when it comes to technology, teachers often learn along with students.

Studies revealed that there is a significance difference between beginner teachers and experienced teachers in using ICT in the classroom (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, & York [8]; Wetzel, Zambo, & Ryan [9]; Bate [5]). Meskill et al. as cited in Wetzel et al. [9] found that classroom experience in using technology with students was found to be more important than formal pre-service course work. They further elaborated that those novice teachers who had received "state of the art" training in classroom technologies were far less comfortable in their implementation than the more experienced teachers who had no formal training with computers but a great deal of classroom experience. Wetzel et al. [9] also indicated that beginner teachers focus on themselves as teachers, not on the student learning.

As far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned, previous researches conducted in Ethiopia have focused on evaluating the status (Kassahun, Zelalem, and Addis [10]), effectiveness (Getachew [7]; Berhanu [2,3]; Kassahun and Zelalem [11]), perception (Berhanu [2,3]), and Impact (Kassahun and Zelalem [11], and Getnet [12], Latchanna and Basha [6]) of the plasma channeled instruction. No research has been conducted on examining the lived experience of the teachers who teaches in those plasma-led classrooms that may affect adoption of the technology. Therefore, this study focus on examining lived experience of beginner secondary school teachers who teach in plasma-led classroom.

### 1.1 The Context of the Problem

According to Bate [5] reports, educational systems around the world are under increasing pressure to use the new information and communication technology (ICT) to teach

students the knowledge and skills they need in the 21st century. Russell and Finger [13] similarly state that the application of ICT is, these days, widespread throughout all types of teaching institutions.

The government of Ethiopia has recognized the benefit of ICT for education and makes some remarkable efforts to use it in education system of the country (Kassahun and Zelalem [11]). Among the efforts that aimed at facilitating instructional delivery and training, production of Educational TV programs, installation of satellite receiving devices known as Plasma Display Panels (PDPs) in every classroom at secondary level, establishing a computer network system, and installation of satellite TV programs transition system at the center Educational Media Agency (EMA) are the main projects (FDRE [14]).

With the assumption of addressing existing quality and equity aspects and to resolve problems of limited access and make use lessons from experiences of other nations, ministry of education has launched the plasma mode of instruction in secondary schools of the country since September 2004 (Kassahun and Zelalem [11]; Latchanna and Basha [6]). This plasma-based instruction was first begun in 6 subjects (English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and civics and ethical education). Later in 2006, three other school subjects (technical drawing, general business and economics) were also added for preparatory students. Moreover, Geography is introduced as part of the delivery system in the 2014/2015 academic year.

All programs have only been delivered to governmental secondary schools in the country through a closed-circuit system using very small aperture terminal (VSAT) satellite dish (Berhanu [2,3]). The signals were broadcast from EMA which is found in center of the country, Addis Ababa.

According to the FDRE [14], the program is planned to transmit uniform education to many students to have access to model and competent teachers, provide standardized education to all high schools, present abstract concepts in a simplified manner, and overcome the problem of qualified teacher. The program has been interrupted in different times for problems encountered during implementations. For instance, the transmissions of English and Civics

and Ethical Educations subjects have been terminated in 2009. In addition the transmissions of physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology were terminated in 2010. Finally, the transmission has resumed as of 2011 (Berhanu [2,3]).

The Plasma Television program is organized around lessons presented by a plasma teacher and performed by students using English as a medium of instruction. It integrates group activities, pair works and individual exercises. Students are provided with different explanations and tasks by the plasma teacher. A classroom teacher is assumed to facilitate and monitor the lessons. Each lesson lasts forty-two minutes long and has a regular structure. In the first five minutes, the classroom teacher is expected to introduce the lesson to be transmitted, and then switch on the television. For the next thirty minutes, the plasma teacher delivers the lessons. The classroom teacher and students listen to the presentations and perform different activities as they are instructed (the teacher facilitates and/or monitors; the students perform tasks). After the presentation, the classroom teacher switches off the television and is expected to spend the last five minutes bringing the session to a close. Two minutes have also been added for transitional period from lessons to lessons.

However, later, a change was made on the structure of the lessons' delivery. Each plasma-led subject has one non-plasma sessions led by the classroom teacher each week whereas the remaining sessions runs by both the plasma and the classroom teacher. In addition, the time covered by the plasma teacher reduced to 25 minutes for mathematics: both the classroom and the plasma teacher take the stage turn by turn till the end of the session. In the remaining plasma-based subjects, the plasma teacher takes 22 minutes and 20 minutes by the classroom teacher.

The roles of the classroom teacher, as mentioned by MOE as cited in Berhanu [2,3], are divided into three: before, during, and after the transmission.

- 1. Before the transmission:** Classroom teachers are expected to identify the lesson to be aired and make all necessary preparations like getting ready lesson plans, teaching aids and laboratory equipments if necessary. They are also

estimated to get students come up with the required teaching materials. Moreover, before the day's plasma lesson is transmitted, they introduce the topic and content of the lesson along with its objectives within five minutes.

2. **During the transmission:** Encouraging students to follow plasma lessons attentively, watching the telecasted lessons, getting the students to work on activities as they are instructed by the screen teacher, taking their own notes regarding the contents which need further explanation, making effort to continue the teaching learning process in case the transmission is interrupted and not interfering the plasma teacher's presentations are some of the roles of the classroom teachers during the transmission.
3. **After the transmission (after the plasma lessons have been over):** Classroom teachers are expected to recap the lessons, give additional explanations, to give counseling regarding the plasma programs and to introduce the topic and content of the upcoming plasma lessons.

In this article, an attempt is made to examine the lived experience of beginner teachers who teaches in plasma-led classrooms at Hamaressa senior secondary school, Harar. The lived experiences of three beginner secondary school teachers are explored in detail via a phenomenological lens. This study is assumed to be relevant to school leaders in providing them with valuable information about the challenges that beginner teachers are facing in managing plasma-based subjects thereby let them think about the interventions they could do. It also provide policy makers with better understanding of the operation of plasma instruction and indicating areas of improvement during revision in the future, if any, on the operation of the program itself and/or training of secondary school teachers. Beyond all, the study may be important for another researcher who wants to study the issue with more schools and teachers.

This study intends to come up with answers for the following questions;

1. How do beginner teachers experience teaching in the plasma-led classroom?
2. What challenges do they encounter in their teaching?

## 1.2 Beginner Teachers

The early years of teaching are often characterized by a "sink-or-swim" or "survival" mentality. On this regard, Zachariah [15] and Nemsar as cited in Clausen [16] explained that the transition from teacher education into the first year of teaching has frequently been characterized as a period of survival, discovery, adaptation, and learning. Similarly, Marie and Gilbert [17] and Kagan as cited in Clausen [16] describe beginning teachers as being concerned with personal conflicts related to acceptance, control, and adequacy.

Another researchers, Lortie and Veenman as cited in Clausen [16], also stated the first year of beginner teachers as a period where new teachers make trial and error decisions about instruction, classroom management, and curriculum development, then continue to rely on those decisions even though they do not represent best practices. New teachers really have two jobs to do – they have to teach, and they have to learn to teach (Kathy, Howard & Tom [17]).

Beginning teachers need to know *how* and *why* to use technology in meaningful ways in the learning process. Dockstader as cited in Lynette [4] and Russell and Romeo [18] indicated that using technology in the classroom is a complex process that includes (a) learning the technology, (b) using technology in the teaching and learning process, and (c) integrating technology to enhance student learning.

Supporting Dockstader's notion, Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, & York [8] also contends that pre-service teachers need to be given opportunities to use technology as an instructional tool. This can be accomplished both within the college classroom (microteaching, simulated lessons), and in field experiences (practicum, student teaching). The more experiences students have, the more likely they will be comfortable using technology to facilitate learning in their future classrooms. If teachers learn how to use technology within their specific content areas and/or grade levels, they can more readily transfer that knowledge to their own classrooms (Bate [5]).

However, research exploring new teachers' instructional technology use has concluded that even if beginner teachers know how to use technology in their classrooms, they may still

lack, as novices, the confidence needed to actually use it in their classrooms (Russell et al. as cited in Clausen [16]; Andersson [18]. Andersson further strengthen his argument saying, although knowledge of technology is necessary, it won't be enough if novice teachers don't also feel confident using that knowledge to facilitate student learning.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative phenomenological research approach is used for this study. According to Carla [19], phenomenology is a qualitative research approach interested in the world as it is experienced by human beings within particular contexts and at particular times. Phenomenology involves capturing and describing how 'they [individuals] perceive it [phenomena], describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others (Van Manen [20]).

According to Dermot and Moran [21], through phenomenological approach, we can only uncover the essence of an experience through a study of "the particulars as they are encountered in lived experience". Thus, this study focused on examining the lived experience of the beginner teachers in order to better understand the nature of the first year of teaching.

In this approach, an in-depth interview was conducted with individuals who experienced the phenomena under investigation, in which they could describe, talk, and make sense of the phenomena. In addition an open-ended questionnaire was employed. The interviews and the open-ended questionnaire provided the participants time to reflect and think about how they have experienced it and what challenges they have encountered as a beginner teacher in a plasma-led classroom. Here, though observation would have been wise to use as one of the tools for data collection, it was not employed due to the fact that the beginner teachers have already taught for the length of 8 (eight) months during the time of data collected which would be one of the limitation of the study.

Purposive sampling was used. Beginner teachers who teach in a plasma-led classroom were purposively selected as participants of the study. Three teachers whose subject of specialization is being delivered in televised program and employed as a beginner teacher in

the academic year of 2014/2015 in Hamaressa Secondary school, Harar were purposively selected for the study. The data was analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Individual themes will be used as units of analysis in this study. Using themes as a coding unit, the researcher was primarily looking for the expression of an idea thus the researcher assigned a code to a text chunk of any size as long that chunk represents a single theme or issue of relevance to the research questions raised.

### **2.1 Data Collection Procedures**

Principal's approval was obtained before conducting the research. Prior to collecting data, the teachers were given written instructions and notified of their voluntary participation in the research and right to refusal. Each subject received general instructions, study descriptions and intent. All data collection took place in the first three weeks April of 2015.

In-depth interviews were conducted in order to gain insight into the participants' experiences. Open-ended questions were asked to understand how participants felt about their experience in the plasma-led classroom. The researcher took notes and recorded his observations during each interview. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning each participant a pseudonym to be used instead of his or her name.

## **3. RESULTS**

The purpose of this study was to report the lived experiences of beginner secondary school teachers who teach in plasma-led classroom. As a phenomenological study, the goal was to illustrate and give voice to those who actually experienced the phenomenon. Participants who are currently teaching at Hamaressa secondary schools in Harari Regional State, Harar were involved. They are new to teaching and employed in the school in the 2014/15 academic year. They participated in this study so willingly. They were cooperative and accommodating in setting up times and places to have face-to-face interviews. Their participation is what made this study possible. In this section, the stories of the three beginner teachers are presented as described by themselves in the interview and open-ended questionnaire using pseudonyms. Finally, a common themes emerged out of their stories is presented.

### 3.1 Participants and Their Stories

#### 3.1.1 Mulugeta's lived experience

Mulugeta (not his real name), 21, muscular physique with medium height, recalled his first day teaching English in Hamaressa secondary school as awful. He was late to be assigned in the school and missed the orientation given to all new teachers. On his arrival, the school's principal "didn't do anything to him. In fact, Mulugeta was told only which classes he would teach when he received the schedule at a department meeting the day before school started.

*"...I was not properly introduced to all the staff. I was not shown to my room. I was not told how to get supplies. I was not told how I would fit in and how I could contribute. I was not even shown the bathrooms!"*

On the following day, he had a class with grade 9<sup>th</sup> B at the second period in the morning. He was very excited to be in a classroom, but he soon felt overwhelmed by the isolation, expectations, and lack of support from colleagues and administrators. He met the vice principal on the corridor between his (the principal) office and the staff's lounge. He greets him and wishes him good luck.

*"...the principal wanted to get me into a classroom on the first day, so he showed me the class from distance and sent me just saying "don't afraid the plasma teacher will do everything and assist you how to proceed". When I enter the class, the plasma teacher was giving explanation. I was trying to track the plasma teacher and take my turn to guide students' activities and moved here and there in the classroom. But I was not effective: I couldn't manage the student's activity; some students were talking at the back and couldn't respond to them; couldn't catch up the plasma teacher..... I was nervous and couldn't concentrate at all".*

But Mulugeta was still confident enough that he would manage everything by himself soon. He continuously attempt to acknowledge, interpret and give meaning to classroom rules, values, resources, and communication patterns in order to gradually integrate himself into the school ethos. He was not concerned about the acceptance and the recognition issues he would

have been gained from different members of the school.

*".....I had the same responsibilities as my more experienced colleagues and was expected to perform and be effective from the first day I enter the class. I was often reluctant to ask for help lest I appear unprepared and incompetent to my colleagues and not to erode my confidence. So I had to rely on my own backgrounds and resources to get through the tumultuous first week of teaching till I got close to the staffs in my department".*

Uncertainty, confusion, and being nervous stemming from his lack of confidence were characteristics of his first week of teaching. He came to class well prepared but as the lesson progressed, everything gets out of control.

*"...I couldn't go in line with the plasma teachers' presentation schemes and engage students in the learning process. I couldn't use properly the brief time I had given by the plasma teacher to introduce day's lesson and objectives; guide students' activities; and summarize the lesson".*

He often struggled mightily to establish a classroom environment conducive to students' learning. He confronted with students who have less academic motivation and interest rather tendency to misbehave. They were not attending the plasma transmission attentively, takes no notes of their own from the plasma and his explanation. The time given by the plasma teacher was too short to ensure the participation of all students. He recalled it as;

*".....due to lack of experience in working with students, I often lost the attention of the students at the back when I was so intensely engaged with student at the front. I would then work to settle the class and return to students at the back, unfortunately the plasma teacher has already taken its position. This cycle repeated itself throughout the four weeks, with a few minor improvements stemming from our work together".*

But Mulugeta was aware that these chaotic classroom experiences was temporary and would last quite a while until he get familiarized with it and settled himself down.

*".....after three months, with the help of my colleagues at the department, I felt that I had established some fairly workable classroom management procedures. However, students were not showing progress in participation that I had hoped. The problem, I think, was the way that the plasma teacher lets students engage in activities. I mean, the plasma teacher give answers to questions within fractions of seconds which in turn discourage participations of students".*

Thus, to deal with these challenges, Mulugeta has invited the vice principal to observe his teaching during his most problematic sessions so he could obtain feedback about how to improve his classroom management and engage students in the teaching learning process.

*"...the vice principal has shared me his experience. I give students home-take assignments and doing worksheets in the non-plasma sessions. And now it's going a lot better – I'm getting to the point where I'm feeling a lot more comfortable with my teaching performance in the plasma-led classroom. ...I feel like I'm done".*

Mulugeta is now becomes increasingly willing to take even risks in order to meet the needs of his students. He recognizes that he must take the time to learn everything he can about his students and then be willing to try whatever he thinks might enhance learning in his classroom.

*".....I want to become a more effective teacher; I want to be there for my students. I want to be able to give them what they need in order to achieve the objectives indicated in the curriculum/textbook and I think that I will be even better for next academic year".*

### **3.1.2 Mohammed's lived experience**

When Mohammed (not his real name), 20, tall and thin physically, went there (Hamaressa secondary school), he was absolutely confident that he would be a good teacher and successful in teaching. However, large class size, misbehaving student, and the presence of some adults in his classroom make him anxious and doubtful of his success in that hell-like classroom. He reported;

*".....in my first day class, I saw some adult students in my classroom, while I was only twenty years old and physically skinny.*

*I thought I am not better at keeping order than other new teachers, severely challenged by the students' well-practiced teasing and clowning, doubtful of my legitimacy as enforcer of rules." I felt uncomfortable requiring students to keep silent and attend the plasma teacher's explanation".*

He cared too much and was unable to detach himself from the students' antics. When they refused to respond to questions, he had no idea what to do. He often lost his composure and quickly gravitated away from the students to the plasma teacher.

*".....seemingly unsure of myself, I would utter a few unintelligible threats; but the students would ignore my warnings, and continue their discussions and horseplay".*

Mohammed struggled a lot to engage all students in the teaching learning process and set order to ensure conducive learning environment during his first two weeks of teaching. However, he couldn't see improvement on the students' behavior and spent the whole instructional time on setting order. He felt desperate with everything happening in his classroom where meaningful learning was supposed to happen.

*"...I encountered problems as I tried to establish the procedures to allow students to thrive in an environment like that. Some students misbehaved, and the resulting climate was often chaotic and uncomfortable; I often felt helpless and unable to get the students to listen to me. As I tried to get tough and enforce rules, I began to feel more like a slave who supervised student's behavior than the inspiring teacher I was hoping to one day become. I became someone I was not, and I was unable to continue the farce. While worrying day and night about controlling my students, I completely lost control of myself".*

Quickly disenchanted and possessing inadequate procedural knowledge, he tends to grow increasingly authoritarian. He was preoccupied with class control and feeling insecurity as if he was "lost in the sea".

*".....I was working fourteen hours a day to plan perfect lessons, and had tried every classroom management technique. My heart told me that I was not connecting with my*

*students, and this knowledge pierced my soul and become impatient, but my instinct still told me to search for answers to the problem I was facing”.*

He was trying to get support from principals and other experienced teachers telling them that he is suffering. But the response was not satisfactory.

*“.....I was disheartened in the first four weeks of teaching because I can’t ask anyone to know what I’m doing in the classroom is okay or not because nobody comes after me to observe and give feedback. I thought there would be regular support and evaluation from supervisors and principals”.*

All in all, Mohammed spent a lot of time as the year began planning lessons and trying to set up routines. Student behavior, however, created challenges for him throughout the year and finding effective classroom management strategies was a headache for him.

*“.....I did have some ideas, but I exhausted those. Everything that I had been taught... was exhausted fairly fast. Students frequently did not follow the plasma teacher and even disrupted others. Student behavior still troubled me at the end of the year.*

According to him, the reason that left his first year teaching experience chaotic is that the training that he has attended in PGDT (Post Graduate Diploma in teaching) program was not adequate enough to equip him with classroom management skills that are important especially in plasma-led instruction. He explained it as;

*“.....the problem is I didn’t trained how could I mange students in the televised instruction. The only thing that I can remember was that we used to have micro teaching. The focus by then was how to use other teaching methodologies apart from the lecture method, and not ICT. Special attention was supposed to be given for how teachers could manage students in televised instruction too”.*

In addition, Mohammed reported that he knew he was expected to guide, identify and engage students in the teaching learning process, take note of issues that are difficult to students and also encourage students while they are doing on exercises suggested by the plasma teacher.

However, the fact was that he couldn’t ensure their active participation and apply active learning strategies for the reason that students are reluctant to get engaged in the process of learning.

*“.....I can’t implement student centered approaches that I have learned in my training. Imagine, the time given to complete exercises is too short, plus most of the students seem not interested to participate”. For instance, Students were occasionally asked to carryout tasks framed between 20 to 40 seconds, but the students are not motivated to attempt the exercises. They know that the answer will appear on the screen after the end of the given time for the exercises. This discouraged them, I think, to participate”.*

He always makes adequate preparation in advance to work with the televised teacher and makes sure that all tasks given by the plasma teacher are dully exercised by students. But the inadequacy of the time allotted for him in the instructional process challenged him a lot to help his students learn better. He complained as;

*“.....while assigning a task to be done in the classroom, the plasma teacher instructs me to check, correct or guide the students. But the time given is too short to do these”.*

Generally speaking, inadequacy of time given to classroom teachers before, during and after transmission couldn’t let him to make adequate support to students’ learning. Moreover he did not make use of his time, couldn’t address individual students’ needs, and could not make appropriate introduction.

*“.....for instance, when the broadcast is over, I was expected to give overall summary of the program, concentrate on those issues I have identified during presentation that requires further explanation and address any question, if any, from students. In addition, I was expected to introduce the title and content of the next televised program and attend to students concerns on the program. But because of inadequacy of time given for consolidation, I couldn’t do all these and support students to the level I expect”.*

However, Mohammed is still hopeful and committed to try alternative classroom



management techniques and active learning strategies to solve the problems he is facing in the classroom and improve his students' learning.

### **3.1.3 Abebe's lived experience**

As it is known beginning teachers enter classrooms with high expectations for themselves and for their students. Yet, several studies revealed that the first year of teaching is a sobering experience for most new teachers. Abebe, 22, a graduate of Bahir Dar University, also experienced the same story. "I could not even differentiate as first day.....my first week was a chaos", he recalled. He was not even aware of what he was doing because there was a bunch of things that he did not know which one he should handle. He was trying to know the surrounding community, the city, the culture, the school community etc. "Everything came over him simultaneously".

*"....normally I was supposed to start class on September 21<sup>st</sup> but my start-up was September 28<sup>th</sup>. I came and started. There was no orientation for me. I was not familiar with this town, I was not familiar with school, and I did not know anyone. I should have been employed in August and know where I will go. It was just like a nightmare. I do not even want to remember".*

On his first day class, he was frightened a lot. He was thinking about what would happen, when he totally in charge of this class. He was seriously terrified thinking about the plasma.

*".....I didn't have the confidence and I was afraid of the plasma. Of course, as a student, I know it since I passed through it. But the problem was that I was frustrated to stand beside it as a teacher. I even thought to the extent that the plasma teacher would expose me, if I commit a mistake. I didn't have the competence to work with the plasma. You know why? I didn't have any background about how to teach using the plasma because I was not trained about the use of the plasma in my PGDT training".*

When he first enters the classroom, he saw the plasma at the very end of the corner. Many students were staring on him. He was confused about how to begin the session. He continues his narration as;

*"....lots of questions came to my mind. Would I be able to manage? Would I be able to direct? Is a problem going to arise? I was just attending the plasma with no reaction even during the times that I was given for facilitation and consolidation. I was relieved when I became aware that first lesson was over, as the bell rung".*

Abebe has ended his first class this way. Of course, he was not sure of his role in the plasma-led instruction. He enthusiastically reported that;

*".....from my experience as a student, I expected my role, in the plasma led classroom, as a technician, operating the plasma screen. I observed my high school teachers turning on the television and getting us watches the program. Unless there is a program failure (transmission interruption), most of them were passive. Even when some students asked them for assistance, they told them as everything could be found from the screen. Thus, my knowledge of how to use the plasma instruction in my lessons was minimal".*

But his first week of chaotic experience has taught him at least his role in the classroom. During broadcasting, he is expected to have his textbook with him so that if broadcast failure happens, he will take over the teaching learning process. He is expected to follow and provide help to students. Moreover he should entertain students' questions, give feedback, and takes note of those issues that he believed require further explanation.

The other challenge that contributes for his frustration especially in the first two weeks was classroom management problems. He was not able to attend the plasma instruction and react to students' misbehavior simultaneously. He recalled it as;

*".....the students' behavior was so poor and I had a real hard time dealing with it, especially the first two weeks, because while the plasma teacher was giving explanation, I had to attend it and take some notes on issues which need my further explanation so that unable to have a look on the students at the same time".*

Besides, Abebe didn't hide his concern on the time allocation for him and the plasma teacher. Engaging students in the teaching learning process is still challenging him. "The time given

for class exercise is not enough for students to do the exercises by themselves and to discuss with their friends". Moreover, the students could not get enough time to interact with their teachers, it is just too fast.

Finally, Abebe indicated that the plasma teacher's language was beyond student's English language proficiency. Moreover, the pronunciation of the plasma teacher was another headache to students to understand the language easily. They used to complain to him that they couldn't understand the language of the plasma teacher. As a result he was supposed to translate the instruction into local language although the medium of instruction is English.

*"... the pace of the plasma teacher is too fast as compared to understanding level of the students in my classroom. They cannot comprehend what the plasma teacher is saying because most of the students do not understand instructions in English, thus, it was very challenging to me to translate what the plasma teacher had said into local languages (Oromiffaa) and to guide students' activity within the timeframe I have given".*

### **3.2 Themes Emerged Out of the Lived Experience of the Beginner Teachers**

As a phenomenology approach, the lived experience of the three beginning teachers is presented above as narrated by themselves. The common lived experience of the three teachers as challenges they have encountered is presented hereunder with a theme of classroom management problems, inability to involve students in the teaching learning process in a televised classroom, and absence of induction and support about how to teach in a televised classroom.

#### **3.2.1 Classroom management problems**

Classroom management skills are of primary importance in determining teaching success. As explained by Zuhair [22], a teacher who is grossly inadequate in classroom management skills is probably not going to accomplish much. Zuhair further stressed that a failure to implement effective classroom management can lead to a level of continued frustration. Boone & Boone as cited in Koehler & Kim [23] has shown that beginning teachers encounter challenges with classroom management. Confirming Boone & Boone's findings, the beginning teachers involved in this study cited classroom

management as one of their most serious challenges.

Mulugeta entered the classroom in his first year and thought he was prepared to meet classroom management challenges. He had taken education classes where he learned different classroom management strategies. But these strategies failed in the classroom. Similarly, Abebe got frustrated and felt as if he was entering a classroom every day where students were unmanageable and nothing he did was effective in governing them.

Mohammed and Abebe explained the overwhelming frustrations they were facing in their first few months of teaching. The teachers figured out their classroom environment as not conducive for the occurrence of meaningful learning, the students tend to misbehave rather than attending the plasma session; and expressed that it required them much effort to control their student's behavior all the time. They couldn't manage the plasma and the students' behavior simultaneously and lost control of both on the first weeks. In line with this finding, Clausen [16] stated that one of the disadvantages of using electronic communication media in teaching is loss of classroom control by the teacher. The reasons that worsen their inability to manage the classroom and the televised instruction simultaneously was that, in the teacher education program they have attended, they were not exposed to such experience i.e. they didn't practiced it in their training and/or the methodology courses they have taken didn't consider the actual teaching practice in the schools.

If these beginner teachers were able to gain a basic classroom management understanding and skills, they will be able to reduce much of the anxieties and frustrations that go along with it. In addition to this, continuous support of the principal and their colleagues could ease their challenges. One of the roles of the principal, according to Carver [24], is to hold students accountable for acting in a responsible manner. Carver further argues that principals who facilitate a disciplined and orderly school environment enable the new teacher to concentrate on teaching students, rather than just managing them.

#### **3.2.2 Absence of induction and support**

Beginning to teach involves both starting a new job and entering a new way of life. The school

communities have to welcome to help them meet the challenges of this beginning (Wong [25]). Very few, however, were warmly welcomed in their schools, introduced to their colleagues, and provided with information about the classes that they would teach, engaged in discussions about the pressing, school-specific questions of curriculum, instruction, and classroom management that most concern new teachers (Kathy, Howard & Tom [17]).

According to Koehler & Kim [23], the feeling of 'belongingness' and the building of the first foundations of their identity as effective teachers depend upon the support that is received from the school administration and colleagues. These supports include all things done for new teachers to acculturate them to teaching.

The integration of ICT in education calls for the changing role of the teachers. Several studies have pointed out that teachers are agents of change in the adoption and use of ICTs in education. Therefore teachers need to not only know where to click but also how, why, and when to use chosen technologies.

According to Lynette [4], technology integration is not about the availability of technology, but more about the teachers' effective use of technology that makes a difference in reforming the classroom. The teacher is the most important ingredient for success when using and integrating technology (Mandell, Sorge, & Russell, as cited in Lynette [4]). Without teachers who can integrate technology, students' exposure to technology remains limited and inequitable.

As we read in the narratives of the teachers involved in this study, the support they have got from their colleagues and the principal was poor. Abebe recalled his first week experience in the school as a "night mare". *"There was no orientation for me. I was not familiar with school, and I did not know anyone"*. Mohammed and Mulugeta also reported that there was lack of support from the colleagues and the administrators at the beginning.

As it has been explained by Mahruf and Adrian [1], using plasma in the teaching learning process requires teachers' knowledge of the technology along with their subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. In other words, it requires the professional competency of teachers, such as the use of the plasma TV, how it differs from

conventional classroom teaching, how to manage and administrate the technology, how to engage students in the learning process, how to manage students misbehavior etc. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the absence of orientation and regular support has caused the beginner teachers to go through chaotic and terrified experiences in the first few weeks of teaching. These beginner teachers were supposed to be properly introduced and oriented before they begin teaching. The principal and/or the supervisor was supposed to help them in what and how of teaching in a plasma-led classroom which might have saved the teachers from those chaotic and horrifying experiences.

If teachers want to successfully use technology in their classes, according to Lynette [4], they need to possess the required knowledge in "how" of the technology. However, if teachers lack the technological proficiency needed to use new technologies in the classroom, it would be difficult for them to make use of the potential benefit that the technology could contribute in maximizing students' learning. Mahruf and Adrian' confirm this argument stating that lack of technological proficiency and competency leads to underutilization in the classroom.

In addition, Ping et al. [26] argues that learning to teach with ICT is not only the accumulation of knowledge and skills. They further elaborate that the beginner teacher should get continuous support on the integration of the technology.

### **3.2.3 Challenge to engage students in the learning process**

According to Park [27], students who actively engage with what they are studying tend to understand more, learn more, remember more, enjoy it more and be more able to appreciate the relevance of what they have learned, than students who passively receive what we teach them. Cognizant of this, It was stressed the documents of MOE (Ministry of Education) that students are expected to actively participate in the teaching learning process. In televised instruction, students should give response for questions raised by both the plasma and classroom teacher; ask questions on unclear ideas and concepts, give attention to the concepts delivered by the plasma teacher and perform activities as they are instructed (MoE as cited in Berhanu [2,3]).

However, the teachers have reported that they couldn't engage students in the teaching learning

process. Abebe has explained that “...the time given for class exercise is not enough for students to do the exercises by themselves and to discuss with their friends”. Moreover, the time given for the classroom teacher is not adequate to interact with their students other than giving introduction at the beginning and summarizing at the end. Mohammed shared Abebe’s challenge too. He explained that “while assigning a task to be done in the classroom, the plasma teacher instructs me to check, correct or guide the students but the time given is too short to do these”.

Similarly, Mulugeta has passed through the same challenge. He reported that students were not showing progress in participation. Of course he attributed the reason partly to the immediacy of the feedback given for classroom exercises by the plasma teacher. On the same line of argument, Mohammed reported that the students are not interested to participate actively in doing classroom activities since the plasma teacher give the feedback within 40 seconds. However, McGee, as cited in Ping et al. [26] contends that only a limited number of exemplary beginning teachers are able to create opportunities for student-centred use of technology, and develop their own identity as users of information technology. Similarly Anderson [18] found that most beginning teachers are unable to use ICT to effectively promote students’ higher order thinking.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Through a phenomenological research approach, this study has illustrated the lived experience of three beginner secondary school teachers who teach in a plasma-led classroom. The nature of phenomenological research is sharing a common experience of those who are willing to share their experience. The beginner teachers who willingly participate in this study shared their rich and detailed information about their lived experience. Absence of orientation/induction before they began teaching has made their first few weeks of teaching full of frustration, anxiety and stress. They couldn’t get control of their classroom and engage students in the teaching learning process.

Moreover, the themes emerged out of their lived experience were in agreement with themes found in the literature regarding absence of proper orientation/induction, classroom management problems, and difficulty to engage students in the

teaching learning process within a televised classroom. This was partly because that the teachers were not introduced with teaching in a plasma-led classroom meaning how to discharge their responsibility effectively and how to manage students and make them engaged in the teaching learning process from the beginning to the end of the classroom. On the other hand, the lived experience of the beginner teachers has disclosed that the school principal and supervisors didn’t played the role expected of them in helping the beginner teachers adjust themselves to the school in general and the classroom environment in particular. In general, although frustration, anxiety and stress are common among beginner teachers, the inadequacy of the training in equipping the teachers with the skills and knowledge of technology supported instruction coupled with poor induction experience augmented the difficulties these teachers had encountered.

It is hoped that this study would provide its readers with better understanding of what it look like being a beginner teacher in a plasma-led classroom. A more comprehensive study with large sample size and longer timeframe could be conducted in order to have comprehensive understanding of the experiences of beginner secondary school teachers teaching in plasma-led classroom.

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Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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