MODESTUM

Research Article

Impacts of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation in Ethiopian Defense University

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation at Ethiopian Defense University (EDU). It focuses on examining the effects of partnerships, stakeholder motivation, and decision-making on curriculum implementation. As a result, a descriptive survey research design with a mixed research approach was employed. A total of 166 respondents (109 students, 51 instructors, and six college commandants) were the participants of the study. Commandants were selected by purposive sampling, and instructors and students were selected randomly. Questionnaires and interviews were tools or sources of data. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (one-way ANOVA and independent samples t-test), whereas the qualitative data were analyzed through verbal description. Findings revealed that instructors value stakeholders' support and commitment, while students appreciate the positive impact on their learning experience. The finding revealed that there is a strong positive correlation between stakeholder engagement and curriculum implementation effectiveness, emphasizing the importance of continuous interaction, feedback collection, and stakeholder knowledge for curriculum alignment. It also emphasizes the need for stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes and partnerships to improve curriculum implementation outcomes. The findings of the study may inspire further research and dialogue on stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation, encouraging international audiences to explore innovative approaches and best practices that promote meaningful educational experiences for students in the field of pedagogy. The researcher suggested that EDU should prioritize stakeholder motivation, partnerships, and decision-making for effective curriculum implementation. This promotes ownership, engagement, and shared responsibility. Additionally, EDU should prioritize stakeholder engagement, support, understanding, commitment, and feedback to ensure the quality and effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

Keywords: curriculum implementation, stakeholders engagement, stakeholders partnerships, stakeholder motivation, stakeholders decision-making

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum implementation is crucial for educational institutions like the Ethiopian Defense University (EDU), which focuses on military higher education. Moreover, effective implementation ensures curriculum alignment with military needs and equips students with relevant skills, requiring active stakeh2021older engagement (EDU, 2021).

Ethiopia's EDU, a crucial higher learning institution, is responsible for training and educating military professionals. In order to meet the evolving needs of the military and prepare students for future roles, the curriculum must be designed and implemented with the engagement of different stakeholders who can offer valuable insights and perspectives (EDU, 2021). Therefore, one crucial aspect of delivering quality education in these institutions is the effective implementation of the curriculum. According to Karakuş (2021), curriculum implementation describes how teachers apply the curriculum, how they instruct, and how they assess students.

According to Belita et al. (2020) and Matuleviciene and Stravinskiene (2015), stakeholders are people, groups, or organizations that have a particular interest in a situation and the ability to have an impact on decision-making. It is important to note that scientists largely agree with Freeman's (2009) definition, and stakeholders are a hot topic in scientific literature. This definition expresses the relationship between the organization and stakeholders, which is based on the dependence of power. Despite the mutual influence between the organization and its stakeholders, stakeholders may have a greater impact on the organization due to their significant power.

In addition, stakeholder engagement is a crucial factor that significantly influences curriculum implementation. It is a two-way process involving consultation, empowerment, involvement, and collaboration between organizations and various stakeholders, including faculty members, administrators, students, military personnel, external agencies, and industry partners, to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Letlatsa, 2018). According to Karakuş (2021), institutional stakeholders play a very important role in the implementation of the curriculum. Specifically, in the context of EDU, the effective implementation of the curriculum is of paramount importance as it directly impacts the competence and preparedness of a future capable and well-trained professional army equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge (Fekade, 2012; Letlatsa, 2018).

Moreover, this study examines the impact of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation in Ethiopia's military higher education institution (HEI), EDU. However, despite its importance, there is a lack of empirical research on Ethiopian military HEIs, specifically in EDU. This research gap hinders our understanding of how stakeholder engagement specifically influences curriculum implementation in this unique context. Therefore, there is a pressing need to explore the role and impact of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation in EDU.

By looking at how involving stakeholders affects the implementation of the curriculum, this study could help make policy and practice decisions based on facts, which would lead to better frameworks for developing and implementing curriculum in EDU. By addressing the research gap in this context, this research contributes to enhancing the quality and relevance of education and training programs provided by the university.

Statement of the Problem

The study aims to investigate how stakeholder engagement influences curriculum implementation at EDU. EDU's role in providing quality education and professional support to the defense force and the community necessitates delivering programs that meet the expectations of stakeholders such as military officers, instructors, students, and faculty.

According to Freeman's (2009) stakeholder theory, effective curriculum implementation requires active engagement with stakeholders. Stakeholders have a legitimate interest in the process, as the objectives of the organization can affect them. Flak and Rose (2005) further emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation.

Freeman (1984) and Mahajan et al. (2023) highlight the significance of stakeholder theory in generating multiple benefits for various stakeholders. This theory advocates for organizations to balance shareholder dividends with stakeholder needs, manage their interests, and provide a comprehensive decision-making framework that ensures strategic decision-making, value creation, and long-term success and sustainability.

For EDU, the effective implementation of the curriculum is crucial to ensuring the competence and preparedness of future military professionals. However, there is a knowledge gap regarding the impact of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation at EDU. Specifically, there is a lack of research on how involving stakeholders influences the alignment of the curriculum with military needs and the acquisition of practical skills by students. Addressing this gap is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between stakeholder engagement and curriculum implementation within the context of EDU (MoND, 2021).

Stakeholder engagement in the context of curriculum implementation at EDU holds significant importance. By actively involving stakeholders, such as military officers, instructors, students, and faculties, EDU can ensure that its curriculum meets the needs and expectations of these key stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement is crucial for curriculum implementation, as highlighted by Belita et al. (2020) and Martín et al. (2021). It brings various benefits to consumers, students, and faculty while providing decision-making units with multiple policy options. Effective stakeholder engagement fosters positive and long-term relationships, enabling mutual benefits for both EDU and its stakeholders. It allows for the identification of emerging trends and potential obstacles that may impact projects in the present or future. By engaging stakeholders, EDU can gather valuable insights and input from those who have a vested interest in the curriculum's outcomes, resulting in a more comprehensive and relevant educational experience.

Furthermore, stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in preventing conflicts. By promoting transparent and accountable communication, fostering relationships, and addressing difficulties, EDU can establish a collaborative environment, where stakeholders feel heard and valued. This approach facilitates the establishment of common objectives and encourages openness and accountability within the institution.

Considering the unique challenges faced by rural schools in South Africa, the study conducted by Gamede and Uleanya (2021) provides valuable insights. They highlight the importance of involving stakeholders and implementing a collaborative leadership structure in addressing issues such as poor academic achievements, insufficiently skilled teachers, restricted resources, and inadequate infrastructure. This approach, which includes clearly defining roles, monitoring performance, and organizing workshops, aims to enhance education and motivation in these schools.

In a related study, Ferrero-Ferrero et al. (2018) shed light on stakeholder engagement in sustainability reporting for HEIs. Their findings reveal that HEIs employ diverse criteria for stakeholder classification, leading to a varied stakeholder engagement process. The expectations of internal stakeholders align with the material aspects of sustainability reporting. Understanding these dynamics is crucial to improving reporting quality and fostering genuine dialogue with stakeholders.

Effective implementation of curriculum is critical for EDU to ensure the competence and preparedness of future military professionals (EDU, 2021). The researcher intends to investigate the knowledge gap on the impact of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of the curriculum at EDU. Specifically, there is a lack of research on how including stakeholders affects the alignment of the curriculum with military needs and the acquisition of practical skills by students. The absence of skill in this domain hinders a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between stakeholder engagement and curriculum

implementation (MoND, 2021). Thus, the researcher aims to address this gap by examining the impact of stakeholder motivation, stakeholder relationships, and stakeholder decision-making on the effective implementation of the curriculum in EDUcation sector by answering the following questions:

1. What are the impacts of stakeholder motivation on the effectiveness of curriculum implementation in EDU?
2. What is the influences of stakeholders' partnerships on the implementation of an effective curriculum in EDU?
3. How does stakeholder decision-making influence the implementation of an effective curriculum in EDU?

This study aims to enhance the understanding of stakeholder engagement's impact on curriculum implementation in EDU, providing insights for curriculum improvement and enhancing military education effectiveness. It also explores stakeholder perspectives and experiences, enhancing stakeholder engagement strategies' success.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study employed stakeholder's theory and agency theory to analyze the influence of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation in EDU.

Stakeholders theory

Stakeholder theory, first introduced by Freeman (1984), is a managerial conception of organizational strategy and ethics defined as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives (Freeman & Phillips, 2002; Mahajan et al., 2023). According to Asiyai (2014), the theory encourages organizations to recognize and manage stakeholder needs, wants, and demands, providing a holistic, responsible framework for decision-making that maximizes value creation, safeguards long-term success, and goes beyond shareholders' focus.

The crucial idea is that an organization's success relies on its ability to manage relationships with key groups like customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and financiers. The manager's role is to maintain support, balance interests, and maximize stakeholder interests over time, ensuring the organization's purpose is realized.

The main theoretical point of view is the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), which argues that organizations must bear in mind the different perspectives and expectations of a variety of constituents (not only holders of capital), called stakeholders, who can influence the outcome of the organization (Ferrero-Ferrero et al., 2018).

Stakeholder theory highlights the importance of managing relationships with stakeholders in HEIs like EDU, as these stakeholders encompass organizations, networks, and individuals capable of influencing an organization's goals. The success of curriculum implementation relies on effectively addressing the needs of these stakeholders. Moreover, the theory emphasizes considering the interests, perspectives, and relationships of stakeholders when making decisions and formulating strategies. By applying this approach to curriculum implementation at EDU, it is possible to enhance engagement, align with stakeholder goals, and improve educational outcomes for military personnel.

Agency theory

Moving on to agency theory, which is a principle used to explain and resolve issues in the relationship between business principals and their agents, typically between stakeholders and company executives, it emphasizes the importance of stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation. Agency theory recognizes the challenges principals face in controlling agents due to differing goals and information asymmetry (Zogning, 2017). This theory, as proposed by Chepkemoi (2019), emphasizes the dynamic relationship between instructors and curriculum processes and can improve curriculum implementation by enhancing accountability, coordination, and effectiveness. By applying the principles of the Agency Theory, stakeholders, including military professionals, instructors, students, and faculties, play a vital role in addressing conflicts, aligning incentives, monitoring progress, and establishing effective communication and governance structures. Engaging stakeholders in the curriculum implementation process enhances accountability, coordination, and effectiveness, thereby improving the relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum through their valuable insights into military needs and curriculum design.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach that used a parallel or concurrent triangulation design. Mullany and Stockwell (2021) use both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study can help explain various aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, providing a more holistic understanding of it and resulting in better-formed conclusions. Mixed-methods research, a method that involves collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, is increasingly popular across various disciplines (Guetterman et al., 2017). Thus, the study employed a concurrent triangulation design, collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously in one phase to provide confirmatory or conflicting findings, which were then triangulated during the analysis phase.

Participants

The study surveyed fourth-year students, instructors, and commandants at EDU's CE, CHS, and RRM using stratified random sampling. The selection was based on participants' experience and knowledge level to gather information about curriculum implementation.

Table 1. Total population, sample size, & sampling technique (Ethiopian Defense University Registrar Office, 2023)

| S/N | Institute (strata) | Population name | | | | | |
| | | Students | | Instructors | | Commandants | |
		Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample
1	College of engineering (CE)	520	52	170	17	2	2
2	College of health sciences (CHS)	440	44	160	16	2	2
3	College of resource management (CRM)	130	13	18	18	2	2
Total		1,090	109	348	51	6	6

Table 2. Summary of population & sample size

	Population	Sample
Students	1,090	109
Instructors	348	51
Commandants	6	6
Total	1,444	166

Table 3. Gender & age of respondents

| Respondents | | | | |
| Instructors | | | Students | |
Frequency (n)	Percenatgae (%)		Frequency (n)	Percenatgae (%)
Gender		Gender		
Male	48	94.10	Male	100	91.70
Female	3	5.90	Female	9	8.20
Total	51	100	Total	109	100
Age		Age		
Below 30	12	23.50	Below 25	72	66.10
31-40 years	28	54.90	26-30 years	11	10.10
41-50 years	11	21.60	31-35 years	25	22.90
			36-40 years	1	0.90
Total	51	100	Total	109	100

According to Chepkemoi (2019), researchers should allocate sufficient time to obtain a large sample size, including at least 10.00% of the target population, to increase reliability. In this study, the research involved 166 respondents, 109 students, and 51 instructors, and six college commandants for qualitative data collection. The target population members for this research amounted to 1,444, with a margin of error of 0.05 and a 95% confidence interval (**Table 1** and **Table 2**).

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection involved questionnaires and unstructured interviews, which were designed after a literature review, easy to administer, and completed quickly. Moreover, Cornbrach's alpha coefficient was computed to assess the reliability of the instruments, yielding a value of 0.754. This high value indicates that the scale was sufficiently reliable for the study. Additionally, item reliability statistics were calculated, revealing values of 0.734, 0.789, and 0.848 for stakeholder motivation, partnership, and decision-making. These statistics confirm the reliability of the items. Furthermore, the qualitative data obtained through the interviews supported the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires.

Data Analysis of the Study

The study utilized questionnaires and interviews to gather data on stakeholder engagement and its impact on curriculum implementation. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 27 and descriptive and inferential statistics, along with regression analysis, to determine its influence. Tables were used to represent the findings. The model used was, as follows:

Implementation of curriculum in EDU: β_0 is constant, β_i is coefficient of the independent variable, X_i (i=1, 2, 3) and X_i is independent variable, and ε is stochastic error term.

The multiple regression equation explains the relationship between a dependent variable and three independent variables, revealing how the dependent variable changes with the variation of the independent variables.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Demographic Status of the Participants

The demographic status of the participants implies the quality of the source of data, as shown on **Table 3**.

The data shows significant gender disparities in educational institutions, with male instructors comprising 94.10% and females only 5.90%. Students are predominantly male, with 91.70% and 8.20% females, respectively. The age distribution shows a potential generation gap, with instructors being older than students. Addressing these disparities is crucial for promoting diversity and inclusivity in educational institutions.

Table 4. Qualification & experience of respondent

	CE	CHS	CRM	Total	Percentage (%)
Qualification					
Diploma	0	1	1	2	3.92
Degree	5	5	2	12	23.53
Masters	15	9	10	34	66.67
Doctorate	2	1	0	3	5.88
Sub-total	22	16	13	51	100
Teachers experience in years					
5-10	11	12	7	30	58.82
11-15	4	5	4	13	25.49
16-20	3	4	1	8	15.69
Sub-total	18	21	12	51	100
Students experience in years					
3-5	35	14	11	60	55.05
6-8	8	5	4	17	15.60
9-11	6	8	2	16	14.68
12-14	3	7	2	12	11.01
15+	0	3	1	4	3.67
Sub-total	52	37	20	109	100

Table 5. Descriptive for stakeholder motivations (instructors)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholders' motivation is crucial for effective curriculum implementation	51	1	5	3.00	0.980
Support and involvement of stakeholders enhance the quality of curriculum implementation	51	1	5	2.86	0.980
Stakeholders' understanding of curriculum goals is essential	51	1	5	3.37	1.058
Commitment and active participation of stakeholders are crucial	51	1	4	2.98	0.836
Feedback and suggestions from stakeholders improve the implementation process	51	1	5	3.18	0.865
Stakeholders' motivation influences the implementation process	51	2	5	3.73	0.940
Valid n (list wise)	51				

Table 6. Descriptive for stakeholder motivations (students)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholders' motivation is crucial for effective curriculum implementation	109	1	5	3.48	1.119
Support and involvement of stakeholders enhance the quality of curriculum implementation	109	1	5	3.70	1.050
Stakeholders' understanding of curriculum goals is essential	109	1	5	3.73	1.094
Commitment and active participation of stakeholders are crucial	109	2	5	4.02	.933
Feedback and suggestions from stakeholders improve the implementation process	109	1	5	3.61	1.130
Stakeholders' motivation influences the implementation process	109	1	5	3.00	1.277
Valid n (list wise)	109				

Table 4 reveals a significant distribution of qualifications, instructor experience, and student experience across colleges. College of engineering has the most master's qualifications, with 58.82% having five-10 years of experience. College of health science has the highest number of teachers. College of engineering has the largest student population.

Response Rate

The study involved 109 students and 51 teachers from three institutions who completed 166 questionnaires. Instructors answered all questions with 100% precision, but the student population slightly decreased to 99.10%. Three questionnaires were not received, but the total response rate was considered adequate to draw generalizations about EDU population.

Impact of Stakeholder Motivations on Implementation of Curriculum at EDU

This study examined influences of stakeholder motivation on curriculum implementation at EDU. Respondents were asked about stakeholder motivations and their agreement was rated on a scale of one-five, with results presented in **Table 5** and **Table 6**.

Table 5 revealed that the instructors consider stakeholders' motivation crucial, with a mean score of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 0.980. They acknowledge the positive influence of stakeholders' support and involvement, despite some variation in their responses (mean [M]=2.86, standard deviation [SD]=0.980). Instructors emphasize the importance of stakeholders' understanding of curriculum goals and objectives (M=3.37, SD=1.058), and they acknowledge that stakeholders' commitment and active participation significantly contribute to successful curriculum execution (M=2.98, SD=0.836). Furthermore, instructors value stakeholders' feedback and suggestions for improvement (M=3.18, SD=0.865). They also perceive a strong association between stakeholders' motivation and their own motivation for effective curriculum implementation (M=3.73, SD=0.940).

In relation to this, an interview was made to confirm these findings. Accordingly, one of the participants that was interrogated was referred to, as follows:

Table 7. Descriptive for partnership (instructors)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholder partnership positively influences effectiveness of curriculum implementation in my institution.	51	2	5	3.88	.840
Stakeholder involvement promotes a holistic approach to curriculum implementation in my institution.	51	1	5	3.63	1.131
Stakeholder partnership improves relevance of curriculum content to needs of the military in my institution.	51	1	5	3.27	.827
Stakeholder partnership enhances my motivation & engagement in curriculum implementation process in my institution.	51	2	5	3.63	.894
Stakeholder partnership fosters a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for effective curriculum implementation in my institution.	51	1	5	3.90	.922
Valid n (list wise)	51				

> I firmly believe that stakeholder motivation significantly influences the effectiveness of curriculum implementation in the university. The motivation of stakeholders, including faculty members, administrators, students, and external partners, plays a crucial role in shaping the success and impact of curriculum implementation efforts. In the specific context of our university, stakeholder motivation to implement the curriculum effectively is a critical factor. While I cannot provide an assessment of the current stakeholder motivation without a comprehensive study or survey, it is essential for us as Commandants to actively promote and nurture stakeholder motivation in our university (commandant K).

From the students' perspective, as shown in **Table 6**, they generally consider stakeholders' motivation as crucial for effective curriculum implementation (M=3.48, SD=1.119). Students perceive that stakeholders' support and involvement have a positive impact on their learning experience (M=3.70, SD=1.050). They also believe that stakeholders' understanding of curriculum goals and objectives is important for effective learning (M=3.73, SD=1.094). Furthermore, students recognize that stakeholders' commitment and active participation significantly contribute to successful curriculum implementation (M=4.02, SD=0.933). They value stakeholders' feedback and suggestions for improving the curriculum implementation process (M=3.61, SD=1.130). Students also perceive that stakeholders' motivation positively influences their own motivation to effectively implement the curriculum (M=3.00, SD=1.277). One of the deputy commandants in college also strengthened the response above, as follows:

> In my opinion, stakeholder motivation is crucial for the success of curriculum implementation at our university. Motivated stakeholders contribute actively, foster collaboration, and ensure curriculum sustainability. As College Commandant, it's my responsibility to cultivate stakeholder motivation through effective communication, recognition, professional development, and a culture that values their contributions (deputy commandant H).

The survey data and interviews show that both instructors and students agree on the significance of stakeholders' motivation in curriculum implementation. According to Freeman (2009), curriculum alignment with stakeholders' needs, goals, and interests enhances motivation, leading to active involvement, collaboration, and commitment in curriculum implementation.

Instructors and students both value stakeholder motivation in curriculum implementation. They believe that understanding curriculum goals, active participation, and feedback for improvement are crucial for enhancing the curriculum. Additionally, students also value stakeholder involvement, as it positively impacts their learning experience. Moreover, both commandants and deputy commandants emphasize the importance of nurturing stakeholder motivation, which is crucial for the effectiveness of curriculum implementation efforts. Deputy commandant further emphasizes college commandant's responsibility to cultivate stakeholder motivation through effective communication, recognition, professional development, and a culture that values their contributions.

Generally, the findings suggest a consensus among instructors and students regarding the significance of stakeholder motivation in effective curriculum implementation. Moreover, stakeholders' motivation influences their active involvement, collaboration, and commitment, which in turn contribute to the success and sustainability of the curriculum. Furthermore, the recognition of stakeholders' understanding, support, and feedback further strengthens the notion that their engagement is crucial for effective curriculum implementation (Freeman & Phillips, 2002).

Impact of Partnerships on Implementation of Curriculum at EDU

The study aimed to determine the level of participation in curriculum implementation for partnership purposes. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on various aspects using a scale of one-five. The results are presented in **Table 7** and **Table 8.**

Table 7 illustrates that instructors highly value stakeholder partnerships for their positive influence on curriculum implementation effectiveness (M=3.88, SD=0.840), demonstrating strong agreement. While there is moderate agreement among instructors, the standard deviation of 1.131 indicates higher variability in their perceptions. Stakeholder involvement promotes a holistic approach to implementation, although to a slightly lesser extent (M=3.63). Instructors also recognize that stakeholder partnerships improve curriculum content relevance for military needs (M=3.27, SD=0.827). Additionally, instructors find that stakeholder partnerships enhance their motivation and engagement in curriculum implementation (M=3.63, SD=0.894). Finally, instructors strongly agree that stakeholder partnerships foster ownership and shared responsibility for effective curriculum implementation (M=3.90, SD=0.922), with moderate agreement among instructors.

In line with questionnaire response whether stakeholder's partnership plays its own role on effective curriculum implementation or not, one of the interviewed college deputy commandant points out:

Table 8. Descriptive for partnership (students)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholder partnership positively impacts the effectiveness of curriculum implementation in my institution.	109	1	5	3.38	1.112
Stakeholder involvement in curriculum implementation promotes holistic approach to curriculum.	109	1	5	3.51	.968
Stakeholder involvement in curriculum implementation enhances relevance of curriculum content to military needs.	109	1	5	3.69	1.103
Stakeholder involvement in curriculum implementation enhances motivation and engagement in implementation process	109	1	5	3.71	1.003
stakeholder involvement in curriculum implementation creates shared responsibility for curriculum success	109	1	5	3.57	1.003
Valid n (list wise)	109				

> Yes, I strongly believe that stakeholder partnership plays a crucial role in effective curriculum implementation in our institutions. In my opinion, it brings together diverse perspectives, enhances curriculum relevance, facilitates practical learning experiences, and promotes continuous improvement. By actively engaging stakeholders, we can ensure that our educational programs are comprehensive, responsive, and aligned with the expectations of our students, the military, and society (deputy commandant M).

The results in **Table 8** shows that students moderately agree that stakeholder partnerships positively impact curriculum implementation effectiveness (M=3.38, SD=1.112). They also moderately agree that stakeholder involvement promotes a holistic approach to implementation (M=3.51, SD=0.968). Moreover, students moderately agree that stakeholder partnerships improve curriculum relevance to military needs (M=3.69, SD=1.103). Additionally, they moderately agree that stakeholder partnerships enhance their motivation and engagement (M=3.71, SD=1.003). Finally, students moderately agree that collaborating with stakeholders fosters ownership and shared responsibility (M=3.57, SD=1.003).

In line with this, the other interviewed college commandant (commandant S) asserted that the impacts and benefits of Stakeholder partnership on effective curriculum implementation in EDU:

> It is clear that stakeholder partnerships have a significant positive impact on effective curriculum implementation in our institutions. Because internal stakeholders like instructors, students, and management staff collaborate with stakeholders such as government agencies, industry experts, educational institutions, and community organizations, diverse perspectives and expertise are brought to the table. "He added that "stakeholder partnerships in our institution offer many benefits, including aligning curriculum with industry needs, providing practical learning opportunities, and providing industry expertise. They also create networking opportunities for students, foster an ongoing feedback loop, and enhance the reputation of military institutions. These partnerships can lead to increased support, collaboration, joint initiatives, research projects, or funding, ultimately preparing graduates for their professional roles (commandant S).

The findings from the survey data and interviews highlight the significant role of stakeholder partnerships in ensuring the effective implementation of the curriculum and improvising quality education at EDU (Asiyai, 2014). Both instructors and students highly value stakeholder partnerships and recognize their positive influence on various aspects of curriculum implementation.

The survey results show strong agreement among instructors and students about the positive impact of stakeholder partnerships on curriculum implementation effectiveness. Instructors value these partnerships for their holistic approach and improved relevance to military needs. Students also agree, recognizing the benefits of stakeholder involvement, such as promoting a holistic approach, improving curriculum relevance, and fostering ownership and shared responsibility. According to the study by Demirkesen and Reinhardt (2021) stakeholder engagement fosters mutual benefit, enables identification of trends and emerging obstacles, and increases the likelihood of identifying setbacks affecting curriculum implementation. Interviews with college deputy commandant and commandant further validate the significance of stakeholder partnerships in curriculum implementation. Deputy commandant emphasizes that stakeholder partnerships bring together diverse perspectives, enhance curriculum relevance, facilitate practical learning experiences, and promote continuous improvement. Commandant emphasizes that these partnerships offer numerous benefits, such as aligning the curriculum with industry needs, providing practical learning opportunities, offering industry expertise, creating networking opportunities, and enhancing the reputation of military institutions. These partnerships can lead to increased support, collaboration, joint initiatives, research projects, and funding, ultimately preparing graduates for their professional roles.

Mostly, the findings underscore the significance of stakeholder partnerships in effective curriculum implementation. These partnerships bring diverse perspectives, improve curriculum relevance, provide practical learning opportunities, foster continuous improvement, enhance institutional reputation, and prepare graduates for successful careers. By actively engaging stakeholders, EDU can ensure that their curriculum meets the needs and expectations of various stakeholders, including students, the military, government agencies, industry experts, educational institutions, and community organizations. According to (Bidandi et al., 2022) collaborative efforts with stakeholders enhance curriculum quality, relevance, and opportunities for students' future professional success, fostering mutually beneficial relationships for the institution.

Impact of Stakeholders Decision-Making on Implementation of Curriculum at EDU

The study aimed to determine respondents' participation in curriculum implementation for decision-making purposes. They were asked various questions and rated on a scale of one-five, with one being strongly disagreed, two being disagreed, three being unknown, four being agreed, and five being strongly agreed. Results are presented in **Table 9** and **Table 10.**

Table 9. Descriptive for decision-making (instructors)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholder decision-making positively influences successful implementation of curriculum in my institution.	51	1	5	3.02	1.257
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation enhances curriculum alignment with institution's needs and goals.	51	1	5	3.00	1.217
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation promotes ownership & commitment among faculty.	51	1	5	3.57	1.100
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation fosters shared responsibility and accountability for successful curriculum implementation.	51	1	5	3.45	1.101
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation contributes to continuous curriculum improvement & adaptation based on evolving military needs.	51	1	5	2.94	1.207
Valid n (list wise)	51				

Table 10. Descriptive for decision-making (students)

Descriptive statistics	n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Stakeholder decision-making positively influences successful implementation of curriculum in my institution.	109	1	5	3.43	1.066
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation enhances curriculum alignment with institution's needs and goals.	109	1	5	3.39	1.139
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation promotes ownership & commitment among faculty.	109	1	5	3.86	1.041
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation fosters shared responsibility and accountability for successful curriculum implementation.	109	1	5	3.59	1.124
Stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation contributes to continuous curriculum improvement & adaptation based on evolving military needs.	109	1	5	3.51	1.102
Valid n (list wise)	109				

The result in **Table 9** revealed that instructors' perceptions of stakeholder decision-making and its influence on curriculum implementation are summarized. On average, instructors believe that stakeholder decision-making positively impacts successful curriculum implementation (M=3.02, SD=1.257). They also perceive that stakeholder involvement enhances curriculum alignment with institutional needs and goals (M=3.00, SD=1.217). Instructors agree that stakeholder decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among faculty members (M=3.57, SD=1.100) and promotes a culture of shared responsibility and accountability (M=3.45, SD=1.101) during curriculum implementation. However, there is variability in their responses regarding stakeholder decision-making's contribution to continuous improvement and adaptation of the curriculum to evolving military needs (M=2.94, SD=1.207).

Concerning the influence of stakeholder decision-making on effective curriculum implementation, one of the college commandants stated the following:

> I feel that stakeholder decision-making determines the implementation of the curriculum in my institution. In my understanding, stakeholder decision-making involves military officials, experts, educators, and industry representatives to ensure the curriculum aligns with military needs. Stakeholders identify practical skills and competencies for military professionals, emphasize hands-on learning experiences, and facilitate industry integration through guest lectures, internships, and collaborative projects. Therefore, their involvement ensures continuous improvement, fosters ownership, and creates a culturally relevant curriculum that reflects the specific needs and context of our army. In addition to that, by engaging stakeholders in decision-making processes, we can create a curriculum that equips students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to excel in their military careers (commandant Y).

The results in **Table 10** showed that students generally have a positive perception of stakeholder decision-making and its influence on curriculum implementation. They believe that stakeholder involvement has a beneficial effect (M=3.43, SD=1.166) and enhances curriculum alignment with institutional needs and goals (M=3.39, SD=1.139). Students strongly perceive stakeholder decision-making as fostering ownership and engagement (M=3.86, SD=1.041) and promoting shared responsibility and accountability (M=3.59, SD=1.124). They also recognize its role in facilitating continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving military needs (M=3.51, SD=1.102).

A deputy commandant emphasized the importance of stakeholder decision-making in ensuring effective curriculum implementation:

> As a military commandant, I recognize the significant impact of stakeholder decision-making on effective curriculum implementation. Thus, the involvement and collaboration of stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping the curriculum to meet the unique needs and requirements of our military personnel. Moreover, I firmly believe that involving stakeholders in the decision-making process is essential to ensuring that our curriculum aligns with the strategic objectives of the military, meets the evolving demands of our military personnel, reflects the latest advancements, fosters collaboration, and ultimately contributes to their professional growth and mission success (deputy commandant G).

Instructors' perceptions of stakeholder decision-making and its impact on curriculum implementation vary, aligning with Freeman's (2009) theory, which advocates for effective management of stakeholder needs for value creation and long-term success. On average, instructors believe stakeholder engagement positively impacts successful curriculum implementation by

Table 11. Coefficient of determination (model summary)

Model	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Standard error of estimate
1	0.949	0.900	0.897	1.21016

Note. Predictors: SDM (stakeholders decision-making); SP (stakeholders partnership); & SM (stakeholders motivation) (constant)

Table 12. ANOVA results

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
	Regression	1,379.292	3	459.764	313.940	0.000
1	Residual	153.772	105	1.464		
	Total	1,533.064	108			

Note. ªDependent variable: ECI (effective curriculum implementation) & ᵇPredictors: SDM (stakeholders decision-making); SP (stakeholders partnership); & SM (stakeholders motivation) (constant)

aligning it with institutional needs and goals, fostering a sense of ownership among faculty members, and promoting a culture of shared responsibility and accountability. However, there is variability in their responses regarding the contribution of stakeholder decision-making to continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving military needs.

According to Demirkesen and Reinhardt (2021) and Korneć (2020), stakeholder participation in decision-making allows for curriculum implementation, enabling organizations to incorporate diverse opinions and align stakeholder needs with institutional objectives for effective method advancement. Hence, the college commandant underlined the significance of stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation. This involves various stakeholders, including military officers, experts, educators, and industry representatives, to ensure alignment with military needs. Stakeholders identify practical skills and competencies for military professionals, emphasize hands-on learning experiences, and facilitate industry integration. Their involvement fosters ownership, creates a culturally relevant curriculum, and equips students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies for their military careers.

Moving on to students, they have a positive view of stakeholder decision-making and its impact on curriculum implementation. Johnson et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of identifying, understanding, and managing stakeholders' involvement in curriculum development. They believe stakeholder engagement enhances curriculum alignment with institutional needs, fosters ownership, shared responsibility, and accountability, and facilitates continuous improvement.

Additionally, the deputy commandant emphasizes the importance of stakeholder decision-making in curriculum implementation, focusing on aligning the curriculum with strategic objectives, meeting evolving demands, reflecting the latest advancements, fostering collaboration, and contributing to professional growth and mission success.

According to Ali and Jarrah (2022), stakeholder engagement significantly impacts curriculum implementation. Both instructors and students emphasize the significance of involving all stakeholders in decision-making processes, recognizing the positive impact of stakeholder involvement. This approach aligns with institutional needs and promotes shared responsibility, accountability, and continuous improvement. It helps create a curriculum that meets military personnel's needs and contributes to their professional growth.

Impacts of Stakeholder Engagement on Curriculum Implementation

The study aimed to investigate the impacts of stakeholder engagement on curriculum implementation in Ethiopian military HEIs. To explore this, the researchers conducted a regression analysis, using curriculum implementation as the dependent variable and stakeholder motivation, decision-making, and partnership as the independent variables. The results of the regression analysis are presented in **Table 11** and **Table 12,** which provide the results of the analysis.

Table 11 illustrates the value of the coefficient of determination (R-squared=0.900). This means that stakeholder engagement accounts for about 90.00% of the variation in curriculum implementation at EDU. This implies that the high coefficient of determination highlights the significant role of stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation at EDU and emphasizes the importance of actively involving stakeholders to achieve successful outcomes in terms of curriculum implementation effectiveness.

ANOVA in **Table 12** indicates a significant relationship between stakeholder involvement and effective curriculum implementation in EDU. The p-value of 0.000, less than 0.05, indicates a positive correlation between the two variables. The results show a strong positive correlation between stakeholder involvement and effective curriculum implementation, with a p-value less than the predetermined alpha level of 0.05. This shows how important it is to keep talking, get feedback, and know your stakeholders in order to align your curriculum.

Table 13 presents the regression weights that are associated with each of the independent variables. The constant has a value of 0.774; SDM (stakeholders decision-making) has a value of 0.993; its influence on curriculum implementation is statistically significant at 0.000; SP (stakeholders partnership) was found to be statistically significant at 0.046; and SM (stakeholders motivation) had a coefficient of 0.064 and was not found to be statistically significant at 0.570. Based on the regression weights and statistical significance, the findings suggest a significant relationship between stakeholder decision-making and stakeholder partnership in effective curriculum implementation at EDU. It emphasizes the need for stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes and partnerships. Although stakeholder motivation did not show statistical significance, it's worth exploring in future research.

Table 13. Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.774	0.616		1.257	0.212
	SDM (stakeholders decision-making)	0.993	0.059	0.826	16.822	0.000
	SP (stakeholders partnership)	0.115	0.057	0.093	2.018	0.046
	SM (stakeholders motivation)	0.085	0.050	0.074	1.688	0.094

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that stakeholder engagement during curriculum implementation plays a significant role in the success of curriculum implementation. Instructors valued stakeholders' support and commitment, while students appreciated their positive impact on their learning experience. Moreover, the advantages of diverse perspectives, practical learning opportunities, and industry alignment resulting from stakeholder involvement were evident. Additionally, stakeholder decision-making was found to foster engagement, continuous improvement, and alignment with military needs.

Consequently, this study emphasizes the importance of stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation at EDU, revealing a strong positive correlation between involvement and effectiveness. It emphasizes the need for continuous interaction, feedback collection, and stakeholder knowledge for curriculum alignment. The study also stresses the need for stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes and partnerships to improve outcomes.

Based on the research findings, the researcher suggests that EDU should prioritize stakeholder motivation, partnerships, and decision-making for effective curriculum implementation. This can be achieved through continuous engagement, clear communication, and recognition of stakeholders' contributions. Collaborating with industry partners can offer diverse perspectives and align the curriculum with real-world needs. Incorporating stakeholder decision-making promotes ownership, engagement, and shared responsibility, enhancing curriculum alignment with military needs and fostering continuous improvement.

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including its focus on stakeholder engagement at EDU, which may limit its generalizability to other institutions. Further investigation is needed to understand stakeholder dynamics in other contexts.

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