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**Cross-Border Partnership and Collaboration in Maintaining Quality
Education in Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIS) In Africa:
Some Selected Cases from Ethiopia**

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Abstract

Higher education institutions in Africa are responsible for the provision of skilled human resources that match with the current demand of the market as well as the pressing development needs of Africa. In this regard, private higher education institutions in Ethiopia also stakes. As opposed to the public ones, PHEIS are striving to provide quality education despite the imperative resource challenges both in terms of infrastructure and human. Different programs have been designed by PHEIs in collaboration with international and national organizations to address these challenges. Especially, in the light of bringing international expertise, different cross-border collaborations and partnership with a view of addressing the human resources challenges and others have been ventured. In line with this, there are also quality assurance institutions encouraging the ventures. Nevertheless, despite the availability of cross boarder collaboration and partnerships in Ethiopia, little is known about the level and status of cross-border collaboration and partnerships in PHEIs vis-à-vis provision of quality education. Therefore, this research was initiated to fill this gap by way of identifying the challenges and opportunities in venturing in such kind of cross-border collaborations and partnerships in Ethiopia. Specifically the research will try to address such questions as “what modalities are employed in order to venture such kind of cross-border collaboration and partnerships?” “what challenges PHEIs were/are faced with while venturing?”, “what regulatory frameworks are there from the GoE side/HERQA?”; “what roles does Consortium of PHEIs play in this regard?”, “what are the opportunities in maintaining quality in PHEIs” and “what lessons can be learnt from the success stories and available endeavors on the issues?”. The institutions targeted for the research are Admas University College, Alpha University College, St. Mary’s University College and Unity

University, Consortium of PHEIs from the PHEIs and Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) from the quality ensuring institutions side. In order to give appropriate answers to the research questions, qualitative survey method was employed and pertinent literatures, and documents were also reviewed. Major findings of the research are cross-border collaboration has immense opportunities in insuring quality in the service delivery of PHEIs. Some of these opportunities are pulling expertise which cannot be secured otherwise, sharing training materials, curricula and so on. The research also found that PHEIs will be challenged to establish a working culture comparable with partnering institutions, and they are also expected to build infrastructure and human resources to make the partnering on equal footing. Major recommendations of the research include that cross-border collaboration should be considered as the fourth pillar for PHEIs; the consortium of PHEIs in Ethiopia should strive to enable PHEIs to capture the opportunity out of cross-border collaboration and government should assist PHEIs in venturing cross-border collaboration as it is keen to assist the public ones.

Background

Development of any continent cannot be seen without the context of the provision of excellent higher education. Such kind of education must also address the pressing needs of the continent. In this regard, higher education institutions in Africa are responsible for the provision of skilled human resources that match with the current demand of the market of the continent. The graduates are expected not only to meet current demand but also the pressing development needs of Africa. In this line, private higher education institutions in Africa have also stakes. This includes PHEIs in Ethiopia. As opposed to the public ones, PHEIs in Ethiopia are striving to provide quality education despite the imperative resource challenges both in terms of infrastructure as well as human. In addition, regulatory frameworks that impose huge responsibility by the government in the light of maintaining

quality when compared to the capacity of PHEIs despite their existence in the market is recent.

Irrespective of the challenges that imposed by the regulatory frameworks and scarce human capital available in Ethiopia, PHEIs are doing their level best to best fit in to the local market to contribute their share in the national development of the country. Among the efforts made by these institutions, cross border collaboration and partnership is the prominent one. By simply venturing with international institutions abroad, PHEIs are pooling a number of resources to maintain quality of education in Ethiopia. This has helped PHEIs for citizens to create wider access to higher education in the light of capacity building of the country. So far, such kinds of ventures have helped PHEIs in supporting the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the country.

Statement of the problem

Different programs have been designed by PHEIs in collaboration with international and national organizations in the light of addressing the challenges they are faced with. Especially, to bring international expertise, different cross-border collaborations and partnership with a view of addressing the human resources challenges and others have been ventured. In line with this, there are also quality assurance institutions encouraging such kind of ventures. Even though, there are initiatives in cross border collaborations in Ethiopia to create wider access to citizens. So far there is a knowledge gap as to the status of cross border collaboration in the light of maintaining quality education in Ethiopia and the kind of opportunities and challenges are available; whether the existing legal framework creates

enabling environment or not. Therefore, this research was undertaken to fill such a knowledge gap.

Objective of the Research

The general objective of the research was to identify the challenges and opportunities in venturing in cross-border collaborations and partnerships in Ethiopia.

Research Questions

Specifically the research tried to address such questions as

- What modalities are employed in order to venture cross-border collaboration and partnerships?
- What are the opportunities of cross-border collaboration in maintaining quality in PHEIs?
- What challenges PHEIs were/are faced with while venturing cross-border collaboration?
- What regulatory frameworks are there from the GoE side/ HERQA?
- What roles does Consortium of PHEIs play in this regard? and
- What lessons can be learnt from the success stories and available endeavors on the issues?

Methodology

To address the above research questions, qualitative survey method was employed and pertinent literatures and documents were also reviewed.

Interview schedule was prepared (having nine questions) using the literature as a framework. The interview was conducted by targeting six respondents from four selected PHEIs namely Admas University College, Alpha University College, St. Mary's University College, one respondent each from the Consortium of PHEIs and Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA). The PHEIs were selected based on the preliminary investigation made by the research for the availability of cross-border collaboration on established or planning bases. Besides, Consortium of PHEIs is association of PHEIs in Ethiopia responsible to help PHEIs in maintaining quality of education among its activities (Consortium of PHEIs, 2012). The responses obtained are summarized and presented in the form of summary of responses and summary of findings part.

Literature Review

This section presents review of the literature on cross-border collaboration and partnership of higher learning institutions. The section starts by defining both collaboration and partnership as they are the foundation for cross-border collaboration and partnership. It then continues by putting the rational/reasons for venturing in cross-border collaboration and partnership, benefits/opportunities of cross-border collaboration, challenges, models, evaluation, and internalization of higher education (consortia).

Partnership and Collaboration

Partnership and collaboration have been used interchangeably in most of the literatures. The central focus for both terms is shared goals among the

entities venturing in partnership towards mutual benefit (Dhillon 2005; Graci 2012).

According to Carnwell and Carson (N.D.) partnership is the notion of sharing and agreement, with particular emphasis on business. The partnership is established based on mutual goals and benefits.

Cross Border Collaboration

Cross border collaboration, as the name implies, is a collaboration that transcends geographical boundaries of a number of nations (Baker and Cairns 2011). It has been a well attested fact that collaboration has provided Higher Learning Institutions (HLI) with opportunities to improve qualities and enhance scope of their offerings by integrating learning opportunities.

Rational Behind Cross-Border Collaboration and its Opportunities/Benefits

In the light of providing quality in higher education, cross border collaboration has been seen in a number of institutions to bring resources that might not be made available in one institution context (Baker and Cairns 2011; Amey et al 2007). Thus, the rationale behind cross-border collaboration can be seen in terms of bringing expertise from abroad, joint development of curricula, utilization of resources, etc. It also widens participation by limiting exclusion of citizens to benefit from HLI (Murphy and Fleming 2003; Slack 2004).

The benefits of cross-border collaboration are immense. Through such kind of ventures, institutions can have chances to secure expertise in the

development of standard curricula, undertakings of joint research, exchange of students, etc. such kind of cooperative ventures would enable both parties to deliver quality education and expertise to cater for global market; Godbey and Turlington 2002; Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Amey et al 2007).

Especially, in the face of globalization where mobility of workforce is evident, internalization of education has paramount of importance (Godbey and Turlington 2002). This is because; preparing graduates to fit into the market irrespective of location would bring lots of opportunities in exporting as well as importing higher education. In fact, the very fact that graduates can be employed in any global organization would enable any country to draw a number of international companies as the country will be potential candidate for outsourcing (Tubbeh and Williams 2010). This has been seen in such continents as Asia. In this line, some of the opportunities provided by cross border collaboration are discussed below.

Development of Joint Programs (Curriculum Development)

Cross border collaboration will create huge opportunity for enhancing quality of higher education since it creates opportunities for the development of joint programs (Godbey and Turlington 2002). The development of such kind of programs would enable developing countries to boost their capacities in tailoring programs that could address developmental issues as well as preparing graduates for the global market. From the PHEIs side, this would create remarkable opportunities in meeting stringent requirement that the government stipulates by way of legal frameworks (Gaziel 2012).

Staff Exchange, Focus on Pedagogy, Quality Assurance or Management

Among the opportunities that cross border collaboration provides PHEIs with is the opportunity created on the areas of staff exchange (Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009). When staff came from collaborating institutions and engaged in teaching/learning and research here in Ethiopia, facilitating environments for knowledge transfer and technology will be created. The exchange will also enable staff from developing countries side to have real international exposure when chances are open to visit the environment in which higher education are conducted abroad (Tubbeh and Williams 2010).

Research Undertakings, Joint Journal Publications

Scholarly communication activities in PHEIs must be one of the corner stone for the enhancement of quality education as well as for the development of the sector. However, it is one of the weak spot in PHEIs as there are no well-established cultures of research (Wondimeneh 2011). In the light of creating vibrant research culture in PHEIs, cross border collaboration by way of joint research undertakings must be the order of the day (Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009). As part of scholarly communication activities, currently there are few journals that are being published by PHEIs in Ethiopia (Wondimeneh 2012), cross border collaboration might help in this regard to secure scholars with high academic ranking (Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009) to serve as editorial board as well as peer reviewing process.

Student Exchange, Internalization/Globalization of PHEIs

Cross border collaboration will not only create opportunities for staff exchange but it also creates opportunities for student exchange between and among partnering institutions. Such kind of venture is one aspect of globalization of higher education or internalization of higher education which enables students to get international exposure in their academic as well as professional life (Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009; Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Amey et al 2007).

Sharing Of Resources, Expertise, Knowledge, Capital, Integrating Learning Experiences

The prominent advantage one could get from cross border collaboration is sharing of resources. As there are well developed systems and resources from part of the globe that we frequently refer, the North; expertise, knowledge, capital might be shared to integrate learning experiences from abroad. This by far would help PHEIs in boosting their capacities in teaching/learning, research and outreach engagements (Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009; Amey et al 2007).

Franchising of Education

Cross border collaboration enables PHEIs in franchising education and export to the different countries in the world (Ennew and Fujia 2009). Basically, PHEIs are engaged in such kind of venture in the areas they have good human capital. Such kind of engagement would create to draw financial resources to PHEIs and the country as well. The venture would also help

PHEIs to build their staff capacity since it creates international exposure (Amey et al 2007; Ennew and Fujia 2009). Nevertheless such ventures should have legal framework to ensure the collaboration are made by respecting the interest of the nations involved (Gaziel 2012).

Challenges of Cross-Border Collaboration

Cross-border collaboration does not exist without a problem. As it will be implemented in two different nations, the first challenge will be difference in culture. In order for trans-border collaboration be effective, the problem of cultural difference must be properly arrested. In addition, difference in institutional capacity might also have adversary effect on the venture unless it is well managed (Tubbeh and Williams 2010).

Effective cross border collaborations have been famous for strong stakeholders' commitment. Absence of stakeholders' commitment can be considered as one of the challenges in the cross border collaborations (Tubbeh and Williams 2010). For the successful venture of cross border collaboration there must be appropriate legal framework and thus lack of enabling legal framework can be a limiting factor for the successful implementation of the collaboration (Gaziel 2012).

Models

There are different collaboration and partnership model (Graci 2012). These models would help to visualize the process of collaboration in order to make it sustainable (Godbey and Turlington, 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009; Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Amey et al 2007; Roydell and Rugkasa 2007). Some of the models incorporate antecedents for partnership, reasons for partnering, goals of partnership, driving factors for collaborations, pushing

and pulling factors. On the other hand, the model by Amey et al (2007) tries to identify components of effective collaborations as “antecedents, motivation, context, and the partnership itself”. In addition, Graci (2012) identifies that a partnership model can constitute “antecedents, problem-setting, objective-setting, structuring and outcomes.”

Evaluation Of Cross Border Collaboration

Evaluation must be built at the heart of any cross border collaborations to measure whether it is advantageous to pursue and sustain such ventures. The process of evaluation should be built in starting from the initiation and continuing at each stage of development of the venture. This would help a lot in sustaining collaboration and help parties involved in securing their ultimate aim (Amey et al 2007; Maher et al 2003; Lamie and Ball 2010; Hart and Northmore 2011).

Internationalization of Higher Education

Internationalization of education is the product of globalization (Tubbeh and Williams, 2010). In the light of creating wider access to students of higher learning institutions, different establishments have been seen worldwide. Among such institutions found consortium of higher learning institutions. Consortium of higher learning institutions can serve as catalysts in internalizing higher learning institutions by bringing together whatever available resources. Such kinds of ventures have also helped to create cross border collaborations (Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009; Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Amey et al 2007; Scherrer 2005; Amey 2010; Jie 2010; Beaudoin 2009).

Summary of Responses

Summary of responses are described here based on the questions posed in the interview schedule. The summaries are based on the categories of respondents and organized into three sections.

Summary of Responses of PHEIs Surveyed

Availability of Cross-Border Collaboration

Table 1: Do you have collaboration/partnership with HLI abroad (YES)

No	Respondents	Responses	
		Yes	Planning stage
1	Admas University College	✓	
2	Alpha University College	✓	
3	St. Mary's University College	✓	
4	Unity University		✓

Table 2: Available partner institution

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lubek university, Germany <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sandwich ○ e-learning • association of support e-learning & e-health care in developing countries (Hamburg, Germany)
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lubek university, Germany • UK-Coventry university (2010) • New Horizon Education Group, Hargessa, Somali Land
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IGNOU • CTA • Netherlands • ORBIS International
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning with universities in USA

Who initiated the collaboration?

The surveyed institutions have taken the initiation to venture in cross-border collaboration.

Table 4: The reason for initiating the collaboration

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• research collaboration (western Michigan)• quality maintenance (INQAAHE)• HRD• interest in curriculum development
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to launch e-learning
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• there was a felt need which still exists• there was no accreditations for MA/MSc program• to build hr capacity of the country• provision of cheaper higher education• bringing quality education to Ethiopia
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• knowledge and technology transfer• experience sharing

Table 5: Date of commencement

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	10 yrs ago
2	Alpha University College	Since 2007
3	St. Mary's University College	2006
4	Unity University	In the pipe line

Table 6: Does the collaboration incorporated as part of organizational structure?

No	Respondents	Responses
		Yes
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proactive, business development office since Feb 2012, through marketing & corporate communication office
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Graduate Studies, Research, Press and Publication
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as part of the graduate program
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> under university announcement (growth for innovative teaching/learning) centre for innovation teaching/learning (CITA)

Table 7: Types of International education partnership

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study abroad and exchange Joint research venture Distance education Partnership agreement Franchise
2	Alpha University College	ALL
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance Exchange of students abroad International degree offering
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All

What modality do you employ to initiate the collaboration?

- all respondents employed MOU

Table 8: Which one of the following specific areas is targeted for the collaboration/partnership?

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of joint programs (curriculum development) • Staff exchange, focus on pedagogy, quality assurance or management • Research undertakings, joint journal publications, • Student exchange, internalization/globalization of PHEIs • Sharing of resources, expertise, knowledge, capital, integrating learning experiences • Adaptation to the changing environment • Franchising of education
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum development • expert provision • staff exchange • experience sharing • capacity building
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource sharing
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint curriculum development • Joint research • Staff and student exchange

Table 9: What benefits does your institutions got from the collaboration?

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building (improved curriculum, building of research capacity, access to good infrastructure, etc.) • Access to quality maintenance tools • Securing e-books for community engagement/outreach • Experience sharing • Secured 25 Personal Computers From GTZ • Server, router (UNDP) • New training package (CISCO, entrepreneurship, e-learning)
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition • Financial benefit • Opportunity for visibility for local institutions • Capacity building • Staff exchange
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All benefits one could get from distance education
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleviates teachers problem for postgraduate students • PhD –staff development • Knowledge and technology transfer

Table 10: What challenges did you face to start and sustain the collaboration?

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor image of the country • Institutional capacity (human resource, finance) • Focus of government is only for public institution • Lack of commitment from int'l organization side • Cultural differences (deadline, work culture)
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpredictable government policy • Lack of transparency from collaborating institution • Personality turnover • Inability to institutionalize collaboration • Absence of on timely response (communication problem)
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges that one could find from distance education • Absence of legal framework • Remittance problem (initially)
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • absence of strong commitment • expectation from partner institution • cultural difference • work culture • availability of resources (hr. financial, infrastructure, etc) • regulatory framework from HERQA • unpredictable situation of the country

Table 11: Are there any regulatory frameworks that encourage cross-border collaboration in PHEIs?

No	Respondents	Responses	
		Yes	No
1	Admas University College		✓
2	Alpha University College	✓	
3	St. Mary's University College	✓ (Introduced this year It is good start)	
4	Unity University		✓ Hard to say it exists in UU case

Table 12: What roles do you think Consortium of PHEIs in Ethiopia can play to promote and sustain the idea of cross-border collaboration?

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire fighting approach • it is not strategic institution
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating healthy business environment • Quality maintenance • Addresses policy problem of the government negotiate to establish formal relationship across PHEIs that venture with cross-border collaboration • Encourages PHEIs to venture appropriate cross-border collaboration • Partner with the government to institute legal framework that will create enabling environment • Follows up to ensure quality cross-border collaboration
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not that much strong • It's more of owners association than professionals (founder association)
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association should give support to UU

Table 13: Do you have anything to share by way of lessons learnt as result of your venture in cross-border collaboration?

No	Respondents	Responses
1	Admas University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are willing institution for collaboration • They want it since Ethiopia is a fertile ground for higher education, they also want the partnership by way of social responsibility • PHEIs must be prepared at high calibre rate • Win-win approach plays prominent role rather than expecting from international collaborator • Cross border collaboration must be one of the pillars for PHEIs
2	Alpha University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross border collaboration has benefit • Commitment from both parties must be secured • Identical work culture should be developed • Opportunities must be strengthened
3	St. Mary's University College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful collaboration • Working culture from abroad • Effective communication culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Website update ○ Email ○ Utilization of IT
4	Unity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross border collaboration is highly important • To made cross border a success pertinent resources like HR, office, finance, etc should be made available • Strong commitment • Endurance is highly important • Cross border collaboration is not part-time job • It is highly attached with survival • It is highly aligned with national development • A far sighted institution usually is engaged in cross border collaboration

Summary of Responses from HERQA

Summary of responses to the questions raised for the quality ensuring institution (HERQA) are presented here.

- I. Is HERQA aware of cross-border collaboration available between Ethiopian PHEIs and higher education outside of the country?
 - HERQA is well aware of the cross-border collaboration available in surveyed institutions.

II. Is HERQA aware of the reasons for PHEIs in Ethiopia to venture cross-border collaboration?

According to HERQA, the reasons for venturing cross-border collaboration are, cross-border collaboration is

- Outcome of globalization which help to
 - import: delivery of education from abroad (SMUC, AUC)
 - export: delivery of education abroad (
 - secure market, business
 - create mutual benefit

III. What are the focal areas for PHEIs in Ethiopia to venture cross-border collaboration? (Teaching/learning, research, outreach, etc.)

- Among the three pillars that make the foundation for all HLIs, the focal reasons for venturing encompasses all, but skewed towards teaching/learning (extent differs)

IV. What benefits/opportunities available for institutions that venture cross-border collaboration?

- benefits/opportunities include: profit, networking, further partnership, cultural exchange, technology and knowledge transfer, management efficiency, experience sharing, and problem solving skills

V. What types of International education partnership have been observed in PHEIs?

HERQA believes that the available cross-border collaboration in the surveyed institutions is of the following types:

- branch campuses, twining, joint degree/double degree, distance education

VI. What possible challenges PHEIs might face to venture and sustain in trans-border collaboration?

The possible challenges are: absence of local expertise, identification of proper institutions (with proper accreditation and with prestige/recognition), knowledge of partner institution, establishment of proper agreement, level of involvement (capacity, balance of power, whether it is based on national interest of Ethiopia (opportunity to incorporate local examples, entry requirement)), institutional culture/capacity, lack of interest from students side (they are fade up).

VII. Are there any regulatory frameworks that encourage cross-border collaboration in PHEIs?

- In 2011, it was introduced after PHEIs have been started cross border collaboration.

VIII. What roles does the Consortium of PHEIs in Ethiopia can play to promote and sustain the idea of cross-border collaboration?

- HERQA believes that consortium of PHEIs can prepare its own rule & regulation to promote cross-border collaboration and can assist HERQA in ensuring quality in cross-border collaboration.

IX. What lessons can HERQA learn so far by simply reviewing the available ventures in cross-border collaboration?

- learning for the organization, the venture help to prepare guideline, there is evolution of cross-border evolution as a result guideline is prepared (legal framework)

Summary of Responses (PHEIs Consortium)

Responses of PHEIs consortium towards the questions raised in the interview are documented in this section.

- I. Is the Consortium aware of cross-border collaboration available between Ethiopian PHEIs and higher education outside of the country?
 - The Consortium of PHEIs is aware of the existence of cross-border collaboration among the surveyed institutions.
- II. What are the reasons for PHEIs in Ethiopia to venture cross-border collaboration?
 - The reasons for venturing in cross-border collaboration are knowledge & technology transfer, creating wider access to higher education (career development and opportunity to international education in affordable approach)
- III. What types of International education partnership have been observed in PHEIs?
 - All types of international education are available however it is more skewed towards distance education and exchange of students.
- IV. What are the focal areas for PHEIs in Ethiopia to venture cross-border collaboration? (teaching/learning, research, outreach, etc.)
 - The focal areas are largely teaching/learning. However, research collaboration is available in SMUC
 - What benefits/opportunities available for institutions that venture cross-border collaboration? PHEIs consortium

identified that benefits/opportunities are knowledge & technology transfer, creating wider access to higher education (career development and opportunity to international education in affordable approach)

V. What possible challenges PHEIs might face to venture and sustain in trans-border collaboration?

- The possible challenges are unavailability of hard currency (for tuition fee and other payments), absence of teachers at the level collaborating institutions expect in local market), cultural differences and institutional capacity.

VI. Are there any regulatory frameworks that encourage cross-border collaboration in PHEIs?

- Regulatory framework is in place recently and it is not yet approved. HERQA must be proactive being rather than reactive. The cart should not come before the horse.

VII. What roles does the Consortium of PHEIs in Ethiopia can play to promote and sustain the idea of cross-border collaboration?

- Consortium of PHEIs can play major roles in the establishment of quality assurance unit that will overhaul HERQA. it can also promote cross-border collaboration as it is a matter of survival.

VIII. What lessons can Consortium of PHEIs is learn so far by simply reviewing the available ventures in cross-border collaboration?

- The consortium does not work much. However, so far the government has become appreciative and instituted legal framework; PHEIs must be strong to address the challenge and become more innovative.

Summary of Major Findings

The research has tried to address the following questions and summary of major findings in relation to the questions posed is provided in this section. The findings are summarized in order to reflect experiences from the PHEIs side, the quality ensuring institution (HERQA) and Consortium of PHEIs.

What modalities are employed in order to venture such kind of cross-border collaboration and partnerships?

- All PHEIs that were surveyed used MoU to initiate as well as manage the collaboration.

What are the opportunities in maintaining quality in PHEIs?

The research found that the major opportunities that can be secured as a result of cross-border collaboration are:

- knowledge & technology transfer including creating wider access to higher education at postgraduate program level
- opportunity to international education in affordable approach
- Capacity building (improved curriculum, building of research capacity, access to good infrastructure, finance, etc.) to help engage in community outreach
- platform for networking, further partnership, staff exchange and cultural exchange
- Experience sharing, problem solving skills, management efficiency
- Access to quality maintenance tools
- recognition, opportunity for visibility for local institutions

What challenges PHEIs were/are faced with while venturing?

Major challenges identified in the research are:

- Institutional capacity (unavailability of hard currency (for tuition fee and other payments), absence of human resource at the level collaborating institutions expect in local market)
- cultural differences(meeting deadline, work culture, communication problem)
- identification of proper institutions (with proper accreditation, with prestige/recognition, knowledge of partner institution, establishment of proper agreement)
 - whether it is based on national interest of Ethiopia (opportunity to incorporate local examples, entry requirement)
- poor image of the country
- focus of government is only for public institution
- lack of commitment from international organization side
- unpredictable government policy
- lack of transparency from collaborating institution
- personality turnover (inability to institutionalize collaboration)
- absence of strong commitment
- expectation from partner institution

What regulatory frameworks are there from the GoE side/ HERQA?

- There is a guideline for cross-border collaboration that is made effective in December 2011 (HERQA, 2011).

What roles does Consortium of PHEIs play in this regard?

Major roles that could be played by the Consortium of PHEIs are found to be:

- establishment of quality assurance unit
- promotion of cross-border collaboration as it is a matter of survival
- preparation of its own rule and regulation to promote cross-border collaboration
- extending assist to HERQA in helping PHEIs in venturing sound cross-border collaboration
- negotiate to establish formal relationship across PHEIs that venture with cross-border collaboration
- Encourages PHEIs to venture in appropriate cross-border collaboration
- Partner with the government to enhance legal framework that will create enabling environment
- Follows up to ensure quality cross-border collaboration
- Support PHEIs in their effort to venture in cross-border collaboration

What lessons can be learnt from the success stories and available endeavors on the issues?

Major lessons that can be drawn from the research are:

- There is evolution of cross-border evolution
- There are willing institution for collaboration (they want it since Ethiopia is a fertile ground for higher education,

they also want the partnership by way of social responsibility

- PHEIs must be prepared at high caliber rate to venture cross border collaboration
- Win-win approach plays prominent role rather than expecting from international collaborator
- Cross border collaboration must be one of the pillars for PHEIs
- Cross border collaboration has benefit
- Commitment from both parties must be secured
- Identical work culture should be developed
- Opportunities must be strengthened
- Working culture from abroad
- Effective communication culture as a result instituting technology based communication for day-to-day activities
- Cross border collaboration is highly important
- To make cross border a success, pertinent resources like human, infrastructure, finance, etc. should be made available—(backed by strong commitment and endurance)
- Cross border collaboration is not part-time job as it is highly attached with survival and national development
- A far sighted institution usually is engaged in cross border collaboration

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section documents the conclusion as well as recommendations of the research.

Conclusion

The research was conducted with the general objective to identify the challenges and opportunities in venturing in cross-border collaborations and partnerships in Ethiopia. Attempts have been made to respond to such research questions as “what modalities are employed in order to venture such kind of cross-border collaboration and partnerships?”; “what are the opportunities in maintaining quality in PHEIs?”; “What challenges PHEIs were/are faced with while venturing?”; “what regulatory frameworks are there from the GoE side/ HERQA?”; “what roles does Consortium of PHEIs play in this regard?” and “What lessons can be learnt from the success stories and available endeavors on the issues?”.

Qualitative survey research method, document review and literature review were employed as methodologies to respond to the research questions in surveyed institutions (Admas University College, Alpha University College, St. Mary’s University College, Unity University; HERQA and Consortium of PHEIs in Ethiopia. Summary of the findings revealed that MoU was a modality that was used by PHEIs in Ethiopia to venture cross border collaboration; there are cross border collaboration in Ethiopian PHEIs with immense potential to boost quality of education in PHEIs in Ethiopia that are consistent with available experiences world-wide (Tubbeh and Williams 2010; Godbey and Turlington 2002; Ennew and Fujia 2009; Amey et al 2007); challenges PHEIs faced with were identified; HERQA has come up with a legal framework to help PHEIs in their venture in cross border collaboration in December 2011 (HERQA 2011); possible roles that Consortium of PHEIs should play were identified and finally lessons learnt

from the engagement of PHEIs in cross border collaboration have been documented.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings of the research, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- While venturing in cross border collaboration, identification of proper institutions (with proper accreditation, with prestige/recognition) establishment of proper agreement based on national interest of Ethiopia should be given due consideration. Cross border collaboration must be institutionalized to tackle personality turnover
- Institutional capacity in terms of minimum requirements to venture cross border collaboration must be built, for instance, human resource at the level collaborating institutions expect in local market
- Government should find ways and means to help PHEIs in their venture in cross border collaboration at it is keen to assist the public ones
- The legal framework for cross border collaboration should be periodically reviewed and awareness as to the existence of the legal framework for PHEIs should be provided
- Consortium of PHEIs should promote the opportunities of cross border collaboration for PHEIs and Ethiopia at large as cross border collaboration should be considered as the fourth pillar of PHEIs
- The available cross border endeavors in PHEIs targeted such continents as Europe, Asia and USA, our continent Africa (apart from exporting HE to neighboring countries) seem to be relegated.

Therefore, future cross border collaborations must target Africa as well

- PHEIs in their future effort in cross border collaboration, evaluation must be one activity to ensure whether such ventures are going as they were originally intended.
- PHEIs must strengthen the opportunity and lessons learnt in their future engagement of cross border collaborations.

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