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The Role of PHEIs in Educational Provision and Organization for HRD & Socio-Economic Development

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Abstract

At present there are many highly recognized PHEIS making educational provision and services in equity and quality at regional and national levels in Ethiopia. This alone has made a great contribution to the development of higher education in Ethiopia by providing wider and greater educational opportunities for those who are denied to access to government HEIs. Similarly, PHEIS of today can play significant roles in the provision and organization of basic and continuing education for socio-economic development and HRD of the count.

The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to investigate the vision, mission and prospects of PHEIs in addressing socio-economic and human resources at the turn of the Ethiopian millennium based on the following basic question.

- 1. What are the major models of development that can be addressed in PHEIs education system?*
- 2. What type of education programs and courses need to be designed and implemented by PHEIs to address the envisaged basic and continuing education for development?*
- 3. What mode of educational delivery system need to be utilized in the provision of this development oriented course?*

The methodology of the study is a descriptive survey based on the data collected through document survey, questionnaire and interview. Finally, based on the data and information gathered and analyzed, the highlights of the findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

Background of the Study

The greater challenges of higher education institutes is their reluctance in accepting the fact that in the age of globalization “development is...education driven” (Syoum, 2006:2) as clearly stated by Kidd (1978:53) below:

“Development and education are related processes of purposeful and organized change. Thus, whether overtly or not development is always interwoven with education.”

Many universities and colleges in both developed and developing countries (like the United Kingdom and Tanzania) are engaged in the provision and organization of programs and courses that address the socio-economic development needs and demands of individuals, society and the nation at large. For instance, many universities in the United Kingdom (like University of Ulster Natigham and Sussex) have basic education extra-mural programs and continuing education programs parallel to their liberal and elitist centered programs. Particularly, the Continuing Education Institute of Ulster University in United Kingdom has a foundation program that provides basic skills oriented agricultural and vocational as well as technical courses for adult learners. It has also higher level continuing education programs (leading to a higher level diploma and degree) that are geared to training high level technicians, vocational workers and professionals to meet the middle level and higher manpower needs of and the nation at large.

In this connection, Alan Rogers (1994:190) in his book *Adult Learning for Development* stressed the educational roles that PHEIs can play in the social economic, cultural and political development” of these individuals and the nation at large. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to investigate the major challenges and opportunities of HEIs (PHEIs, in particular) in organizing and providing education and training that is tailored for the socio-economic development of Ethiopia.

Specific objectives

Based on the foregoing discussion, the specific objectives of this study are:

- Identifying the major challenges that PHEIs face in the provision and organization of development oriented programs and courses; and
- Exploring the possibilities and opportunities (PHEIs) that exist and can be generated for designing and organizing development oriented courses.

Research Questions

Accordingly, in order to address the objectives stated above, the following basic questions are taken as a frame of reference for the analysis and interpretation of both the primary and secondary data of the study.

1. What are the major models of development that can be addressed in PHEIs education system?
2. What type of education programs and courses need to be designed and implemented by PHEIs to address the envisaged basic and continuing education for development?
3. What mode of educational delivery system need to be utilized in the provision of development oriented courses?

Methodology of the Study

The methodology of the study is a descriptive survey and comparative case study approach. The sample population includes teachers and students who were randomly selected from the four PHEIs. Data was collected by close ended questionnaires and structured interviews.

Out of the 200 questionnaire sent to teachers (100) and students (100), 95 (95%) and 96 (96%) respectively were filled out and returned. Similarly, 20 structured interview questions were prepared and handed over to concerned educational leaders (including deans, coordinators, and one associate president) of the four PHEIs, and the researcher was able to contact only 10 of the concerned educational leaders of the four colleges to gather their interview report (These include * SMUC (4) * AUC(4), * ADUC (1) and UUC*(1).

In addition, two senior academic staff members of AAU were interviewed.

2. Review of Related Literature

As stated earlier the relevance and quality of modern HEIs is mainly determined by the dynamic and progressive educational policy and goals that are stated explicitly and clearly to address the socio-economic needs and demands of individuals and society at large. Accordingly, the literature review of this study is presented in two parts as follows:

2.1. The Concept of Development in Relation to Adult Education

Development is growth plus change; change in turn, is social and cultural as well as economic; and qualitative as well as quantitative. U. Th. anp (cited in Yalew. 1985:29).

Education is central to the process of development (Shaw, R. Yalew. 1985:29).

* SMUC=St. Mary University College

* AUC= Alpha University College

* ADUC= Admas University College

* UUC=Unity University College

These two statements provide the conceptual framework for development in relation to education. They, therefore, form the initial basis of this report. In this study, development and adult education are seen as interlinked process with similar dynamic elements. Both involve purposeful social, economic and cultural change. Both encourage movement from the present state of functioning to a more advanced state. Both imply a negotiated relationship between an agent (a developer, planner, and educator) and a client (a nation, community, and student).

In both developmental and educational processes, the common denominators are individuals and groups, which interact with each other. This suggests that education can lead to lasting development in society. Development involves a mobilization of human potential in all aspects of life: the growth within individuals and communities of a critical awareness, of social reality, and ability to understand, control and shape their future. It also involves a more equitable distribution of resources, locally and nationally. Thus, development covers a wide range of interrelated social, cultural, economic and political factors, as opposed to the narrow and traditional definition which focuses solely on “growth or a rise in the gross national income”.

Contemporary writers on economics and development define ‘development’ as a multidimensional process, which involves:

- (a) basic changes in social structures, attitudes and institutions;
- (b) acceleration of socio-economic as well as cultural growth;
- (c) the reduction of inequality, including fair distribution of resources;
- (d) the eradication of absolute poverty.

(Totten 1970, Elkan (1976) Todaro (1977), Green (1977) Brandt, (1980) Cited in Yalew 1985:12)

This corporate definition implies that development is not merely a function of economic, but also concerns the interaction of the interrelated factors listed above in order to bring about change for the benefit of human beings.

With special reference to developing countries like Ethiopia, the immediate and crucial goal of development tends to be:

- (a) the fulfillment of the basic needs of the people;
- (b) the development of human resources and potential to meet these needs.

As stated earlier, essentially, Ethiopia's development goals cater for economic, social and cultural advancement, which is intended to meet the needs of the society and the nation as a whole.

Different approaches have been advocated for development program geared towards improving the quality of life of the majority of the population in the Third World. In an Adult Education and Development conference (1984) at Magee University College, N. Ireland (UK), three development strategies were stressed by well-known educators:

(I) Grass roots Development Approach

This approach focuses on "a new small-scale 'alternative structure' based on community enterprises and activities". (Tlacey cited Yalew. 1985:32)

- (ii) Basic Human Needs Approach of development based on a "need related curriculum" (Bown, cited in Yalew 1985:31).

- (iii) Social Action Development Models: This approach may include two main clusters:
- a) “those which rely upon changes in the quality of life meeting the basic human needs or human resources development”;
 - b) And those which think in terms of ‘liberation’, providing for the ‘oppressed’ access to resources of all kind”. (Rojers cited in Yalew 1985:31).
- (I) the human resource development (HRD);
 - (ii) The integrated approach of development.

The writer believes that all these approaches could prove viable in Ethiopia, depending on the economic, social, and cultural condition of various regions. All the development models mentioned above can be related to the concept of “room-for-maneuver”. According to Professor Lalage Bown (1984), this concept is becoming “common currency among those people concerned with development studies and it does imply the notion of alternatives, the notion of trying to widen ways forward for individuals and groups in society”.

- (iii) Development and education are related processes of purposeful and organized change. Thus, “whether overtly or not, development is always interwoven with education”.

2.1. The Role of Education for Development

Given that education plays a pivotal role for development this part of the literature review specifically focuses on the developmental roles of adult and C.E. According to a. Rogers (1994), adult education plays major socio-economic roles as indicated below.

Economically-parents and the community at large may want to be involved in at economic growth and modernization, and higher agricultural yield or more efficient individual and exploitative processes, of resource preservation.

Socially-may be aimed at communicable harmony or justice or welfare of environmental or social in-harassment (quality of life)

Culturally-they may be aimed at preserving and increasing access to richness.

Politically-they may be aimed at increasing awareness and participation and structural change.

HRD-for recurring employment, increasing productivity, achieving economic self-reliance. Rogers, 1994:94-95).

To address the above developmental goals of both private and public HEIs of developed and developing countries need to design courses and programs that are geared to socio-economic and cultural development of individuals and their respective nations at large. In this regard, the challenges and experiences of some developed and developing counties are presented below.

In United Kingdom HEIs some of the traditional universities tend to focus on liberal and elitist education as divorced from productive education that caters for socio-economic development of individuals and the nation. In reference to the United Kingdom earlier education system G. Pickering states. "It is common to speak of a liberal education as a special characteristics of a university and a gentleman (liberal) in its grammatical sense as opposed to service" (1967:129).

However, modern universities in the United Kingdom (e.g., the universles of Sussex, Ulster and Nottingham) are engaged in extra-mural and continuing education programs.

For example, the University of Ulster (N. Ireland) and the University of Nottingham provide development oriented foundation and extramural courses as well as continuing education courses respectively. Stressing this point, Rogers asserts that “university extra mural departments (EMDs) in the UK” (1994:52) represent university based development oriented programs.

Many Western European universities and Prussia does not exist! possess good systems of industrial education for the masters and managers of factories and workshops” (Pickering, 1967:142).

Similarly, the United States, Germany and Russia have incorporated vocational and polytechnic education in their universities’ education system for training middle and higher level technicals, vocational workers and professionals who could be employed in various factors and business enterprises for enhancing the socio-economic development of their respective nations (Pickering, 1967:144-145).

In developing countries of Africa, the problems of modern universities go far beyond economic challenges. Colonialist and imported models University (without any adaptation and revitalization in the context of African culture) would produce an Afro-European elite on African soil with absolutely no educational contributions for the socio-economic of African Countries.

Accordingly, as stated by J. Ngrere (1970), the first and foremost role of a university is to impart productive and practical knowledge and skills that generate liberated ideas, thinking and action. In this context, in speech at Dar Es Salaam University, he forwarded the following definition and functions of an African university.

“A university is an institution of higher learning, a place where people’s minds are trained for clear thinking, for analysis, for independent thinking and for problem solving of higher level. Given this definition; a university has three major and important functions:

First, it transmits advanced knowledge that serves as a basis of action or as a spring board for further research. Second, a university is a center to advance the frontiers of knowledge and third, a university through its teaching, provides high-level manpower to the society.”

Similarly, modern educators in South Africa strongly advocate a liberated African university from that of the Apartheid system and educational policy and practices of the colonialist legacy. The major challenges of a South African university is changing the way that knowledge is constructed and communicated based on African values and culture. In this context, Brock Une (2000) says the following:

“Creating favourable research conditions for the academics in these universities might be the best way and strengthen the hub [and] ...to build a South African culture for all South African... on African soil. This would really be de-colonization of the African value.”

3. Discussion

The rationale of this study is based on the assumption that PHEIs are now faced with the challenges of providing and organization of development oriented programs and courses; and their contributions in this sector tend to be minimal. This basic assumption forms on

initial forum to investigate the major problems and opportunities of PHEIs in the provision and organization of development focused education and training.

The discussion of the results of this study is, therefore, based on the secondary and primary data gathered and organized from documentary sources, questionnaires and interviews. The data obtained from primary sources are discussed in two major subsections that include: Types of development courses /programs and mode of delivery of these courses.

3.1. Types of Development Programs and Courses

The major sources of data for this study are students and teachers respondents from four PHEIs in Addis Ababa. The respondents were provided with a list of four types of development focused courses/programs that include.

- a. Community development program/courses;
- b. Knowledge based agriculture program/courses;
- c. Vocational and technical program/courses;
- d. Higher level PSD*. And HRD* program/courses.

And their responses for each sub-section is presented and discussed categorically and collectively as follows:

As indicated in Table I, the majority of teacher and student respondents affirm that the community development courses (including health, education, local medicine, civic education, family planning, home economics and service management) are being and need to be provided by PHEIs with average percentage response of 97%, 88%, 92%, 94% and 95% respectively.

* HRD= Human Recourse Development

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The number of respondents who said that such community development courses need not be provided is insignificant as clearly shown in the table. This implies that despite the situational administrative challenges they might have faced PHEIs have had ample opportunities for organizing and providing such development oriented courses/programs. PHEIs managers and leaders who were interviewed also declared that they have the commitment and devotion to make such training schemes part and parcel of their program and agenda.

Similarly, respondents were asked if their PHEIs could address agricultural courses/programs (related to seed selection, terracing, shifting cultivation, irrigation, insecticides and pasting. Interestingly, both teachers and students strongly favoured the participation of PHEIs in the provision and organization of these courses and programs. Such endeavours by PHEIs need to be given due attention by the community and government in particular whose central development policy is agriculture led industrialization.

The other major point which should be given due attention and consideration by PHEIs is related to their potentiality in the provision and organization of technical and vocational courses or programs in their respective institutions. Both teacher and student respondents tend to favor both middle level manpower training for technical and vocational facilitator to satisfy the middle man power needed for the nation, on the one hand, and to provide basic technical and practical knowledge and skills to marginal societies who are denied access to mainstream development. Such training can be given by PHEIs mainly based on IK and ITC. They also reported that PHEIs can provide higher-level development oriented training for HRD and PSD.

Finally, the respondents were asked what type of training and which mode of delivery system can PHEIs effectively address. The four categories of development issues discussed

above. Both teachers and students respondents highly commended the need for HRD through the following type of training programs.

- Training social workers and community leaders;
- Training agricultural extension agents in the most modern and conventional way; and
- Training educators and coordinators of development programs for the various levels of the economic sectors of the country.

With regard to the mode of delivery, both teachers and students responded in favour of the four modes of delivery system as presented below in order of priority based on the average response for each mode of delivery.

1. In-service 84%
2. In-housed 56.5%
3. Distance 49.9%
4. Extension 49.7%

Interview Report

In addition to the original survey through questionnaires, structured interview were conducted with 10 educational leaders and coordinators in the four PHEIs under study as well as with two senior staff members of AAU.

The purpose of the interview was not only to get additional information for crosschecking the data obtained through questionnaires, but also to gain expertise and experiential information from concerned educational leaders and senior staff members of PHEIs and AAU respectively.

Accordingly, the highlight of the interview report is briefly presented below. Regarding the major missions and goals of PHEIs in the provision of development oriented courses, the

interviewees reported that PHEIs have the responsibility and obligation to: train and produce highly qualified and certified professionals, technicians and vocationals; provide demand-driven productive knowledge and skills to adults; and technocrat jobs in the world of work.

Promoting and satisfying the country's trained manpower demands that, the capacity building endeavor for socio-economic development of the nation at large be accelerated.

2. With regard to the type of development oriented programs and courses, the interviewees reported that:

PHEIS have the need and interest to be partially engaged in the four sectors of development courses that include;

- HRD development courses;
- Agricultural courses; and
- Industrial and vocational courses.

Despite their deep concern and interest in the provision and organization of such courses, the interviewees reported that the PHEIs have their own problems and limitations in being directly involved in the provision and organization of development courses and programs. Such limitations can be attributed, partially, to their limited human and material resources to initiate and provide development oriented courses with quality and capacity.

The other challenge for PHEI is administrative and bureaucratic problems related to policy issues from MoE the green light for giving such development oriented programs.

4. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The major challenge HEIs, particularly PHEIs, is the provision of quality education in type and content. Due to their limited commitment and interview, PHEIs contribution to the provision and organization of development geared program courses is minimal and nominal.

Inorder to address the following issues, questions are designed.

1. What are the major models of development that can be implemented by PHEIS?
2. What mode of delivery system needs to be employed to address development courses and programs?
3. Regarding the type of development courses, the overwhelming majority of the respondents reported that:
 - Community development course (including health education, education and home economics) must be provided;
 - Agricultural courses are poorly addressed by PHEIs. And most of them favored the provision and organization of such courses in quality and quantity; Industrial and vocational courses are particularly addressed in some PHEIs. The respondents therefore declared their view that vocational and technical training needs to be provided;
 - Similarly, human resource development courses (that include training manpower as facilitators and extension agents) are all seen as essential components of the training programs;
 - Regarding the models of development that can be employed in training the coordinators, facilitators, trainers as well as consumers of such development activities the survey has identified;

- The BHN model of development, the grass-roots approach of development for small scale industry and the HRD for higher level vocational and professional services and the socio- change model of development;
- Regarding the mode of delivery system, the respondents indicated their favor of the following modes of delivery as presented in order of priority.
 - ♦ In-service training
 - ♦ Distance learning
 - ♦ Extension
 - ♦ In-house training

Interestingly, Rogular Barham is findings match that of the interviewer's reports. However, the information obtained through interviews has provided the following additional important views and impressions. First, the interviewees observed the minimum involvement of PHEIs in designing and organizing development oriented programs and courses that may be attributed to their lack of awareness and information about the available opportunities and strategies for initiating such programs/courses. Second, the reluctance and indifference reflected by PHEIs managers and deans to face and confront the challenges that deter them from opening their doors for development oriented courses.

I cannot because I'm not an expert in this field and I cannot always understand the unclear writing.

Conclusion

The overall picture of the findings discussed above reflects the following conclusions.

- From the findings it has to be noted that PHEIs tend to be very passive, reluctant and too reserved in the provision and organization of development oriented courses. This may be mainly attributed to their lack of awareness and information that could have helped them to find a number of possibilities and

opportunities for initiating and endeavoring development courses in their programs.

- The second major conclusion drawn from the finding is the reluctance and lack of confidence of PHEIs in facing the academic and administrative challenges and their lack of insight and wisdom in programs and organization of development granted courses.

Recommendations

Based on the discussions of the documentary survey and summary of the findings, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- It appears that managers and deans of PHEIs lack awareness information and, most important, the commitment in designing, organizing and providing development-oriented programs. It is therefore strongly recommended that PHEIs learn more about the concepts and roles of education in the socio-economic and cultural development of the country, particularly regarding their potential institutional roles. They have to learn from both developed and developing countries and universities as discussed in the literature review and background discussion of this study.
- Regarding the type of courses to be provided, PHEIs need to take the following strategies and actions. They need to survey and study courses / programs that are being provided with in and outside their county. For example, the development study programs in the United Kingdom and the other development courses and activities in AAU would enlighten their vision and mission. AAU has development based institutes (like IDR) and faculties (like engineering) out of which PHEIs can learn and design and organize development oriented courses.
- Having had such basic experience, PHEIs can select and inject the type of delivery system (such as, INSET D. E) related to development issues and programs.

- Having had the adequate experience, orientation and information from model universities like AAU, they need to employ any one or all of the following models of development.
- The BHN model of development

Beneficiaries of such programs are poor people who are unable to satisfy their basic survival needs unnecessary PHEIs, therefore, can design a program for training coordinators and facilitators of such programs. The other model of development is the grass-roots model of development based on the skills and knowledge required for small-scale industry that can be addressed to marginal societies who are given access to the main stream of development. For this sector of society two levels of training can be addressed by PHEIs.

The first strategy is providing basic technical and vocational training to this marginal society where they reside or at a nearby community school.

The second is giving training to facilitators and coordinators of this sector of the development program. In both cases, all training activities need to be based on local IK and ITC.

- The model of development that can be addressed by PHEIs is the HRD model. This model of development can be designed, organized and provided for higher level vocational, technical and professional training to satisfy middle and higher level man-power need of the country.

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