Review

The Opportunities and Challenges of Ethics in Ethiopia Higher Institution

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With the core objectives of assessing the nexus between University, Cultural Diversity and Ethics, in accommodating multiculturalism in Ethiopian university. The findings are more emphasized and analyzed qualitatively in light of primary sources gathered by interviewing of informants from student from different university, work colleagues and personal observation of the researcher. On the other hand, secondary sources were used in order to address the basic objectives of the research. To this end, the study used Descriptive survey research design for collecting data from the study area. The findings of this study indicate that ethics played uncountable role in building moral attitude of student in order to find what right, best is, and moral for those involved in multicultural society. And also ethics played paramount role in order to students acquire different knowledge and art of communication, resolving disputes, culture, values and norms and way of life of their friends in the university. On the other hand, ethics impeded by the development of narrow nationalism and the feeling of sectionalism among student and some teachers in the university and also, ethnicization of education system in the country had produced 'tapered minded' students on the basis of their belongingness such as ethnicity, religion, language and culture. In addition to this, Social media highly affected the implementation ethics in Ethiopian higher institution which is used by irresponsible activist who counted themselves as representatives of their ethnic groups. Finally, the study comes up with the conclusion that the implementation of ethics in Ethiopian university in encouraging diversity is less marked and requires more effort from different stakeholders.

Key words; University, Diversity, ethics, multiculturalism

INTRODUCTION

The values-driven life style in multicultural country is highly important in government universities with an impressive new opportunity for community. According Alfred (1861-1947) the task of a university is the creation of the future, so far as rational thought, and civilized modes of life style throughout generations. To address

this it is important to promote all inclusive ethics, mutual understanding, promoting companionship, peace-fostering, and earth-friendly ways of life for diverse people of the universe (Kuschel 1993). Ethics played pivotal role in regulating the relationship between ethical perception and culture. The development of individuals' perceptions of ethics cannot be considered independently of the culture to which they belong. Exhibited in everyday

behaviour of individuals from different cultures differ in the criteria they use is ethically (Armstrong & Sweeney et. al 1996).

The core aim for the establishment of university is to promote the principle of active concern for others, create fresh and respectful environment for all and flourish truly all inclusive ethics and to handle our differ cultures. The prevalence of intense interaction between cultures is increasingly important. Communities of different cultures that interact with each other more than to live in harmony with other communities can get to know their cultures (Prozesky 2007). Culture is effective on communities that they have the level of civilization, life style, material and spiritual elements and decisive as well as on the ethical perception it is one of the basic building blocks in the formation of communities.

At the systemic level ethics has a great role in promoting multiculturalism, especially in society made up of diverse cultures. Although ethics is shaping the behavior of society and accommodate multiculturalism by peaceful live together without any separation of cultures, languages, ethnic, religions, race and clan (walelign, 2012). In African continent ethics have great role in promoting multiculturalism. It also there are many challenge related to ethics in accommodating multiculturalism and peaceful ways of living together in the continent. People in different cultural group, religion, language and diverse cultural group live together in implementing ethics in good manner (Almerew, 2005).

Similarly in Ethiopia over 80 ethnic groups are existed. These groups have their own languages, cultures, customs and norms. These different ethnic groups with different beliefs, values and norms have common things together. They live through peaceful co- existence and harmony as well as in promoting diversity and ethics are their motto to live in peaceful existence (Almerew, 2005). But this does not mean, there are no challenges for the nation which have diverse culture and different background (Abera, 2010).

It is common to see conflicts in Ethiopian university. Even though most of conflicts are managed at the university level, some of them have coursed national crisis and many of these university conflicts are occurred because of simple misunderstanding between different students who have different background. However the issue of ethnicity and religions serious issue for escalation of conflict and highly experienced in Ethiopian university students (Asmamaw, 2012). In Ethiopian university there is a nation-wide crisis which is a cause for culturally embedded ethical traditions which practiced by people for long period of time. Cognizant to these all, this paper seeks to investigate the nature of Ethiopian Universities, Cultural Diversity and Ethics, Opportunities and Challenges in Ethiopia public universities.

Virtue Ethics Framework for Multiculturalism

Unmistakably, multiculturalism has a deeply ethical agenda, promoting social goods including mutual understanding, mutual affirmation, cooperation, inclusion, equity, and social justice (Sue *et al.*, 1998). It is easy to see how such attractive goals have inspired arduous and heartfelt efforts in reforming society, particularly if one contrasts these goals with their opposites. Virtue ethics highlights the way in which the worthiness of these multicultural goods inspires devotion to them. Understanding the capacity of the multicultural movement to transform the power structure of society requires recognition of the attractiveness of these goods to individuals from the majority culture (Fowers & Richardson, 1996).

Endorsing multiculturalism undeniably engages us in the pursuit of worthwhile goods. Embracing cultural differences surely requires strength of character, which we term openness to the other, knowledge about openness to the other and consistent action along the lines of this knowledge, action that is motivated by respect and interest in those who are culturally different from oneself and that is guided by wise choices (Barbara, 2006).

Upstairs all, virtue ethics implies that openness to the other is much more than learning information and acquiring behavioral skills. It requires being or becoming the kind of person who seeks inter-cultural contact and is committed to the goods of multiculturalism. The virtue of openness to the other also enhances virtue ethics by incorporating the importance of engaging in dialogue with other cultural traditions. This dialogue opens promising avenues for cultural self-reflections, self-critique, learning, and engagement. The virtue of openness to the other is a transformative capacity that can help existing cultural and virtue traditions to remain vibrant, self-reflective, and open-ended. Therefore, a character based approach emphasizes that the only way to be culturally competent in the way multicultural authors intend is for individuals to employ cultural knowledge and behavioral capacity with the appropriate motives and to act wholeheartedly in pursuit of the goods of multiculturalism among any public university.

The Thespian of Higher Institution in Shaping Students Behavior

At the systemic level higher institution has a responsibility to teach the impacts of ethics, social responsibility and cultural diversity for future fate multicultural society. University, students are required to behave ethically and responsibly in relation to multicultural pupils. And also expected to treat their staff with courtesy at all time, contribute to a culture of respect

and tolerance between students; and demonstrate respect for difference (Griffith, 2004). In tallying to this, university teaches students on the area of inter-disciplinary and multicultural development of an outstandingly inclusive, multicultural value system as a contribution to the development of culture of ethics in school compound and a value-driven pedagogy which will incorporate the values of ethics.

Students need to become aware of the values and attitudes that underpin human behavior. They also acquiring the knowledge think critically, question assumptions, make informed decisions, and should act as ethically and socially responsible citizens. The university's role is to lend a hand student's made their own decisions by stimulating discussion. Universities are charged with the task of helping people to develop to the fullest potential and be the best they can personally be. It is not the university's role to do that for its students but to help the students do that for themselves. A university education should enable graduates to make a positive contribution to their communities (Goldman, 2000).

As university graduates progress in their careers it is highly likely that they will attain a role of organizational and moral authority. Therefore graduates should understand the various approaches to ethical dilemmas and they should have the ability to: recognize ethical issues; develop critical thinking and self-confrontation skills; cultivate tolerance towards disagreement and the inevitable ambiguities in dealing with ethical problems; and elicit a sense of moral obligation and develop a personal code of ethics (Goldman, 2000). In understanding the university grounds Climate for diversity, universities have the responsibility to advance social progress (Bowen, 1977) and prepare citizens for life and leadership in a diverse society (Gurin et al., 2002).

On the other hand, diversity poses different opportunities and challenges that higher institutions must address. In order to overcome challenges and maximize the benefits of diversity, it is necessary to understand the campus climate for diversity. However, "there has been no common framework for understanding the campus racial climate in a way that helps to develop policies and practices that can be used to enhance the higher institutions climate" (Hurt ado et al. 1998).

Uniformly, the Ethiopian higher institutions are working for creating multicultural oriented citizens. According to the Higher Education Proclamation of Ethiopia, the objectives of higher education are to prepare knowledgeable, skilled, and attitudinally mature graduates in numbers with demand based proportional balance of fields and disciplines so that the country shall become internationally competitive; ensure that education and research promote freedom of expression based on reason and rational discourse; and promote democratic culture and uphold multicultural community life (Moe,

2009).

Universities' prior objective is to equip students with scientific knowledge that could bring change in a society, and they are trained to be physicians, engineers, journalists, astronomers, manager, teachers, accountants or others. Temporarily, the students might be prepared to be competent in a profession but if he/she fails to create good social relationship or interaction he/she becomes defective and fails to play constructive role in a society. Therefore, the universities should prepare their students even to an effective social life. At this point, education becomes critical to understand those differences and should prepare students to deal with those cultural differences in today's global work environment where multinational groups eagerly seek for new graduates with intercultural competence to work either at home or abroad.

By and large, the operations and structures of an ethically excellent, public university will practice all ethical values and avoid the unethical qualities such as, dishonesty, injustice, selfishness, disrespect and laziness. And also university works to achieve consistently the ideas of equality, fraternity and fairness among culturally different people. To sum up universities should do invaluable work to create a global future worth student having good qualities for global community in general and positive thinker in particular for their country.

The Role of Ethics in Endorsing Multiculturalism in Ethiopian Universities

Ethics has several roles in promoting multiculturalism. It becomes necessary to think morally in order to find what right, best is, and moral for those involved in multicultural society. It can be the determinants of our behavior towards other. Prioritizing respect for the dignity of individual persons as higher than responsibility to society is clearly the result of ethics. This implies, as- much as respect for the dignity of persons must include respect for diversity. Respect for individuals includes respect for their cultural beliefs, not a demand that individuals become independent, autonomous, or alienated from their own cultural identity.

In addition to this, ethics helps to know, how personal beliefs and culture influence one's interactions with others. Having awareness of differences in values the question remains how to bridge conflicting worldviews for effective ethical outlooks. It can also form oneness in diverse society, tolerance, love and peace, shape individual mind toward doing the right thing and helps us to develop our ethical behavior. To sum up ethics has a paramount role in promoting unity within diversity, as well as to be free from ethno-centrism outlook.

Similarly, Ethiopian university has admitted a diverse student population that provided rich opportunities for

friendships among students from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Within these diverse societies there are different ethical values, but students have to make friendship with one another's. As the researcher collected data through interview; most of Ethiopian university students *are ethically good and they can make friends with different students having different backgrounds.* These help students to know the diverse culture of their country those who have different language, ethnicity, religion and political affiliation.[1]

University is a place where students start to live in a social context that represents the diverse society in the country in many respects. The presence of a diverse student was perceived as an advantage in their span of life. The attendance of diversity provides students with an ideal opportunity to learn from each other's cultures, languages, religions and experiences and also develop skills that are important for their social lives. Accordingly, one informant responded that the importance of living in diverse society as follows;

> *When we live with students from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, we have a chance to learn different cultural traditions, history, dancing style, cultural way of life and languages. And also we have a chance to share our culture and experience with other students. I think diversity provides a very good opportunity to know the different ethnic groups in Ethiopia and their cultures. This is far important than reading a book or learning about ethnic groups and their culture in the class.[2]*

In Ethiopia, there is no best place like universities to learn different cultures and ways of life. The diversity within university provides students with an opportunity to develop different skills that are important for their academics and for their social life. Students also believed that, the presence of diverse student population provides them with opportunities to develop tolerance, new problem solving skills, and the ability to live in a diverse context and with realities. To realize this impression most of the students stressed whether they are benefited from living in diverse society now and before they came to university as follows;

> *When they are in their home relatively narrow-minded, but now we have got a lot of experiences. If you compare us with a person who did not get this chance, we are by far the restored person in social life, because we have developed tolerance and we can live as we need. Living in a diverse campus makes you*

patient, tolerant, and reflective. It totally changes our mind.[3]

Challenges of Diversity in Impeding Ethical Values in Ethiopian Universities

There are several ethical challenges in Ethiopian University that related to multicultural issues such as, narrow nationalism, intolerant behavior of some students, religious extremism, and culturally being extremism, discrimination behavior of students on the basis of color, unsubstantiated activism and so forth.

One of the main challenges in Ethiopian university is the declining of social cohesion, the rise of 'narrow nationalism', and the implications of conflict. As social cohesion declined, tension and conflicts increased to a point that has been nearing social crisis. People fancy their ethnic identities more than their national one and criticize the 'authorization' that has been occurring within education and the country as a whole. Furthermore, they have blamed the current government for manipulating ethnicity for political power and politicization of ethnicity by different actors for cheap political support from the people who belongs to them.[4]

In addition to this, one of the most unethical challenges that hinder multiculturalism is absence of tolerance between students. Most of the students in Ethiopian university lack the values of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence due to they develop the attitude of sectionalism. As a result, conflicts between ethnicity escalate from time to time because of students backed by different rent seeker groups and opposition political parties those who need destabilize the nation.

As the information collected from different respondents showed that the escalation of negative attitudes, tensions and conflicts among students is common. One of the justifications which rose by the respondent is Ethiopia's ethnic based political system is responsible for the prevalence of conflict in Ethiopian higher institution. As one of my students argue that the establishment of political parties on the basis of ethnicity, allocation of resource and manipulation of ethnicity for numbers is a responsible factor for the impediment of ethics in Ethiopian higher institution. This supplemented by

> *No one trusts each other and groups are always suspicious of each other. I can say that the majority of the students in this generation worry about their ethnicity and the ethnicity of others around them." They have already been told that*

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[1] Interview with student at Mettu University, 01 march2017
[2] Interview with student Jimma University, 23 october2018

[3] Interview with student at Madda Walabu university, 14 may2019
[4] Interview with work colleagues of at woldia University,11january 2019

other ethnic groups are their enemies. So it makes it very hard for students from different ethnicities to become friends. They are not willing to live together, they are not willing to eat together, and they are not willing to share things together.

The conflictual relationships among students signified serious issues within the larger society. Most of the students arrived at their universities having already developed negative attitudes and perceptions towards one another. Tensions, conflicts and social unrest among the diverse Ethiopian peoples were due to the exaggerated and over emphasized use of ethnicity by the leading groups on ordinary issues.

On the other hand, the behaviors of most of the student influenced by their environment around the campus. This influences their behavior and leads to do the wrong action to relief out of it by using some drinks, chewing chat and smoking cigarettes. These drugs are not allowed in the campus and students usually used to have it outside of the campus. As a result, students who used these drugs could not be acting ethically, this pave the way for disagreement between the pupil and school management.

Ethnicization of Ethiopian education system in the last two decades had produced 'tapered minded' students. Higher education students are trapped with negative ethnocentric views that limited their worldviews. National feelings are disappearing from all levels. The misconstruction of ethnic federalism has produced 'constricted nationalism and pave the way for People in order to loyal to their ethnic group only. This stage in our country is frightening to the extent heading towards the creation of serious social unrest and ultimately civil war… Things like killing, ethnic cleansing, burning houses and kicking people from their places have become common nowadays.

In addition to this social media highly affect the implementation ethics in Ethiopian higher institution which is used by irresponsible activist who counted themselves as representatives of their ethnic groups. Most of ethnic groups used social media to communicate information about protests against government and to dispatch hate speech towards other ethnic groups, including videos recorded on smart phones, which put the issues in front of an international audience. This is one of the way students used in university to bypass state-controlled media and communicate directly with their friends who are in other university to alteration of information. Such exchange of information deliberately mess up government and student exams and create instability in different universities, this mainly lead by different irresponsible activists who are living abroad and in Ethiopia used social media as instrument to oppose government and other competitive ethnic groups.

CONCLUSION

This study was aimed at assessing the nexus of multiculturalism and ethics in Ethiopian higher institution, and to further examination of the role of ethics and challenges that affect the implementation of ethics in diverse society. The overall findings of this study leads to the conclusion that the ethics has paramount role properly manage the day to day life of multicultural people in Ethiopian university and at the same time ethics tested by different obstacles within diverse people

Positively, necessary ethics played uncountable role in building moral attitude of student in order to find what right, best is, and moral for those involved in multicultural society. As the study reveals that most of the student develop the culture of tolerance, respect, mutual understanding, peaceful co-existence and the art of living with multicultural society who are from different background. As the collected data indicated that student understand how personal beliefs and culture influence one's interactions with others in their day to day interactions. Students acquire different knowledge and art of communication, resolving disputes, culture, values and norms and way of life of their friends in the university.

On the other hand the study reveals that the declining of social cohesion, the rise of 'narrow nationalism continuously affect the prevalence of ethics in different public institution of Ethiopia. The development of narrow nationalism and the feeling of sectionalism among student and some teachers in the university eroded the value of ethics in the day to day life multicultural pupils of Ethiopian university. And these pave the way for the prevalence of intolerance between students, this has its own contribution for students in order to influence by their environment around their groups. In addition to this, Ethnicization of Ethiopian education system had produced 'tapered minded' students on the basis of their belongingness such as ethnicity, religion, language and culture. Student has no any knowledge about other parts of the country because of the assigned in their local university which is near to their home and family. In support to this, Social media highly affect the implementation ethics in Ethiopian higher institution which is used by irresponsible activist who counted themselves as representatives of their ethnic groups.

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